WRITINGS OF CECIL C CRAWFORD - VOLUME 1

by Cecil C. Crawford

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Cecil C. Crawford (Volume 1), compiled for study and devotional reading.

100 Chapters

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01.001. Volume 1

BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK

SURVEY COURSE IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Volume I by C. C. Crawford, Ph.D. LL.D College Press, Joplin, Missouri

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art., article

intro., introduction

cf., compare

l., line

ch., chapter

ll., lines

chs., chapters

p., page

edit., edition

pp., pages

e.g., for example

par., paragraph

ff., following

sect., section

fn., footnote

sv., under the word

ibid., the same

trans., translated

i.e., that is

v., verse

in loc., in this place

w., verses

or connection

vol., volume

EXPLANATORY This is the first of a two-volume work under the same title, the last volume to be published at some time before the end of the current year. The content of the entire work is arranged in four series of thirteen “lessons” each, thus providing an entire year of Bible study. The work is designed to present the teaching of the Bible as a whole, hence the over-all subject is “God’s Moral System.” The Course is prepared for use in Bible colleges, and in Bible study classes in local church and church school groups. Incidentally, these lessons were first prepared and used locally some thirty years ago. They are now being re-issued (with but little revision) for general distribution. In order to achieve the greatest possible measure of simplicity, the material in these lessons is printed in question-and-answer form. Of course, this material is not intended to be a catechism, nor is it intended to be used by anyone as such. It will be noted also that many of the Answers presented herein are in themselves brief sermon outlines. This homiletic touch should add to the usableness of the work. Brief excerpts from the writings of competent authorities will be found interspersed throughout the matter presented in this Course. In most instances, however, for the sake of brevity, I have not indicated the sources. I vouch personally for the reliability of the sources from which the excerpts are derived. I am especially indebted to the following works: The Christian System, by A. Campbell The Scheme of Redemption, by Robert Milligan Systematic Theology, by A. H. Strong The Origin of Sin, by E. W. Cook Commentary on Acts, by J. W. McGarvey Evenings with the Bible, by Isaac Errett The abbreviation A.V., as used in this course, refers to the Authorized or King James Version of the Bible. The abbreviation A.R.V., refers to the Revised Version, American Standard Edition (1901). A letter from Thomas Nelson and Sons informs me that permission is no longer necessary to quote from this Edition.

C. C. Crawford

Chapter 3

01.002. WHY WE BELIEVE IN GOD

Lesson One WHY WE BELIEVE IN GOD Scripture Reading: Psalms 100:1-5.

Scriptures To Memorize: “The fool hath said within his heart, There is no God” (Psalms 14:1). “Know ye that Jehovah, he is God; it is he that hath made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture” (Psalms 100:3). TO INTRODUCE THE LESSON, ask your pupils this question: If you were asked by an unbeliever to state the reasons why you believe that there is a God, how would you reply? What reasons would you give? Insist upon your pupils answering this question in their own words, and thus ascertain how much thought they have given it. You may be surprised to find that the children have clearer ideas of God than the grown-ups.

1. Q. How is the Christian creed stated in the Scriptures?

A. It is stated thus: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

2. Q. What must one believe in order to become a Christian?

A. One must believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 20:30-31—“Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.” Acts 16:31—“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9-10—“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

3. Q. What is clearly implied in this creedal formula?

A. That in order to Divine Sonship there must be Divine Fatherhood.

4. Q. What does Jesus teach in regard to this matter?

A. He says; “Ye believe in God, believe also in me” (John 14:1).

5. Q. What is the first truth of true religion?

A.The first truth of true religion is God, 6.Q.Why is God the first truth of true religion?

A. Because all other truths, and in fact true religion itself, rest upon God, His being, His attributes and His works.

7. Q. What is the first argument for our belief that there is a God?

A. It is called the Argument from Design.

8. Q. What is this Argument from Design?

A. It is that design implies a designer; hence the design of the world around us and within us implies a Divine Designer or Supreme Architect.

(1) Take, for illustration, a building. Ask your pupils to specify the biggest building they have ever seen. Ask if they can remember the time when it did not exist as a building. In what form did it exist before it became a building? The answer is obvious: it must have existed in the mind and plan of the person who conceived and designed it. Everything in our human experience exists first in dream, vision or plan, before it becomes in reality the thing it is designed to be. This is true of the dress you wear, the dinner you serve, the home you build, etc. A building pre-supposes a builder, design necessitates a designer.

(2) The idea of design includes not only the structure and arrangement of the thing designed, but also its functions and uses. Paley's illustration of a watch and its uses is, though old, quite simple and sound. The design in a watch is obvious. But before there was a watch, there must have been a watch-maker; and the watch-maker must not only have designed and arranged its parts to serve the purpose for which the instrument was constructed, viz., to keep time accurately. Design therefore includes both the structure and the functions of the thing designed.

(3) It is equally clear, too, that the builder must antedate the building. This being true, the Supreme Architect must have antedated His creation.

(4) For another illustration, take the human body. It is a perfect mechanism. It is more—it is a vitalized mechanism. Call attention to the inter-relations of bone, muscle, blood, organs, etc., each discharging its particular function, and the whole welded together and inhabited by a unifying entity called spirit. To think for one moment that nature could have produced this living mechanism by any operation of "resident forces" is, to say the least, absurd. Suggest the idea that the body is the building in which the real self dwells, i.e., your body is merely the tabernacle in which the real you resides. 2 Corinthians 5:1—"the earthly house of this tabernacle." 1 Corinthians 6:19—"your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit which is in you," says Paul, writing to Christians. We want to keep our houses clean and whole-some and fit to live in, do we not? Then should we not keep our bodies equally clean and wholesome?

(5) The world in which we live is a vast building roofed by space. Consider the design prevailing throughout this vast material universe! Planets revolving in certain orbits, the earth rotating on its axis, with unbroken regularity. Nature is a cosmos, not a chaos. (Ask the students to tell what they think and know about the stars. Cultivate their appreciation of the beauty and glory of the heavens, of the beauty of a landscape, especially its coloring in the autumn, etc. Students enjoy talking about such things). Everything in this world is cause and effect, and design. Order is nature's first law. No intelligent person can for a minute think that all this design is the work of chance. Besides, what is meant by "chance?"—who can define the term? As Fred Emerson Brooks has written in his poem, The Grave Digger, "If chance could fashion but one little flower, With perfume for each tiny leaf, And furnish it with sunshine and with shower—

Then chance would be Creator, with the power To build a world for unbelief."

We cannot for one moment think, however, that the orderliness of seedtime and harvest, of summer and winter, of day and night, of cause and effect, etc., is the consequence of any operation of chance. Everything in our material world indicates design.

(6) This design, moreover, is universal. It is everywhere, both around us and within us. Thus two atoms of hydrogen combine with one of oxygen, no more, no less, to form a particle of water. Even the abnormalities of nature, such as cyclones, earthquakes, pestilences, etc., all have their respective causes. Dr. A. H. Strong points out that it is “a working-principle of all science . . . that all things have their uses, that order pervades the universe, and that the methods of nature are rational methods,” He adds: “Evidences of this appear in the correlation of the chemical elements to each other; in the fitness of the inanimate world to be the basis and support of life; in the typical forms and unity of plan apparent in the organic creation; in the existence and cooperation of natural laws; in cosmical order and compensations” (Systematic Theology, p.77). Why should materialists say: The more law, the less God? Why is it not more rational to say: The more law, the greater the evidence of God. Frances Power Cobbe says: “It is a singular fact that, whenever we find out how a thing is done, our first conclusion seems to be that God did not do it.” Such a process of reasoning is, however, wholly irrational; it proceeds from a heart filled with unbelief. We agree with Henry Ward Beecher that “design by wholesale is greater than design by retail.” We accept the universality of design as a positive proof of the immanence of God.

(7) We conclude therefore, that before this world could have existed in fact, it must have been designed, planned and created is evident in it, His footprints are everywhere upon it, His Spirit permeates the whole. Even Herbert Spencer admits: “One truth must ever grow clearer—the truth that there is an inscrutable existence everywhere manifested, to which we can neither find nor conceive beginning or end—the one absolute certainty that we are ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed.” And Shelley, who wrote his name in the visitors’ book of the inn at Montanvert, and added: “Democrat, philanthropist, atheist;” yet loved to think of a “fine intellectual spirit pervading the universe.” And Charles Darwin, founder of the evolutionary hypothesis, wrote: “In my most extreme fluctuations, I have never been an atheist, in the sense of denying the existence of a God” (Life, 1:274). No one can intelligently and profoundly contemplate the world around us and within us without admitting the fact of God. Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Psalms 19:1—“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.” Hebrews 1:10—“Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands” (Cf. Psalms 102:25).

9. Q. What is the second argument for our belief that there is a God?

A. It is called the Argument from Intuition.

10. Q. What is the Argument from Intuition?

A. It is that the intuition of a Supreme Being is so well-nigh universal among men, we can only conclude that it has its origin and foundation in fact.

(1) Man is universally endowed with religious intuitions and aspirations, all of which point unmistakably to a Supreme Being who is able to supply all his spiritual needs. Religious intuitions common to all races are: a sense of sin and loss; a desire for prayer and worship; a feeling of need of salvation; and a longing for and expectation of life beyond the grave. “However fallen and degraded, there is something within man which reaches after God, and a piteous voice that cries to the unseen for help” (M. M. Davis, How To Be Saved, p. 20). (2) All peoples have their belief in

God, no matter how depraved their conceptions of His nature. The Vedas declare: “There is but one Being—no second.” Back of all the mythological systems of the Greeks and other ancients, as their foundation and support, was belief in the Supreme All-Father. “The lowest tribes have conscience, fear death, believe in witches, propitiate or frighten away evil fates. Even the fetich-worshiper, who calls the stone or the tree a god, shows that he has already the idea of a God” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 56). Sir Charles Lyell writes: “The presumption is enormous that all our faculties, though liable to err, are true in the main and point to real objects. The religious faculty in man is one of the strongest of all, It existed in the earliest ages, and instead of wearing out before advancing civilization, it grows stronger and stronger, and is today more developed among the highest races than it ever was before. I think we may safely trust that it points to a great truth.”

(3) We can neither assume nor recognize the finite as finite, except by comparison with the Infinite. As Victor Hugo says: “Some men deny the Infinite; some, too, deny the sun; they are the blind.” “Even the Nihilists, whose first principle is that God and duty are great bugbears to be abolished, assume that God and duty exist, and they are impelled by a sense of duty to abolish them” (Culter, Beginnings of Ethics, p. 22). “Blind unbelief is sure to err,” writes Cowper. Of course. It errs because it is blind.

(4) All peoples have their conceptions of a future life, too. To the Greeks, it was Elysium; to the Teutons, Valhalla; to the American Indian, “the happy hunting-ground.” To the Hebrews, its glories were revealed and expressed in the beautiful word, Paradise. To us it is revealed as Heaven. Have these intuitions been implanted within us merely that we may in the end find ourselves disillusioned and mocked? Does a cruel Satirist sit upon the throne of the universe? A thousand times—No!! (5) We can arrive at but one conclusion, therefore, viz., that the intuition of a Supreme Being upon whom men everywhere more or less conceive themselves to be dependent, is so universal it can be accounted for only on the ground that it was originally implanted in the very nature of man, by the Creator Himself.

11. Q. What is the third argument for our belief that there is a God?

A. It is called the Argument from Experience.

12. Q. What is the Argument from Experience?

A. It is the argument derived from the testimony of righteous persons who claim to have personally experienced fellowship with God and to have tasted of the benefits and blessings of His grace.

(1) Faith “gives us understanding of realities which to sense alone are inaccessible, namely, God’s existence, and some at least of the relations between God and His creation” (Strong, ibid, p. 4). Faith is, therefore, the highest form of knowledge. It is the insight of the two eyes of the heart—understanding and love. Pascal: “We know truth, not only by the reason, but by the heart . . . The heart has its reasons, which the reason knows nothing of.” Emerson: “Belief consists in accepting the affirmation of the soul—unbelief in rejecting them” (Essays). Hebrews 11:3—“by faith we, understand,” etc. 2 Timothy 1:12—“for I know him whom I have believed.” 1 John 3:2—“We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him,” etc. (2) “The errors of the rationalist are errors of defective vision. Intellect has been divorced from heart, that is, from a right

disposition, right affections, right purpose in life. Intellect says: 'I cannot know God;' and intellect is right. What intellect says, the Scripture also says" (Strong, ibid., p. 4). 1 Corinthians 2:14—"Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him," etc. 1 Corinthians 1:21—"in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God," etc. (3) "As in conscience we recognize an invisible authority, and know the truth just in proportion to our willingness to 'do the truth,' so in religion only holiness can understand holiness, and only love can understand love" (Strong, ibid., p. 5). Psalms 34:8—"O taste and see that Jehovah is good: blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him." John 3:21—"he that doeth the truth cometh to the light." John 7:17—"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." (4) The noblest affirmations of God have their foundation in true religious experience. Consider the experience of thousands who have testified that they cried out unto God and found Him; that their petitions were heard and answered; that their spiritual aspirations were realized through repentance, prayer, meditation, worship and sacrificial service. Dare we be so irreverent as to call this "superstition?" For illustration, the experience of David, and that of Paul. The "Confessions" of Augustine. (5) Develop the thought with your pupils of a personal intimacy with God. Do you pray? Do you give thanks at the table? Do you know that God answers prayer? Even when as a child you lisped, "Now I lay me down to sleep," etc., you prayed to Someone—to a Person who could hear and understand and respond—did you not? Teach the children to pray unselfishly—not for a new dress, or new toy, etc. Teach them that they can come to God at any time if they approach Him "in Jesus' name."

13. Q. What fundamental conviction do we reach at this point in our study?

A. We reach the conviction that there is no rational explanation of the world, nor of man, nor of personality, without a living God.

Unbelief is highly irrational. The only true rationalism is Christian faith. John 14:1—"ye believe in God, believe also in me."

14. Q. What practical lesson should we derive from these truths?

A. That one who says within his heart, There is no God, is a fool. Psalms 14:1.

Likewise, one who lives as if there were no God is also a fool. Atheism, whether of the intellect or of the life, is folly. Unbelief and irreligiousness are but forms of insanity.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON ONE 1.Q.How is the Christian creed stated in the Scriptures?

2. Q. What must one believe in order to become a Christian?

3. Q. What is clearly implied in this creedal formula?

4. Q. What does Jesus teach in regard to this matter?

5. Q. What is the first truth of true religion?

6. Q. Why is God the first truth of true religion?

7. Q. What is the first argument for our belief that there is a God?

8. Q. What is this Argument from Design?

9. Q. What is the second argument for our belief that there is a God?

10. Q. What is the Argument from Intuition?

11. Q. What is the third argument for our belief that there is a God?

12. Q. What is the Argument from Experience?

13. Q. What fundamental conviction do we reach at this point in our study?

14. Q. What practical lesson should we derive from these truths?

Chapter 4

01.003. THREE COMMONPLACE PROOFS OF GOD

Lesson Two THREE COMMONPLACE PROOFS OF GOD Scripture Reading: Psalms 19:1-14.

Scriptures To Memorize: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork” (Psalms 19:1). “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). TO INTRODUCE THIS LESSON, explain that by commonplace we mean common to our everyday experience. Jesus made use of commonplace things to enforce the most profound spiritual truths, as, e. g., the lily of the field, the sower who went forth so sow, the shepherd and the sheep, the vine and its branches, etc. Following His method of teaching, we call attention here to three commonplace evidences of God in the world which are incidental to our everyday experience, so much so in fact that we are prone to overlook their eternal significance.

15. Q. What is one commonplace proof of God?

A. Life.

16. Q. How does life prove that there is a God?

A. Life is itself proof of the Divine Life-giver.

(1) “One of the most deeply suggestive events in nature is the reawakening of life in the springtime, with the sense of fresh beauty and newness of being which it brings” (H. W. Dresser, The Philosophy of the Spirit, p. 1). What is this oft-recurring miracle but another of the many “renewings” of the Divine Spirit?

(2) Life is all around us and within us. As the poet has written:

“Whether we look or whether we listen.

We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;

Every clod feels a stir of might, An instinct within that reaches and towers, And, groping blindly above it for light, Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.”

(3) But what is Life? We do not know fully. It has never been adequately defined or explained. We do know that an essential principle of life is growth. That which does not grow will sooner or later stagnate and die. Age itself, writes George Macdonald, “is not all decay; it is the ripening, the swelling of the fresh life within, that withers and bursts the husks.” But as to defining life, neither science nor philosophy has ever been able to do that. “Life is a simple idea, and is incapable of real definition” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 251). (4) We do know, how ever, that the stream of Life flows out from Somewhere, and that it reaches its highest expression, in our visible world, in the self-conscious personality of human beings. Did you ever ponder the differences between you, and the world around you? You are different from a rock, a chair, etc., different from a thing. You

can think; you can feel (remorse, hate, love, etc.); you can will (i.e., decide between this and that, choose whether you want a new bicycle or a trip to the country). A mere thing has none of these powers. Intellect, feeling, will, conscience, etc., belong only to personality, spirit, selfhood. (5) Through these faculties you are able to distinguish yourself from the world around you. "Personality is the knowledge that we are apart from the rest of the universe. Our body is made out of the same elements that are in the earth or in the stars. It is a part of the world. But our life is something apart and our consciousness is even more separate. Alone of all animals we can double ourselves up, so to speak, to look at ourselves" (Dimnet, What We Live By, p. 22). (6) From what source did man derive these powers? Not from things; not from nature, or the world around us; for these faculties set us apart from the world around us, lift us above it, in fact. The life within us has always been. You were born, not made; you were born alive; and your parents were born of their parents; and so on and on. Whence came the first life on this planet? It must have come from the Divine Life-giver, who is Himself the Living God. (7) Again, the source of a stream must be higher than its outlet. If the outlet of Life's stream is in self-conscious personality (the human), it follows that the source is in the Divine Self-conscious Personality. Cf. Exodus 3:14—"I AM THAT I AM" (timeless existence, personality, etc.). John 4:24—"God is a spirit." (8) The evolutionist may trace the stream of life back through numerous "missing links" until he reaches his far-famed "primordial cell." But in so doing he has accomplished little or nothing, for the big question is: How did Life get into the cell? (9) Genesis 2:7—"Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath (i.e. the spirit) of life." The body of the first man was made of the earthly elements; but his life was the consequence of a Divine inbreathing. Does not this teach that Life is a gift, and a gift from the very essence of God Himself? Where do we find a nobler conception of life and its origin, in all literature? Never forget that life is not a creation, not a reward, not a thing merited by man, but a gift from God! It is a gift to be cherished, to be nurtured, to be utilized for God's glory and for the benefit of our fellows. John 6:63—"it is the spirit that giveth life." The same is true of spiritual and eternal life. It, too, is a Divine Gift. Romans 6:23—"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (10) Without God, Life is without rational explanation. Philip James Bailey has written:

"Let each man think himself an act of God, His mind a thought, his life a breath of God; And let each try, by great thoughts and good deeds, To show the most of Heaven he hath in him."

(11) Our God, the God of the Bible, is a living God. Jeremiah 10:10—"Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God." 1 Thessalonians 1:9—"ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God." Acts 17:24-25, "The God that made the world and all things therein . . . he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Matthew 16:16—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17. Q. What is a second commonplace proof of God in our world?

A. Law.

18. Q. How does law prove that there is a God?

A. Law is itself proof of the Divine Law-giver and Sovereign of all things.

(1) Our world is said to be a world of law. But law is merely an explanation of method, not of cause. It deals with the how, not the why. (2) You may throw a ball into the air. Why doesn't it keep on going? Why does it return to the earth? Because, we are told, the earth puts forth an attraction

(which we call gravity) that pulls it back. But what causes the earth to put forth this attraction? When we state the law of gravitation, we merely describe how the heavenly bodies act in relation to one another. But what causes them to act in such manner? Again, two atoms of hydrogen combine with one atom of oxygen to form a molecule of water, according to the law of chemical affinity. But what causes them to unite in such fixed proportions? (3) The conclusion is obvious; back of all law, there must be will. Law is he expression of the will of the lawgiver; and as will is an essential part of personality, the lawgiver must be a person. We cannot even imagine that unintelligent things could have originated laws. (4) In a monarchy, law expresses the will of the king; in a democracy, it expresses the will of the people. In the universe, law is the expression of the Divine Will. God's Will is the constitution of our material universe. Psalms 33:9—"He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Note the significance of the statement, "And God said," recurring so frequently in the Mosaic narrative of creation (Genesis 1:3; Genesis 1:6; Genesis 1:9; Genesis 1:11, etc.). (5) The same reasoning applies to the realm of moral law. God alone, the Sovereign Ruler of all things, has the right to decree what is right, and to distinguish right from wrong. Romans 7:7—"I had not known sin, except through the law; for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 3:20—"through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." (6) There is no rational explanation of either natural or moral law aside from the Will of the Divine Lawgiver, God. Richard Hooker writes: "Of Law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage—the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power." "Proportion, order, harmony, unity in diversity—all these are characteristics of beauty. But they all imply an intellectual and spiritual Being, from whom they proceed and by whom they can be measured. Both physical and moral beauty, in finite things and beings, are symbols and manifestations of Him who is the author and lover of beauty, and who is Himself the infinite and absolute Beauty" (Strong, ibid., p. 61).

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour; And back of the flour the mill; And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower, And the sun, and the Father's will."

19. Q. What is a third commonplace proof of God in our world?

A. Love.

20. Q. How does love prove that there is a God?

A. Love is unfailing proof of the Divine Lover.

(1) Love is the master passion of our world. It has inspired innumerable hymns, songs, poems, and works of art. It has wrought countless deeds of sacrificial service. (2) But—can a rock, a chair, a mere thing, love? No. Love can be experienced only by a person. Therefore it must have had its source in the Divine Being. As surely as rain falls from the cloud, as surely as light pours out of the perspective of the eye, so Love has its source in the heart of the heavenly Father. 1 John 4:8—"he that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love." (3) As the essential principle of life is growth, and of law is authority; so the essential principle of love is sacrifice. He who loves much will give much. One will inevitably espouse the cause of the object of one's love. Illustrated by the mutual love of sweethearts, by the love of parents for their children, by the love of a mother for her son, by the love of a patriot for his country. So, when God foresaw the world in danger of perishing forever,

He incarnated Himself as its Savior. 1 John 4:8—“God is love,” i.e., He is a God of love. John 3:16—“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWO 15.Q.What is one commonplace proof of God?

16. Q. How does life prove that there is a God?

17. Q. What is a second commonplace proof of God in our world?

18. Q. How does law prove that there is a God?

19. Q. What is a third commonplace proof of God in our world?

20. Q. How does love prove that there is a God?

Chapter 5

01.004. WHO IS GOD?

Lesson Three WHO IS GOD?

Scripture Reading: Acts 17:22-31.

Scripture To Memorize: “God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

21. Q. Is God just an idea?

A. The Scriptures teach what God is, i.e., that He has actual being.

(1) Hebrews 11:6—“he that cometh to God must believe that he is,” etc. (2) The favorite claim of the “Humanist” is that God is just an idea (“concept”) of the human intellect; that, instead of God having created man in His own image, man has created God in his own imagination. This is pure atheism. It asserts that there is no God in fact, i.e., apart from our thinking. (3) To this notion we object: that any human being capable of imagining a God with all the perfections of the God revealed in the Scriptures, particularly as He is fully revealed in the New Testament, would himself be a god. “Had Jesus never lived,” says Rousseau, “the writers of the gospels would themselves have been as great as he;” that is, by virtue of their ability to imagine and to portray such a Person and to put upon His lips such a Teaching, as that revealed in the New Testament Scriptures. (4) Even in the dim light of the Old Testament revelation, and in a document as old as the Creation narrative in Genesis, God is presented as the Eternal Spirit who “moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2); i.e., who nourished incipient energy and life into operation. Moses presents Him as the one true and living God. Hosea portrays His matchless love and compassion; Amos, his righteousness and justice; and Isaiah, His wisdom and holiness. God manifested His love in and to Israel; and in turn, His mercy, His pity, His justice, and His longsuffering patience. In such times of barbarous iniquity, war, sensualism, and selfish greed, how could man have imagined a God of such exalted attributes? (5) It is highly irrational to think that God is just an Idea, corresponding, let us say, to Uncle Sam, or Santa Claus. The notion is absurd and profane. Hebrews 11:6—“he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.”

22. Q. Is God a material object or idol?

A. The Scriptures teach that God is a Spirit.

(1) This means that He is not to be conceived of as a material being, hence He cannot be apprehended by any physical means. (2) The ancients were prone to worship the most powerful object visible to them, such as the sun, for instance. The worship of idols, animals, even insects, has always been characteristic of heathenism. Paul says that the Gentile peoples “changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things” (Romans 1:23). (3) Idolatry in any and every form is expressly condemned in scripture. Exodus 20:4—“thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image,

nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them." Acts 17:24—"God . . . dwelleth not in temples made with hands." 1 John 5:21—"My little children, guard yourselves from idols." "The second command of the Decalogue does not condemn sculpture and painting but only the making of images of God. It forbids our conceiving God after the likeness of a thing, but it does not forbid our conceiving God after the likeness of our inward self, i.e., as personal. This again shows that God is a spiritual being)) (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 250). Is not the "veneration" of images, icons, etc., as practised by many of the older denominational groups of institutionalized Christianity, closely related to idolatry, if not in fact the real thing?

23. Q. Is God identical with Nature?

A. The Scriptures teach that God is the Creator and Ruler of Nature.

(1) The theory that God and Nature are one and the same, is quite prevalent in higher educational circles today. This theory is known as pantheism (God is all, i.e., "the totality of things"). Yet this notion is as old as the human race itself. The Brahman philosophy, for example, one of the most ancient of systems, is pure pantheism. (2) The Scriptures teach that God is not "the totality of things," but that He is the Creator and Preserver and Ruler of this "totality." Genesis 1:1—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Acts 17:24—"the God that made the world and all things therein." Colossians 1:16-17—"for in him were all things created . . . and he is before all things, and in him all things consist."

24. Q. Is God an impersonal influence, energy, or principle?

A. The Scriptures teach that God is personal.

(1) God is not an impersonal energy, such as electricity. God is a Spirit, and where there is Spirit, there is personality and vitality. (2) God is not just an impersonal Principle, such as Mind, for instance. We are right in saying that God has Mind, but we are in error if we say that God and Mind are identical. This is the fundamental error of the disciples of Mrs. Eddy. (3) Nor is God just an impersonal influence. God is good, of course; but God is not to be identified with the abstract moral influence, Good. God is Love, too; but this does not mean that God and Love are one and the same; it means that our God is a God of love.

25. Q. Who, then, is God?

A. God is the one and only infinitely perfect Spirit, the Creator and Ruler of all things, and the Author of all good.

(1) We must keep in mind that it is difficult for the finite to define the Infinite; and that any human definition of God Almighty is necessarily imperfect. Richard Hooker, eminent English divine, says: "Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade into the doings of the Most High, and our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence, when we confess without controversy, that His glory is inexplicable, His greatness above our capacity and reach." (2) By the term God, we mean the creative Eternal Spirit behind and in the universe to whom we are indebted for our capacities, our privileges and our innumerable blessings. William Newton Clarke says, Outline of Christian Theology: "God is the personal Spirit, perfectly good, who in holy love creates sustains and orders all." (3) "Jesus is God's own manifestation of Himself. He is 'the true light, even the light which

lighteth every man coming into the world,' and all revelation must be read in this light" (Boswell, God's Purpose Toward Us, p. 9). Hebrews 1:3—"who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance," etc. Jesus Christ revealed the nature, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, compassion, longsuffering, sacrificial love, in fact every attribute of God that needed to be revealed to man. John 14:9—"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." It is our privilege to know God in the respects, and to the extent, that He revealed Himself in and through His Son Jesus Christ.

26. Q. Why do we say that God is the one and only infinitely perfect Spirit?

A. Because the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, true and living God.

Deuteronomy 6:4—"Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." Isaiah 46:9—"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body . . . one Spirit . . . one hope . . . one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. who is over all, and through all, and in all," Note the perfect harmony between the Old and New Testaments in regard to fundamental truths).

27. Q. Why do we say that God is a Spirit?

A. Because Jesus says that God is a Spirit, John 4:24.

28. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is a Spirit?

A. We mean that God as to nature is Personal; having understanding, feeling and free will, but not having a body.

(1) God has mind. Romans 11:34—"for who hath known the mind of the Lord?" God has feeling. John 3:16—"For God so loved the world," etc. God has free will. Luke 22:42—"not my will, but thine, be done." Isaiah 46:10—"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Ephesians 3:11—"according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (2) Where there is spirit, there is personality (self-consciousness, Self-determination, conscience, etc.). Where there is spirit, there is vitality (life). Where there is spirit, there is sociality (desire for fellowship with kindred spirits). Therefore, our God, who is a Spirit, is a personal God, a living God, and a loving God. In the sense, too, that God is personal and that we are personal, we have been created in His "image" (Genesis 1:26-27). (3) "God is not only spirit, but He is pure spirit. He is not only not matter, but He has no necessary connection with matter." Again: "When God is spoken of as appearing to the patriarchs and walking with them, the passages are to be explained as referring to God's temporary manifestations of Himself in human form—manifestations which prefigured the final tabernacling of the Son of God in human flesh" (Strong, ibid., p. 250).

29. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

A. That we may commune with our God in loving intimacy.

30. Q. What does the Epistle of James teach us in this respect?

A. James says: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8).

31. Q. How are we to worship God?

A. Jesus says that we are to worship Him in spirit and truth. John 4:24.

32. Q. What does Jesus teach us in this statement?

A. He teaches us that true worship is spiritual; that is, it is communion of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit, according to the commands, means and appointments specified in the Word of truth.

(1) Impress upon your pupils the depravity of image worship, nature worship, animal worship, self worship, etc. These are the ear-marks of heathenism. We are not to worship a thing, nor Nature, nor any creature: we are to worship the Creator. (2) Impress upon your pupils the folly of meaningless rites and ceremonies in connection with Christian worship. Ritualism is not an indication of true spirituality. (3) The Word of truth which we are to follow as our standard of worship, and book of discipline, is the New Testament. We are not under the Law, but under the Gospel covenant, the reign of the Holy Spirit. John 1:17—"the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (4) The appointments of Christian worship designated in the New Testament Scriptures are: prayer, praise, thanksgiving, meditation, fasting, Bible study, the giving of substance in the form of tithes and offerings, the public assembly of the saints, the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), etc. (5) Impress upon your pupils that we meet God in these divine appointments. Hence the importance of cultivating regular habits of worship.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THREE 21.Q.Is God just an idea?

22. Q. Is God a material object or idol?

23. Q. Is God identical with Nature?

24. Q. Is God an impersonal influence, energy, or principle?

25. Q. Who, then, is God?

26. Q. Why do we say that God is the one and only infinitely perfect Spirit?

27. Q. Why do we say that God is a Spirit?

28. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is a Spirit?

29. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

30. Q. What does the Epistle of James teach us in this respect?

31. Q. How are we to worship God?

32. Q. What does Jesus teach us in this statement?

01.005. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Lesson Four THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD Scripture Reading: Isaiah 55:6-11, Psalms 139:7-10.

Scripture to Memorize: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

33. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely perfect?

A. We mean that God is not like created things who are good only in part or measure, but that God unites in Himself all perfections without measure or bounds.

34. Q. What do we mean by the Attributes of God?

A. By the Attributes of God, we mean the Perfections of the Divine Nature.

35. Q. What are the Attributes of God?

A. These: God is eternal, unchangeable, omniscient, all-wise, omnipresent and omnipotent; infinitely holy, just, and good; infinitely true and faithful; infinitely merciful and longsuffering.

36. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?

A. We mean that God is, always; that He has always been and will always be; that He is without beginning and without end.

God is self-existent. It is His nature to be. Cf. Exodus 3:14—“I AM THAT I AM.” Psalms 90:2—“Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”

37. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is unchangeable?

A. We mean that He is eternally the same, without any change in His nature or attributes, or variation from His eternal purpose and plan.

“All change must be to better or to worse. But God is absolute perfection, and no change to better is possible. Change to worse would be equally inconsistent with perfection. No cause for such change exists, either outside of God or in God Himself” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 257). Psalms 102:27—“thou art the same.” Malachi 3:6—“I, Jehovah, change not.” James 1:17—“The Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.” Isaiah 46:10—“My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

38. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omniscient?

A. We mean that He is all-knowing; in the sense that He knows all things, past, present and future; and in the sense also that He knows our inmost desires and thoughts.

Psalms 147:4—“He counteth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.” 1 Samuel 16:7—“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart.” Proverbs 15:3—“The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good.” Acts 15:8—“God, who knoweth the heart,” etc. Hebrews 4:13—“there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

39. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is all-wise?

A. We mean that He knows how to ordain and dispose all things in the best manner to attain His purposes and ends.

Isaiah 46:9-10—“I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning,” Psalms 147:5—“His understanding is infinite.” Examples: the deliverance of Noah; the saving of the child Moses; the humiliation and exaltation of Joseph; works wrought through the Hebrew people; the saving of the Infant Jesus from Herod’s wrath, etc. Ephesians 3:11—“according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,” (Do you suppose that God is interested in our own selfish desires and schemes?) 40.Q.What do we mean when we say that God is omnipresent?

A. We mean that He is everywhere, and everywhere at one and the same time.

(1) Spirit is unlimited by our poor conceptions of time and space. Illustrate this by your own experience in a dream. In that subconscious state you re live many of the experiences of a lifetime, in just a few seconds; or perhaps take a long journey in the time that would be required for a clock to tick. (2) Jeremiah 23:23-24—“Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah.” (3) Psalms 139:7-10, “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.” (4) Acts 17:28—“he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being.”

“Speak to Him then, for He hears, and spirit with Spirit can meet;

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”(Tennyson)

(5) How comforting the realization of His ever-presence! Not only “an ever-present help in time of trouble,” not only “a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night;” but also a real Friend, so close that one has but to reach out his hands and feel His presence, so to speak; always near to hear the cry of His children, to deliver them from the evil one, to lift them up when they have fallen, and to guide them day by day if they will but accept His guidance. One who loves. One who cares. One who rescues. One who forgives. One who redeems. One whose presence fills Heaven, earth, and all places.

41. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipotent?

A. We mean that He is all-powerful, or almighty; that He can do anything He wills to do, and has only to will it and the thing is done.

(1) Genesis 17:1—“I am God Almighty.” Isaiah 44:24—“I am Jehovah, that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth.” Hebrews 1:3—“upholding all things by the word of his power.” Psalms 33:9—“for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalms 115:3—“He hath done whatsoever he pleased.” Psalms 135:6—“Whatsoever Jehovah pleased, that hath he done.” Ephesians 1:11—“who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.” Matthew 19:26—“with God all things are possible” (Jesus). Matthew 3:9—“God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” (2) Examples: the Creation; the wonders in Egypt and in the Wilderness; the miracles wrought through holy men of old, and through Jesus and His apostles. Acts 2:22—“a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you.” (3) It is understood of course that God must of necessity always act consistently, and therefore never in opposition to His own nature, attributes, or ends. Hebrews 6:18—“in which it is impossible for God to lie.” Titus 1:2—“God, who cannot lie.” For instance, it would be impossible for an irresistible force to be brought to bear upon an immovable object, for both such a force and such an object would be infinite, and Infinity is never self-contradictory. God never acts in opposition to Himself or His own ends.

42. Q. What lessons should be impressed upon our minds by these great truths about God?

A. Three lessons, especially: 1. That we should strive at all times to do good and to keep ourselves from evil; 2. That we should under all circumstances trust in God implicitly; and 3. That we should under all circumstances and conditions be resigned to His dispensations.

Psalms 23:1—“Jehovah is my shepherd: I shall not want.” Ephesians 3:20—“unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” John 10:14—“I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me.” Psalms 23:4—“I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FOUR 33.Q.What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely perfect?

34. Q. What do we mean by the Attributes of God?

35. Q. What are the Attributes of God?

36. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?

37. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is unchangeable?

38. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omniscient?

39. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is allwise?

40. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipresent?

41. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipotent?

42. Q. What lessons should be impressed upon our minds by these great truths about God?

Chapter 7

01.006. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (Concluded)

Lesson Five THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (Concluded) Scripture Reading: Psalms 145:1-21.

Scriptures To Memorize: “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

43. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely holy?

A. We mean that it is His nature to love, desire and will only that which is good and right, and to abhor that which is evil.

(1) Holiness is the fundamental attribute in God, which conditions and limits the exercise of all the other attributes. “In Christ’s redeeming work, though love makes the atonement, it is violated holiness that requires it; and in the eternal punishment of the wicked, the demand of holiness for self-vindication overbears the pleading of love for the sufferers” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 297). “A God all mercy is a God unjust” (Edward Young). “No one can be just without subordinating Pity to the sense of Right” (Martineau). (2) Isaiah 6:3—“Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts.” Revelation 4:8—“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty.” Hebrews 12:14—“the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord.” James 1:13—“God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man.” 1 Peter 1:16—“ye shall be holy; for I am holy.”

44. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely just?

A. We mean that under His moral government the righteous shall all receive a just recompense of reward for righteousness; and that all the wicked shall receive a correspondingly just retribution for their wickedness.

Romans 2:6—“God who will render to every man according to his works.” Romans 2:11—“there is no respect of persons with God.” Psalms 89:14—“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne.” Examples: Punishment of the people of Noah’s day; destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Jews; final segregation of all the wicked in hell, with the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). Galatians 6:7—“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Romans 2:5-8, “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life; but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil.” Romans 6:23—“For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

45. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely good?

A. We mean that it is His nature to act always for the greatest good of His whole creation, and that He really does bestow innumerable blessings upon His creatures daily.

(1) In administering His moral universe, God always acts for the benefit of His creation, not in part, but as a whole. Romans 2:11—“there is no respect of persons with God.” (2) One who might be inclined to question the goodness of God, because of the sin and suffering incidental to our present state, should learn that beginnings are to be judged by endings, and not endings by beginnings. This is especially true with respect to the Plan of the Universe, which is to have its consummation in the “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13). Only in the Day of Consummation (“the times of restoration of all things,” Acts 3:21) shall we be able to properly and correctly evaluate the justice, righteousness and goodness of our God. (3) Psalms 145:9—“Jehovah is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works.” Matthew 19:17—“One there is who is good.” Romans 8:28—“to them that love God all things work together for good.” Let us “count our many blessings, name them one by one.” (4) Matthew 6:31-32—“Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithall shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” When are we as Christians going to learn to take the teaching of Jesus seriously, accept it literally, and actually go to living it day by day?

“Said the Robin to the Sparrow:

‘I should really like to know Why these anxious human beings Rush about and worry so!’

“Said the Sparrow to the Robin:

‘Friend, I think that it must be That they have no heavenly Father Such as cares for you and me!’”

(Elizabeth Cheney) 46.Q.What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely true?

A. We mean that He cannot err, deceive nor lie; that He desires, loves, wills and reveals only the truth.

Psalms 119:160—“the sum of thy word is truth.” John 3:33—“He that hath received his witness hath set his seal to this, that God is true.” Titus 1:2—“God, who cannot lie.” John 14:6—“I am . . . the truth.” John 14:17—“the Spirit of truth.” 1 Timothy 3:15—“the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

47. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely faithful?

A. We mean that He faithfully executes all His judgments and fulfills all His promises.

2 Timothy 2:13—“he abideth faithful.” 1 Corinthians 10:13—“God is faithful.” Deuteronomy 32:4—“a God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he.” Isaiah 40:8—“the word of our God shall stand forever.” 1 John 1:9—“if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Hebrews 2:2—“For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?” Matthew 24:35—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”

48. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely merciful?

A. We mean that He is ever willing and anxious to pardon all who are truly penitent.

(1) Ezekiel 33:11—“as I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his ways and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways,” etc. Psalms 145:9—“His tender mercies are over all his works.” Luke 1:78—“the tender mercy of our God,” 2 Corinthians 1:3—“the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.” Ephesians 2:4—“God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Titus 3:5—“according to his mercy he saved us.” (2) In the story of the Prodigal-Son (Luke 15:11-32), Jesus tells us that the father “ran” to meet his penitent boy returning home, “and fell on his neck and kissed him.” Is this not intended to portray the infinite mercy and compassion of our heavenly Father? Note, too, that the father was “moved with compassion” (Luke 15:20). (3) Robert Browning writes: “God! Thou art love! I build my faith on that.” Lowell says: “’Tis heaven alone that is given away; ‘tis only God may be had for the asking.” Annie Johnston Flint: “Out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth and giveth—and giveth again.”

49. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is longsuffering?

A. We mean that He gives the sinner a long time for repentance, even to the limit at which love must give way to justice.

(1) 1 Peter 3:20—“when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing” (i.e., for one hundred and twenty years, Genesis 6:3). 2 Peter 3:9—“the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2) Consider His longsuffering patience towards the children of Israel, despite their numerous and repeated backslidings! Think of the awful wickedness of our world today—yet God waits, hoping that men may come to repentance! (3) God’s mercy will follow you to the grave, my sinner friend, but it cannot consistently follow you farther. This life is probationary; in the next world, God’s mercy must give way to His justice. No such thing as postmortem repentance or salvation is taught in the Scriptures. See, for illustration, the narrative of Lazarus and the Rich Man, Luke 16:19-31.

50. Q. What lessons should we learn from these great truths about God?

A. Three lessons, especially: 1. That, because God is infinitely just, we cannot expect to continue in sin and “get away with it;” 2. That, because God is infinitely faithful, we can depend absolutely on His Word with its “precious and exceeding great promises;” and, 3. That, because God is infinitely merciful and longsuffering, He yearns for all sinners to forsake their evil ways and come back to “the Father’s house” in true penitence.

(1) Our sins will find us out: if not here, then hereafter. Whatsoever we sow, we shall reap in kind. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. If we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. See Galatians 6:7-8. Each after its own kind is a law of the moral as well as the biological realm. (2) We cannot always depend on our emotions, experiences, or notions, nor upon the opinions of others; but we can always depend on God’s Word. Therefore let us search the Scriptures diligently, that we may know the way of life and walk in it. (3) God loves you, my sinner friend! He yearns for you. He pleads with you to come back “home.” He says: “My son, give me thy heart; and let thine eyes delight in my ways!” (Proverbs 23:26). Oh! give Him your heart now and He will fill it with peace and joy!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIVE 43.Q.What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely holy?

44. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely just?

45. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely good?

46. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely true?

47. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely faithful?

48. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely merciful?

49. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is longsuffering?

50. Q. What lessons should we learn from these great truths about God?

01.007. THE NAME OF GOD

Lesson Six THE NAME OF GOD Scripture Reading: Exodus 3:1-5.

Scripture To Memorize: “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14).

51. Q. What is the Hebrew term for the Deity in the first verse of Genesis?

A. The term Elohim.

52. Q. What is the signification of this term?

A. It is used to designate “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity” (Isaiah 57:15).

(1) This term is translated “God” in our Versions. “In our religion we do not speak of ‘a God,’ but of ‘God’—a single and definite being: there is none like Him” (Clarke, Outline of Christian Theology). (2) This term is obviously used to designate God as the Absolute, the Omnipotent, the Eternal One. Hence it is the designation generally used in those scriptures in which God is depicted in His works of Omnipotence; as, for instance, in the first chapter of Genesis, in which He is revealed as the Creator. Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.” (3) This term is also plural, which is most significant. It evidently alludes to “a certain plurality in the divine nature.” Genesis 1:26—“And Elohim said, let us make man in our image,” etc. “The Holy Spirit who presided over the development of revelation may well have directed the use of the plural in general, and even the adoption of the plural name Elohim in particular, with a view to the future unfolding of truth with regard to the Trinity” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 319).

53. Q. By what designation did God reveal Himself to Abram?

A. By the designation, God Almighty.

(1) Genesis 17:1—“Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, I am God Almighty,” etc. (in Hebrew, El Shaddai). (2) This designation was handed down to Isaac and Jacob. See Genesis 28:3; Genesis 35:11.

54. Q. By what Name did God reveal Himself to Moses and the Hebrew people?

A. By the Name, I AM.

Exodus 3:14—“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

55. Q. How is this Name rendered in our language?

A. As Jehovah.

Exodus 6:2-3—“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah I was not

known to them."

56. Q. What is the signification of this Name?

A. It is used in those scriptures which reveal the Deity as the personal God, the covenant God, the benevolent God, the God of revelation, the Deliverer and Benefactor and Friend of His people.

(1) The true pronunciation of this Name, known only to the early leaders of Israel, is lost. The Jews have long regarded it "the great and incommunicable Name," and have from remotest times avoided even the mention of it. See Leviticus 24:16. To even speak this name is regarded as blasphemy by all orthodox Jews. According to tradition, the Name was pronounced only once each year, by the High Priest when he went into the Holy of Holies on each Annual Day of Atonement. No wonder, then, that the Jews charged Jesus with blasphemy when He assumed this Name for Himself. John 8:58—"Before Abraham was born, I am." Cf. John 8:59—"They took up stones therefore to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple." Jesus must have had the right to assume this Name for Himself, else He would be the most blasphemous imposter who ever appeared in the world. (2) This Name is rendered Ehyeh by some authorities; and by others, Yahweh. In our version, it is transliterated into Jehovah. It is commonly rendered Lord in the Authorized Version; but is allowed to stand as Jehovah in the Revised Version. (3) When the Deity is presented in scripture as combining works of omnipotence with those of benevolence, the combined form is used—Jehovah Elohim. This is rendered Lord God in the Authorized Version, and Jehovah God, in the Revised Version. E. G., Genesis 2:7—"and Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground," etc.

57. Q. What is indicated by this great and incommunicable Name?

A. It signifies especially (1) timelessness, (2) personality, and (3) presence.

(1) By timelessness, we mean eternity or self-existence. Take, for illustration, a problem in mathematics, such as dividing 1000 by 3. You could keep on dividing forever, and there would always be a fraction remaining. So if you could project your mind back into the past, and back and back and back for ever, God was always, at any time, The I AM. Or, you could project your mind into the future, on and on and on for ever, and God would always be The I AM. If you were asked, "Where did God come from?" reason would require that you answer: God never came, God has always been. If God had a beginning, He would not be God, because finite beings only, have a beginning. I cannot fully understand this, any more than I can comprehend the limitlessness of space, but it is entirely logical. God, being Infinity, has the ground of His existence in Himself; and is therefore without beginning and without end. Thus the Name itself signifies timelessness, eternity, self-existence. (2) By personality, we mean self-consciousness and self-determination. Only a person can say, "I am." "I think, therefore I am" (Descartes). "Thinking is self-conscious being" (Ladd, Philosophy of Knowledge, p. 59). It is this faculty of self-consciousness, or realization of self-hood, that distinguishes a person from brutes and things. If a pig could say, understandingly, "I am a pig," it would no longer be a pig, but would be a person. I AM signifies personality (understanding, feeling, free will, etc.). God is not the everlasting I WAS, but the everlasting I AM. (3) This Name also signifies presence. God is always The I AM. Not the I WAS—but the I AM. Psalms 139:7-10, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" etc. An atheist once wrote on a piece of paper, "God is nowhere." His little

daughter changed it to read: “God is now here;” and the atheist was converted. (4) “Observe that personality needs to be accompanied by life—the power of self-consciousness and self-determination needs to be accompanied by activity—in order to make up our total idea of God as Spirit” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 253). To summarize: The Name by which God has revealed Himself to us shows that He is not a thing; not nature as a whole; not an impersonal principle, energy or influence; but a personal God, a living God, an ever-present God. John 4:24—“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

58. Q. What other significance has this Name for us?

A.It shows that God is not just a human idea or concept, as some would claim. This name is of such infinite signification that it utterly destroys the notion that Jehovah was an imaginary tribal deity of the Hebrews, like “Baal” of the Moabites, “Ashtaroth” of the Sidonians, “Dagon” of the Philistines, etc. Such a Name as this could never have been humanly imagined—it must have been revealed.

59. Q. What great lesson should we derive from these truths?

A. We should learn to revere, adore and honor the great and holy Name of our God.

Call attention to the evils of blasphemy. Swearing is a senseless and profitless habit; therefore a most inexcusable sin. Exodus 20:7—“Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.” Matthew 5:34, the words of Jesus, “I say unto you, Swear not at all,” etc.

60. Q. What is the favorite term for the Deity in our New Testament Scriptures?

A. The term Father in Heaven, or Heavenly Father.

(1) This is the term used so frequently by Jesus Himself. Matthew 6:9—“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc. Matthew 6:14—“your heavenly Father.” John 17:11—“Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me.” (2) In the apostolic writings, the Deity is often spoken of as “God the Father,” as “God and Father of all,” and as “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Php 2:11, Ephesians 4:6, Ephesians 1:3, etc.). (3) These New Testament terms all signify relationship—a spiritual relationship to be enjoyed through Jesus Christ. “Through Christ, who has merited adoption and filiation for His people, every believer has a right to call God Father” (Cruden, Concordance, in loco). Cf. Romans 8:15-16. (4) It will thus be seen that God has revealed Himself progressively: first, as Elohim, the Omnipotent and Eternal One, the Creator of all things: later, as Jehovah, the Benefactor, Redeemer and Friend of His people; and finally, as Heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the spiritual Father of all true believers. And so we are taught to pray: “Our Father who art in heaven,” etc. (Matthew 6:9).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIX

51. Q. What is the Hebrew term for the Deity in the first verse of Genesis?

52. Q. What is the signification of this term?

53. Q. By what designation did God reveal Himself to Abram?

54. Q. By what Name did God reveal Himself to Moses and the Hebrew people?

55. Q. How is this Name rendered in our language?

56. Q. What is the signification of this Name?

57. Q. What is indicated by this great and incommunicable Name?

58. Q. What other significance has this Name for us?

59. Q. What great lesson should we derive from these truths?

60. Q. What is the favorite term for the Deity in our New Testament Scriptures?

01.008. GOD THE CREATOR

Lesson Seven

GOD THE CREATOR

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-27; Psalms 33:6-17. Scriptures To Memorize: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1-31). “By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9). “By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God; so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear” (Hebrews 11:3).

61. Q. What truth is indicated by the design in the world around us?

A. That the universe had a Designer.

(1) Example of a watch. Its marks of design, as we have learned, prove that it had a designer, who foresaw not only its structure but its uses as well. (2) Example of the human eye. It must have been designed for the specific purpose for which it is used. It is inconceivable that both the eye itself and its functions are products of chance, or of materialistic evolution. (3) The same reasoning applies with equal force to all the organs of the body and their respective uses. (4) So it is with the world. It must have had a Designer who foresaw it in all its parts and uses, even before He created it. (5) Impossible for a building to build itself; hence the folly of materialistic evolution, which is today rejected by leading scientists.

62.Q.What is the first great truth revealed Bible? in the A.The truth that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1.

(1) God is not identical with Nature, but is the Creator and Ruler of Nature. “The first lesson of the Bible is that at the root and origin of this vast material universe, before whom we are crushed as the moth, there abides a living, conscious Spirit, who wills and knows and fashions all things” (Dr. Marcus Dods). John 4:24—“God is a Spirit.” Genesis 1:2—“the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” (2) It must be admitted that what we call Substance (Matter) was either created, or it has always been. Either Spirit or Matter, one or the other, is uncreated and eternal. No other assumption is possible. (3) The superiority of Spirit to Matter proves conclusively that Spirit was first. For instance, how could you even know anything about Matter, or formulate any theories of Matter, if you did not have Mind? It is obvious that it is only through the avenue of Mind that we are able to form concepts of Matter and theories respecting it; hence, in knowing Matter and its uses, Mind proves its superiority. But Mind is a function of Spirit; therefore we conclude that Spirit is superior to Matter, and that Spirit must have antedated Matter. Both Reason and Revelation teach us that Spirit was first. (See Lesson Thirteen.).

63. Q. What is the full significance of this statement in the first verse of Genesis?

A. It is most significant, in the fact that it challenges all false theories of God.

(1) It challenges atheism—the notion that there is no God. (2) It challenges dualism—the theory that both God and Matter are eternal. (3) It challenges materialism—the notion that Matter is eternal and all. (4) It challenges pantheism—the notion that God is "the totality of things." (5) It challenges polytheism—belief in many Gods. (6) It challenges humanism, the high-sounding name given to that current form of atheism which dethrones God and deifies man. (7) Thus it will be seen that Moses "dipped his pen in the ink of inspiration and, with one mighty sweeping statement, anticipated and challenged all the false notions of God that were to arise in the world throughout all the ages of human history."

64. Q. What is meant by Creation?

A. By Creation we mean that free act of God by which in the beginning He made, without the use of preexisting materials, the whole visible and invisible universe.

(1) Whether He did this a portion at a time or all at one time, is inconsequential. The fact remains that He did it; and this is the religious truth with which we are concerned. (2) It should be noted here that man does little more than tinker with things. For instance, in building a house, man makes use of materials at hand, such as wood, brick, stone, etc. But when God creates, He does so without using pre-existing materials. Hebrews 11:3—"By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." That is, the world was not made out of sensible and pre-existent material, but by the direct Fiat of Omnipotence. (3) This primary or absolute creation is indicated in the first chapter of Genesis by the Hebrew word bara, which is used in Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:27.

65. Q. By what method did God create all things?

A. He created all things by the exercise of His Almighty Will.

God is omnipotent, which means, as we have learned, that He has only to will a thing to be done, and it is done. Spirit is all-powerful in relation to things. Spirit can be resisted only by free will. A realization of the Omnipotence of Spirit would awaken the church to higher and holier living.

66. Q. By what means did God create all things?

A. By means of His Word.

(1) Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9—"By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." John 1:1-3—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Hebrews 11:3—"By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God," etc. (2) The medium through which will is revealed and expressed, is word. Law, then, is the expression of will, communicated in words. Hence we read, in the first chapter of Genesis, that at the beginning of each "day" of creation, God said something; and that what God said was done. Genesis 1:3—"and God said, Light be; and Light was." Psalms 33:9—"He spake, and it was done." (3) Impress upon your pupils the truth that the Word of God is omnipotent and never-failing. Luke 1:37—"for no word from God shall be void of power." God always keeps His promises when we

meet the conditions. This is a lesson our generation needs to learn. God's Word for us is embodied in the New Testament Scriptures, our all-sufficient guide in religious faith and practice.

67. Q. why did God create the world around us?

A. Evidently He created it for man's use and benefit.

(1) Genesis 1:28-31, "And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," etc. (2) "God's favor to man is manifested in the fact, that for his special benefit the whole earth, with all its rich treasures of mineral, vegetable, and animal wealth, was provided. For him, all the matter of the Earth was created in the beginning. For him, all the gold, and silver, and copper, and iron, and granite, and marble, and coal, and salt, and other precious minerals and fossils, were treasured up, during the many ages that intervened between the epoch of Creation and the beginning of the Historic Period. For him, the light and the atmosphere were produced. For him, the world was clothed with grass, and fruits, and flowers. For him, the Sun rose and set in the firmament, and the stars performed their apparent daily and yearly revolutions. For him, the sea and land were filled with living creatures, and the air was made vocal with the sweet voices of birds. All these things were provided for the good and happiness of man; and then he himself was created to enjoy them. And thus it happened, that what was first in design was really last in execution" (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 36).

68. Q. Why, then, did God create man?

A. Probably because God wanted a race of beings whom He could love and by whom He could be loved.

(1) Spirit is social, i.e., it seeks the fellowship of kindred spirits. God recognized this when He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). (2) Because God, who is Himself a Spirit (John 4:24), sought the fellowship of kindred spirits, it was necessary that He create man "in his own image" (Genesis 1:27). (3) Parents desire children that they may love them, care for them, protect them, and be loved by them in return. Teach the children the reasons why they should love their parents; and that for the same reasons we should love our heavenly Father. (4) God's ultimate objective in inaugurating and administering His entire moral system, is nothing short of a holy universe, "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13); and, in consequence, His own final and complete vindication from the false charges preferred against Him by Satan on the occasion of the latter's revolt against His authority and government. Ephesians 3:9-10—"God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God," etc. See Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:10, etc. (This matter will be fully treated in another lesson). (5) Of course it is folly to speculate too extensively with regard to the "secret things" of the Almighty (Deuteronomy 29:29). Suffice it for us that the world is here, and that we are in it. Therefore it should be our privilege and joy to make the very best of it, and of ourselves, under God's guidance and in harmony with His will and plan for us.

69. Q. In view of all these great truths, what should we do?

A. We should praise God unceasingly for His goodness and loving kindness towards us; and we should love and serve Him always, for in so doing we shall find true happiness both here and hearafter.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVEN 61.Q.What truth is indicated by the design in the world around us?

62. Q. What is the first great truth revealed in the Bible?

63. Q. What is the full significance of this statement in the first verse of Genesis?

64. Q. What is meant by Creation?

65. Q. By what method did God create all things?

66. Q. By what means did God create all things?

67. Q. Why did God create the world around us?

68. Q. Why, then, did God create man?

69. Q. In view of all these great truths, what should we do?

Chapter 10

01.009. GOD THE PRESERVER

Lesson Eight GOD THE PRESERVER Scripture Reading: Psalms 148:1-14; Acts 17:22-31.

Scripture To Memorize: “For he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass away” (Psalms 148:5-6).

70. Q. Who is the First Cause of all things?

A. God.

(1) He alone is unoriginated, uncreated, eternal. (2) Spirit precedes, unifies and controls Matter. A magnet, for instance, will attract to itself all the steel filings on a laboratory table. That is, it is not the magnet which does it, but the energy stored up in the magnet. In this sense, this invisible energy may be said to build a body around itself. In like manner, I believe, Spirit gathers around itself particles of Matter. Your spirit, or self—the real you—attracts to itself the particles of which your body is composed, and welds them into a unit. When the spirit leaves the body, the body dissolves into its original elements—calcium, phosphorus, hydrogen, oxygen, etc.—because its unifying entity is gone. This change we call death. But it is only the dissolution of the body; the spirit, unaffected by it, lives on. (3) So, when the Divine Spirit began to “move upon the face of the waters” (literally, to brood, vitalize, cherish incipient life, etc.), He assembled around Himself the substance of which He fashioned our universe. See Genesis 1:2. (4) It follows, that if your spirit can build around itself a body adapted to your needs in this world, it can also gather (reassemble) from the elements those particles necessary to the building of a spiritual (ethereal) body, which will be adapted to your needs in the next world. For spirit unifies and controls body, and determines its kind; or, to state it in another way, body is subordinate to and subject to spirit, not spirit to body. 1 Corinthians 15:44—“If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.” It will thus be seen that the scripture doctrines of resurrection and immortality rest upon a sound scientific basis. (5) All this is in harmony with the latest science, which holds that Matter is an “emanation” from Space. Is it not more in accord with facts to say that Matter was called unto being by Divine fiat, i.e., by a decree of the Eternal Spirit? Psalms 33:9—“He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalms 148:6—“he hath made a decree which shall not pass away.”

71. Q. What does God still do with respect to His creation?

A. He preserves, sustains and governs it.

72. Q. By what method does God preserve and govern the world?

A. By the exercise of His Almighty Will, as in creating it.

God thus caused the world to continue in such manner and forms as it pleases Him, and as long as it pleases Him, in conformity to His purposes and plans. He also causes it to undergo such changes and renovations as may become necessary at times in the execution of His purposes and in the accomplishment of His divine ends; as for example, in the days of Noah, and as will occur at

the close of the present age or dispensation. See 2 Peter 3:1-13.

73. Q. By what means does God preserve and govern the world?

A. By means of His Word.

2 Peter 3:1-13—“knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Note especially 2 Peter 3:10—“the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up,” i.e., the corruption, iniquity, mortality, etc., incidental to this earthly state, shall be eliminated. This points forward to a renovation, not an annihilation; for, out of the conflagration, we are told, there shall emerge “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Cf. Isaiah 60:18-22; Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 66:22, etc. Also Revelation 21:1-5. The first general renovation, in Noah’s day, was wrought with water as the element; the final renovation, in the Day of the Lord, will be wrought with fire as the element. Whether this will be fire literally, or a period of universal strife, calamity and suffering that will purge our world of its dross, we have no means of knowing; the matter of importance is that when God speaks the Word, judgment will over-take the world that now is and a complete renovation will take place, to be followed by the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Cf. Psalms 102:25-27. “Of old didst thou lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

74. Q. What do we call this Divine care in preserving and ruling the universe?

A. We call it Divine Providence.

75. Q. But if God governs the world, why is so much evil done in it? Is it because God wills it?

A. God does not will evil. God abhors evil. Evil is in the world because man allowed it to come in; and it remains in the world, because man allows it to remain.

(1) James 1:13-14—“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed.” Hebrews 1:9—“thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity.” (2) God’s ultimate end in the management of His moral system is to have a holy universe, for the obvious reason that He cannot fully enter into fellowship with moral beings, nor they with Him, unless they are holy. Matthew 5:8—“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” John 17:11—“Holy Father.” 1 Peter 1:16—“ye shall be holy; for I am holy.” 1 John 3:8—“To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (3) But God cannot have holiness without freedom, for the very idea and definition of holiness is a free, voluntary choice of right in preference to wrong. Therefore, in order to make holiness possible in His creatures, God of necessity endowed them with free will. But free will carries with it the possibility of choice, and where there is such a possibility, there is always the possibility of choosing the wrong. And in this possibility of choosing the wrong, lies the potentiality of sin. It is thus obvious that not even Omnipotence can, in a system of free moral action, have holiness and at the same time prevent the possibility of sin, God’s entire moral system rests upon the nature of things. We conclude, therefore, that evil is unavoidable in the best moral system, i.e., the system designed to effect holiness as its primary end. (4) In the final analysis of the case, moreover, the choice between right and wrong rests with the creature, and when man chooses the wrong, chooses his own way above God’s way, the consequence is sin; and the responsibility for sin rests upon the creature who makes the selfish and wrong choice. This is how sin came into the world, and it is why sin remains in the world; for the tragedy of it all is that “all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

76. Q. But why does God, seemingly at least, often permit the wicked to prosper while evil befalls the good?

A. For two reasons: 1. Because the righteous can be confirmed in true holiness only by trials and sufferings; and 2. Because God will not allow even the little good which the wicked may do, to go unrewarded; and therefore, as He cannot reward it in the next world, He takes this means of allowing it to be rewarded in this world.

God tells us repeatedly in His Word, that our state here is probationary, and that justice will be meted out to all persons according to each one’s works, not in this world, but in the world to come. Acts 17:31—“he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.” Romans 2:16—“in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.” Matthew 5:45—“he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.” Matthew 13:27-30, “And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he saith, Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.” Romans 12:19—“Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.”

77. Q. What are the two kinds of God’s Providence?

A. They are: His general Providence, and His special Providence.

78. Q. What is meant by His general Providence?

A. By His general Providence is meant His preservation and care of the world at large, including the physical world and the unregenerate among men.

Psalms 148:6—“he hath also established them forever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass away.” Psalms 83:18—“That they may know that thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth.” Psalms 103:19—“Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” Job 12:23—“He increaseth the nations, and he destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and he leadeth them captive.” Psalms 104:14—“He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth,” etc. Ephesians 1:11—“him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.” Matthew 6:30—“If God doth so clothe the grass of the field,” etc. Acts 17:25-26—“He himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation,” etc. Cf. Jeremiah 18:7-10.

79. Q. What is meant by His special Providence?

A. By His special Providence we mean all His special manifestations of grace and lovingkindness towards His covenant people.

Psalms 34:15—“The eyes of Jehovah are towards the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.” Psalms 34:7—“The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.” 1 Corinthians 10:13—“God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above all that ye are able, but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.” Matthew 7:11—“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” 2 Corinthians 4:17—“For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory,” etc. Matthew 5:11-12—“Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.” John 16:33—“In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” James 1:17—“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.” Php 2:12-13—“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.”

80. Q. What attitude should we take, then, with regard to trials and sufferings that may overtake us in this life?

A. We should accept and meet them in the spirit of resignation, and thus allow them to build us up in the most holy faith.

(1) We should accept them in faith believing that to them that love God all things work together for good,” and knowing that “our light affliction which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.” (2) We should not pray so much to be delivered from earthly trials, as we should pray for the strength to meet them when they come upon us. (3) We should follow the example of the Master in regarding adversity as the means divinely appointed to

make us “perfect through sufferings” (Hebrews 2:10), and to thus fit us for the inheritance of the saints in light (Colossians 1:12). (4) Finally, we should learn from sufferings and trials and the other incidents of our earthly state, that in this present life we are but pilgrims, journeying toward that city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHT 70.Q.Who is the First Cause of all things?

71. Q. What does God still do with respect to His creation?

72. Q. By what method does God preserve and govern the world?

73. Q. By what means does God preserve and govern the world?

74. Q. What do we call this Divine care in preserving and ruling the universe?

75. Q. But if God governs the world, why is so much evil done in it? Is it because God wills it?

76. Q. But why does God, seemingly at least, often permit the wicked to prosper while evil befalls the good?

77. Q. What are the two kinds of God’s Providence?

78. Q. What is meant by His general Providence?

79. Q. What is meant by His special Providence?

80. Q. What attitude should we take, then, with regard to trials and sufferings that may overtake us in this life?

01.010. GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Lesson Nine GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:19-34.

Scripture To Memorize: “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. They will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:9-14).

81. Q. What among other things was the mission of Jesus?

A. It was to make God known unto us.

Matthew 11:27—“All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.” Hebrews 1:3—“who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance.” etc.

82. Q. What does Jesus say about this phase of His mission?

A. He says: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9).

83. Q. What does the Apostle John say on this subject?

A. He says: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

“He hath declared him,” i.e., revealed Him to men, in His essential nature, attributes and works.

84. Q. What is the favorite New Testament designation for God?

A.It is: Father in Heaven, or Heavenly Father. In the Old Testament Scriptures the Hebrew name Elohim, as we have learned, is used to designate Him as “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity” (Isaiah 57:15); and the name Jehovah is used to designate Him as the covenant God, the Deliverer and Benefactor of His people. But it is not until we open the pages of the New Testament that we find Him revealed in His true spiritual relationship with His covenant children through Christ, viz., as their Heavenly Father. This brings Him close to us, helps us to understand Him and to know Him more intimately. George Meredith says: “I hold to the word ‘Father.’ No young child can take the meaning of ‘Spirit.’ You must give him a concrete form or he will not put an idea in what he is uttering. He must address somebody. Later, when he throws off his childishness, he will, if you are watching and assisting him, learn to see that he has prayed to no false impersonation in addressing an invisible ‘Father’” (From The Letters of George Meredith).

85. Q. What words are we told to use when we come to God in prayer?

A. Jesus Himself tells us to say: “Our Father who art in heaven” (Matthew 6:9).

86. Q. What kind of Fatherhood is indicated by this designation?

A. Spiritual Fatherhood, or the Fatherhood that God bears towards His covenant children through Christ.

(1) There is a sense of course in which God is Father of all men, viz., in the sense that they all derive their personal nature from Him. See Genesis 2:7. Acts 17:25—"he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Hebrews 12:9—"the Father of spirits." (2) But this type of Fatherhood is not, in fact never was, the ground of salvation. Acceptance and reconciliation of man with God have been from the very beginning on the grounds of faith and obedience. Hebrews 11:6—"Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is," etc. Noah obtained deliverance, not on the ground that he was created in the image of God, but on the ground of his faith which manifested itself in obedience to God's commands. Other cases in point are Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, etc. See the entire eleventh chapter of Hebrews. (3) It is sheer folly for any man to expect God to save him on the ground of his morality, respectability, culture, good citizenship, and the like. Salvation is the gift of God, offered by grace, and accepted by faith. Ephesians 2:8—"For by grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Romans 6:23—"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (4) It is obvious that those living under the Dispensation of Grace, i.e., under the new covenant, have little or no right to say, "Our Father who art in heaven," who have not acknowledged His Fatherhood by themselves submitting to the terms necessary to adoption into the household of faith. "Father" is the relationship He bears especially to His covenant people, i.e., to those who are "in Christ." These truths need to be emphasized in our day of loose thinking.

87. Q. What are Christians called, in the New Testament?

A. They are called "children of God."

Romans 8:16—"that we are children of God." 2 Corinthians 6:17-18—"Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord . . . and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Note well: Be ye separate!

88. Q. How do we become children of God under the new covenant?

A. By accepting Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God; by turning from sin and offering ourselves as a living sacrifice unto God; by confessing Jesus as our Christ, in the presence of witnesses; and by being buried with Him in baptism and raised up to walk in "newness of life."

John 3:5—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Mark 16:16—"he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Acts 2:38—"Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Luke 13:3—"Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." Matthew 10:32—"Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." Romans 10:10—"for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 6:4—"We were buried with him therefore through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Galatians 3:27—"For as many of you as

were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:17—"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." Romans 8:1—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Cf. Acts 8:12, Acts 8:35-40, Acts 16:14-40, Acts 16:30-34, Acts 18:8, etc.

89. Q. What is this process whereby the sinner is inducted into the household of faith, called, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. It is called Adoption.

(1) Romans 8:15-17, "For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (2) Explain what adoption means: the right to wear the family name, to enjoy the privileges of the family, and to receive a just portion of the family inheritance, etc.

90. Q. When do we have the privilege of calling God our heavenly Father?

A. We have this privilege as a consequence of being adopted into the spiritual family of God, the church.

Galatians 6:10—"the household of the faith." Ephesians 2:19—"the household of God."

91. Q. What does Jesus say about calling any man "father" in a spiritual sense?

A. He says: "Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9).

92. Q. What are God's dealings with us in the relationship He bears to us as our heavenly Father?

A. He exercises towards His children all the obligation, privileges and prerogatives of Fatherhood.

(1) He loves us—so much that He gave His most priceless treasure to redeem us from sin. John 3:16. (2) He is merciful to us. Psalms 103:13-14—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." (3) He protects us. Matthew 6:13—"and bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Psalms 34:7—"the angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (4) He provides for us—on the condition of course that we earn our daily bread by honest toil. Matthew 6:11—"Give us this day our daily bread." Cf. Genesis 3:17, Matthew 6:19-34. (5) He puts His Spirit within us. 2 Corinthians 1:22—"God who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (6) He gives us the Family name. Acts 11:26—"the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." "Christian" means of, or belonging to, Christ, (7) He gives us a place at the Family Table, i.e., the Lord's table. 1 Corinthians 10:21—"the table of the Lord." Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30. (8) He gives a portion of the Family Meal, i.e., the communion of the body and of the blood of Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:16. (9) He disciplines us. Hebrews 12:7-11. (10) He eventually gives us a just portion of the eternal inheritance, the joys of heaven. 1 Corinthians 2:9—"things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him." Romans

8:18—“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.” 1 Peter 1:4—“unto an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” (11) As our Father, He has the inherent right to require obedience, and to exercise disciplinary measures for disobedience. He has all the obligations, rights and privileges of fatherhood.

93. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

A. That we should deem it a most blessed and precious privilege to belong to the church, the body of Christ and the household of God; and to be thus privileged to say, “Our Father who art in heaven.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON NINE 81.Q.What among other things was the mission of Jesus?

82. Q. What does Jesus say about this phase of His mission?

83. Q. What does the Apostle John say on this subject?

84. Q. What is the favorite New Testament designation for God?

85. Q. What words are we told to use when we come to God in prayer?

86. Q. What kind of Fatherhood is indicated by this designation?

87. Q. What are Christians called, in the New Testament?

88. Q. How do we become children of God under the new covenant?

89. Q. What is this process whereby the sinner is inducted into the household of faith, called, in the New Testament Scriptures?

90. Q. When do we have the privilege of calling God our heavenly Father?

91. Q. What does Jesus say about calling any man “father” in a spiritual sense?

92. Q. What are God’s dealings with us in the relationship He bears to us as our heavenly Father?

93. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

01.011. FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson Ten FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20.

Scripture To Memorize: “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

94. Q. Is there more than one God?

A. No. There is one, and only one, living and true God.

Deuteronomy 6:4—“Jehovah our God is one Jehovah” (Moses). Ephesians 4:6—“one God and Father of all” (Paul). Note the perfect agreement between Old and New Testament teaching on all these matters.

95. Q. Of how many Persons does the one God consist?

A. The Scriptures teach that He consists of three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(1) The Scriptures teach: “1. That God is one; 2. That in this sublime and incomprehensible unity, there is also embraced a threefold personality” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 19). (2) When we say that God is a Spirit, we mean that as to nature He is personal, or that He must be conceived of in terms of personality. Elsewhere in scripture we learn that His personality is triune.

96. Q. Does this mean that we worship three Gods?

A. No. It means that we worship one living and true God, who embraces within Himself a threefold personality.

(The term “Trinity” is found only in Theology, not in the Scriptures).

97. Q. Is this threefold personality of God revealed in the Old Testament?

A. It is intimated only.

(1) Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Here the plural form Elohim (translated “God”) is used. This plural form is most significant. (2) Genesis 1:26—“Let us make man in our image,” etc. These words could not have been addressed to angels, for two reasons: (a) angels are themselves creatures, not creators; (b) man has not been created in the likeness of angels, who are ethereal, and without sex distinction (cf. Matthew 22:30, Hebrews 1:14). Nor could they have been addressed to the earth, as held by certain Jewish commentators (e. g., Maimonides), for the obvious reason that such intercourse as implied in the language of this text must have been among persons, in fact could not have been in connection with inanimate things. This language, then, “serves to reveal and to express the plurality of our Creator in some sense.” Are we not justified, then, in concluding that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were holding a council among themselves with regard to the nature of this being about to be created and placed upon the earth as its lord tenant? Cf. also Genesis 11:7—“Let us go down and confound their

language." Also Isaiah 6:8—"And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (3) In the Old Testament Scriptures, we read of God, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God. Genesis 1:1—"In the beginning God." Genesis 1:2—"and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Genesis 1:3—"And God said, Let there be light," etc. Cf. Psalms 33:6-9, John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16-17. In the New Testament Scriptures, they are no longer God, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God; but Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

98. Q. Why wasn't this threefold personality of God revealed in Old Testament times?

A. We cannot say definitely. Perhaps because God did not fully reveal Himself in Old Testament times. Perhaps, too, because if He had revealed His Triune personality to the Hebrew people, they would have worshiped three Gods instead of the one true God. Polytheism and idolatry were the besetting sins of the ancients.

99. Q. Why is this threefold personality of God revealed in the New Testament?

A. Because Jesus came to reveal God to us, in His essential nature, attributes and works.

(1) We usually say that Jesus came to reveal God to us fully, by which we mean that He revealed all the truths about God that we need to know, as essential to our salvation and growth in holiness. (2) The fact of the threefold personality of God is revealed in three New Testament texts, as follows: (a) Matthew 28:19, the baptismal formula, "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." These are the words of Jesus Himself. (b) 2 Corinthians 13:14, the apostolic benediction, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (c) 1 Peter 1:2—"according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

100. Q. Does this mean that God consists of Three Persons?

A. It means that as to nature, God is one; as to personality, He is Three.

(1) God is inherently a Spirit (John 4:24); that is, as to nature, He is a personal God. This oneness of nature, however, seems to embrace a threefold personality, scripturally revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (2) These Three Persons are so described in the Scriptures that we are compelled to think of them as three distinct Persons, at least on occasions and in their operations. (3) For example, the Son (one Person) told His apostles that He would pray the Father (another Person) to send the Holy Spirit (a third Person, for Spirit is essentially personal) upon them, to guide them into all the truth. See John 14:16-17; John 16:7-10, etc. (4) Again, when Jesus was baptized, He, the Son (one Person) was standing on the bank of the Jordan River; and at the same time, the Father (another Person) was speaking from heaven; and at the same time also, the Holy Spirit (a third Person) was descending through the air in a dovelike form. See Matthew 3:16-17, Luke 3:21-22. (5) Again, the Father is distinguished from the Son as the Sender from the One Sent; also as the Begetter from the One Begotten. See John 3:16-17; John 1:14; John 1:18; 1 John 4:9, etc. The Son is pictured as praying to the Father. See John 11:41-42; also the entire seventeenth chapter of John. Finally, the Spirit is distinguished from both the Father and the Son, and is said to have been sent by both. See John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Galatians 4:6, etc. In view of all this evidence, together with other numerous scriptures which

represent the Holy Spirit as having the attributes of a person, as doing the works of a person, and as suffering the slights and experiencing the emotions of a person; it is obvious that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are presented to us in the Scriptures as three distinct Persons.

101. Q. What is the formula according to which believers are to be baptized?

A. They are to be baptized “into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

(1) This is the command of Jesus, a part of the Great Commission. (2) Note: not names, but name, i.e., Three in One.

102. Q. What is the signification of this formula?

A. It means that in the one act (baptism or immersion) we yield our hearts and lives unto the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

103. Q. Does this mean that we should be dipped three times?

A.No. We are immersed only once, because there is only one God. To be dipped three times would indicate that we worship three Gods. So-called “trine immersion” is unscriptural for the obvious reason that our God, though embracing within Himself a threefold personality, is still one God.

104. Q. Can we fully understand this triune personality of God?

A. Of course not. Nor is it necessary that we understand it fully.

(1) It is impossible for our finite minds, which cannot even fathom the mysteries of created things, to be capable of comprehending a mystery which is infinitely above all created things. (2) It is equally impossible for the finite mind to understand all the existences, manifestations and operations of Spirit. (3) We must accept this doctrine by faith. Nor does it pay to speculate too extensively regarding such matters. It is beyond the power of the human intellect to peer into the secrets of the Divine Being. Martin Luther warned of the unprofitableness of discussing what God does and thinks “by Himself.” Calvin says: “God treats sparingly of His essence. His essence is indeed incomprehensible to us. Let us therefore willingly leave to God the knowledge of Himself.” Zwingli says: “A Christian man’s task is not to talk grandly of doctrines, but always to be doing hard and great things with God.”

105. Q. What is the importance of this doctrine of the triune personality of God?

A. It is evidently essential to both creation and redemption.

How could there be a Scheme of Redemption without the Father to originate, the Son to execute, and the Spirit to realize, apply and consummate it? (Explain that after the Son had made atonement for sin, the Spirit came, on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord, to apply the redemptive work of Christ to the hearts of men and women. This present dispensation is the age of the Holy Spirit. His dwelling-place is the Church, the body of Christ. Ephesians 2:22—“the habitation of God in the Spirit”). Thus it will be seen that in the fullness of God’s being we find satisfaction for every human need.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TEN 94.Q.Is there more than one God?

95. Q. Of how many Persons does the one God consist?

96. Q. Does this mean that we worship three Gods?

97. Q. Is this threefold personality of God revealed in the Old Testament?

98. Q. Why wasn’t this threefold personality of God revealed in Old Testament times?

99. Q. Why is this threefold personality of God revealed in the New Testament?

100. Q. Does this mean that God consists of Three Persons?

101. Q. What is the formula according to which believers are to be baptized?

102. Q. What is the signification of this formula?

103. Q. Does this mean that we shall be dipped three times?

104. Q. Can we fully understand this triune personality of God?

105. Q. What is the importance of this doctrine of the triune personality of God?

Chapter 13

01.012. HOW GOD HAS SPOKEN TO US

Lesson Eleven HOW GOD HAS SPOKEN TO US Scripture Reading: Hebrews 1:1-4, Romans 1:18-23, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16.

Scripture To Memorize: “God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

106. Q. Is it possible for the world to know God through its own wisdom?

A. It is not.

1 Corinthians 1:21—“For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.”

107. Q. In view of this fact what did God do for us?

A. He made Himself and His will known to us in a series of revelations.

108. Q. Why has God thus spoken to His creatures?

A.Because He loves us, wants us to be saved from our sins, and wants us to be holy. In order for Him to accomplish these ends in us and for us, it was necessary that He reveal to us all the truths we need to know about His nature, attributes, works, purposes and plans; and all the truths we need to know regarding our own salvation and growth in holiness.

109. Q. Why, then, was it necessary for God to speak to us?

A. Because if he had not done so we should be lost forever.

Without His divine revelations, we could never know what we need to know about God, His attributes, works, purposes and plans; and what we need to know in order to be saved from our sins and to grow in holiness ourselves. Without his knowledge, we should be hopelessly lost forever.

110. Q. Why does God want us to be holy?

A. For three reasons:

1. Because He loves us; 2. Because His ultimate end in creation and redemption is to have a holy universe; and, 3. Because, in the very nature of things, any lack of that holiness on our part “without which no man shall see the Lord,” would make it impossible for God to have that fellowship with His creatures which He sought and purposed when He created them.

111. Q. In what two books has God revealed Himself to us?

A. He has revealed Himself to us in the Book of Nature, and in the Book of Scripture.

112. Q. What do we mean by the Book of Nature?

A. By the Book of Nature, we mean the physical universe or the world around us.

113. Q. What has God revealed to us in the Book of Nature?

A. He has revealed His omnipotence and glory.

Romans 1:20—“For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity.” Psalms 19:1—“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.” “Nature is God’s art,” says Philip James Baily.

114. Q. Why was it necessary for God to reveal Himself and His purposes further, in another Book?

A. Because He could not reveal his moral attributes, such as His love, justice, goodness, holiness, compassion, faithfulness and longsuffering, in the Book of Nature; and because He could not reveal in the Book of Nature the truths necessary to our salvation and growth in holiness.

(1) In Nature we see evidences of order, beauty, energy, force, even of intelligence. But Nature is silent in the presence of sorrow, suffering, sin, despair and death. Yet these factors are ever present in human life and experience, and we must have a God who will meet these needs of the soul. Therefore “in the fulness of the time God sent forth his Son.” In Christ Jesus, these cries are heard and answered. He reveals a personal Father God, a God who cares, a God who forgives, a God who gives the abundant life, a God who redeems; and this revelation is embodied in the New Testament Scriptures. Hence our God is the God of both Nature and Scripture. (2) “While God may reveal Himself to us in many ways, through nature and through the wondrous laws of science, of which He is the Author also, yet He speaks to us only through the Bible. Through nature we may come to know Him as Creator, but only through the Bible can we hear His voice speaking to us as the Father. It is to learn to hear this ‘still, small voice’ that we study the Word, observing that His voice is ever attuned to those who would hear, whether in the simple days of the beginnings of spiritual knowledge or in these days of completed revelation” (C. J. Sharp, New Training for Service, p. 5). (3) It is obvious that without the Bible we should still be worshiping the sun, the heavenly bodies, animals or idols, as the ancients did. Psalms 119:105—“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path.” Psalms 119:130—“The opening of thy words giveth light.”

115. Q. What do we mean by the Book of Scripture?

A. By the Book of Scripture, we mean the Bible.

Scripture is inspired (God-breathed) literature. 2 Timothy 3:16-17—“Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.”

116. Q. What does the word Bible mean?

A.It means The Book. The Bible is the history of redemption through Jesus Christ. It is the faithful and inspired record of God's revelations to man. It is the only Book of which it can be said that God is the Author. In every sense of the term it is The Book.

117. Q. What has God revealed to us in the Bible?

A. He has revealed all the truths we need to know about Himself, His nature, His attributes, and His purposes; and He has revealed in the Bible all the truths we need to know about our own salvation and growth in holiness.

118. Q. By what method did God reveal Himself, His attributes, and His purposes and plans?

A. He did so progressively; that is, as man grew in his capacity to understand and make use of the truths revealed.

Hebrews 1:2—"by divers portions and in divers manners." Isaiah 28:10—"precept upon precept . . . line upon line . . . here a little, there a little." Mark 4:28—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

119. Q. Through whom did God reveal Himself and His purposes in olden times?

A. Through holy men of old, men of great faith.

(1) 2 Peter 1:21—"men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." Hebrews 1:1-2—"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets," etc. (2) Through the patriarchs, He revealed His self-existence, unity, personality and providence; and through them He revealed also the source, nature, evidences and rewards of faith. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. See Hebrews 11:1-40. (3) Through Moses and the early leaders of the Hebrew nation, He revealed His uniqueness, His superiority, and His omnipotence. The miracles wrought by Moses were largely for the purpose of demonstrating God's power and superiority to false heathen deities. Through Moses He also revealed the eternal principles of right and wrong, in the Ten Commandments. See Exodus 20:1-26. (4) Through the Hebrew prophets, He revealed His wisdom, righteousness, justice and holiness; and His Messianic purposes and plans. The prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, etc.—were expounders of personal holiness, national righteousness and social justice.

120. Q. Through whom did God fully reveal Himself and His purposes?

A. Through His Son Jesus Christ and His Apostles.

Hebrews 1:2—"God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son," etc.

121. Q. What did He reveal through Jesus Christ and the Apostles?

A. He revealed especially His divine love and compassion, and His plan for the salvation of the world.

1 Peter 1:10-12, "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves,

but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into." Ephesians 3:4-5—"the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit," etc.

122. Q. What is said of Jesus in this connection?

A. It is said that He was the very image of the Father's substance.

Hebrews 1:3—"who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance," etc. We humans are the image of God only in a personal sense. But Jesus is the very image of God, i.e., in every particular, moral as well as personal. He manifested in Himself all the wisdom, purity, power and holiness of the Godhead.

123. Q. What did Jesus say of Himself in this connection?

A. He said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

124. Q. Did Divine revelation end with Jesus and the Apostles?

A. It did, because with them everything pertaining to life and godliness was revealed.

2 Peter 1:3—"seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Jude 1:3—"the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

125. Q. Where is this final and complete revelation recorded?

A.It is recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. No human being has ever been able to add one iota of moral or spiritual truth to the body of teaching recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. The teaching of the New Testament is sufficient to furnish the man of God completely unto every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

126. Q. In view of these facts what should we do?

A. We should search the Scriptures diligently and reverently, in order that we may learn to know the only true God and His Son Jesus Christ, whom to know aright is eternal life.

Acts 17:11—"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so." John 17:3—"And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." John 14:6—"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me." John 6:68—"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:63—"the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON ELEVEN 106.Q.Is it possible for the world to know God through its own wisdom?

107. Q. In view of this fact what did God do for us?

108. Q. Why has God thus spoken to His creatures?

109. Q. Why, then, was it necessary for God to speak to us?

110. Q. Why does God want us to be holy?

111. Q. In what two books has God revealed Himself to us?

112. Q. What do we mean by the Book of Nature?

113. Q. What has God revealed to us in the Book of Nature?

114. Q. Why was it necessary for God to reveal Himself and His purposes further, in another Book?

115. Q. What do we mean by the Book of Scripture?

116. Q. What does the word Bible mean?

117. Q. What has God revealed to us in the Bible?

118. Q. By what method did God reveal Himself, His attributes, and His purposes and plans?

119. Q. Through whom did God reveal Himself and His purposes in olden times?

120. Q. Through whom did God fully reveal Himself and His purposes?

121. Q. What did He reveal through Jesus Christ and the Apostles?

122. Q. What is said of Jesus in this connection?

123. Q. What did Jesus say of Himself in this connection?

124. Q. Did Divine revelation end with Jesus and the Apostles?

125. Q. Where is this final and complete revelation recorded?

126. Q. In view of these facts what should we do?

Chapter 14

01.013. THE WORD WHO BECAME FLESH

Lesson Twelve THE WORD WHO BECAME FLESH Scripture Reading: John 1:1-18.

Scripture To Memorize: “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 . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-2; John 1:14). TO INTRODUCE THIS LESSON, review the following truths which we have learned up to this point: 1. Our God is one God, a Spirit; that is, as the Absolute, He is pure Spirit; as such, His essential nature is personality. He is a personal God, and a living God. 2. He embraces within Himself, however, a threefold personality. 3. In the Old Testament Scriptures, this threefold personality is designated by the terms, God, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God. 4. In the New Testament Scriptures, it is designated by the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 5. This does not mean that there are three Gods, but one God rather, consisting of Three Persons. (As the essential nature of each of these Three Persons is personal; it follows that the essential nature of the Three together, or God in His entirety, is personal—a Spirit). 6. These three Persons are so described in scripture, that we are compelled to think of them as three distinct personalities, at least on occasions and in their numerous operations. 7. To these six truths we are now ready to add the seventh, viz., This triune personality of God is eternal; that is, it is inherent in the Deity and consequently has always been, as we are now prepared to show in this lesson.

127. Q. Who was born in Bethlehem of Judea?

A. The Child who was named Jesus.

128. Q. Why was He named Jesus?

A. Because the name Jesus means “Savior;” and He came to be the world’s Savior.

Matthew 1:21—“thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.’”

129. Q. By whom was this name given to Him?

A. By God the Father, through the annunciating angel, Matthew 1:21.

130. Q. Did this One whom we know as Jesus exist as a person prior to His appearance as the Child of Bethlehem?

A. The Scriptures teach that He did.

(1) Jesus prayed to the Father in these words: “Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). (2) On another occasion Jesus expressly declared: “Before Abraham was born, I am” (John 8:58); thus assuming for Himself the Name of the Deity, and in so doing asserting His own self-existence from eternity. (3) Paul says:

“Christ Jesus who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man” (Php 2:7-11). That is, He did not consider His own equality with God a thing to be striven for, because it was His inherently, as He was deity by nature; and could therefore subordinate His deity and resume it again as he pleased. Cf. John 10:17-18—“Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” (4) In this connection, consider also those scriptures which expressly assert that He participated in the creation of the physical universe. See Hebrews 1:2, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16-17, etc.

131. Q. What name is given to Him to describe the eternal relationship prevailing between the Father and Himself?

A. The name, Word of God.

(1) The relationship between God and the One whom we know, in the flesh, as Jesus, must have been purely spiritual prior to His incarnation; hence it can be described only by a spiritual name. (2) Again, this relationship which existed between the Two from eternity was more intimate than is possible between human beings. (3) As this relationship was eternal, it is obvious that it could not have been designated by the term Son of God, because where there is father and son, the father must of necessity antedate the Son. But God and the Word have always been: they are coeternal. (4) The Holy Spirit selected the only term in our human vocabulary by which this eternal, spiritual relationship can be designated, viz., The Word of God. (5) There is no relationship more intimate than that existing between spirit and its own thought. Or, let us say, between your self and your own thought. No one but you can know your thoughts and ideas. 1 Corinthians 2:11—“For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him?” This was the intimacy existing from eternity between God and the Word. (6) Again, the name Word of God describes a relationship that is eternal and purely spiritual. (7) The One whom we know as Jesus, was the Word of God in a two-fold sense: inwardly, in that He was from eternity “in the bosom of the Father” (John 1:18); and outwardly, in that He was the perfect expression, or revelation, of the wisdom, purity, power and holiness of the Deity.

132. Q. What does the Apostle John say about Him as the Word of God?

A. He says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

(1) Explanatory: the phrase “in the beginning” means literally before things began. (2) Before things began, the Word was, i.e., before the creation, the Word was. (3) The Word was with God, i.e., there were Two—God and the Word. When I am with you, there are two of us. (4) But, lest any one get the notion that the Word was less than, nor inferior to God, the Apostle adds: “and the Word was God.” That is the Word as to nature was deity, as truly as God is deity.

133. Q. When did the Word of God become the Son of God?

A. When “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

134. Q. Through whose agency was this miracle wrought?

A. It was wrought through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:35—“The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee,” said the Angel to Mary.

135. Q. Through what human instrumentality was this miracle achieved?

A. Through the instrumentality of the Virgin Mary.

136. Q. What is this miracle called in the Scriptures?

A. His divine begetting.

Luke 1:35—“wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.”

137. Q. Why was He to be called the Son of God?

A. In consequence of His divine begetting.

138. Q. What does this name, Son of God, describe?

A.It is the name used to describe the relationship between God and the Word, then and after the Word became flesh. In other words, it is the name used to designate the relationship which began at Bethlehem, through Mary. From that time on, it was no longer God and the Word, but the Father and the Son. This Divine Sonship was a matter of eternal decree. See Psalms 2:7.

139. Q. What is the name commonly given to this Mystery?

A. It is usually spoken of as The Incarnation.

140. Q. What does the Apostle Paul call this great Mystery?

A. He calls it “the mystery of godliness.”

1 Timothy 3:16—“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: he who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

141. Q. What does the term Incarnation signify?

A. It signifies that the Person who appeared at Bethlehem was the Divine-human Person; the Person who combined in Himself the two natures—the Divine and the human.

142. Q. What name is given Him to describe this Divine-human nature?

A. The name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14—“Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Matthew 1:23—“and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us.”

143. Q. What, then, was Jesus?

A. He was Incarnate Deity.

144. Q. In what sense may we speak of Mary as the mother of Jesus?

A. In the sense that she, a pure virgin, was the passive instrumentality through whom God wrought this miracle of the Incarnation.

145. Q. Is there any Scripture ground for worshiping the Virgin?

A.None whatsoever. Of course she should be respected and honored by all people, and especially by all Christians; but not worshiped. To worship the Virgin and to pray to the Virgin, are purely human inventions. After Acts 1:14, she is not even mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures. Jesus Himself said: “For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Matthew 12:48-50).

146. Q. Did Jesus, then, have a human father?

A. No. God was His Father.

Jesus in all His teaching never once recognized any human being as His father, but without exception referred to God as His Father. Matthew 12:50—“my Father who is in heaven.” Joseph was merely His foster-father. His name appeared in the Hebrew records, of course, as the legal father of Jesus, Luke 3:23—“And Jesus himself, when he began to teach was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,” etc. Note the significance of the parenthesis: “as was supposed.” Not however, in fact; because in fact He was the Son of God.

147. Q. In what special sense then was Jesus the Son of God?

A. In consequence of His Divine Begetting; hence He is repeatedly spoken of in the Scriptures as The Only Begotten Son of God.

Note the significance of the word only, in all cases where this term is used. John 1:14—“the only begotten from the Father.” John 3:16—“For God so loved thee world that he gave his only begotten Son.”

148. Q. What other reasons have we for believing that Jesus was the Only Begotten Son of God and Incarnate Deity?

A. Five reasons, especially: 1. He taught as God.

2. He lived as God. 3. He wrought as God. 4. He died as God. 5. He was raised up from the dead.

1. He taught as God. No one has ever been able to find a single flaw in His teaching. No one has ever been able to add a single moral or spiritual truth to the body of teaching which He left in the world. 2. He lived as God. He gave not only a perfect teaching but a perfect example as well. He was tempted in all points as we are, through His human nature of course, yet was without sin. No one has ever been able to point out a single defect in His character. He lived the Perfect Life. 3. He wrought as God. His miracles, as to kind, were of the widest variety. He had absolute power over nature. He had but to will or command, and thing willed was done. 4. He died as God. That is, He gave Himself in utter Supreme Sacrifice, not merely for His friends, but for His enemies as well. John 10:18. 5. He was raised up from the dead. By his conquest of death and the grave, He brought life and immortality to light. The final proof of His deity is His resurrection from the dead.

149. Q. In view of this array of evidence, what should we do?

A. We should believe and confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matthew 16:16, Romans 10:9-10. This is the good confession which is to be made with the mouth, unto salvation: What excuse has any responsible person for not confessing Christ—now? Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWELVE 127.Q.Who was born in Bethlehem of Judea?

128. Q. Why was He named Jesus?

129. Q. By whom was this name given to Him?

130. Q. Did this One whom we know as Jesus exist as a person prior to His appearance as the Child of Bethlehem?

131. Q. What name is given to Him to describe the eternal relationship prevailing between the Father and Himself?

132. Q. What does the Apostle John say about Him as the Word of God?

133. Q. When did the Word of God become the Son of God?

134. Q. Through whose agency was this miracle wrought?

135. Q. Through what human instrumentality was this miracle achieved?

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143. Q. What, then, was Jesus?

144. Q. In what sense may we speak of Mary as the mother of Jesus?

145. Q. Is there any Scripture ground for worshiping the Virgin?

146. Q. Did Jesus, then, have a human father?

147. Q. In what special sense then was Jesus the Son of God?

148. Q. What other reasons have we for believing that Jesus was the Only Begotten Son of God and Incarnate Deity?

149. Q. In view of this array of evidence, what should we do?

01.014. THE PRIORITY OF SPIRIT

Lesson Thirteen THE PRIORITY OF SPIRIT Scripture Reading: John 6:52-65.

Scripture To Memorize: “It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life” (John 6:63).

150. Q. What is our first objective in this series of lessons?

A. It is to help our pupils to know God our Heavenly Father.

151. Q. What is our second objective in this series of thirteen lessons?

A. It is to reemphasize the spiritual view of the universe and of life; and to implant in the minds of our pupils the right spiritual attitude towards life and its problems.

152. Q. What fundamental knowledge is necessary to the attainment of this right attitude towards life?

A. The knowledge of the Priority of Spirit.

Hebrews 9:14—“the eternal Spirit.” Genesis 1:2—“the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” John 6:63—“It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing.” Galatians 5:25—“If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.”

153. Q. What does reason teach us with regard to the universe?

A. It teaches us that there must have been a First Cause of all things.

“Something is; and therefore something eternally was.” For, as the ancient philosophers taught: “Ex nihilo, nihil fit,” i.e., from nothing, nothing comes. The argument from philosophical necessity, that something must have existed from eternity, is sound.

154. Q. What does reason teach us further about the First Cause of all things?

A.It teaches us that the First Cause must be unoriginated and eternal. That is, the First Cause must be without beginning; and if without beginning, must therefore be without end. It must have the ground of its existence within itself. It must be, because it is its very nature to be. Cf. Revelation 1:18—“I am . . . the Living one.

155. Q. What does reason further tell us that this First Cause must be?

A.That it must be either Spirit or Matter. No other starting point is possible, for the simple reason that there is no other First Cause imaginable. Dualism, i.e., the notion that both Spirit and Matter are eternal, must be ruled out on the ground that it is unphilosophical to assume two coeternal First Causes, when one is sufficient. Again: the Materialist who assumes that Matter has always been, merely begs the question; for in so assuming, he assumes that Matter is the unoriginated First Cause. Philosophically, there is but one choice; and that is the choice between Theism (belief

in God, a Spirit) and Materialism (belief in the eternity of Matter).

156. Q. What do we mean by Matter?

A. By Matter we mean substance, combinations of atoms; popularly, anything that occupies space.

157. Q. What do we mean by Spirit?

A. Spirit is a term which the human intellect is incapable of defining. The best we can do is to suggest the implications of the term.

158. Q. What, then, are the implications of Spirit?

A. It implies four things especially, viz., 1. Personality; 2. Vitality; 3. Sociality; and 4. Transcendence.

(1) Personality includes among other things intellect, feeling, will and conscience. It includes self-consciousness and self-determination. (2) Vitality includes life, energy, influence, etc. Where there is spirit, there is life. Cf. John 6:63—"it is the spirit that giveth life." (3) Sociality is the desire for fellowship with kindred spirits, including such attributes as friendship, love, etc. (4) Transcendence, by which we mean that Spirit is not subject to the limitations of time, space, etc. These are all characteristics of Spirit, whether in God or in man.

159. Q. What primary reason have we for rejecting the notion of the Priority of Matter?

A. The inferiority of Matter is the chief ground on which we reject its priority.

(1) Matter explains nothing, it accounts for nothing. In fact it must be accounted for itself. (2) The attributes of Matter are far inferior to those of Spirit. (3) Atoms are in themselves impotent. "Atoms can do nothing without force, and can be nothing (intelligible) without ideas" (Dr. A. H. Strong). (4) It cannot be demonstrated that matter, atoms, molecules, etc., are realities. These terms are, rather, artifices of thought, conveniences of speech. It is our contention that realities exist only in the realm of Spirit. (5) Materialism is derogatory to human nature. I refuse to believe that I am nothing more than a combination of atoms. I utterly reject the notion that all there is for me in life, is to eat and drink and then lie down to die, like a beast of the field. I know better! I know, from my own experience, that I have been made "but little lower than God" (Psalms 8:5). (6) Materialism breeds vice and iniquity, because it destroys our sense of responsibility. It debases human society. (7) In short, the materialistic theory is contrary to reason, to experience, to intuition, and to common sense.

160. Q. What fundamental reason have we for accepting the Priority of Spirit as a first truth?

A. The superiority of Spirit is the chief ground on which we accept the Priority of Spirit.

(1) The attributes of Spirit are so far superior to those of Matter that no other position is tenable. (2) For instance, Spirit implies continuous personal identity. When matter is acted upon by the application of external forces, it changes form. Not so of Spirit. It is always the same. You will still be you, always. Even in this life, despite the numerous complete changes which your body will undergo in a lifetime, you continue to be you. Physical change has no effect on personal identity.

(3) Spirit implies memory. According to the latest science, the human body changes completely every four years or so. This being true, the body undergoes some twenty complete transformations in a lifetime. But memory persists. Our memory is frequently as clear when we are eighty years old, as it was when we were thirty. (4) Spirit implies self-activity. Matter has the property of inertia, i.e., it does not move until acted upon. But Spirit acts of its own volition. It controls Matter and is therefore superior to Matter. (5) Spirit implies unrelatedness to time or space. The highest activities of mind are independent of physical conditions. Mind is always in a process of development, long after physical development has ceased. The subconsciousness, in fact, never ceases to develop. You can take a trip around the world, in a dream, and do it "in the twinkling of an eye." You can live anew the experiences of a lifetime, in a dream, in just a few seconds of what we call "time." The subconsciousness is unlimited by our feeble conceptions of time, space, distance, etc. (6) Finally, the only medium through which we can even know about Matter, or formulate theories of Matter, is Mind: and Mind is a function, or phase, of Spirit. Therefore, in knowing Matter, Spirit proves itself superior to that which it knows: and if superior to Matter, it must have antedated Matter. Until it can be scientifically demonstrated that both Consciousness and the Subconsciousness in us are themselves material (combinations of atoms)—which will never be done—we shall continue to give priority and superiority to Spirit.

161. Q. Are our conclusions substantiated by the teaching of the Bible?

A. They are substantiated in every particular by the teaching of the Bible.

According to the Bible, the unoriginated and eternal First Cause is God. Genesis 1:1—"In the beginning God." According to the teaching of Jesus Himself, God is a Spirit (John 4:24). No other conception is quite so pure, so satisfactory, so helpful, or so rational, as this.

162. Q. What, then, is the only true Rationalism?

A. The only true Rationalism is Christian Theism; that is, belief in the living and true God who revealed Himself in Jesus Christ.

It is our conviction that mankind cannot maintain its conscience or preserve its morale, on a philosophy that robs human existence of its ultimate meaning. This is what the materialistic philosophy does. It is refreshing to turn from this sordid view to the Christian philosophy, that "over and in the universe, as its Creator and Controller, is a Christ-like Father" (Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin). God is; God loves us; God is longsuffering towards us; God cares for us; God yearns for our fellowship. God wants our hearts, that He may save us with an everlasting salvation. God is saying to us: "My son, give me thy heart; and let thine eyes delight in my ways." Our Redeemer is saying: "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." Why not accept these precious invitations now? Why not turn—now—from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God? Why not come back now, to the Father's house?

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTEEN 150.Q.What is our first objective in this series of lessons?

151. Q. What is our second objective in this series of thirteen lessons?

152. Q. What fundamental knowledge is necessary to the attainment of this right attitude towards life?

153. Q. What does reason teach us with regard to the universe?

154. Q. What does reason teach us further about the First Cause of all things?

155. Q. What does reason further tell us that this First Cause must be?

156. Q. What do we mean by Matter?

157. Q. What do we mean by Spirit?

158. Q. What, then, are the implications of Spirit?

159. Q. What primary reason have we for rejecting the notion of the Priority of Matter?

160. Q. What fundamental reason have we for accepting the Priority of Spirit as a first truth?

161. Q. Are our conclusions substantiated by the teaching of the Bible?

162. Q. What, then, is the only true Rationalism?

01.015. SPECIAL STUDY ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

SPECIAL STUDY ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD In the last two or three decades proofs of the priority and sovereignty of Spirit (Universal Mind, Intelligence, Logos, Reason, etc.) have been multiplied by discoveries in the fields of both the physical and the psychical sciences. Among the more significant of these are the following:

1. The basically mathematical structure of the cosmic processes.

Examples: (1) The mathematical precision of celestial movements, not only of the bodies which comprise our own solar system, but of the galaxies as well which go to make up the cosmos as a whole: this preciseness is such that for purposes of dating, any one of these heavenly bodies may be taken as the mathematical center (frame of reference); such that the movements of all of them (as, e. g., eclipses, comets, etc.) can be accurately dated as far back into the past or as far forward into the future as the human mind may care to reach in its calculations. When a celestial event fails to take place as “predicted” by an astronomer, what is the astronomer’s reaction? He does not for one moment question the objective precision of the celestial motions; on the contrary, he begins looking for the error subjectively. that is, in his own calculations. (2) The differentiation of the physical elements on the basis of the number of protons in their respective atomic nuclei and corresponding number of electrons in their respective orbits (from one proton and one electron in the hydrogen atom, up to 92 protons and 92 electrons in the uranium atom); hence, the periodic table of the elements. (3) The differentiation of minerals according to their respective basic geometrical patterns (crystalline forms) such that the plane surfaces become the external expression of the definite internal structure in each case; hence the science of crystallography. (4) The varying arrangements of atoms and molecules in space, in such a manner as to make possible identification and classification of both molecules and compounds, as depicted in stereotypic chemistry. (5) The differentiation of living species generally according to the number of chromosomes in the reproductive cells of the male and female (in the human species, 23 in the male sperm and 23 in the female ovum): the process by which the mystery of heredity is effectuated. (6) The now known possibility of the actual reduction of certain sensory data, such as color and sound, usually described as qualitative, to mathematical quantities. Color sensations are known to be produced by the impingement of refracted light waves of specified different lengths (or of quanta of different frequencies) upon the retina of the eye; sensations of sound by the impingement upon the ear, of auditory stimuli in the form of sound waves traveling at various vibration rates by way of a medium, usually the air. Music has its basis, of course, in the mathematics of sound, a fact discovered by Pythagoras in the sixth century B.C. (Pythagoras is traditionally credited with having coined the phrase, “the music of the spheres.”) To summarize: The mathematical structure of the cosmos points directly to a Universal Intelligence, Mind or Spirit as its source and ground. Pythagoras said: “Things are numbers.” Galileo: “Nature’s great book is written in mathematical symbols.” Plato: “God ever geometrizes.” Einstein: “How can it be that mathematics, being after all a product of human thought independent of experience, is so admirably adapted to the objects of reality?” Sir James Jeans: “The Great Architect of the universe

now begins to appear as a pure mathematician." "The universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine." "We may think of . . . the laws of nature as the laws of thought of a universal mind. The uniformity of nature proclaims the self-consistency of this mind. . . . If the universe is a universe of thought, then its creation must have been an act of thought" (See Jeans, This Mysterious Universe, New Revised Edition, 1943, pp. 158, 168, 175, 181, 182). As a matter of fact, in our day matter, in its ultimate constituency, is found to be metaphysical rather than physical: this is obvious from the fact that its processes are apprehended, not by sense-perception, nor even by sense-perception implemented by the microscope, but by means of mathematical formulas.

2. The principle of the adaptation of means to ends—a principle which characterizes the cosmos throughout: the inorganic to the organic, the organic to the conscious, the conscious to the self-conscious, the self-conscious (personal) to the moral and spiritual, etc. Note the following obviously necessary relationships which prevail in the cosmos: that of radiant energy to other forms of energy; that of the inter-relationships (possible transmutations) of all forms of energy (lose mass and gain energy, lose energy and gain mass); that of light and atmosphere to plant photosynthesis and animal life (plant life is dependent on carbon dioxide, animal life on oxygen); that of photosynthesis to all higher organic life (Genesis 1:30—animal life is dependent on plant photosynthesis); that of the physiological and psychological processes in man, as he is now constituted, etc. Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:46-49—in the Plan of God, the natural or physical life is the necessary prelude (probationary period) to the spiritual and eternal life. Man must live here before he can hope to live hereafter. (Revelation 22:1—note the metaphor, "river of water of life.")

3. The fact of the adaptation of nature to man and his needs. The distinguished scientist, A. Cressy Morrison, makes this fact the thesis of his excellent little book, Man Does Not Stand Alone (written in reply to the book by Julian Huxley, Man Stands Alone). Throughout the last century, he contends, we have thought so generally in terms of the visible adapting of man to nature that we have been inclined to overlook the less visible but no less obvious and amazing adaptation of nature to man. Morrison's thesis is, in general, that the wonders of nature and man, and the existence of life itself, can be shown by calculation (the statistics of probability and chance) to be impossible without a Supreme Intelligence and a definite purpose, that purpose being ultimately the preparation of the human soul for immortality. "We have found," he says, that there are 999,999,999 chances to one against a belief that all things happen by chance" (p. 100). Again: "My purpose in this discussion of chance is to bring forcefully to the attention of the reader the fact that . . . all the nearly exact requirements of life could not be brought about on one planet at one time by chance. The size of the earth, the distance from the sun, the temperature and the life-giving rays of the sun, the thickness of the earth's crust, the quantity of water, the amount of carbon dioxide, the volume of nitrogen, the emergence of man and his survival—all point to order out of chaos, to design and purpose, and to the fact that, according to the inexorable laws of mathematics, all these could not occur by chance simultaneously on one planet once in a billion times" (pp. 99–100). Again: "As man approaches a complete understanding of time, he also approaches an understanding of some of the eternal laws of the universe and an apprehension of the Supreme Intelligence" (p. 87). The fact is that apart from man as lord tenant of the earth (God's steward) there would be no earthly reason for the existence of any of the sub-personal species (cf. Genesis 1:27-31; Genesis 8:15-17; Psalms 104:14; Psalms 136:25, etc.).

4. The marvelous design of the human organism as a psychosomatic unity. The body is built up hierarchically, that is, in an ascending order of complexity, from cells into tissues into organs, from organs into systems, and from systems into the organism. Personality, in like manner, is a hierarchical structure, again in an ascending order of complexity, or reflexes, habits, dispositions, traits, and finally the self. There is no alchemy of wishful thinking by which psychology can be reduced wholly to physiology, that is, the higher thought processes to neurosensory arcs, etc. The human being as now constituted is a psychosomatic unity; interaction of the physical and mental, even though the mode of this interaction remains inscrutable, is a matter of everyday human experience. (Cf. Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:35-49; 2 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Psalms 139:4.) (Cf. the quip of the “man of medicine,” so oft recurrent in literature, the boast that if he had had the task of creating the human body he could have done a better job than, in his opinion, was done. As a matter of fact, no human being as yet has succeeded in creating a living cell, much less an entire body vitalized with rational life. Nor has any man ever been able to synthesize a living cell in the laboratory, and even if man should succeed in doing this some day, the achievement would leave unanswered the question as to what or who created the first living cell, an event which must have long antedated man’s appearance on the earth. Any purveyor of the above-mentioned bit of smart-Aleckism would show about as much consistency as the chap (whom H. L. Mencken tells about) who burst forth on occasion exclaiming, “I am an atheist—thank God!”).

5. The fact of the Will to Live which permeates the whole animate creation: the natural tendency of all living creatures to resist extinction. Consider also, in this connection, the rhythmicity which pervades the cosmos: the alternation of day and night, of seedtime and harvest, of spring and summer and fall and winter (Genesis 8:22); the varying life cycles of natural species—of the human being, childhood, youth, maturity, senescence, and finally the “eventide”; the play of opposites, especially of life and death, etc. It will be recalled that one of the Platonic (Socratic) arguments for survival is that which is based on the alternation of opposites: contrary states, argued Socrates, pass into each other, and therefore death must pass into its opposite, life (Phaedo, 70–71). The Will to Live is evident in every aspect of the upward surge of life, from the process of segmentation (“protoplasmic irritability”) in the lowliest cell up to the multiplex psychosomatic unity known as man. No evolution hypothesis even pretends to account for this life movement. To summarize: Order is nature’s first law. We must conclude, therefore, that before this world could have existed in fact it must have been planned, designed and created by the Supreme Architect whom we know as God. His handiwork is evident everywhere in it; His footprints are everywhere upon it; His Spirit is the inexhaustible source of every form of energy by which it is conserved (Psalms 102:25 ff; Psalms 119:90-91; Psalms 19:1; Job 38:1; Job 38:4; Hebrews 1:10).

6. Conclusions drawn from contemporary research into the phenomena of the Subconscious. (1) There is no more generally accepted fact in present-day psychology than that of the unbroken continuity of the psychic process on the subliminal level. The total content of the psyche is at any given time far more comprehensive than the content of consciousness at the particular time. (2) Intimations of the powers of the inner self which has been opened to view by psychic research are found in two of the most common facts of human experience, namely, the subconscious association of ideas and the subconscious maturing of thought, as illustrated in the sudden

appearing, in a dream or in a dreamlike moment of waking, of the solution of a problem which has been vexing the mind in the hours of objective awareness and reasoning. (3) Students of psychic phenomena describe the human psyche (“inward man,” 2 Corinthians 4:16, Romans 7:22, Ephesians 3:16), as a house, so to speak, with two rooms in it: a front room which faces the external world and through which impressions from that world make their entrance by way of the physical senses; and a back room in which the impressions which have entered by way of the front room find a permanent abiding-place. This front room is commonly designated the objective (conscious, supraliminal) part of the self, or simply the “objective mind”; this back room, the subjective (subconscious, subliminal) part of the self, or simply the “subjective mind.” It is to this room that we refer when we speak of the Subconscious in man. The objective takes cognizance of the external world; its media of knowledge are the physical senses; it is an adaptation to man’s physical needs, his guide in adjusting to his present earthly environment. Its highest function is that of reason. The subjective, on the other hand, takes cognizance of its environment by means independent of physical sense; it perceives by intuition; it is the storehouse of memory; it performs its highest functions when the objective processes are in abeyance (that is, in natural or in induced sleep: the latter is hypnosis); it is especially amenable to suggestion. This subliminal part of the “inner man” seems to be unlimited by objective concepts of distance, space and time (one can go back into childhood, or travel throughout the cosmos, in a dream): it functions effectively outside the space-time dimension. It has all the appearance of a distinct entity, with independent powers and functions, having a psychical order of its own, and being capable of functioning independently of the corporeal body. It is in a sense the very core of the human being. It probably is, in its ultimate aspect, the ontological self, the essential and imperishable being of the human individual; that is, as the objective powers of the psyche may rightly be correlated with what we call “mind,” so the subjective may rightly be correlated with what we call “spirit,” in man. (Cf. Genesis 2:7, Job 32:8).

(4) Hypnosis is a common occurrence: it is used in medical and dental surgery, and even in childbirth. Catalepsy is a state of deep hypnosis in which the patient is rendered insensible to fleshly pain. Cf. hibernation in animals and suspended animation in human beings.) (5) phenomena of the Subconscious which indicate the human spirit’s transcendence of the space-time dimension are telepathy (communication of thought and feeling from one person to another without the mediation of the physical senses), clairvoyance (the power to see physical objects or events apart from the medium of physical sense), and prescience (foreknowledge of events in time). These are the phenomena included under the term Extrasensory Perception. These phenomena are being studied scientifically in various colleges and universities in our day, notably by Dr. J. B. Rhine and his colleagues in the Department of Parapsychology at Duke University. Dr. Rhine affirms that the prevalence of such phenomena has been established beyond all reasonable doubt, and established, moreover, not by hearsay, but by strict mathematical or statistical procedures and norms which rule out the possibility of chance production. Even though materialistic scientists may continue to doubt these conclusions, he says, largely because they do not want to accept any finding that tends to undermine their own cherished predilections, still and all they have not, and indeed cannot, question the mathematical accuracy of his methods. (See J. B. Rhine, The Reach of the Mind, and his latest work, The New World of the Mind.) Certainly such phenomena as telepathy and clairvoyance support the Biblical doctrines of inspiration and revelation: if human spirit can communicate with human spirit without the use of physical media,

surely the Divine Spirit can in like manner communicate truth to the human spirit (Acts 2:4, 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, Matthew 16:16-17, John 16:13-14, Matthew 10:19-20). The phenomenon of prescience, of course, supports the claim of prophetic insight and prophetic transcendence of time that is characteristic of revealed religion. (6) Phenomena of the Subconscious which point up the human spirit's apparently unlimited power of knowing are perfect memory, and perfect perception of the fixed (mathematical) laws of nature, Thus the perfect memory of the Subconscious provides a scientific basis for the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Who knows but that perfect memory, by which the self preserves the records of its own deeds, both good and evil, may prove to be "the worm that never dies," and conscience (that is, unforgiven, guilty conscience) "the fire that is never quenched"? (Cf. Revelation 20:11-15, Mark 9:43-48). Again, the perfect perception, by the Subconscious, of the fixed laws of nature, supports the view that Life Everlasting will not be a matter of stretched-out time, but essentially an illumination or fullness of knowledge, that is, intuitive apprehension of eternal Truth, Beauty and Goodness: in a word, eternal life will be wholeness or holiness—the union of the human mind with the mind of God in knowledge, and of the human will with the will of God in love. This will be the Summum Bonum, the Beatific Vision (1 Corinthians 13:12, 1 John 3:1-3). (In the life we now live this phenomenon of perfect perception manifests itself in mathematical prodigies, musical prodigies (perfect pitch), photographic memory, and the various aspects and fruits of what we call creative imagination.) (7) Phenomena of the Subconscious which support the view that spirit is pre-eminent over body are those which are exhibited in cases of suggestion and auto-suggestion. These phenomena remind us that all men are endowed by the Creator with psychic powers designed to be of great value to them in maintaining physical and mental health, if they will but utilize these powers as they should. It is still just as true as ever that as a man thinketh in his heart, so he is (Proverbs 23:7): this fundamental truth is the basis of what is known in our day as psychosomatic medicine. (See the great work by H. Bernheim, suggestive Therapeutics, recently republished by the London Book Company, 30–41 Fiftieth Street, Woodside, New York.) (8) Phenomena such as psychokinesis (PK), levitation, automatic writing, the projection of ectoplasms and phantasms, and the like, seem to indicate that the thought of the Subconscious has the power to transmute itself into what we call "physical" energy and thus to produce "physical" phenomena. Psychokinesis (or telekinesis) is that phenomenon in which ponderable objects are influenced, and even moved, by thought energy alone. Dr. Rhine and his associates have long been experimenting in this field and claim to have obtained positive results. In automatic writing the Subconscious assumes control of the nerves and muscles of the arm and hand and propels the pencil. Levitation is not, as often defined, the illusion that a heavy body is suspended in the air without visible support: it is alleged by students of psychic phenomena to be the real thing, produced by subconscious thought power. Ectoplasm is defined by Hamlin Garland as an elementary substance that is given off by the human body, at the command of the Subconscious, in varying degrees. He conceives it to be ideoplastic, that is, capable of being moulded, by the subjective thought power either of the psychic or of the sitter, in various shapes. To quote the distinguished physicist, Dr. Millikan: "To admit telekinesis and the formation of ectoplasmic phantasms is not to destroy the smallest fragment of science—it is but to admit new data, to recognize that here are unknown energies. Materialization does not contradict one established fact: it merely adds new facts" quoted by Garland, Forty Years of Psychic Research, pp. 379–380). Phantasms are described as thought projections of the Subconscious, that is, ethereal reconstructions of matter by the power of thought. They may be called "embodied

thoughts," we are told, even as man may properly be called the embodied thought of God. Truly, then, thoughts are things. (It should be made clear at this point that these phenomena are not to be identified with aspects of what is known in Scripture as necromancy, such as, for example, alleged communication of the living with the dead. All forms of sorcery, conjuration, necromancy, etc., are strictly condemned in both the Old and New Testaments: see Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:26; Leviticus 19:21; Leviticus 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15, etc.). (9) All such phenomena as psychokinesis, levitation, ectoplasms, phantasms, etc., serve to support the view of the primacy of mind or thought in the totality of being. In the possession and use of these powers of thought energy, thought projection, and thought materialization, man, it is contended, reveals the spark of the Infinite that is in him, and thus himself gives evidence of having been created in the image of God. For, is not the cosmos itself, according to Biblical teaching, a constitution of the Divine Will, a projection of the Divine Spirit, an embodiment of the Divine Thought as expressed by the Divine Word? Cf. Genesis 1:1-31, Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Hebrews 11:3). Biblical teaching is simply that the Will of God, as expressed by His Word, and actualized by His Spirit, is the Constitution (that which constitutes) of our universe, both physical and moral. (10) To summarize: It will thus be seen from the material presented in the foregoing paragraphs, that the phenomena of the Subconscious all go to prove the independence, transcendence, and imperishability of the essential human person, and therefore support the spiritualistic (as against the materialistic) view of man's origin, nature, and destiny. They confirm the fact that the primacy of spirit in man, and, on the basis of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (that that which begins to exist must have an adequate cause) they support our conviction of the priority and sovereignty of the Divine Spirit in whose image man is created. John 4:24—said Jesus, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (For those who wish to pursue this study of the Subconscious further, the following books are recommended in addition to those already cited above): F. W. H. Myers, The Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death, 2 vols., Longmans, Green and Company, New York; Hereward Carrington, The Story of Psychic Science, published by Ives Washburn, New York; Hamlin Garland, Forty Years of Psychic Research, Macmillan, New York. Also The Law of Psychic Phenomena, by Dr. T. J. Hudson, the 32nd edition of which was published in 1909. Some of these works are now out of print, but copies are usually available at second-hand bookstores. For out-of-print books, write the London Book Company, Woodside, New York, or Basil Blackwell, Broad Street, Oxford, England.)

Chapter 17

01.016. GOD'S MORAL SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

It should be made clear at this point that in the remaining lessons of this first year volume we shall be studying God's eternal purpose and plan with respect to the moral universe. There is a notion abroad in the world today that life is meaningless and purposeless; that we humans are merely puppets of chance—whatever that term may signify; that a cruel Satirist, commonly called Fate, sits upon the throne of the universe. This cynical philosophy is of course but a revival of ancient paganism with its characteristic sense of the futility of things. It is our purpose in these lessons to teach the true philosophy of life: that there is a God, and that He has a plan for His moral creatures; that He had an eternal purpose and end in creating them; and that He is slowly but surely bending the course of events toward the triumphant and glorious consummation of this divine purpose and plan. Dr. Edward Beecher has rightly said that "a complete system of the universe is a natural want of the mind." We believe that such a complete system of the universe is fully revealed in the scriptures, and that the one thing most needed at the present time, to dispel current forms of unbelief, is that men should reverently re-study the Bible, under the conscious leading of the Holy Spirit, to ascertain what is "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). It is our desire in this series of lessons to instil in the hearts of parents and children alike, the conviction that life does have a meaning—a profound and vital meaning—especially for all who live in harmony with God's purpose and plan for the human race. One who is acquainted with these essential truths of both reason and revelation is prepared to cope with the agnosticism and unbelief prevalent in our day, especially so-called Fatalism.

It is important that these fundamental matters should be impressed upon the minds of the children as well as adults. For the children, the illustration of a man setting out to build a great building, is suggested. He first draws up the plans and specifications for the structure he proposes to build; then he enters upon the actual construction of it with the definite intention of building it according to the plans already drawn, and for the specific use to which he intends to put it when it shall have been completed. There are three general steps in the entire process, viz., (1) organization, (2) execution, and (3) application. Origination takes in the formulating of the necessary plans and specifications for the building; execution, the actual construction of the building according to the plans and specifications; and application, the actual use of the completed structure for the purpose for which it was designed and built. So it is with God and His universe, which He designed and created, which He governs, and which He is slowly but surely directing toward that ". . . one far-off divine event. To which the whole creation moves."

(Tennyson.)

Lesson Fourteen GOD'S MORAL SYSTEM Scripture Reading: Romans 8:18-25.

Scripture To Memorize: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the

creature waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (Romans 8:18-21).

1. Q. What do we learn about God from the world around us?

A. That He is a God of order.

(1) It has been rightly said that "nature is a system—a cosmos, not a chaos." (2) "A disorderly Supreme Being is unthinkable . . . Without order there could be no number or measure; no music, no art. Without it there could be no growth, no progress, no life, no cause and effect; no liberty, no social relations, and no science" (Boswell, God's Purpose Toward Us, pp. 11–12). (3) Our world is a world of cause and effect. Even the abnormalities of nature, such as cyclones, earthquakes, tidal waves, pestilences, etc., have their respective causes. To deny that order prevails throughout the universe is to deny the known facts of observation and experience.

2. Q. What great truth do we derive from our conviction that God created the heavens and the earth?

A. The truth that He had a purpose in creating us and the world around us.

Order necessitates purpose, and vice versa. Our God is orderly and purposeful because He is intelligent. He commands that we ourselves do all things "decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40); therefore we may rightly expect Him to do His works in the same orderly manner. It follows, then, that God did not create the universe without first forming His purpose with respect to it and its creatures.

3. Q. What do we mean by the physical universe?

A. By the physical universe we mean the world around us, commonly called the natural or material world.

Hebrews 1:10—"Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands." Cf. Genesis 1:1, Hebrews 11:3, Psalms 33:6-9.

4. Q. What do we mean by God's moral system?

A. By His moral system we mean His eternal purpose and plan with respect to His moral creatures.

(1) By moral creatures we mean all those who have free will, or the ability to choose between right and wrong. Call attention to the differences between you and the world around you. (2) By moral system, we have reference to all moral creatures; that is, to the whole realm of personality. (3) The terms moral universe and moral system, are used by way of contrast with the terms physical universe and physical system. The former allude to the realm of personality; the latter, to the realm of things. (4) For general purposes, when we speak of God's moral system, we have reference to His purpose and plan with respect to us. Thus the idea becomes a matter of personal interest.

5. Q. What was God's purpose in creating the physical universe?

A. It was evidently created for man's use and benefit.

(1) This is clearly indicated in Genesis 1:28-30. (2) The physical universe is in a sense incidental to God's moral system; for, without the human race, the physical universe and the brute creation would both be needless and superfluous. As God had no need Himself of the natural world, He must have created it for us. It should be made clear to the students that the world around us, or what we call Nature, with its manifold blessings of sunshine and shower, seedtime and harvest, of tree and fruit and herb, of fish and bird and beast, etc., was all created for us and for our use and benefit. (3) Hence the natural world was created first, the brute creation next, and man last. The order of creation as given in the first chapter of Genesis is in perfect accord with the nature of things. Everything led up to the creation of man and his establishment upon the earth as its lord tenant (Genesis 1:27-30). (4) How needless the creation of the natural world would have been without the human race to inhabit it, to make use of its vast resources, and to benefit from its operations and productivity! (5) Impress upon the students the fact that God bestows innumerable blessings upon us daily. How little we could accomplish if God did not send the sunshine and the shower, if He had not stored up in the earth its vast resources of mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms! Should we not give thanks to God daily for all these blessings? Should we not cultivate the habit of offering Him our thanks each time we gather at the family table to partake of His bounties?

6. Q. What was God's purpose in inaugurating His moral system?

A. Evidently He purposed to have, ultimately, a holy universe.

(1) The primary reason for His moral system seems to have been that He wanted beings whom He could love and who could love Him in return. 1 John 4:16—"God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." (2) Spirit is social, i.e., it seeks the fellowship of kindred spirits. It is quite probable that God was speaking from His own experience when He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). Both creation and redemption, it would seem, have their source and foundation not so much in God's sovereignty as in His love. (3) "But God could not love sticks and stones and material things any more than we can. Neither could He love the brute creation, for they could not understand and appreciate Him. He could truly love only a proper object of love; and there is no proper object of affection but a free moral agent—one who can understand and appreciate affection, and especially that affection which has its foundation in moral qualities and character" (Cook, The Origin of Sin, p. 94). (4) Such perfect intimacy of association and fellowship with His moral creatures as God desires, is possible only among beings who are holy. 1 Peter 1:16—"ye shall be holy; for I am holy." Matthew 5:8—"blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." We conclude, therefore, that the ultimate objective of God's eternal purpose and plan is a holy race.

7. Q. What may we expect, then, with regard to God's moral system?

A. We may expect it to have a consummation grander and more glorious than is possible for the human intelligence to imagine!

(1) The scriptures teach that this consummation will be realized in the ages to come. Ephesians 2:7—"that in the ages to come he may show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (2) It will be realized no doubt in "the new heavens and new earth, wherein

dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13). (3) We may expect it to be grand and glorious because it will be the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose and plan. Nothing in this world can compare with it in nobility, magnitude and preciousness. (4) This is all clearly taught in Romans 8:18-21. Here it is taught that the human race was subjected to a state of vanity (literally, frailty, i.e., physical imperfection, mortality, and in fact all the consequences of having been clothed with a fleshly body); and that this was done according to the direct arrangement of the Creator, and in view of man's liability to temptation and sin; that it was done in the benevolent design and expectation that the human race would, by passing through this earthly state, be moved to seek deliverance from its various forms of bondage consequential to a fleshly organization, and would thus in cooperation with God on the terms and conditions of His Covenant, finally attain that desired freedom from the guilt and consequences of sin, and even from mortality itself, and finally be established for ever in the free and glorious service of God. (5) In this connection read the account of John's apocalyptic vision of the "holy city, new Jerusalem" in the "new heaven and new earth" (Revelation 21:1-4).

8. Q. In view of these truths how should we regard this present world?

A. We should look upon it as being only the stepping-stone to the future world.

(1) If it is not just the stepping-stone to a future glorious world, then life here is purposeless and to a large extent useless. As Browning says:

"Truly there needs another life to come!

If this be all, And another life await us not, for one I say 'tis a poor cheat, a stupid bungle, A wretched failure. I for one protest Against, and I hurl it back with scorn."

(2) God's moral system is probably yet in its infancy. "Our view is that God is just now laying the foundations of an endless moral universe; and that when these foundations have been laid securely, then the peopling of the material universe will go on through all the ages; so that the ultimate design which God has in view is a moral universe expanding in glory and blessedness forevermore. . . . The solution of the matter may be found in this—that God is building so vast a universe, and laying the foundations of a government over it that will stand the strain of eternity" (Cook, The Origin of Sin, pp. 21, 32).

9. Q. What lessons should we derive from these sublime truths?

A. Three great lessons, namely: 1. that God knows and is always doing what is best for the race as a whole; 2. that we should accept His dispensations in implicit faith that to all who love Him all things work together for good; 3. that we should always live and act in harmony with His will as revealed in the scriptures, for in so doing we shall attain that true holiness essential to unbroken fellowship with Him in the ages to come.

(1) Colossians 1:12—"giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Matthew 6:33—"seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness." Php 2:12-13—"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." 1 John 3:2-3—"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath

this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (2) Impress the following truths upon the students: (a) that there is a life hereafter; (b) that life here is just preparatory; (c) that we should live here as God wants us to live; (d) that in so doing we shall be a blessing to this world and shall prepare ourselves to live with Him eternally in the next world; (e) that if we refuse to live here as He wants us to live, we can expect nothing hereafter but to be separated from Him forever; (f) that such a tragic end would be the consequence of our own disobedience, and not of anything that God has desired or willed or done. God wants us to be saved. God pleads with us to forsake sin. God knows what is best for us. Therefore our eternal happiness depends on our working together with God according to the terms and conditions, and in the ways, which He has revealed in His word.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FOURTEEN 1.Q.What do we learn about God from the world around us?

2. Q. What great truth do we derive from our conviction that God created the heavens and the earth?

3. Q. What do we mean by the physical universe?

4. Q. What do we mean by God's moral system?

5. Q. What was God's purpose in creating the physical universe?

6. Q. What was God's purpose in inaugurating His moral system?

7. Q. What may we expect, then, with regard to God's moral system?

8. Q. In view of these truths how should we regard this present world?

9. Q. What lessons should we derive from these sublime truths?

01.017. THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Lesson Fifteen THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD Scripture Reading: Romans 8:26-30.

Scripture To Memorize: “For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Romans 8:29-30).

10. Q. What do we mean by the foreknowledge of God?

A. By the foreknowledge of God, we mean His knowledge from eternity of the events and developments in His moral universe.

(1) Foreknowledge ordinarily means the knowledge of events in advance of their happening. With God it means knowledge from eternity of the events and developments in connection with the working out of His eternal purpose and plan. (2) Knowledge from eternity means knowledge which was held prior to the inauguration of the moral universe. Ephesians 1:4—“even as he (God) chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34—“the kingdom prepared . . . from the foundation of the world.” 1 Peter 1:20—“Christ who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world,” etc. (3) “Two things are evident as demonstration itself. The first—that all the purposes and promises of God are in Christ—in reference to Him, and consummated in Him and by Him; and, in the second place, they were all contemplated, covenanted and systematized in Him and through Him before the foundation of the world” (A. Campbell, The Christian System, p. 32). Again: “The phrase pro and apo katabole kosmou, found ten times in the New Testament, literally indicates the foundation of the world. We quote Ephesians 1:4, Matthew 25:34, 1 Peter 1:20, as unequivocally declarative of this” (ibid., p. 33, fn.). (4) 2 Timothy 1:9—“according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal,” etc. Cf. John 17:5; John 17:24.

11. Q. What did God evidently foreknow with reference to His moral creatures?

A. He evidently foreknew that they would lapse into sin and would consequently stand in need of salvation.

(1) We cannot say definitely of course that this was true with respect to the angels, but it was undoubtedly true with respect to man. (2) God evidently foreknew, even before He created the world and man, that man would lapse into sin; and in the light of this foreknowledge He foreordained all the essential features of the Plan of Redemption. (3) 1 Peter 1:1-2—“elect . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” Acts 2:23—“him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” (the reference here is to Christ). 1 Peter 1:20—“Christ who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake,” etc. (4) We cannot conceive of omniscience without foreknowledge of such important matters as these; nor can we conceive of the true and living God

as making experiments.

12. Q. What is the connection between God's foreknowledge and His eternal purpose and plan?

A. It seems obvious that His eternal purpose and plan were formed with the likelihood in prospect that man would lapse into sin and stand in need of salvation.

(1) Before man was created the likelihood of his lapse into sin was evidently contemplated, and the eternal purpose and plan of the creator for a holy race were evidently originated with this eventuality in view. Hence we find that the first intimation of redemption was given immediately after the temptation and fall of our first parents. See Genesis 3:15. (2) "Evident then it is, that the whole remedial or gospel system was purposed, arranged and established upon the basis of the revealed distinctions of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and by these, in reference to one another, before the foundation of the world; and that all the institutions and developments of religion in the different ages of the world were, in pursuance of that system, devised in eternity, and consummated some two thousand years ago" (Campbell, The Christian System, p. 33). (3) "The Plan of Salvation by Grace was no afterthought, introduced merely upon the event of human sinfulness; but the sinfulness of the race was distinctly foreseen, and the Atonement decided upon, and all the peculiar circumstances and conditions of the race devised from the very outset. The world itself was created at first, and its pillars set up, and its physical peculiarities all arranged down to the minutest particulars, in view of the fact that it was to be the home of a sinful race, in which the grand work of Redemption was to be wrought out" (Cook, The Origin of Sin, p. 148). (4) Redemption is the grand word in God's eternal purpose and plan for us. The Bible is the history of redemption; that is, the record of the unfolding of the divine plan through which reception, in its reality and in its effects, has been brought within reach of all men. Romans 3:24—"being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

13. Q. What is meant by foreordination?

A. Foreordination is the term used to describe all those exercises of the Divine Will by which the circumstances and events in the unfolding of God's eternal purpose and plan, were determined and decreed from eternity.

14. Q. What is the scripture doctrine of foreordination?

A. It is that the divine Plan of Redemption for man was foreordained in all its particulars, and in the light of God's foreknowledge that the race would lapse into sin and stand in need of salvation.

(1) This does not mean of course that certain individuals are foreordained to be saved, and others foreordained to be lost. This notion, embodied in many of the man-made creeds, is monstrously derogatory to God, and has driven thousands of confused souls into unbelief. (2) It means, rather, that a certain class of persons is foreordained to be saved, and that another and opposite class is foreordained to be lost. (3) Romans 8:28-30. "All things work together for good to those that are called according to God's ancient purpose; and they are thus called by the gospel. Those who He foresaw in purpose would obey Him, He predetermined to be, when raised from the dead, of like form with that of His Son. Those whom He thus in purpose predetermined, He also in purpose called; and those whom He called in purpose, He justified in purpose; and those whom He justified

in purpose, He glorified in purpose" (Lard, Commentary on Romans, p. 279). It will thus be seen that the apostle is contemplating, in this scripture, God's eternal purpose; and that the class for whom God purposes to work the benefits described (justification, glorification, etc.) is "them that love God," and who of course manifest their love for Him by obedience to His commands. In short, the elect, or those foreordained to be saved with an everlasting salvation, are those who respond to the overtures and calls of God as extended through the gospel, and who manifest their faith and love by obedience to His commands. Revelation 22:17.

15. Q. What class of persons is foreordained to be saved?

A. The class consisting of those who accept God's offer of salvation through Christ.

(1) Ephesians 1:3-5 : "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ; even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world . . . having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," etc. Ephesians 1:13-14—"in whom ye also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory." (2) God's overtures and calls are extended to us through the gospel. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14—"but we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 2:8—"for I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (3) All who hear and accept God's calls extended to them through the gospel, constitute the class of accountable human beings that is foreordained to be saved (provided of course that they continue throughout life to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," 1 Corinthians 15:58). Hence they are known in scripture as the elect. Revelation 22:17—"he that will, let him take the water of life freely." 1 Peter 1:1-2—"to the elect . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Matthew 25:34—"then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (4) 'The present elect of God are, then, those who are in Christ, and not those out of Him: for it was in Him that God has set His affection upon them, and chose them to eternal life before the world began. God is not, indeed, in this whole affair a respecter of persons. It is at character, and not at person, that God looks. He has predestinated all that are in Christ 'to be holy and without blame before him in love,' and, at His coming, to be conformed to Him in all personal excellency and beauty and to share with Him the bliss of a glorious immortality. So that 'we shall be like him'—he the firstborn, and we His junior brethren, bearing His image in our persons as exactly as we now bear the image of the earthly Adam, the father of us all" (Campbell, The Christian System, pp. 34–35).

16. Q. What class of persons is foreordained to be lost?

A. The class consisting of all those who reject or neglect God's offer of salvation through Christ.

John 3:18—"he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." Mark 16:16—"he that disbelieveth shall be condemmed."

Romans 2:8-11, “but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil . . . but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good . . . for there is no respect of persons with God.” Hebrews 2:3—“how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9—“at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”

17. Q. Why is this class of persons foreordained to be lost?

A. They will be lost, not because of anything God has done or will do to cause them to be lost, but in consequence of their own disobedience, indifference and rebelliousness.

James 1:13-15, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death.” John 5:40—“ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.” 2 Peter 2:9—“the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment.” Romans 2:15-16, “in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.” Matthew 7:18-20, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” Hebrews 10:29-31, “of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTEEN 10.Q.What do we mean by the foreknowledge of God?

11. Q. What did God evidently foreknow with reference to His moral creatures?

12. Q. What is the connection between God’s foreknowledge and His eternal purpose and plan?

13. Q. What is meant by foreordination?

14. Q. What is the scripture doctrine of foreordination?

15. Q. What class of persons is foreordained to be saved?

16. Q. What class of persons is foreordained to be lost?

17. Q. Why is this class of persons foreordained to be lost?

01.018. GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

Lesson Sixteen GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE Scripture Reading: Ephesians 3:1-13.

Scripture To Memorize: ". . . to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:9-11).

18. Q. What is meant by God's eternal purpose?

A. By God's eternal purpose is meant the objective or end that He had in view when He created the universe and man.

19. Q. What did God's eternal purpose necessitate?

A. It necessitated His divine plan for the universe and its moral creatures.

"A purpose implies and demands a plan. Intelligent human minds formulate plans for the execution of their purposes, and these plans are formed before the attempt is made to accomplish the purpose. If this is true of the human mind, how much more is it true of the divine mind . . . The priority of purpose to creation is no more essential than the priority of plan to creation; for the necessity, which originated the purpose, originated the plan" (Boswell, God's Purpose Toward Us, pp. 20–21).

20. Q. When did God form His eternal purpose and plan?

A. Before He entered upon His work of creation.

(1) The very nature of God makes it essential that He should have formed His purpose concerning the universe and its creatures before He created them. God, who is all-knowing, all-wise, and all-powerful, surely would not have inaugurated a scheme of things without having first formed a purpose and plan with regard to it. If this is not true, then the world and life and man are all without rational explanation or reason for existence. (2) The scriptures teach that God's purpose is eternal. 2 Timothy 1:9—"God who 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 times eternal." Titus 1:2—"in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal." 1 Peter 1:20—"Christ who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world." Ephesians 3:11—"according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

21. Q. What is comprehended in God's eternal plan?

A. All those divine acts essential to human redemption.

It was His eternal plan that the Word should become flesh and dwell among us as our Savior, that the Savior, Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God, should make atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Himself; that He should die and be buried and be raised up from the dead, and be made head over all things to the church; that salvation should be proffered all accountable human beings through Him and in His name, on the terms of the new covenant; that both Jews and Gentiles should be united in the one body of Christ, the church; and that through the instrumentality of the church, the gospel with its calls and gifts and promises should be proclaimed unto all nations for the obedience of faith. All this is comprehended in what we know as the Scheme of Redemption. (For reference, see John 1:14, Matthew 1:21, Php 2:5-11, Hebrews 2:14-17, Hebrews 9:24-28, 1 Peter 2:24, Ephesians 3:1-12, Ephesians 2:11-17, Ephesians 1:20-23, Acts 2:29-36, Acts 10:35-43, Matthew 28:18-20, Matthew 24:14, etc.).

22. Q. How is God's eternal purpose and plan otherwise designated in scripture?

A. It is called "the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things," Ephesians 3:9.

Ephesians 3:1-7, "For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles—if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel," etc. 1 Peter 1:10-12, "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto, you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into." 1 Corinthians 4:1—"stewards of the mysteries of God." 1 Corinthians 2:7—"but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory," etc.

23. Q. In whom does this eternal purpose and plan of God centralize?

A. In Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:11—"according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 2:7—"that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Galatians 4:4-5—"but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son . . . that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." 1 Peter 1:20—"Christ who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake." Ephesians 1:9-10, "making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth," etc.

24. Q. What is the ultimate objective, or end, of God's eternal purpose and plan?

A. A holy race, to inhabit "the new heavens and the new earth," 2 Peter 3:13.

Revelation 21:1-4 : "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them and be their God; and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; the first things are passed away." Cf. 2 Peter 3:8-13; also 1 Corinthians 15:20-28.

25. Q. What do the scriptures teach about the consummation of God's eternal purpose and plan?

A. The scriptures teach that because God is unchangeable, His eternal purpose and plan will be triumphantly and gloriously consummated.

Isaiah 46:9-10, "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Malachi 3:6—"I, Jehovah, change not." Romans 11:29—"for the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of," i.e., not turneth away from, not abandoned or changed. James 1:17—"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." Titus 1:2—"in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal." Men may reject, neglect and even oppose God's eternal purpose and plan, but they will never be able to hinder its ultimate and glorious consummation.

26. Q. In view of all these great truths what should we do?

A. We should give earnest heed to the calls of God, accept His matchless gifts of salvation and eternal life, and live in harmony with His eternal purpose and plan for us, for we may be absolutely sure that no disappointments will follow a life of consecration and service.

Revelation 22:17—"he that is athirst, let him come; he that will, let him take the water of life freely." Matthew 11:28—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Romans 6:23—"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Revelation 2:7—"to him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTEEN 18.Q.What is meant by God's eternal purpose?

19. Q. What did God's eternal purpose necessitate?

20. Q. When did God form His eternal purpose and plan?

21. Q. What is comprehended in God's eternal plan?

22. Q. How is God’s eternal purpose and plan otherwise designated in scripture?

23. Q. In whom does this eternal purpose and plan of God centralize?

24. Q. What is the ultimate objective, or end, of God’s eternal purpose and plan?

25. Q. What do the scriptures teach about the consummation of God’s eternal purpose and plan?

26. Q. In view of all these great truths what should we do?

Chapter 20

01.019. GOD'S INVISIBLE CREATION

Lesson Seventeen GOD'S INVISIBLE CREATION Scripture Reading: Hebrews 1:1-14.

Scripture To Memorize: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10).

27. Q. Does God have any creation other than our visible world?

A.The scriptures teach that God has an invisible creation. By invisible, we mean invisible to us, Colossians 1:16—"for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible," Ephesians 3:10—"the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places." Cf. Colossians 2:10; Colossians 2:15.

28. Q. Who are the inhabitants of the invisible world?

A. The angels.

29. Q. What special reason have we for believing in the existence of angels?

A. The reason that Jesus in numerous scriptures expressly asserts their existence as a fact.

Matthew 22:30—"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven." Matthew 13:39—"the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels." Mark 8:38—"when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Matthew 24:36—"but of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven." Matthew 26:53—"thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?" These are just a few of the many texts in which Jesus expressly affirms the existence of angels as a fact. One should think seriously before taking issue with our Lord on any subject. What justification has any one for speaking of belief in angels as a "superstition?" As a matter of fact, to believe in angels requires no greater exercise of faith than to believe in atoms.

30. Q. Are the angels created beings?

A. The scriptures teach that God created them.

Colossians 1:16—"for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible." Psalms 148:2; Psalms 148:5—"Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his host . . . let them praise the name of Jehovah; for he commanded, and they were created." How long it was between the creation of angels and the creation of man we have no means of knowing, for the simple reason that eternity cannot be measured by our human concepts.

31. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their number?

A. The scriptures teach that they are a great multitude.

Luke 2:13—“and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,” etc. Matthew 26:53—“twelve legions of angels,” i.e., an indefinitely large number. Hebrews 12:22—“to innumerable hosts of angels.” Revelation 5:11—“I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne.” See also Daniel 7:10.

32. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their rank?

A. The scriptures teach that they are of a higher order than man in rank and endowment.

They are supernatural in their attributes, but not infinite. God alone is infinite. Luke 20:36—“neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels.” Psalms 103:20—“Bless Jehovah, ye his angels, that are mighty in strength, that fulfill his word, hearkening unto the voice of his word.” Cf. Matthew 24:36.

33. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their nature?

A. The scriptures teach that they are an order of celestial beings.

(1) They are ethereal beings. Hebrews 1:14—“are they not all ministering spirits?” Acts 23:8—“for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit.” (2) They are without sex distinctions. Matthew 22:30—“for in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven.” (3) Celestial creatures cannot in the very nature of the case have the characteristics of our physical organization. It is for this reason we must lay aside our earthly bodies, and our blood which is the seat of physical or animal life, and put on spiritual (ethereal) bodies adapted to our environment in the next world, before we can be fully conformed to the image of God’s Son (Romans 8:29). Leviticus 17:11—“for the life of the flesh is in the blood.” 1 Corinthians 15:50—“flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 15:44; 1 Corinthians 15:49—“if there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body . . . and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (The reference in this last text is to the saints, not to the unconverted). (4) It is obvious that pictorial representations of angels which have come down to us from medieval art, in which they are represented as feminine creatures with wings, are unscriptural. Angels are invariably referred to in scripture in the masculine; furthermore, ethereal beings would have no need for wings. We must distinguish between scripture teaching and human tradition on all such subjects as this. (5) It is equally obvious that the popular notion that angels are spirits (or souls) of the righteous dead, is also unscriptural. In Hebrews 12:22-23, the “innumerable hosts of angels” are clearly distinguished from “the spirits of just men made perfect” (i.e., the righteous dead). (6) Again, the assumption that angels are creatures of the human imagination, corresponding to the demigods of the ancient mythologies, is absurd. Demigods were usually conceived of as the offspring resulting from sensualistic relations between all sorts of imaginary creatures. The gods were represented as consorting with humans, and frequently with brutes; and all sorts of fantastic creatures were supposed to have inhabited the earth as a consequence of such illicit relations. It is silly to think that the Bible writers, surrounded as they were by sensualistic and idolatrous pagan neighbors, could have imagined an order of beings purely ethereal in nature and benevolent in their ministry, as angels are represented to be in the scriptures. We therefore accept the teaching of the Bible with respect to angels and their nature and work, as divine revelation. (7) Summarizing, angels are represented in scripture as an order of ethereal beings, all of whom were probably created at one

time; an order of beings without sex distinctions or qualities; an order of beings superior to man in rank and endowment, but inferior to God and subject to His government.

34. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their office and work?

A. The scriptures teach that they are the ministers of God's providence.

(1) Hebrews 1:14—"are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" Luke 15:7—"there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," etc. (2) Concerning little children, Jesus said: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10). Does He not expressly teach in this statement that little children have their guardian angels? (3) Again, we are told that angels have ever been interested in the unfolding of God's plan of redemption for man, and the events connected therewith. 1 Peter 1:10-12, "concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; search-what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into." (4) Angels, we are told, will play a leading role in the final judgment of nations and in the renovation of our earth. Matthew 13:39—"the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels." Matthew 25:31—"But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." Mark 8:38—"when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." 2 Thessalonians 1:7—"at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire," etc. (5) Instances of angelic ministration are frequent in scripture, as, for example, in the following connections: Hagar, Genesis 16:7; Abraham, Genesis 18:2; Genesis 22:11-18; Lot, Genesis 19:1-17; Jacob, Genesis 28:12; Genesis 32:1; Moses, Exodus 3:2, Galatians 3:19; the children of Israel, Exodus 14:19, Judges 2:1; Balaam, Numbers 22:31; Joshua, Joshua 5:15; Gideon, Judges 6:11-12; Manoah, Judges 13:2-21; David, 2 Samuel 24:16; Elijah, 1 Kings 19:5; Elisha, 2 Kings 6:17; Daniel, Daniel 6:22; Daniel 7:10; Zechariah, Zechariah 2:3; the annunciation to Joseph, Matthew 1:20; Zacharias, Luke 1:11-20; the annunciation to Mary, Luke 1:26-38; the protection of the Child Jesus, Matthew 2:13-20; the shepherds, Luke 2:8-15; the temptation of Jesus, Matthew 4:11; the women at the sepulchre, Matthew 28:2-5; the disciples at the Ascension of Jesus, Acts 1:9-11; Peter and John, Acts 5:19; Philip, Acts 8:26; the deliverance of Peter from prison, Acts 12:6-9; Cornelius, Acts 10:3; Paul, Acts 27:23-24; John, Revelation 1:1; Revelation 5:2, etc. (Many authorities believe that the "angel of Jehovah" frequently mentioned in the Old Testament scriptures was the Word of God Himself in pre-incarnate manifestations, or theophanies. See Micah 5:2, 1 Corinthians 10:1-4).

35. Q. In what moral state were the angels when God created them?

A. The scriptures teach that they were all good and happy and endowed with many supernatural gifts.

36. Q. What, then, did God do through the angels?

A.He inaugurated His moral system through them. By moral system, as previously explained, we mean His government, purpose and plan with respect to personal beings, or those who are endowed with free will. That the angels have free will, the same as man, is evident from the scriptures.

37. Q. Of what value to us is belief in the angels and their ministry?

A. It serves to liberate our minds from bondage to the things of flesh and sense.

(1) Things of flesh and sense are to a large extent illusive and transitory. As Rabbi Hillel Silver says, in his Religion in a Changing World, the scientific concepts of “matter, energy, time, space, the atom, etc., are not truth, but only artifices of thought, convenient summaries, not realities.” The only realities in this changing world, he rightly contends are “the reality of God, the reality of personality, the reality of truth, beauty and goodness.” Reality is found only in the realm of spirit. (2) Therefore we should constantly “look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen,” as we make our earthly pilgrimage; “for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18). A realization of the fact that there is an invisible world, inhabited by celestial beings who minister God’s providence and who are personally interested in our spiritual welfare as children of God, should help us mightily to resist “the tyranny of things.” What is needed most in our day and age is simple, childlike faith and trust with respect to “the revealed things” of God. Deuteronomy 29:29.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTEEN 27.Q.Does God have any creation other than our visible world?

28. Q. Who are the inhabitants of the invisible world?

29. Q. What special reason have we for believing in the existence of angels?

30. Q. Are the angels created beings?

31. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their number?

32. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their rank?

33. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their nature?

34. Q. What do the scriptures teach regarding angels as to their office and work?

35. Q. In what moral state were the angels when God created them?

36. Q. What, then, did God do through the angels?

37. Q. Of what value to us is belief in the angels and their ministry?

01.020. THE NATURE OF SIN

Lesson Eighteen THE NATURE OF SIN Scripture reading: 1 John 3:1-12.

Scripture To Memorize: “Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). “To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

38. Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is transgression of the law of God.

(1) 1 John 3:4—“Sin is the transgression of the law” (A.V.); “sin is lawlessness” (R.V.). (2) As God is the only Being who is infinitely wise, holy, just and good, it follows that He alone has the necessary attributes for determining what is right, and for distinguishing right from wrong. (3) God’s law is the expression of God’s will; therefore sin is disobedience to God’s will. (4) Crime is transgression of the civil law, which is man-made; sin is transgression of the divine law. (5) Romans 7:7—“I had not known sin, except through the law; for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” The Apostle is writing here with reference to God’s law. See Exodus 20:17.

39. Q. What are the two general kinds of sin?

A. Sins of commission, and sins of omission.

40. Q. What are the sins of commission?

A. By sins of commission we mean: wilfully doing the things or indulging in the practices which God has expressly prohibited or denounced.

Romans 2:8—“unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness,” etc. Romans 13:9—“For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (cf. Exodus 20:1-17). Matthew 5:28—“every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Galatians 5:19-21, “now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of which I forewarn you . . . that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

41. Q. What are the sins of omission?

A. By sins of omission we mean: refusing or neglecting to do the things enjoined upon us by divine authority as essential to our salvation and growth in holiness.

James 4:17—“to him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” Matthew 22:37—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” Matthew 22:39—“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Acts 16:31—“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” Matthew 10:32—“Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven.” Acts 2:38—“Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.” 1 Corinthians 11:26—“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till he come.” 1 Corinthians 16:2—“Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.” Galatians 5:22-23—“But? the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.” Hebrews 2:3—“how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?”

42. Q. What is the essential principle of sin?

A. The essential principle of sin is selfishness.

(1) No sin was ever committed that was not essentially the choice of self above God. (Explain to the students as follows: You commit sin when you do what you want to do in preference to what God wants you to do; or, when you put your own way of doing things above God’s way of doing things. This is a rule to which there is no exception). (2) All the confusion, apostasy, humanism and denominationalism of modern Christendom spring from two sources, viz., refusing to obey the laws which God has made, and in the manner He intended them to be obeyed; and making laws where God hasn’t made any, and forcing them upon the church as tests of fellowship. (3) Some philosophers hold that life is made up of contrasts; therefore, they say, evil is necessary to counterbalance good. But this is an evasion rather than an explanation of the problem. To resolve evil into a principle of eternal necessity doesn’t explain any thing. (4) Many have tired to solve the problem of the origin of evil by denying its existence altogether, as the disciples of Mrs. Eddy attempt to do. But this is contrary to the known facts of observation and experience. (5) others hold that the seat and source of evil is in the fleshly body. This is erroneous, however, because our bodies are not evil in themselves; rather, they become instruments for evil only when we use them in violation of the laws of God. We should remember that our bodies are, except in most unusual circumstances, subject to control by mind and will. (6) There is no getting around the conclusion that the essential principle of all sin is selfishness, i.e., its source is in the free, voluntary choice of self above God. There is no other rational explanation of evil and its origin. (7) A writer in Bibliotheca Sacra says: “Sin is essentially egoism, putting self in God’s place. It has four principal characteristics, or manifestations: (a) self-sufficiency, instead of faith; (b) self-will, instead of submission; (c) self-seeking, instead of benevolence; (d) self-righteousness, instead of humility and reverence.” (8) The big word in the vocabulary of evil, is Self. Isaiah 53:6—“all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.”

43. Q. What does reason teach us about the beginning of sin?

A. It teaches us that the first sin must have been committed by a free moral being who chose his own way in preference to God’s way.

(1) By a free moral being, we mean one capable of wilfully putting self above God. (2) To speak of good and evil as influences, principles, concepts, etc., is pure sophistry, for it must be admitted that neither good nor evil could exist separate and part from a person. If sin springs from selfishness, there must first be a self to make the choice which results in sin. In short, there could not be sin without a sinner. And the sum total of good in the universe is the sum total of obedience to the laws of God on the part of all intelligent creatures; while the sum total of evil in the world must be the totality of disobedience to the laws of God on the part of all intelligent creatures. (3) To put it another way: whatever is like God is true and good, and whatever is unlike God is, in proportion to its contrariety, false and evil.

44. Q. But why did not God so constitute His creatures as to make it impossible for them to sin?

A. For the reason evidently that not even Omnipotence Himself could achieve the particular end He had in view for His creatures, without having endowed them with free will; and where there is free will there is, in the very nature of the case, the potentiality of sin.

(1) The problem of evil and its origin is the most difficult problem of human life and experience. No solution has ever been proposed from a philosophical point of view that even comes near to an explanation of all the issues involved in the problem. Our own view is that this problem is one, not of philosophy, but of fact; and that God alone can reveal to us the facts in the case. Hence we accept by faith what the Bible intimates and teaches on the subject, and shall continue to do so as long as human wisdom fails to offer a more satisfactory solution. Over and above all the difficulties involved in the problem, however, the following truths stand out clearly. (2) God's eternal purpose is, as we have learned, to ultimately have a holy race. But holiness is the free, voluntary choice of right. It is the choice of God's way above all other ways, and God's way is always right. Before God could have holiness in His creatures therefore, it was necessary that He endow them with free will, or the ability to intelligently and consciously choose the right above the wrong. (3) Had He constituted them incapable of temptation and sin, He would, by the same act, have constituted them incapable of attaining holiness. (4) If you and I, as human beings, were not free to choose between right and wrong, we would no longer be human, and we would no longer be personal beings. Free will is an essential part of personality, in both angels and men. (5) It is also obvious that there is comparatively little virtue in our choosing what God wants us to do when that which God wants us to do is what we ourselves also want to do. The virtue, and corresponding holiness, accrues when we choose to do what God wants us to do in preference to what we want to do ourselves. In the light of this reasoning, although the circumstances of the case are partially obscure to us, temptation becomes a factor in the development of true holiness, (6) "Could not all sin have been excluded from the world? By assuming man to be a free being, it could not have been avoided, for freedom is always liable to abuse. Therefore, if God decided that man was to be free in some cases to act right or wrong, it necessarily follows that he may act wrong. No Omnipotence could possibly alter this without destroying man's freedom" (Turton, The Truth of Christianity, pp. 75–76.) (7) It seems therefore that God adopted the best possible procedure to attain the end He has in view, in that He supplied His creatures with all sufficient motives and warnings to encourage them in obedience, and left the issues of the case with them. Since God is all-wise, this was to have been expected of Him; for, as we have learned, when we say that God is all-wise, we mean that He knows how to ordain and dispose all things in the best manner to attain

His ends. (8) Finally, we should keep in mind that when any free moral being chooses the wrong, he could have chosen the right. In every case, the choice is ours; and, since the choice is ours, ours must also be the responsibility. In the final analysis of the case, sin is in the world because man allows it to stay. Therefore the ultimate responsibility for sin must be borne by the creature and not by the Creator.

45. Q. Why should we strive earnestly to avoid sin?

A. For the following reasons: 1. Because it is an offense against God. 2. Because it separates us from God. 3. Because, in view of God's overwhelming love for us, it is a manifestation of base ingratitude. 4. Because it disfigures the image of God in us. 5. Because it disturbs the peace of our consciences. 6. Because it weakens us physically, morally and spiritually. 7. Because it engenders hatred, strife and chaos in human society. 8. Because it robs us of heirship to eternal life. 9. Because it entails disease, suffering and death in this world. 10. Because it will bring eternal condemnation upon us in the world to come.

46. Q. What should deter us from committing sin?

A. Two things, viz., 1. the consideration of God's great love for us; and 2. the consideration of sin's certain and tragic consequences both here and hereafter.

John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." Romans 2:4—"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Galatians 6:7—"Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Romans 6:23—"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHTEEN 38.Q.What is sin?

39. Q. What are the two general kinds of sin?

40. Q. What are the sins of commission?

41. Q. What are the sins of omission?

42. Q. What is the essential principle of sin?

43. Q. What does reason teach us about the beginning of sin?

44. Q. But why did not God so constitute His creatures as to make it impossible for them to sin?

45. Q. Why should we strive earnestly to avoid sin?

46. Q. What should deter us from committing sin?

Chapter 22

01.021. THE BEGINNING OF SIN

Lesson Nineteen THE BEGINNING OF SIN Scripture Reading: John 8:42-47.

Scripture To Memorize: “He that doeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

47. Q. Within what order of beings did sin have its beginning?

A. The scriptures teach that sin originated among the angels.

48. Q. Did the angels all remain good and happy, as they were when created?

A. No. The scriptures teach that many of them rebelled against the divine government.

2 Peter 2:4—“For if God spared not angels when they sinned,” etc., Jude 1:6—“and angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation,” etc., Matthew 25:41—“into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.” 1 Corinthians 6:3—“know ye not that we shall judge angels?”

49. Q. Who was the instigator and leader of this rebellion?

A. The scriptures teach that the archangel Lucifer was the leader of it.

(1) The scriptures intimate that Lucifer, prior to his fall, was an angel of superior rank and attainment. The name “Lucifer” itself means “the shining one,” and, in the Revised Version, is translated “day-star.” (2) Isaiah 14:12—“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” (A. V.) It should be explained here that prophecy usually runs in parallels; hence in this scripture the fate of the king of Babylon is described as analogous to the fall of Lucifer. (3) Ezekiel 28:12-14, “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God . . . Thou are the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” (A. V.). Here the prophetic parallel is between Lucifer and the king of Tyre.

50. Q. What did this rebellious angel seek to do?

A. It seems that he sought to break away from God’s authority and to set up a rival throne somewhere beyond our universe.

51. Q. What were the motives which prompted this rebellion?

A. Pride and jealousy, resulting in unlawful and insatiable ambition.

(1) This is intimated in 1 Timothy 3:6—“not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Here the Apostle Paul admonishes Timothy not to appoint a new convert to the responsible position of an elder in a local church, lest, being puffed up with pride, he

should fall into the condemnation of the devil; that is, lest he should fall, as Satan himself fell, by becoming inordinately proud and ambitious. (2) Isaiah 14:13-15, “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (A. V.) Ezekiel 28:15-17, “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee . . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness” (A. V.) These statements could scarcely have been made with reference to earthly monarchs. It seems evident that orthodox Christian scholarship is right in interpreting them as alluding to the rebellion and fall of Lucifer. (3) It seems that the archangel’s fall was due to pride, jealousy and false ambition; and that his appeal to his fellow creatures was the specious plea of “personal liberty”—a plea which has damned more souls than any other single lie. It is quite possible that he influenced other angels with false charges and lying accusations against God, as, for example that the Creator was tyrannical and unjust in imposing His will upon free creatures, etc.; and that he exhorted them to follow Him in breaking away from all divine restraint and in setting up a rival government somewhere in the heavens. Many of the angels evidently listened to his lies and followed him into open rebellion; but by far the greater number rejected his appeal and remained loyal to the divine government. (4) “How pride got possession of Satan’s heart it may be difficult for us to conceive. But it seems probable, from the statement of Paul in First Timothy, that it was in some way owing to his elevation above those around him. He may have once been the archangel, superior to even Michael. But in an evil hour his eye was turned from the Creator to himself as the highest, the most gifted, and the most influential of all the creatures of God. His heart swelled with pride; ambition took possession of his soul; and rebellion was then seen in heaven. But justice and judgment are the dwelling-place of God’s throne, Psalms 89:14. He reigns in the midst of the most perfect righteousness, and no sin can be tolerated for a moment in His presence, And hence he had but to speak the word, and Satan, with his rebel hosts that kept not their first estate, were instantly cast out of heaven and bound in ‘eternal chains under darkness to the judgment of the Great Day,’ Jude 1:6” (Milligan, The Scheme of Redemption, pp. 44–45, fn.).

52. Q. What happened to the angels that sinned?

A. The scriptures teach that they were cast down from their original habitation.

Ezekiel 28:16—“therefore have I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God.” Isaiah 14:15—“thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the uttermost parts of the pit.” Luke 10:18—here Jesus says, “I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven” (the Word was of course present when this incident occurred). 2 Peter 2:4—“for if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell,” etc.

53. Q. Why did not God devise a plan of salvation for the wicked angels?

A. No doubt because their sin was inexcusable from any and every point of view.

(1) Prior to their rebellion, they had been in close fellowship with God. They had known Him as their creator and Ruler. They must have been fully aware of His wisdom and omnipotence, and they must have known that all existence depended upon Him for continuance. (2) In addition to all this, they sinned purely of their own volition, without having been influenced from any source outside themselves. They were not seduced, as man was. They decided of their own free will to

enter upon a course of rebellion, motivated by their own false, inordinate ambition. For all these reasons and possibly others unknown to us, their sin was inexcusable.

54. Q. What was the effect of this eternal rejection of them by their Creator?

A. They became totally depraved.

Jude 1:6—“and angels that kept not their own principality . . . he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” What kind of “bonds,” and what kind of “darkness?” Bonds of reprobation, undoubtedly; and the darkness of implacable hatred and despair. Having realized from the time of their fall that they are irretrievably and eternally lost, they have always been and will always be totally depraved.

55. Q. But why did not God annihilate all the wicked angels when they rebelled against Him?

A. It would be sheer presumption on our part to attempt to answer this question dogmatically. Suffice it to say that scientific investigation teaches us that God does not, and reflection causes us to believe that He would not, annihilate anything He has created.

(1) One of the very first laws of nature is that the total amount of matter in the universe is always constant. Matter may change form, but nothing is ever lost in the process. (2) Reason teaches us that if God does not annihilate matter, He surely would not annihilate spirit. (3) As a matter of fact, were God to annihilate anything He has created, He would be acting inconsistently, or in opposition to Himself. To act inconsistently, however, would be contrary to His nature as the Deity; hence it would seem that the word annihilation is not included in the vocabulary of heaven. (4) There is no reason for believing that our earth will ever be annihilated; rather, it will be renovated. See 2 Peter 3:1-13.

56. Q. How has God rewarded the angels who remained faithful to His government?

A. He has rewarded them with everlasting happiness, which consists in being with Him, seeing Him, serving Him and possessing Him forever.

(1) Matthew 18:10—“in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.” (2) They are called the elect angels. 1 Timothy 5:21—“I charge thee in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels,” etc. This does not mean that their remaining faithful was the result of their election, but rather that their election was the consequence of their fidelity.

57. Q. How do the good angels affect us today?

A. They love us, and they act as ministers of God’s providence toward us.

Hebrews 1:14—“are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?” God’s special providence is constantly being exerted in behalf of His saints through the ministrations of angels.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON NINETEEN 47.Q.Within what order of beings did sin have its beginning?

48. Q. Did the angels all remain good and happy, as they were when created?

49. Q. Who was the instigator and leader of this rebellion?

50. Q. What did this rebellious angel seek to do?

51. Q. What were the motives which prompted this rebellion?

52. Q. What happened to the angels that sinned?

53. Q. Why did not God devise a plan of salvation for the wicked angels?

54. Q. What was the effect of this eternal rejection of them by their Creator?

55. Q. But why did not God annihilate all the wicked angels when they rebelled against Him?

56. Q. How has God rewarded the angels who remained faithful to His government?

57. Q. How do the good angels affect us today?

Chapter 23

01.022. THE ADVERSARY

Lesson Twenty THE ADVERSARY Scripture Reading: John 8:42-47, Ephesians 6:10-20.

Scripture To Memorize: “Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world” (1 Peter 5:8-9).

58. Q. Do the scriptures teach that there is a personal devil?

A. They do, and it is taught more frequently and more positively in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.

(1) The testimony of Jesus. John 8:44—“ye are of your father the devil . . . he was a murderer from the beginning . . . he is a liar, and the father thereof.” John 12:31—“now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” Matthew 13:38-39—“the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy that sowed them is the devil.” (2) The testimony of the Apostle John. 1 John 3:8—“he that doeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” (3) The testimony of the Apostle Peter. 1 Peter 5:8—“your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (4) The testimony of the Apostle Paul. 2 Corinthians 4:4—“in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving.” 2 Corinthians 11:14—“even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light.” Ephesians 2:2—“according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience.” (5) The devil is spoken of in scripture as “the prince of this world” (John 14:30; John 16:11); “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4); “the prince of the powers of the air” (Ephesians 2:2); “the prince of demons” (Matthew 12:24); “the tempter” (Matthew 4:3); “the adversary” (1 Peter 5:8); “the accuser” (Revelation 12:10); “the old serpent” (Revelation 12:9); the first liar and the first murderer (John 8:44). (6) He is compared to a fowler (Psalms 9:13); a sower of tares (Matthew 13:25; Matthew 13:39); a wolf (John 10:12); a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8); a serpent (Revelation 12:9; Revelation 20:2); and a dragon (Revelation 16:13). These terms suggest his total depravity, and his diabolical malice and cunning.

59. Q. What does reason teach us in this connection?

A. Reason also teaches us that there is a personal devil.

(1) If not, then man must be held responsible for all the evil in the world, and such a responsibility would be overwhelming. (2) Why is it more “absurd” that a moral being should have sinned against God in past ages, than that moral beings should sin against Him now, as they obviously do? (3) Belief in a personal devil is far more reasonable than belief in an impersonal spirit of evil, (4) One of the most ingenious devices that the devil employs in deceiving people, is that of “selling” them the lie that he has no actual existence. Beware of this lie! It is destructive and dangerous!

60. Q. Who was the devil, originally?

A. He was, as we have learned, an angel of superior rank and attainment, who was moved by pride and jealousy and false ambition, to instigate and lead a rebellion of certain angels against the divine government.

61. Q. By what name has he been known since his fall?

A. He is spoken of in scripture as Satan, or the devil.

62. Q. What has Satan been trying to do since his fall?

A. He has been trying to hinder and defeat the execution of God's eternal purpose and plan.

(1) He seduced our first parents in the Garden of Eden, but God immediately announced His plan of redemption through the Seed of a woman. See Genesis 3:15. (2) He then corrupted people of the antediluvian world by bringing about the intermingling of the irreligious Cainites and the pious Sethites, Genesis 6:1-4; but God intervened, and preserved the human race and His divine plan through Noah. (3) He then seduced the Hebrew people into idolatry and apostasy at every opportunity, until God finally, as a punishment which they deserved, allowed them to be subjugated and carried off into captivity in Babylon. (4) He incited Herod to try to murder the Child Jesus as soon as the latter was born, but God sent His angel to warn Joseph and Mary, and they fled with the Babe into Egypt. Matthew 2:13-23. (5) No sooner had Jesus entered upon His ministry, following His baptism and the Father's subsequent introduction of Him to the world as His "beloved Son," than Satan tried to seduce Him; but Satan failed utterly. Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 4:1-11. He made another attempt to overpower Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, but failed again. (6) Finally, in desperation, he incited the Jewish nation through their ecclesiastical leaders, to murder the Son of God. Calvary was the darkest hour in human history. No doubt Satan and his rebel hosts calculated they had won a complete victory when Jesus expired on the Cross! But they reckoned without the working of God's mighty power which He wrought when He raised up Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. Ephesians 1:15-23. The resurrection of our Lord and the establishment of the church were the two great events in the development of the remedial system which made inevitable the ultimate defeat and subjugation of Satan. (7) Today with the desperation of a lost spirit engaged in a hopeless cause, he makes war on the church. Realizing full well that he faces certain and eternal segregation in hell, he seeks only to drag the human race down into the pit with him! Let us never lose sight of the fact that, in respect to every truth said of God—

"Satan ever watches round him, Seeks to find the weakest part, And in moments most unheeded, Quickly throws his fiery dart."

63. Q. In what great conflict is the church engaged today?

A. In the final and desperate conflict with Satan and his rebel hosts.

(1) Ephesians 6:12—"For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (2) No doubt the saints are subject to temptation by these unseen evil personalities which inhabit the universe. No doubt that wicked angels influence us to sinful impulses by the powers of telepathy which are inherent in all types of personality, to which we may surrender unless we are clad in "the whole armor of God."

64. Q. How do the wicked angels affect us today?

A. They try to ensnare us, to entice us into sin, to injure us in body and spirit, and to plunge us into perdition.

Luke 8:12—“and those by the way side are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved.” John 13:2—“and during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot . . . to betray him,” etc. 1 Timothy 4:1—“giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.” Ephesians 6:11—“put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” James 4:7—“resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” 2 Timothy 2:26—“and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will.” 1 Corinthians 7:5—“that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency.” Psalms 91:3—“for he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler.”

65. Q. How will this great conflict end?

A. In the ultimate triumph of the true church. (See Revelation, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21).

66. Q. What has God promised His children with respect to the wiles of the devil?

A. He has promised that, in consequence of their implicit trust in Him, He will not suffer them to be tempted beyond their ability to resist the temptation.

(1) 1 Corinthians 10:13—“There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.” 2 Peter 2:9—“the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.” (2) That we may be reminded constantly of our heavenly Father’s guidance and protection, Jesus has taught us to pray in these words: “and bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matthew 6:13). (3) As in the case of Job, devilish malignity is ever circumscribed and held in check by the power of the Almighty. See Job 1:12; Job 2:6. The devils could not even plunge a herd of swine to destruction without the Savior’s permission, Matthew 8:28-34. (8) The most effective means of resisting temptation are: knowledge of the word of God and the ability to use it with discrimination, Matthew 4:1-11, Ephesians 6:17; meditation and prayer, Matthew 4:1-2, Luke 22:39-43; and faithful keeping of the Lord’s appointments, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 11:23-30, Hebrews 10:23-25.

67. Q. What is the primary end contemplated in God’s eternal purpose and plan?

A. A holy race, to inhabit the new heavens and the new earth, 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1-4.

68. Q. What additional end is contemplated in God’s eternal purpose and plan?

A. Probably His own complete vindication from the lying accusations which were brought against him by the devil and his angels; a vindication before and by all the intelligent creatures of the universe; and a vindication resulting from the matchless demonstration of His amazing grace, love and compassion, as manifested in and through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:10-11—“to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” 1 Corinthians 6:3—“know ye not that we shall judge angels?” See also Revelation 15:2-4; Revelation 19:1-8; Revelation 20:11-15, etc.

69. Q. What shall be the ultimate end of Satan and his kind?

A. Eternal segregation in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe.

(1) Penitentiaries are for the incarceration and segregation of only those who will not respect and obey the law. (2) Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41—“Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.” Revelation 20:10—“and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” (3) If human beings, for whom God has given His only begotten Son that they should not perish but have eternal life, do finally perish in hell, it will not be because God casts them into it, but because they cast themselves into hell in consequence of their own indifference and rebelliousness. See Revelation 21:8. In the final judgment, each class will go to its proper place instinctively and voluntarily; and those who go to hell will be driven there by their own guilty consciences.

70. Q. In view of all these facts what should we do?

A. We should constantly and prayerfully keep ourselves clad in the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles and snares of the devil. Ephesians 6:10-20.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY 58.Q.Do the scriptures teach that there is a personal devil?

59. Q. What does reason teach us in this connection?

60. Q. Who was the devil, originally?

61. Q. By what name has he been known since his fall?

62. Q. What has Satan been trying to do since his fall?

63. Q. In what great conflict is the church engaged today?

64. Q. How do the wicked angels affect us today?

65. Q. How will this great conflict end?

66. Q. What has God promised His children with respect to the wiles of the devil?

67. Q. What is the primary end contemplated in God’s eternal purpose and plan?

68. Q. What additional end is contemplated in God’s eternal purpose and plan?

69. Q. What shall be the ultimate end of Satan and his kind?

70. Q. In view of all these facts what should we do?

01.023. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH OUR FIRST PARENTS

Lesson Twenty-one WHAT GOD DID THROUGH OUR FIRST PARENTS Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:24-31.

Scriptures To Memorize: “And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27). (Genesis 1:27). “I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalms 139:14).

71. Q. Who were our first parents?

A. The first man and woman, Adam and Eve.

72. Q. Why do we speak of them as our first parents?

A. Because the human race is descended from them.

73. Q. What, firstly, did God do through our first parents?

A. It was through them that He established His moral system in our visible world.

74. Q. How did the first man and woman come into being?

A. The scriptures teach that God created them.

(1) Genesis 1:27—“God created man in his own image . . . male and female created he them.” (2) That God created our first parents is a far more rational and satisfactory explanation of man’s origin than the so-called “evolutionary hypothesis” that he is the offspring of the brute creation. (3) The following are major objections to the evolutionary theory: (a) Nature, if left to her own resources, deteriorates instead of progressing. (b) The sterility of crossed species is contrary to the idea of an evolutionary process. (c) Evolution fails to account for all special organs, such as wings, feathers, eyes, ears, fins and electric organs in fishes, poison glands and fangs of reptiles, and others too numerous to mention here. (d) It fails to bridge the chasms between the inorganic and the organic, between the mineral and vegetable, and between the vegetable and animal kingdoms. (e) It fails to account for instincts peculiar to certain creatures, such as those of the ant, the honey bee, the beaver, etc. (f) It fails to account for the origin of sex distinctions. (g) It fails to account for the moral and spiritual intuitions in man. (h) It fails to explain the origin of life. (i) It fails to account for man’s high standing in the category of living creatures. (j) Finally, it is contrary to the known facts of observation and experience. If man were to disappear now from the face of the earth, there is no apparent reason for believing that by any process or change now going on in nature, another creature like him would ever be evolved, however long the animal kingdom might continue to exist. If evolution is true, then when and why did it cease?

75. Q. How did God distinguish man at creation from all other creatures?

A. By creating man in His own image.

76. Q. In what sense is man the image of God?

A. Man is the image of God in a personal sense.

(1) Genesis 1:27—“and God created man in his own image.” The term image as used here, means likeness. In the ordinary sense of the term an image is a reflection; hence it may be rightly said that man is a reflection of God. (2) How is man the reflection of God? In a personal sense, primarily. This evidently means that as God is, as to nature, personal; so man is personal as to nature, and was so created. In short, man was endowed at creation with all the essential elements of personality, such as intelligence, feeling, will, self-consciousness, self-determination, memory, etc. (3) By his endowment at creation with the essential elements of personality, man was made a moral creature, and as such is subject to God’s will and law. (4) In a nutshell, as God is a Spirit, so man is inwardly a spirit. His body is merely the tabernacle in which the real self (ego, or spirit) dwells; and as such is nothing more than a convenience adapted to his needs in this present world of time and space.

77. Q. What, secondly, did God do through our first parents?

A. He originated our human nature in them.

78. Q. What do we derive from our first parents?

A. Our human nature.

79. Q. What is meant by our human nature?

A. Human nature is what God made to be when He created him.

Human nature is what God has made men to be by virtue of their creation. Human character is what men make themselves to be by their own thinking and acting.

80. Q. What are the two essential elements of our human nature?

A. Body, or flesh; and spirit.

(1) Genesis 2:7—“Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (2) “Dust of the ground” means, literally, the earthly elements of which our bodies are composed. Dust is used in scripture as the emblem of frailty, humility, mortality, etc. It is obvious from this text that the body of man was mortal from its creation, i.e., subject to dissolution into its original elements. (3) In the sense that the body was originally formed of various earthly, or chemical elements, it was a divine creation; whereas the spirit that was breathed into it was a divine gift. (4) The body was lifeless and useless until God breathed into it “the breath of life.” What does this mean? It means, evidently, that God implanted a spirit in the body. Out of His very own essence He breathed into the hitherto lifeless form all the essential elements of personal life. (5) Man as to nature, then, is twofold: he is essentially spirit (self, ego); and spirit dwells in a body of flesh. (6) This duality of man’s nature is further indicated by its two-fold destiny. The body, we are told, will be resolved into the chemical elements of which it was originally formed; but the spirit will return to God. Ecclesiastes 12:7—“the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it.”

81. Q. What great truth about life is revealed in Genesis 2:7?

A. The truth that life is a divine gift.

(1) The body of man was originally a divine creation; but the spirit was a divine gift. And when God implanted spirit in the body, He implanted life in it. “And man (literally, the man) became a living soul.” (2) The story is told that Rowland Hill once conversed with a celebrated sculptor who was hewing out of a block of marble a statue of the great English patriot, Lord Chatham. “There,” said the sculptor, “isn’t that a fine form?” “Now,” replied Mr. Hill, “can you put life into it? Else, with all its beauty, it is still a block of marble.” God formed the human body of the dust of the ground, and He then vitalized the inanimate figure by putting spirit into it. Man is able to repair, assemble and arrange matter, but only God is able to make matter excel itself in quality. (3) The picture here is that of the Creator stooping down and placing His lips and nostrils to the inanimate form which He had created, and then expelling an infinitesimal portion of His very own essence into it. (4) Thus our personal life was originally a gift from God. The same is true of eternal life: it is a divine gift. Romans 6:23—“the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (5) Since life is God’s gift to us, it follows that we should appreciate this gift, cherish it, and make the best use of it for the benefit of our fellows and for God’s glory.

82. Q. What resulted from the divine implanting of spirit in body?

A. The result was that the man became “a living soul.”

(1) Soul is a term which has reference primarily to the individuality. It stands for the entire being composed of body and spirit. (2) You are a living soul, I am a living soul, every human being is a living soul composed of two essential parts—body and spirit. (3) “We see that the expression ‘living soul’ is not applied to the breath of God as considered in itself and separate from the body, but that it describes man in his entirety, as the result of the union of the two contrasting elements” (Godet, Biblical Studies: The Old Testament, p. 32). “Soul is spirit as modified by union with the body” (Hovey). “By soul we mean only one thing, i.e., an incarnate spirit, a spirit with a body” (Hodge, Popular Lectures, p. 221). (4) When spirit enters into any kind of body to indwell it and possess it and unify it, be that body terrestrial or celestial, material or ethereal, the result of the union of the two elements is a living soul. (5) Human nature is, then, two-fold, consisting of spirit and flesh: a material body vitalized and energized by spirit.

83. Q. What twofold purpose was the human body divinely intended to serve?

A. It was no doubt intended: 1. to serve as a convenience for man in his present environment; and 2. to serve as a check upon whatever imperiousness of spirit he might develop.

(1) It was to serve as a dwelling-place for his spirit, or self; and hence as a convenience adapted to his needs in this present state only. 2 Corinthians 5:1—“the earthly house of our tabernacle.” (2) It was probably designed to serve also as a check upon man’s imperiousness of spirit. This it does by confining his ego to a locality. “The body is to be regarded, not as the origin of want, desire and impulse, but rather as the instrument of their gratification—the medium through which the confined and restless agent within is ever acting out himself, and seeking satisfaction; and through which he is compelled to seek it, that he may, in the process, be crossed and repressed, disciplined and subdued, and thus be made to learn, if possible, the great lesson of submission to God” (Cook,

The Origin of Sin, p. 152). (3) It should be kept in mind that under most, if not actually all, circumstances, the body is subject to the control of our mental faculties, and hence cannot be in itself the source and seat of sinful impulses. Such impulses emanate from what is called in scripture “the mind of the flesh” (Romans 8:6-7), i.e., the “carnal” or “natural” mind (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:14). (4) Impress upon the students the importance of resisting these sinful impulses, and of keeping their bodies clean and wholesome as God intended they should be kept.

84. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through our first parents?

A. He revealed in them the glory, dignity and worth of humankind.

(1) The distinction between human nature and human character should be recalled, in this connection. Human nature is what God made man to be by virtue of his creation. Human character is what men have made themselves to be in consequence of their own thinking and acting. (2) While human nature, like everything that God created, was originally “good” (Genesis 1:31—“and God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good”); human character has become, says Jesus, more or less devilish (John 8:44—“ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do”). Human character has become depraved because men have made it so (“the lusts of your father it is your will to do”). (3) While the Bible writers portray human character as being depraved in consequence of the inroads of sin, they invariably speak of human nature in the noblest of terms. Genesis 1:27—“God created man in his own image.” Psalms 139:14—“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:7, James 3:9. (4) The glory and dignity of man are indicated by the following: (a) By the time of his creation, i.e., after the earth had been fitted up as a dwelling-place for him and all the lower orders had been brought into being to serve his interests. He was the last and noblest of God’s creations. (b) By the solemn circumstances of his making. His creation necessitated a Divine concilium at which the Three Persons of the Godhead conferred among themselves with regard to the nature and attributes of the creature about to be placed on the earth as its lord tenant (Genesis 1:26). (c) By the divine origin of his dual nature (Genesis 2:7). (d) By the marvelous range of his faculties. (e) By his extraordinary powers of transmission. In the case of Adam, God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;” but from that time on, the creature transmitted both body and spirit, from generation to generation, through the exercise of his own powers of procreation. (f) By his high standing in the scale of created things. Psalms 8:5—“thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honor.” (g) By the extent of his dominion. The entire natural world was placed under his rule and the divine command was: “Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28). Psalms 8:6—“Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.” (g) If these observations are all true of the natural man, how infinitely more so are they of the redeemed man who is God’s special “workmanship” created in Christ Jesus for good works! See Ephesians 2:10; cf. Ephesians 4:24—“Put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.”

85. Q. What should we do in consequence of knowing these essential truths regarding our human nature?

A. We should never debase our God-given human nature with sin. We should keep ourselves unspotted from the world (James 1:27). We should present our bodies daily as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service (Romans 12:1).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-ONE 71.Q.Who were our first parents?

72. Q. Why do we speak of them as our first parents?

73. Q. What, firstly, did God do through our first parents?

74. Q. How did the first man and woman come into being?

75. Q. How did God distinguish man at creation from all other creatures?

76. Q. In what sense is man the image of God?

77. Q. What, secondly, did God do through our first parents?

78. Q. What do we derive from our first parents?

79. Q. What is meant by our human nature?

80. Q. What are the two essential elements of our human nature?

81. Q. What great truth about life is revealed in Genesis 2:7?

82. Q. What resulted from the divine implanting of spirit in body?

83. Q. What twofold purpose was the human body divinely intended to serve?

84. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through our first parents?

85. Q. What should we do in consequence of knowing these essential truths regarding our human nature?

Chapter 25

01.024. MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE

Lesson Twenty-two MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:4-25.

Scripture To Memorize: "And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17).

86. Q. What is the probable connection between the fall of angels and the creation of man?

A. It is twofold: in the first place, it is obvious that when God created the angels, He had in view also the creation of man, for we are told that the office of the angelic host is to minister to the heirs of salvation; in the second place, it is likewise obvious that the apostasy of certain angels made it even more imperative that God should make a demonstration of His infinite love and justice, in and through our human race, sufficient to prove to all intelligent creatures, for all time and eternity, the falsity of Satan's lying accusations against Him.

(1) It should be remembered that prior to man's creation, God had demonstrated only His "everlasting power and divinity" (Romans 1:29). This demonstration was made in the world of nature. (2) When the angels sinned, a final and incontrovertible demonstration of His infinite love and compassion became all the more imperative. (3) Naturally the field for such a demonstration was our human race, the creation of which had already been planned in the councils of heaven. (4) This demonstration was consummated in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son on the Cross, and in the offer of salvation to all mankind on the terms of the gospel covenant (John 3:16; John 15:13; John 3:3-5; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9-10; Galatians 3:26-27). (5) God's eternal purpose and plan included therefore, the sending of the Word to become flesh and dwell among us and to make atonement for sin, the establishment of the church, the uniting of both Jews and Gentiles in the one body of Christ, and the proclamation of the gospel for a testimony unto all the nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 24:14). (6) This has all been worked out "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in he heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11).

87. Q. What do we mean by man's original state?

A. By man's original state, we mean his state immediately following his creation and prior to his lapse into sin.

88. Q. What was one circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of special providence.

(1) The Garden of Eden was fitted up, as a special bower of loveliness, for our first parents to occupy during the continuation of their original state of innocence. Everything calculated to

contribute to their happiness and enjoyment was provided for them in Eden. (2) “Eden was evidently designed merely as a temporary abode for man in a state of innocence. God does nothing in vain, and foreseeing that man would certainly fall, He fitted and prepared the world at large for fallen man; and the Garden of Eden particularly and specially for our first parents. This was wise, and just, and good” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 37). (3) The location of Eden has ever been a debatable question. The most generally accepted views are that it lay either in the highlands of Armenia, or in the valley of the Euphrates. Genesis 2:14—“and the fourth river is the Euphrates.” Profane history is in agreement with Genesis in locating the cradle of the human race somewhere in Southwestern Asia.

89. Q. What was a second circumstance of man’s original state?

A. It was one of unhindered access to God.

(1) During the Edenic period of man’s innocence, the Creator and creature lived in intimacy of fellowship, because sin had not come between them to cause separation and alienation. Genesis 2:15—“and Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden,” i.e., led him by divine impulse to this habitation specially prepared for him. Genesis 3:8—“and they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,” etc. Here we have a quaint but striking revelation of the intimacy which existed between the man and his Creator. (2) This unhindered access to God was symbolized by the presence of the Tree of Life “in the midst of the garden.” Where God is, there is always life.

90. Q. What was a third circumstance of man’s original state?

A. It was one of exemption from physical death.

(1) Though created with a body which was from the beginning subject to dissolution, the first man was given access to the Tree of Life which evidently yielded a fruit, the properties of which served to counteract the inherent mortality of his body and to thus preserve his physical youth and vigor. (2) It is quite evident that this Tree of Life had an actual existence and bore real fruit of some kind unknown to us. There is nothing incredible in such a view. If God provides food for us daily which serves to renew our physical strength, surely He could have provided for our first parents a special food intended to renew and preserve their physical youth. (3) Hence, when they sinned, it became necessary to expel them from Eden and to guard “the way of the tree of life,” lest they gain access to its fruit and, though in a state of rebellion, continue to perpetuate their physical youth in such an unnatural state. Genesis 3:22-24, “now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever,” etc. (4) This Tree of Life was symbolic of their communion with God; it was a type of Christ Himself; and it was emblematic of the food that will be provided for the redeemed in Paradise restored (Revelation 22:2).

91. Q. What was a fourth circumstance of man’s original state?

A. It was one of liberty within the circumference of the law.

(1) Genesis 2:16—“of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat,” etc. Here we have liberty. (2) Genesis 2:17—“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.” Here we have the first prohibitory law. (3) Genesis 2:17—“for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Here we have the penalty for the violation of the law. Law would not be law

without its penalty. (4) It should be noted that this first prohibition, like all of God's laws, was for man's good. It was benevolent in its nature and design. It follows, therefore, that the law was not the cause of man's disloyalty when the real test came, but rather the proof of it. (5) Moreover the law was so simple and plain that transgression was inexcusable on any ground. (6) All of which teaches us that there is no genuine freedom under any form of government, divine or human, except within the circumference of the law.

92. Q. What was the fifth circumstance of man's original state?

A. It was one of most intimate companionship with a counterpart of his own flesh and bone.

(1) Genesis 2:18—"and Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should live alone; I will make him a help meet for him" (i.e., a counterpart for him, a helper answering to him). Also Genesis 2:23-24, "And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (2) The creation of the Woman was a particular act of God for the Man's benefit. Genesis 2:21-22—"and Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he (builded he into) a woman . . ." (3) "Not out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled on by him; but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be beloved" (Matthew Henry). (4) Why does not the modern man lack one rib? Because only the individual skeleton of Adam was affected by this miracle, Changes in the human skeleton by modern surgery are not handed down by ordinary process of generation. What may have happened to Adam's anatomy does not necessarily affect his posterity. (5) Genesis 2:22-25, "and brought her unto the man . . . therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (cf. Matthew 19:5, 1 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 5:31). Jehovah thus appears as the Maker of the first marriage. It was He who presented the Woman to the man. "The word implies the solemn bestowment of her in the bonds of the marriage covenant, which is hence called the covenant of God (Proverbs 2:17); implying that He is the Author of this sacred institution" (Bush). (6) Thus, in the manner in which He created the Woman—by literally building her out of the rib of the Man—God has impressed upon His creatures two great truths: first, the sacredness of the mystical union between husband and wife in the covenant of marriage; second, the even greater sacredness of the mystical union between Christ and His bride, the church, in the covenant of grace (Ephesians 5:22-33).

93. Q. What great lessons do we learn from our study of man's original state?

A.We learn that life, liberty, law and marriage are all of divine origin, and should therefore be highly regarded by man. The truth that real life and happiness are to be enjoyed only by living in harmony with God's laws and institutions, cannot be too forcefully impressed upon the minds of both children and adults. Living in harmony with God's laws and institutions is righteousness. Sin means discord, disillusionment, suffering, despair and death; but righteousness means self-control, freedom, peace, joy, and the life that is abundant and eternal. Titus 2:11-12, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-TWO

86. Q. What is the probable connection between the fall of angels and the creation of man?

87. Q. What do we mean by man’s original state?

88. Q. What was one circumstance of man’s original state?

89. Q. What was a second circumstance of man’s original state?

90. Q. What was a third circumstance of man’s original state?

91. Q. What was a fourth circumstance of man’s original state?

92. Q. What was the fifth circumstance of man’s original state?

93. Q. What great lessons do we learn from our study of man’s original state?

Chapter 26

01.025. HOW SIN CAME INTO OUR WORLD: THE TEMPTATION

Lesson Twenty-three HOW SIN CAME INTO OUR WORLD: THE TEMPTATION Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:1-8.

Scriptures To Memorize: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:13-14). “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11). “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

94. Q. What was man’s original state morally?

A. It may be properly described as a state of innocence.

(1) It was at the outset a state of untried innocence, How long Adam and Eve continued in obedience to God after their creation, we have no means of knowing. It is obvious, however, that as long as they did so, they had no knowledge of evil as a matter of experience. (2) The notion of some theologians that Adam was created holy, is absurd. It is absurd for the simple reason that created holiness is impossible. Holiness is attained, and that only through free, voluntary choice of right above wrong. (3) Whatever character Adam earned prior to his lapse into sin, was earned by his obedience to those commands of God which crossed none of his natural inclinations, and which therefore cost him little or no self-denial. His goodness was commendable as far as it went, but of inferior worth because there was no settled principle of obedience in his heart. (4) Hence when the real test came, a test in which the command of God did cross his own desires, and that directly and sharply, his love of having his own way overpowered all other considerations, and he sinned. (5) Genesis 3:5—“ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil,” urged the tempter. It is true that when our first parents sinned, they did then learn to know good and evil, but not in the sense they had anticipated. They learned to know evil, not as God knows it, i.e., as something to be abhorred and forever rejected; but as Satan knows it, i.e., as a matter of bitter experience. It was when they came to know evil as a matter of personal experience, that they fell from their original state of innocence and became separated from God by sin.

95. Q. How did our first parents fall from their original state of innocence?

A. They fell by disobeying the law of God.

96. Q. Did they sin purely of their own volition as the angels sinned; or were they seduced from an outside source?

A. They were seduced by Satan, who acted through the instrumentality of a serpent.

(1) Genesis 3:1. What this a literal serpent? Evidently it was, for the following reasons: (a) It is expressly classified with the beasts of the field. (b) It is described as a creature possessing the instinctive cunning that is popularly supposed to belong to actual serpents. Genesis 3:1—“now the

serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field," etc. Cf. Matthew 10:16. (c) It seems only reasonable that Satan should have made use of an apparently harmless agent in seducing the woman, thus, by keeping himself in the background, deceiving her as to the identity of the real tempter. (d) It was evidently a creature well known to her, as she manifested no surprise on hearing it address her articulately. (e) The curse subsequently pronounced upon serpent-kind in general (Genesis 3:14-15) would be meaningless if this was not an actual serpent involved in the transaction, or if it had been an unreal creature or apparition of some sort. (f) The language of the New Testament corroborates this conclusion. 2 Corinthians 11:13—"but I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness," etc. Says Olshausen: "We are perfectly justified in concluding from this mention of the fall, that Paul spoke of it as an actual occurrence." (2) That the serpent was merely the instrument through which Satan acted, is evident from the following considerations: (a) Because the power of speech is not a natural endowment of the serpent; hence it must have used articulate language on this occasion as the mouthpiece of a supernatural intelligence. "The speaking must have emanated, not from the serpent, but from a superior spirit, which had taken possession of the serpent for the sake of seducing man" (Keil and Delitzsch). Balaam's ass, by divine impulse, spoke in articulate words (Numbers 22:21-30); so the serpent in tempting Eve must have spoken by diabolical impulse. Eve had no fear of it for the reason probably that fear was unknown in Eden, i.e., prior to the entrance of sin into the world. (b) Because there is no other ground on which we can explain the diabolical malice and cunning manifested in the temptation of Eve. (c) Because there is no other ground on which we can explain the words of Jesus in John 8:44. (d) Because this view is confirmed by the circumstances of our Lord's temptation. "The tempter approached the Savior openly; to the first man he came in disguise. The serpent is not a merely symbolical term applied to Satan; nor was it only the form which Satan assumed; but it was a real serpent, perverted by Satan to be the instrument of his temptation" (Keil and Delitzsch). No doubt Satan approached Christ openly because he was well aware that the latter would be able to penetrate every disguise and uncover every deception, (e) Finally, there is no other ground on which we can account for the twofold implication of Genesis 3:14-15, which includes both literal warfare between mankind and serpentkind, and spiritual warfare between the Seed of the woman and the Old Serpent, the devil; and there is no other ground on which we can explain the various scriptures in which Satan is alluded to as the Old Serpent (2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:9; Revelation 20:2). (3) "To a child, there are few things more attractive than a glittering serpent, with its curving motions, its brilliant colors, and the magnetic charm of its eye. It is a fit symbol of the devil in his sly, insidious approaches, his cunning, and the power to charm that precedes his power to destroy" (Errett, Evenings With the Bible, Vol. I., p. 24). (4) "On the hypothesis that there was in this first temptation a twofold agency; that Satan spoke through a literal serpent, just as demons, in the time of Christ, spoke through real men and women; on this hypothesis, I say, all is plain, simple and natural. It is, then, easy to account for all the facts in this eventful case; and especially to see how it was that the woman, being at length deceived and overcome by the hellish malice and diabolical cunning and artifice of the Serpent, stretched for her hand, and plucked, and ate 'Of that forbidden fruit, whose mortal taste Brought death into the world, and all our woe.'"

(Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, fn., pp. 43–44). (5) "The serpent itself is the best comment upon the text. Look at it: glittering, lithe, cunning, cold, smooth, poisonous—truly it looks as if it might have done it! I don't think the lion could, or the elephant, the eagle, or the ox; but the serpent

brings with it a high probability of baseness and mischief" (Joseph Parker). (6) "It is remarkable that the Gentile idolaters did many of them worship the devil in the shape and form of a serpent, thereby avowing their adherence to that apostate spirit, and wearing his colors" (Mathew Henry).

97. Q. What great lesson should we learn from the serpent's part in this tragic affair?

A. The solemn truth that temptation often comes to us like a serpent.

"Temptation comes like a serpent; like the most subtle beast of the field; like that one creature which is said to exert a fascinating influence on its victims, fastening them with its glittering eyes, stealing upon them by its noiseless low and unseen approach, perplexing them by its wide circling folds, seeming to come upon them from all sides at once, and armed not like other beasts with one weapon of offense—horn, or hoof, or teeth—but capable of crushing its victim with every part of its sinuous length. It lies apparently dead for months together, but when roused it can, as the naturalist tells us, 'outclimb the monkey, out-swim the fish, outleap the zebra, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger.' How naturally in describing temptation do we borrow language from the aspects and movements of this creature!" (Marcus Dods).

98. Q. What characteristics of Satan are revealed in this story of the first temptation?

A. His diabolical malice and cunning.

(1) His diabolical malice. Who but Satan would have molested that happy pair created in God's image, and thus brought such tragic ruin upon the whole human family? (2) His diabolical cunning is indicated: (a) by the fact that he selected the woman as the object of his approach. "Woman has more generally been injured and ruined through the abuse of that affectionate trust, which is really one of her main characteristics, than by any other means" (Isaac Errett). The devil knew, too, that through her the man could be more easily beguiled. (b) By the fact that he approached her when she was alone, and unsupported by her husband. It seems that Adam appeared on the scene later and, probably out of love for her, followed her into disobedience (1 Timothy 2:14). (c) By the fact that he selected such a favorable opportunity for the temptation. It seems that he made his approach at a moment when the woman was standing near the tree of forbidden fruit and no doubt was gazing upon it with considerable curiosity. Genesis 3:6—"and when the woman saw that the tree was good for food," etc. (d) By the fact that he used a method of approach designed to weaken her faith in the word of God. First, the flippant, ironical question, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?"—thus insinuating that if God had issued such a prohibition, it was an exceedingly foolish one. Second, the malicious alteration of the divine command, quoting it as a prohibition not merely of the one tree, but of all. Third, the bold contradiction of the divine command. Genesis 3:4—"ye shall not surely die." Fourth, the lying accusation against God. Genesis 3:5—"for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." "That is to say, it is not because the fruit of the tree will injure you that God has forbidden you to eat it, but from ill-will and envy, because He does not wish you to be like Himself" (Delitzsch). Finally, the fatal appeal: "ye shall be as God." "They will be independent of God—gods to themselves, free from all restraints, and having all the materials of happiness within themselves. It was an appeal to selfhood against Godhood; and the eating of the forbidden fruit was, on the part of Eve and Adam, an attempt to erect selfhood into Godhood. It was a renunciation of Jehovah's sovereignty, the lifting up of a standard of rebellion

against their Maker, who had been to them the fountain of life and blessedness" (Errett, Evenings With the Bible, vol. 1., p. 26).

99. Q. What fatal mistake did the woman make in dealing with the tempter?

A. She made the fatal mistake of temporizing with him.

(1) She might have perceived from his first insinuating question that he had no good end in view, and should therefore have answered with a curt "Get thee behind me, Satan!" But she temporized—and the devil was quick to press the advantage thus gained. (2) "Whoever parleys with temptation is already on the verge of danger" (Peloubet). It doesn't pay to flirt with the devil. 2 Timothy 2:22—"flee youthful lusts." 1 Thessalonians 5:22—"abstain from every form of evil." James 4:7—"resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (3) Whereas our Saviour resorted to the word of God as his support in resisting Satan's appeals (Matthew 4:4; Matthew 4:7; Matthew 4:10), Eve, by temporizing with him, was inveigled first into doubt, and finally into disobedience. "Satan teaches men first to doubt, then to deny; he makes them skeptics first, and so by degrees makes them atheists" (Matthew Henry).

100. Q. What should our knowledge of the circumstances of this first temptation lead us to do?

A. It should lead us to put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and haying put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:13-18).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-THREE 94.Q.What was man's original state morally?

95. Q. How did our first parents fall from their original state of innocence?

96. Q. Did they sin purely of their own volition as the angels sinned; or were they seduced from an outside source?

97. Q. What great lesson should we learn from the serpent's part in this tragic affair?

98. Q. What characteristics of Satan are revealed in this story of the first temptation?

99. Q. What fatal mistake did the woman make in dealing with the tempter?

100. Q. What should our knowledge of the circumstances of this first temptation lead us to do?

Chapter 27

01.026. HOW SIN CAME INTO OUR WORLD: THE SURRENDER

Lesson Twenty-four HOW SIN CAME INTO OUR WORLD: THE SURRENDER Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:1-8.

Scripture To Memorize: “Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth, sin; and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15).

101. Q. What was the threefold appeal involved in the temptation of our first parents?

A. The physical, the esthetic, and the intellectual.

(1) Genesis 3:6—“and when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,” etc. What did she see? “That the tree was good for food.” “What could she see but the serpent eating that same fruit, all the while ascribing to its virtues his own wonderful elevation and superior knowledge?” (Milligan). It seems that in order to give force to his own infidel assertions and insinuations, he actually ate some of the forbidden fruit himself, and presented his own case as a real and veritable proof of its marvelous effects. “That the tree was good for food”—the physical appeal is the most elementary of temptations. Notable examples of it are found in Alexander the Great, Robert Burns, Lord Byron, Edgar Allen Poe, all brilliant men but unable to resist the appeal to physical appetite and desire. (2) “And that it was a delight to the eyes.” Here we have the esthetic appeal. This often accompanies the physical, and, though apparently more refined, is quite subtle and powerful. Great geniuses, musicians, poets, artitsts and the like, have frequently been grossly immoral. The allurements of certain types of music, for example, and of other forms of fine art, accentuate physical desire and make illicit pleasures more attractive. (3) “And that the tree was to be desired to make one wise”—the intellectual appeal. The desire for unlawful knowledge has stranded many a soul in the mire of unbelief. Theologians have used this appeal most effectively in keeping the church divided, the un-Christian teachers have used it widely in pushing young souls over the precipice of doubt into the deadly calm sea of agnosticism, or into the maelstrom of confusion and unbelief.

102. Q. What was the issue involved in this first temptation?

A. The issue of obedience or disobedience to God.

(1) God had said, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Along came Satan saying, “Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.” (2) Thus the issue was clearly joined. It was the issue between the word of God on the one hand, and the lying denials and accusations of Satan on the other. (3) The final choice rested, however, with Eve and Adam. Their unlawful desires blinded them for the moment, led them into believing Satan’s lies and into choosing the wrong. Thus they sinned.

103. Q. In what did the actual sin of our first parents consist?

A. In their overt act of disobedience to God.

(1) The sin was not in the temptation, but in the yielding to it. (2) When curiosity becomes whetted by desire, lust is the result. So it was with Mother Eve: she finally reached the point where she actually lusted for divinity—to be as God. But “lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin;” therefore “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat” (Genesis 3:6). The falling away, which had its inception in lust, or unlawful desire, was consummated in the overt act of disobedience to God. James 1:13-15, 1 John 3:4. (3) “The confluence of all these streams made such a current as swept the feeble will clean away; and blind, dazed, deafened by the rush of the stream, Eve was carried over the falls as a man might be over Niagara” (Maclaren). (4) In a striking parallel, the consummation of our conversion to Christ is, by divine authority, in our overt or outward act of obedience to His command. This overt act of obedience is Christian baptism, in which we yield ourselves in body and spirit to the authority of Christ, the head of the church. Galatians 3:27—“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.”

104. Q. What was the essential principle of this first sin?

A. It was selfishness—the essential principle of every sin.

(1) Their sin resulted from their following their own desires in opposition to God’s command. It was the choice of self above God, which is the essential principle of every sin that was ever committed. Mark 7:21-23, “for from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man” (Jesus). (2) In striking contrast, the essential principle of righteousness is the choice of God above self. Self-giving is the very first principle of our Christian faith; and in the mutual relations between moral creatures, self-denial for the general good must become the law of the universe if peace and joy are to prevail among men. Matthew 16:24—“if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

105. Q. What followed as a consequence of the fact that our first parents were seduced?

A. It became possible for God to temper justice with mercy, which He did in working out a plan of salvation for the human race.

Because the angels sinned purely of their own volition and without seductive influences having been brought to bear upon them from an outside source, it was impossible for God to maintain the eternal principles of justice and to, at the same time, extend mercy to them. In the case of our first parents, however, the situation was different. They were seduced by Satan the adversary of God and of all good. Therefore it was God’s eternal plan to temper justice with mercy, which it was possible for Him to do under such circumstances; and to work out a plan of salvation for man, that would ultimately result in the complete defeat and subjugation of Satan, and in the complete renovation of our world of the consequences of all his nefarious enterprises and works.

106. Q. What do we learn from all these facts?

A. We learn that Satan, in tempting us, makes use of the same methods and schemes and pleas, that he employed in the seduction of our first parents.

(1) It is sad, but nevertheless true, that their experience has been re-enacted in the life of every human being on reaching the age of accountability. Romans 3:23—“all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.” (2) To read this summarization of the facts connected with the temptation and fall of our first parents, is to realize that the devil has never changed his tactics. Most of us know from personal experience that he still employs the same suaveness, the same cunning, the same deceit, the same half-truths and half-lies, promising so much but actually giving so little! (3) The best that Satan has to offer you for serving him, is ultimate disillusionment, remorse and despair; and incarceration in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe. “The wages of sin is death”—not only physical death, the dissolution of the body; but eternal death as well, banishment forever from the presence of God and His saints. (4) Where, then, will you spend eternity? The choice rests with you. If you choose the wrong, yours will be the responsibility for such a course of action! Galatians 6:7—“Be nt deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

101. Q. What was the threefold appeal involved in the temptation of our first parents?

102. Q. What was the issue involved in this first temptation?

103. Q. In what did the actual sin of our first parents consist?

104. Q. What was the essential principle of this first sin?

105. Q. What followed as a consequence of the fact that our first parents were seduced?

106. Q. What do we learn from all these facts?

Chapter 28

01.027. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN IN OUR WORLD

Lesson Twenty-five THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN IN OUR WORLD Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:7-24.

Scripture To Memorize: “Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned” (Romans 5:12).

107. Q. What was the immediate consequence of the sin of our first parents?

A. The awakening of conscience in them.

Genesis 3:7-8—“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” (literally, girdles). “And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.” Thus is indicated the beginning of shame and fear in the human heart, as consequences of sin.

108. Q. What did this awakening of conscience signify?

A. It signified that they had become separated from God by sin.

109. Q. What immediate punishment was inflicted upon them in consequence of their separation from God by sin?

A. The immediate punishment inflicted upon them was their expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:22-24, “And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever—therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

110. Q. Why were they expelled from the Garden of Eden?

A. Evidently in order that the penalty attached to the law which they had transgressed, might be executed.

(1) The law was: “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.” But as law would not be law without a penalty for its violation, the penalty was: “for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (2) This penalty pointed forward to physical death primarily. The same God who laid down the penalty, later defined it in such terms that no one can be in doubt as to what He meant by it. Genesis 3:19—“for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” This couldn’t have reference to anything but physical death, i.e., the dissolution of the body. (3) This conclusion is further corroborated by the fact that the only sense in which the word “die” is used in

the book of Genesis is with reference to physical death. E. g., Genesis 5:5—“and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” Cf. Genesis 5:8; Genesis 5:11; Genesis 5:14; Genesis 5:17, etc. (4) “The clause of the prohibition, ‘Thou shalt surely die,’ evidently refers to physical death and means no more than “thou shalt become dieable” (Shook, Gist of the Bible, p. 62). Dr. Adam Clarke paraphrases it thus: “From that moment thou shalt become mortal, and shall continue in a dying state till thou die.” “Thou shalt be subject to death” reads the Targum of Jonathan. “By the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil man forfeited his liberty to eat of the tree of life” (Dummelow). (5) Mortality seems to be inherent, however, in all fleshly or animal organization. Our view is, therefore, not that man became mortal when he sinned, but rather that his body had been mortal from its creation; that in Eden he had counteracted this mortality and preserved his physical youth by eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life; that, on becoming separated from God by his own disobedience, he forfeited this great privilege; that consequently in order that the penalty connected with the law which he had violated, might be worked out in his fleshly body, he was expelled from Eden; and thus having lost access to the food with which he had previously counteracted his mortality and prevented death, in due course of time he died, i.e., he died physically (Genesis 5:5). (6) From these considerations it is obvious that the penalty connected with the law violated by our first parents comprehended, primarily, physical death, or the death of their bodies; and that further, their death physically was a natural and logical consequence of their alienation from God. Thus it was that “through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin” (Romans 5:12).

111. Q. Do the scriptures teach that our first parents died spiritually when they sinned?

A. The scriptures teach that they entered upon a dying state, both physically and spiritually, the moment they became separated from God by selfishness and sin.

(1) In scripture those who are alienated from God by sin are said to be “dead” in the sense that they are in a dying state. Ephesians 2:1—“dead through your trespasses and sins.” Colossians 2:13—“and you, being dead through your trespasses, and the uncircumcision of your flesh.” Luke 15:24—“for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” To be in such a dying state is to be lost, and vice versa. (2) Moreover, they are in such a dying state, not because God desires it or brings it about, but because the active principle of sin, selfishness, is enthroned in their hearts, thus separating and alienating them from God. Colossians 1:21—“and you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works.” Ephesians 2:3—“the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.” (3) “Union with God in some way and by some means is essential to all life, and separation from Him is always death” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 54). (4) Actual spiritual death takes place, however; or perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say, is consummated, in the next world. It is eternal death, i.e., the final, complete and eternal separation of the soul from the presence of God, and its ultimate segregation in hell. See 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, Romans 9:22, Matthew 25:41, Revelation 2:11, Revelation 20:6, Rev. 20:18, Revelation 21:8, etc. (5) In defining the word thanatos (death), Thayer, in his Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, says: “In the widest sense death comprises all the miseries arising from sin, as well physical death as the loss of life consecrated to God and blessed in Him on earth to be followed by wretchedness in the lower world.” Cf. Revelation 20:14. (6) In the case of our first parents, their expulsion from Eden meant their loss of unhindered access to God, and the loss,

too, of the companionship and fellowship of His real presence. It meant also that they stood henceforth in need of religion with its mediatorial and reconciliatory aspects and offices. (7) The objective of God's Plan of Redemption, and the essence and purpose of true religion, is to eradicate the principle of selfishness from the human heart, and to substitute there-for the principle of sacrificial love; and to thus bridge the chasm, heal the separation, and bring about reconciliation between the creature and the Creator. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

112. Q. Do the scriptures teach that the whole human race must suffer the guilt of Adam's sin?

A. The scriptures teach that the sins for which we shall be held accountable are those which we commit ourselves.

(1) Sin is a personal intention or act of disobedience to God. Matthew 5:28, 1 John 3:4, 1 John 5:17, Deuteronomy 9:7, Romans 14:23, James 4:17, etc. (2) Romans 3:23—"for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God, (not have been born in sin, but have sinned). (3) Psalms 58:3—"the wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." They go astray not have been born astray. (4) Psalms 14:1—"they are corrupt, they have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good" (note—have done abominable works). (5) Psalms 51:5—"behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." The allusion here is to personal sin, not inherited guilt. (6) Isaiah 53:6—"all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (note, we have gone astray, not have been born astray). (7) Ephesians 2:1—"dead through your trespasses and sins" (not through Adam's sin, nor the sins of your parents). (8) Ephesians 2:3—"were by nature children of wrath." How so? Because they "lived in the lusts of the flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (not because of any inherited guilt). (9) Colossians 1:21—"alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works" (not Adam's works). (10) Colossians 2:13—"you being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh" (not in Adam's trespasses). (11) Job 14:4—"who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." This is explained by the preceding verse: "Dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me into judgment, when the day of probation will have been ended, and the final decree will be: "He that is filthy, let him be made filthy still . . . and he that is holy, let him be made holy still" (Revelation 22:11). (12) Romans 3:10-18. Note: "they have all turned aside," etc. The allusion here is to general depravity resulting from personal sins, not from inherited guilt. (13) The dogma of original sin is purely of theological origin. The term itself is theological lingo. No such idea as that of inherited guilt is taught in the scriptures. Moreover, the dogma of original sin misrepresents God, and has driven thousands into infidelity. (14) The scriptures teach that each person shall be held accountable in the Judgment for his own personal sins, and not for the sins of Adam or the sins of his ancestors. Romans 14:10; Romans 14:12—"for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God . . . So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God." Matthew 16:27—"then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds." 2 Corinthians 5:10—"For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Revelation 20:13—"and they were judged every man according to their works." (15) Hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18:20).

113. Q. Do the scriptures teach that the whole human race must suffer the consequences of sin?

A. They do. The human race suffers the consequences of sin from generation to generation.

(1) The dogmas of original sin, total depravity, unconditional election and reprobation, etc., have all arisen from the failure of theologians, scholarly as they were, to distinguish between the guilt and the consequences of sin. For instance, a man may in a few hours gamble away all his possessions, and thus reduce his family to abject poverty and want. The family would thus suffer the consequences of the father's misdeeds; but there is no court in heaven or on earth that would hold the family responsible for his guilt. So it is with our race. We must all suffer the consequences of sin from generation to generation; but a righteous God would never hold us individually responsible for the guilt of Adam or the guilt of our fathers. (2) No one can deny the fact of the operation of the law of heredity, which is defined as the "transmission of physical or mental characteristics or qualities to descendants." Physical features and frailties, sinful dispositions and propensities, and moral imperfections, are all without doubt transmitted from generation to generation by the ordinary processes of reproduction. That there is a close relation also between physical weakness and moral imperfection cannot be denied, but this connection is beyond the ability of the human intelligence to fully understand or explain. Guilt, however, is something acquired by each individual in consequence of his own transgression of the law of God; but is never inherited. (3) Exodus 20:5-6—"I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." The allusion here is evidently to the consequences of sin. Galatians 6:7-8—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." (4) It is not only a truth of divine revelation, but a fact of ordinary observation and experience as well, that our race suffers the consequences of sin from one generation to another, and even unto the third and fourth generations. It is a known fact that most of the diseases which prey upon our fleshly bodies today, are the direct consequences of the sins of our fathers. This knowledge should serve to foster in our minds a realization of the awful malignancy of sin, and to prompt us to flee from it as from a pestilence, not alone for our own well-being, but for the welfare of generations yet unborn.

114. Q. What is the chief consequence of Adam's sin which has descended upon the whole human race?

A. Temporal or physical death.

(1) By physical death we mean the dissolution of the body. The body of man, as we have learned, was created mortal; and this mortality which is inherent in our physical organization, and consequently universal, we inherit through our descent from Adam. (2) As long as our first parents lived in Eden and had access to the Tree of Life, they were given the privilege of counteracting their mortality and preserving their physical youth and vigor by eating of its fruit. But, on being expelled from Eden in consequence of their disobedience to God, they became subject to the law of mortality inherent in their physical organization, and in due course of time they died (Genesis 5:5). We, the whole human race, their posterity, having been born in the world at large, outside of

Eden, and consequently not having access to the fruit of the Tree of Life wherewith to counteract our natural mortality, must also all die. It will thus be seen how that physical death has become a natural, inevitable and universal consequence of the sin of our first parents. (3) This explains why infants must die, the same as adults. Though innocent of guilt, infants bear in their bodies the consequences of sin and must therefore suffer physical death as a prerequisite of the redemption of their bodies. See Romans 8:23, Php 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58, etc. (4) It should be pointed out, too, that physical death is universal in its scope, not alone in consequence of the sin of Adam, but in consequence of our own sins as well. For the tragedy of it all is that the apostasy of our first parents is repeated in the life of every human being on reaching the age of accountability. Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12. (5) Because the consequences of sin are universal, death is universal. Ecclesiastes 12:7—"the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 9:5—"for the living know that they shall die." 1 Corinthians 15:22—"as in Adam all die." Hebrews 9:27—"it is appointed unto men once to die." Genesis 3:19—"dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (6) The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are, however, a divine pledge and proof that the same all who die physically in consequence of the sin of Adam, shall be raised up (i.e., their bodies shall be raised) in consequence of the perfect obedience of Christ. This is the substance of Paul's argument in the fifth chapter of Romans; also in 1 Corinthians 15:22—"for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." The Apostle is writing here with regard to the resurrection of the body. Hence this does not mean that all will be saved, but rather that all (i.e., the bodies of all) will be raised up from the dead by the working of that same mighty power which raised up the body of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:14). Jesus Himself authenticates this teaching in John 5:28-29. "The hour cometh," He says, "in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Though the scriptures teach that the bodies of all will be raised up, they assert positively that only the redeemed will be clothed in glory and honor and immortality. And when that final great transformation shall have been wrought, then the consequences of sin will have been swept out of our world, and even mortality itself will have been "swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4). Revelation 21:4—"and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; for the first things are passed away." May the Lord hasten the day!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-FIVE

107. Q. What was the immediate consequence of the sin of our first parents?

108. Q. What did this awakening of conscience signify?

109. Q. What immediate punishment was inflicted upon them in consequence of their separation from God by sin?

110. Q. Why were they expelled from the Garden of Eden?

111. Q. Do the scriptures teach that our first parents died spiritually when they sinned?

112. Q. Do the scriptures teach that the whole human race must suffer the guilt of Adam's sin?

113. Q. Do the scriptures teach that the whole human race must suffer the consequences of sin?

114. Q. What is the chief consequence of Adam’s sin which has descended upon the whole human race?

01.028. THE CHIEF END OF MAN

Lesson Twenty-six THE CHIEF END OF MAN Scripture Reading: Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 3:16-23.

Scripture To Memorize: “Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

115. Q. For what end are we in this world?

A. We are in this world that we may know God, and love Him, and serve Him always.

116. Q. What shall we attain by loving and serving God?

A. We shall attain eternal happiness.

117. Q. Are not the things of this world sufficient to make us happy?

A. No. The things of this world cannot possibly bring us true happiness.

118. Q. Why cannot the things of this world bring us true happiness?

A. Because all earthly things are vain and perishable and because man is made for the service of God and for eternal happiness in heaven.

James 4:14—“what is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Cf. the testimony of Solomon, Ecclesiastes 2:9-11.

119. Q. Can man find true happiness in riches?

A. No. True happiness is not to be found in riches.

Read James 1:9-11, Luke 12:16-21.

120. Q. Can man find true happiness in worldly pleasure?

A. No. True happiness is not to be found in worldly pleasure.

Read the story of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-19.

121. Q. Can man find true happiness in the possession of worldly wisdom?

A. No. True happiness is not found in worldly wisdom.

Read the testimony of Solomon, who was one of the wisest of men. Ecclesiastes 1:12-18.

122. Q. Can man find true happiness in the possession of great power?

A. No. True happiness is not to be found in earthly power and authority.

Read the testimony of Solomon, perhaps the most powerful of ancient monarchs, Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. Ecclesiastes 2:11—“behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun.”

123. Q. For what end, then, have the things of this world been given us?

A. That we may use them for the purpose of knowing and serving God.

1 Corinthians 10:31—“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” Colossians 3:17—“Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

124. Q. Why does God require us to know Him?

A. Because He is the source of all truth; and because to know Him is the secret of life eternal.

John 17:3—“and this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.”

125. Q. Why does God require us to love Him?

A. Because He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Acts 17:25—“seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” James 1:17—“every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” Matthew 7:11—“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Ephesians 2:8—“for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that (salvation) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” Romans 6:23—“the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

126. Q. Why does God require us to serve Him?

A. Because He is the Sovereign ruler of all things; and because serving Him will result in the greatest good to His creatures.

Psalms 148:5—“Let them praise the name of Jehovah: for he commanded, and they were created.” Acts 17:24—“the God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” 1 Corinthians 8:6—“to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him.” Psalms 100:3—“Know ye that Jehovah, he is God; it is he that hath made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.”

127. Q. What will become of all those who refuse or neglect to know and love and serve God?

A. They will be separated from Him forever.

Matthew 25:30—“cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.” 2 Thessalonians 1:9—“who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”

128. Q. What must we do, if we would know and love and serve God, and be eternally happy?

A. We must believe what God has revealed; we must keep His commandments; we must faithfully observe all the appointments which He has ordained for our salvation and growth in holiness.

(1) “Or in other words, we must have Religion; for Religion (from religare) is the lively union of man with God, which springs from faith, charity, and grace, and is confirmed by the faithful observance of the Divine Commandments” (Deharbe’s Catechism). (2) It should be explained that the Latin verb religare means “to bind back;” hence true religion proposes and accomplishes the complete reconciliation of the creature with the Creator. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20.

129. Q. Where do we get the correct knowledge of divine truth, of the commandments of God, and of the means and appointments of divine Grace?

A. In the Holy Scriptures, and only in the Holy Scriptures.

Acts 17:11—“Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.” See also Psalms 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, etc. Therefore let us never neglect instruction in Christian doctrine, that we may truly learn to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him; and learn how to serve Him properly according to His own commandments and appointments; that in the end we may attain everlasting happiness in the heavenly state. This is indeed the chief end of man, and the end for which He was created in the image of God.

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him all creatures here below;

Praise Him above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!” Amen.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-SIX 115.Q.For what end are we in this world?

116. Q. What shall we attain by loving and serving God?

117. Q. Are not the things of this world sufficient to make us happy?

118. Q. Why cannot the things of this world bring us true happiness?

119. Q. Can man find true happiness in riches?

120. Q. Can man find true happiness in worldly pleasure?

121. Q. Can man find true happiness in the possession of worldly wisdom?

122. Q. Can man find true happiness in the possession of great power?

123. Q. For what end, then, have the things of this world been given us?

124. Q. Why does God require us to know Him?

125. Q. Why does God require us to love Him?

126. Q. Why does God require us to serve Him?

127. Q. What will become of all those who refuse or neglect to know and love and serve God?

128. Q. What must we do, if we would know and love and serve God, and be eternally happy?

129. Q. Where do we get the correct knowledge of divine truth, of the commandments of God, and of the means and appointments of divine Grace?

01.029. SPECIAL STUDY ON EVOLUTION

SPECIAL STUDY ON EVOLUTION

Reference has been made occasionally on preceding pages to the theory of evolution. To discuss this theory comprehensively, in relation to Biblical teaching, especially to that of the Hebrew cosmogony (Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-3), would require too many additional pages. Hence, I shall have to content myself with a somewhat cursory presentation of the subject.

I should like to say here, however, that no one knows—and it is doubtful that any man will ever know fully (1) how life itself originated, (2) the why and how of the life movement (what it is that causes cells to divide and thus to multiply, to differentiate in structure and to specialize in function), (3) the modusoperandi of heredity (how corporeal modifications or changes become incorporated into the chromosomes and genes, as indeed they must, in order to be transmitted to offspring), (4) the why and how of mutations (would not a sequence of mutations resulting in an ascending scale of complexity of existents surely presuppose a directing Intelligence?), (5) in short, how a new species emerges, or could emerge. (As Alfred Russel Wallace once said to his friend Darwin: Your theory may account for the survival of a species, but it does not account for the arrival of a new species.) These mysteries are all inscrutable phenomena of the total life process. As a matter of fact, the time element to which advocates of the theory resort puts it beyond the pale of strictly empirical proof or disproof.

Incidentally, the word “evolution,” like the word “nature,” belongs among the most ambiguous words in the English language. The most extreme form of the theory is that which is commonly called “materialistic” (“mechanistic” or “naturalistic”) evolution. This is the view that all species have come into existence fortuitously and as a result of the operation of resident forces in each lower species. This view is not only antireligious—it is unscientific. It is unscientific in that it ignores the order which enables us to designate the totality of physical being as a cosmos. The Greek kosmos means “order,” and order presupposes Intelligence. A science is man’s attempt to understand and describe the order which he finds in a given area of being. If order did not exist, there could be no science. Sheer fortuity (chance, purposelessness, etc.) simply cannot be reconciled with the order that is known by us empirically to exist. It has been rightly said that if man should ever discover beyond all possibility of doubt that the world he lives in is a world of chance exclusively, that discovery would mark the most tragic day in the story of his life upon the earth. It would denude the world and his own life in it of any possible meaning.

I suggest that each reader of this book secure a copy of the latest issue of Everyman’s Library edition (published by E. P. Dutton, New York) of Darwin’s Origin of Species, and read therein the Preface written by W. H. Thompson, F. R. S., Director of the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control, Ottawa, Canada. Thompson states flatly that he does not consider that the evolutionists have proved their claims, I only wish that we might have the space here to reproduce the substance of this Preface. Since this we do not have, I urge the reader to secure this book and read the Preface for himself. Another work that I recommend, dealing with the evolution

hypothesis, is that by Douglas Dewar, entitled The Transformist Illusion. This book may be secured from DeHoff Publications, 749 N. W. Broad Street, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Still and all, the other side of the coin, so to speak, should, I think, receive attention briefly here, for the benefit of students whose faith may have become gravely disturbed by the evolution dogma. There are many educated persons, I find, who in all sincerity hold that the theory, “if properly understood,” does not conflict with the Hebrew Cosmogny, if this in turn is “properly interpreted”; in a word, that there is no necessary conflict between the biological and Biblical accounts. These persons look upon evolution, within certain limits, as God’s method of creation. They base their position on the following arguments:

1. That the design of the Mosaic account is simply to affirm the truth that our world is the handiwork of the living God, who has only to order a thing to be done, and it is done. (Note the statement, “and God said,” which occurs repeatedly in the first chapter of Genesis.) That in short, the Spirit’s purpose in giving us the account is to emphasize the religious truth of the Creation without regard to the scientific aspects thereof. Hence, although we are told expressly that whatever God commanded “was done,” we are not told just how it was done. (Cf. Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Psalms 148:1-6; Hebrews 11:3.) Whether the Creative Process extended over seven week-days or seven (shall we say?) aeonic days is not a matter of special significance, as the same measure of Creative Power would have been prerequisite in either case. Therefore, the problem, according to those who hold this view, is not one of power but of method. (Obviously, Infinity in God has no reference to magnitude of any kind; rather, it designates the inexhaustibility of the Power which creates and sustains the cosmos.)

2. That there is nothing in the Genesis account to indicate that God spoke all living species into existence at one and the same instant; on the contrary, according to the account itself, the Creation extended over six “days” and a fraction of the seventh (note that God is said to have finished His work on the seventh day, Genesis 2:2).

3. That considerable indefiniteness characterizes the use of the Hebrew word yom (translated “day”) throughout the Genesis narrative. E. G., in Genesis 1:5; Genesis 1:16, it means “day light”; in Genesis 2:4, it is used for the whole Creation Era. Moreover, (1) there was no actual measurement of time in connection with the first three “days”: chronology had its beginning on the fourth “day”; (2) the “evening” that preceded the “morning” of Day One must have been in the sphere of timelessness; (3) as the distinguished commentator, Lange, puts it: “evening and morning denote the interval of a creative day,” the terms indicating respectively the first and second halves of this “day”; we cannot think of the usual evening and morning here, because the earth, and indeed our entire galaxy, did not become astronomically arranged until late in the entire process; (4) God Himself is timeless (always He is I AM, Exodus 3:14), and His activity is timeless (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:2, 2 Peter 3:8); unlike men, and Americans especially, God never gets in a hurry; (5) finally, the account of the seventh “day” does not terminate with the formula, “there was evening and there was morning, a seventh day,” such as occurs in connection with the account of each of the preceding six “days”: this indicates that the Father’s Sabbath is still going on. (This could well be what Jesus Himself meant when in defending Himself against the carping of the Pharisees that He was desecrating the Sabbath by doing works of healing on that day, He said, John 5:17, “My Father worketh even until now, and I work”; that is, the Father has been working

works of benevolence throughout all these intervening centuries—His aeonic Sabbath—and now you cavil at me for doing works of benevolence on your little week-day Sabbath! Cf. Mark 2:27. From the arguments as given above, there are many sincere believers who conclude that the days of the Genesis cosmogony were aeonic (epochal, or geological) days, and not days of twenty-four hours each. I think it only fair to take note here of the fact that this view was held by several of the Church Fathers, even those who adopted the literal rather than the allegorical method of interpreting Scriptures, as, e. g., Ephrem of Edessa, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, et al.) (See the book, Evolution and Theology, by Ernest C. Messenger, published by Macmillan, New York, 1932.) On the basis of this exegesis, of course, there was ample time to allow for progressive developments—by means of secondary causes, that is, what we call “natural laws” or “laws of nature,” which are in fact the laws of Nature’s God—claimed by modern science. From the instant that God spoke out, saying, “Light, Be!” (Genesis 1:3) to the instant when the Three, in Divine Consilium, decided, “Let us make man in our image” (Genesis 1:26), the stretch of time was indeed ample for all the eras that may be claimed by geology, pleontology, and other contemporary sciences. To the foregoing account of the basic tenets of what is sometimes called “Theistic evolution,” sometimes “Christian naturalism,” I should like to add the following personal observations:

1. It must be admitted that one of man’s most common errors is that of trying to carry his puny concepts of time over into the sphere of God’s timelessness. God’s timelessness is Eternity. Cf. Paul, 2 Corinthians 4:18—“the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

2. There are philosophers and theologians who take the position that at certain stages in the Creation, God, by direct action (that is, by primary, as distinguished from secondary, causation) inserted new and higher powers into the Cosmic Process, the first above the inanimate world (matter-in-motion) being the life process (cellular activity), then consciousness (the product of sensitivity), and finally, self-consciousness (person and personality). Obviously, these are the phenomena which mark off, and set apart, the successively higher levels of being as we know these levels empirically. On the basis of this theory, it is held that even though variations—both upward (progressive) and downward (retrogressive)—by means of resident forces, may have occurred on the levels of plant life and animal life, the actualization of first energy-matter, first Life, first consciousness, and first personality, must have been of the character of special creation. (The French naturalist, Cuvier, 1769–1832, held that the archetypal forms of all species were direct creations.) (It is significant, of course, that whereas the Hebrew verb bara, translated “create,” and signifying a primary creation, that is, creation by Divine Thought without the use of pre-existing material, occurs in Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:27 of the Genesis account, the verb asah, translated “make,” and signifying a fashioning—reducing to order—of previously created material, is found elsewhere in the account: in Genesis 2:3, the verbs are used together, to signify the completed Creation.) Surely unbiased persons will agree that no theory has ever really bridged the gap between the inanimate and the animate, or that between the brute and homo sapiens.

3. Again, the Genesis account of Creation is closely linked up with the Old Testament doctrine of the Sabbath. In Genesis 2:1-3, we have what is called a pro-lepsis, that is, an explanatory connecting together of two events widely separated in time, as if they had occurred at the same time. God rested, we are told, on the seventh “day,” after finishing His creative work on that “day.”

But He did not sanctify the seventh week-day as the Jewish Sabbath until after the Exodus. (For other cases of pro-lepsis, see Genesis 3:20, and Matthew 10:2-4). It is crystal clear that the first observance of the week-day Sabbath occurred, when the Procession reached the wilderness of Sin, on the eighth day of the eight-day period described in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. (It is inconceivable that the Procession would have been on the march, as we are told explicitly that it was, on the first day of this eight-day period, for this would also have been a Sabbath, had the institution been in effect at that time. But the law of the Sabbath forbode the people to do any work whatever, even to kindle a fire or to leave their habitations on that holy day (Exodus 16:29; Exodus 31:14-15; Exodus 35:2-3; Numbers 15:32-36); hence marching on that day would have been a flagrant violation of the divine command.) Not too long after, the Procession reached Sinai, and there the positive law of the Sabbath was incorporated into the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:8-11). In Deuteronomy 5:12-15, we are told expressly that the weekday Sabbath was set apart by divine authority to be observed by the children of Israel as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; hence, its observance must have been inaugurated after that deliverance had taken place, that is, after the Exodus. The Sabbath was an integral part of the Decalogue, and the Decalogue was the heart of the Mosaic Covenant. In Deuteronomy 5:4-22, we find Moses repeating the Commandments, including the command to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath; in Deuteronomy 5:1-3 of the same chapter, we find him stating positively that God had not made this Covenant with their fathers (the patriarchs), but with the generation that had been present at Horeb (another name for Sinai), and with their descendants to whom he, Moses, was speaking on that occasion (just before his own death and burial). (Cf. Galatians 3:19. Here the Apostle tells us that the Law (Torah) was added, that is, codified, because of the growing sinfulness of the people under no restraint but that of tradition. All these Scriptures account for the fact that we find no mention of the Jewish Sabbath in Genesis, that is, throughout the Patriarchal Dispensation. What, then, was the purpose of the inspired writer (Moses, Matthew 19:7-8; Luke 16:29-31; Luke 24:27; Luke 24:44; John 1:17, etc.) in correlating the observance of the weekday Sabbath by the Jewish nation with the “day” of God’s rest from His creative work? The answer is obvious: it is to explain why the seventh day was selected to be memorialized instead of any one of the other six days. We have in Genesis the reason why the particular day was chosen; we have in Deuteronomy what the day was chosen for, that is, what it memorialized. In a word, the Genesis account is to inform us that the seventh day of each ordinary week was sanctified as a memorial for the Jewish nation because that was the great (aeonic?) day on which God rested from His creative activity “in the beginning.” Thus it may be contended, legitimately, it would seem to this author, that the extent of he time involved in these two instances is not any necessary part of the exegetical parallel. (As clearly indicated in the New Testament, Christian assemblies were held on the first day of the week, the Lord’s Day, as a memorial of the Resurrection. Cf. Mark 16:9, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, Revelation 1:10, etc.).

4. Although the Bible is not a textbook of science, and was not intended to be such, still and all the extent to which Biblical teaching and contemporary scientific theory are in harmony is little short of amazing. This is especially true of the Creation narrative. The order of Creation as given in this account is as follows:

Day One: energy, light, matter-in-motion. (Contemporary physics holds that the first “physical” energy must have been some form of radiant energy. Moreover, the transmutation of energy into

matter, and of matter into energy, is a commonplace in our day.) Day Two: atmosphere ("firmament," literally, "expanse").

Day Three: lands and seas, and plant life ("each after its kind").

Day Four: the beginning of the measurement of time, that is, chronology. (Plant life had probably cleared the gases from around the earth, and so the heavenly bodies came into view for the first time.) Day Five: the water and air species. (The current theory is that animal life began in the water.) Day Six: land animals, man and woman.

Day Seven: consummation, and rest. This is precisely the order of creation envisioned today by Science. Moreover, we have here a remarkable example of the adaptation of means to ends, and of the adaptation of nature to man and his needs. Light or radiant energy necessarily came first; light and atmosphere necessarily preceded animal life; and all subhuman orders necessarily preceded human life (to provide food, shelter, clothing, medicine, etc., for man). (Note also the correspondence between the picture of man in Genesis 2:7 as a mind-body unity ("a living soul") and the organismic (psychosomatic) approach to the study of man that is characteristic of modern science.) Again, I call attention to the little book, Man Does Not Stand Alone, by the distinguished scientist, A. Cressy Morrison, published by F. H. Revell, New York. The thesis of this entire book is that of the adaptation of all nature to man and his needs, the vice versa of the overworked shibboleth of man's adaptation to nature, his "environment.") Now it is well-known that the existence of the Torah is traceable historically back beyond the beginnings of human science; in short, we have here a book, with its account of the Creation, which originated in pre-scientific times, and yet is amazingly in harmony with contemporary science. Indeed, I doubt that the time ever existed in which scientific thinking and Biblical teaching were in greater accord than in our own day. How can we account for this, other than on the ground that in Genesis we have divine revelation?

5. It would be well, I think, to list here the various interpretations of the Genesis account of the Creation, as follows:

(1) The mythical view, that the account is derived in large part from Babylonian, Indian, Hellenic, etc., folklore. We object to this theory, for the following reasons: (a) the transcendent purity (of the concept of God and His operations) of the Hebrew Cosmogony removes it far from any possible connection with these alleged pagan sources; (b) the fact that this account is attached to the history of the early life of man on the earth gives it historical support that all pagan mythologies lacked; and (c) there is not the slightest trace of myth in the Genesis account, and those who allege to the contrary do not know what the factors are which make a narrative really mythical. To realize that there is no mythology in the Genesis account all that one has to do is to compare it with the actual creation myths of the primitive and pagan peoples. Mythology was polytheistic. Its characters were personifications of natural forces (as distinguished from the pure incorporeal personality of the God of the Bible, Exodus 3:14), anthropomorphic creatures with sex distinctions and guilty of all the crimes in the category. No mythical, allegorical, or even metaphorical connotations are to be found in the Genesis Cosmogony.

(2) The ultra-literal view, that the Genesis account portrays the Creation as having been consummated in six days of twenty-four hours each. This theory is fairly well treated in the

foregoing paragraphs. The vagueness of the time element in the account does, as we have already noted, open to some question this traditional view.

(3) The ultra-scientific view, which require the Genesis Cosmogony to conform to science in every detail. This is asking too much, however, for two reasons: In the first place, the Bible is not a textbook of science, was not even designed to be such; in the second place, science changes its basic concepts from age to age, and therefore no account of Creation could possibly be elastic enough to harmonize with all these changing views. The Biblical account of the Creation is designed to give us the truth about the nature, origin, and destiny of the person, and his position in the totality of being as the lord tenant of the earth which was created for his habitation (Genesis 1:28-30). The essence of this entire Cosmogony is that the Will of the living God is the constitution of our world, both physical and moral; that the Totality of the world we cognize by sense-perception and subsequent reflection is the embodiment of the Thought, Will, and Word of the Creator.

(4) The prophetic-vision theory, that the “days” referred to in the Genesis account were actually seven successive ordinary days in the life of the prophet Moses (cf. Deuteronomy 18:15; Deuteronomy 18:18; Acts 3:22; Acts 7:37, etc.) on which he was vouchsafed what might be called panoramic visions of the progressive stages of the Creation.

(5) The restitution or renovation theory, that we have described here what is called the Adamic renovation of our cosmos following a pre-adamic cataclysmic reduction of this cosmos to a chaos. This view goes along with the cyclical view of cosmic history (cf. Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-2, etc.).

(6) The panoramic (cinematographic) view, that we have in the Genesis account a vivid unrolling, before the mind of Moses, of the process of Creation in its successive stages, and without particular regard to detail. (Dr. Strong calls this the pictorial-summary view.) One is reminded here of the words of Augustine, De Gen. ad Lit., 4:27, “The length of these days is not to be determined by the length of our week-days. There is a series in both cases, and that is all.”

6. I do strenuously object to the manner in which the theory of evolution has been built up into what might be called a dogma. Many modern textbooks are replete with assertions of, and statements about, what is designated the “fact” of evolution. This usually occurs when, from an author’s viewpoint, the wish is father to the thought. It is unfortunately true that when certain of the intelligentsia lose their faith in God, they avidly seek every possible device to bolster their unbelief. To say that evolution is a “fact,” however, is going entirely too far, especially in the attempt to establish a theory which is constructed for the most part by inference. Whether this inference is necessary inference or not, or just sheer conjecture, remains a moot question. Bold assertions do not cover lack of concrete evidence. Although I have never been able to bring myself to the point of accepting many of the exaggerated claims that are made by the evolutionists, yet after some fifteen years of dealing with college students, it has become my conviction that there is no real need for adding difficulties for them unnecessarily, or setting up and shooting at what may turn out to be straw men. Hence, the material of this section has been organized and presented with the end in view of helping the student to be strengthened in the most holy faith. If this can be accomplished without doing violence to the sacred text, on any subject that has been more or less controversial, I think it should be done. I cannot convince myself that acceptance or rejection of

any theory of the method of Creation that recognizes and allows for the operation of Divine Intelligence and Power should ever be made a test of fellowship in a church of the New Testament order. This last word: The most telling indictment brought by W. R. Thompson (mentioned above) against those who have been singing so lustily paeans to Darwin is on the count of intellectual dishonesty. “A long-enduring and regrettable effect of the success of the Origin,” he writes, “was the addiction of biologists to unverifiable speculation.”“ “The success of Darwinism,” he goes on to say, “was accompanied by a decline in scientific integrity . . . evident in the reckless statements of Haeckel and in the shifting, devious and histrionic argumentation of T. H. Huxley.” He points out the fact that even among scientists there is great divergence as to what evolution really is and how it comes about. Yet these men rally to the defense—and dogmatic promulgation—of a doctrine which they cannot even define. To this I might add that it has long been a favorite avocation of the self-styled “naturalistic” school of scientists—whose conclusions were warped by their predilections against any kind of religious faith—to belittle the philosophers of the Middle Ages for their “blind worship” of Aristotle. Yet I am sure that the medieval veneration of Aristotle was relatively mild in comparison with the uncritical devotion which so many scientists of recent vintage have given to Darwinism. Thompson concludes as follows: “Between the organism that simply lives, the organism that lives and feels, and the organism that lives and feels and reasons, there are, in the opinion of respectable philosophers, abrupt transitions corresponding to an ascent in the scale of being, and they hold that the agencies of the material world cannot produce transitions of this kind.” The fact of the matter is, as stated heretofore, that no one knows just how a new species emerges or could emerge. With these conclusions this writer is in full accord.

01.030. SPECIAL STUDY ON MAKING GOD REAL

SPECIAL STUDY ON MAKING GOD REAL

I shall follow the time-honored procedure of dialectic, treating this subject first from the negative point of view, then concluding from the positive point of view.

D. Elton Trueblood, in his excellent text, Philosophy of Religion, emphasizes the truth that one's belief in the existence of God is not as potent an influence in one's life as is one's concept of the nature and attributes of God; that is to say, the matter of paramount importance to religious faith is the kind of God in whom one believes. It seems to me that this statement is one which can hardly be called in question.

Certainly man needs, and must have, if his worship is of any value, a God who is "real" to him, a God who is in some significant measure understandable by him, a God who is congenial to him, and therefore a God who supplies his human needs and to whom he can commit himself, in body and soul and spirit, without reservation. Where is this God to be found? Where and how has He revealed Himself to man? In reply to these questions we have just three propositions to offer, as follows:

1. Science, despite its achievement in the area of the understanding of the cosmos and its elementary particles, still and all is incapable of making God, or spiritual values of any kind, actually real to us, that is, real in the sense stated above. Science, to be sure, can give us a more comfortable world; it can fill our lives with gadgets which contribute to physical ease—but science cannot tell us much about God. Science points up, of course, the greatest mystery of all—the mystery of being. It brings this mystery to our attention and to our wonder, but it remains incapable of penetrating this mystery to its depths. Science can describe processes—in fact, that is its function; but it has little to say about meanings.

Science does contribute, however, one significant truth that has great bearing on our apprehension of the nature of God. That truth is, as stated heretofore in this text, that the framework of the world we live in is a framework of order. Because our world is a world of order, we can live in it; we could not live in an unpredictable world. And because our world is a world of order (a cosmos, not a chaos), science is possible: all the sciences are efforts of man to describe the order which he finds in the various areas of physical being to which he directs his attention. Three facts of the world which science presents to our view stand out in bold relief: (1) that the processes of the physical world are in harmony with, and indeed governed by, strict mathematical norms or principles; (2) that running throughout life as we experience it, and governing the cosmic order in its every aspect, is the principle of the interrelationships of ends and means; (3) that standing out clearly through all human experience is the fact of the adaptation of nature to man. The mathematical character of our cosmos has been a source of awe and wonder to scientists of every field and from the earliest times. Pythagoras (5th century B.C.) was moved to affirm that "things are numbers." Plato in like manner commented: "God ever geometrizes." And in recent

years Sir James Jeans has affirmed that our universe appears to be the handiwork of a pure mathematician, and creation an act of thought. Surely the necessary inference is that such precision of mathematical relations, of the interrelationships between ends and means, and of the adaptation of nature to the needs of man, its lord tenant, presupposes a Universal Intelligence, an Orderer of this universal order and design. There are few materialists indeed in the history of philosophy, and the truly great scientists have ever been humble souls. Still and all, science is helpless to make God real to us. Perhaps the highest degree to which the faith of science can attain is well expressed in these words of the late Albert Einstein: My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.

(This is quoted by Lincoln Barnett, The Universe and Dr. Einstein, p. 106.) This, of course, is the intellectualized God of Spinoza, and not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Philosophy likewise, even though it can become more human and more positive in its affirmation of values as facts of our world, still is incapable of making God real to us. The whole history of philosophy confirms this statement. The simple fact is that our God—the God of the Bible—is not to be tied down to a Procrustean bed of human speculation and opinion.

One who is informed in the history of philosophy will be impressed with the fact that the uninspired thinkers of all ages—those who have depended on the power of reason alone—have failed to reach any apprehension of God that is appealing to the human consciousness or that meets human aspiration and need. Philosophy offers its classic arguments—the Ontological (based on the concept of perfect being), the Cosmological (whatever begins to exist must have an adequate cause), and the Teleological (design in our universe presupposes the Designer), etc. These arguments, based largely on a priori thinking, although having validity of a kind, still do not make God real to us. Not so long ago I undertook to make a list of the terms that have been coined by the different philosophers to convey their respective concepts of what they call the First Cause, the First Principle, whom believers call God. This list affords some interesting food for speculation, to say the least, as indicated by the following examples (in which the particular philosopher is named first, and his designation for God follows the name): Pythogoras, Unity; Plato, the Form of the Good; Aristotle, Pure Self-thinking Thought or the Unmoved Mover; Heracleitus, Logos (Reason, Law); Anaxagoras, Nous (Mind-Stuff); Plotinus, The One; The Scholastics, Natura Naturans, or Actus Purus; Bruno, World Soul; Spinoza, Substance; Schopenhauer, The Absolute Will; Hegel, The Absolute Idea; Spencer, The Unknowable; Bergson, Elan Vital (Life Force); Matthew Arnold, The Power That Makes for Righteousness; C. Lloyd Morgan, Nisus (of Activity); Emerson, The Over-Soul; William James, M-O-R-E, etc. (Does not this last approximate absurdity?) Obviously, these designations are, for the most part, purely academic and without content in terms of human experience. They provoke little interest except within the circle of the intellectually “elect.” They can never make God real, in any satisfying sense, to the average man.

We are reminded at this point of the words of Zophar the Naamathite to the patriarch Job in days of old, Job 11:7—

Canst thou by searching find out God?

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? The most that human philosophy can do in answer to this question is to give a resounding negative. Man, by the light of his own reason alone, can never apprehend God in any measure that is satisfying to his own nature and needs. Human reason must be complemented and vitalized by faith—by faith that turns to divine revelation. God must have revealed Himself to man; otherwise, no man could ever gain any adequate understanding of Him. If God has not revealed Himself to man, then man is back where he was two thousand years go, utterly ignorant of God's love, and floundering in the muck and mire of human speculation. Of course, we see the manifestations of the power of God in nature all the time, but it is not the Power of God that meets man's deepest needs—it is the Love of God that man must drink of freely, in the Spirit, if he is to become a true saint, meet for the inheritance of all the saints in light. (See Romans 1:18-23, Psalms 19:1, Romans 5:5, Colossians 1:12.) This leads us to our conclusion which is to be stated in positive terms, as follows:

3. Christ Jesus alone makes God real to us.

It was an integral part of the mission of the Son to our world, not only to provide an atonement for sin, but also to show mankind who and what God is. Said He, on occasion: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9), "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6), etc.

How many huge tomes have been written and published on the subject of understanding God, knowing God, etc.! How many educated men are still laboriously trying to climb the ladder stretching from earth to heaven when all they need to do is to take the elevator, that is, to look on Christ and so to see God in human flesh! One who desires to apprehend the wisdom of God needs only to listen to the voice of Jesus delivering the Beatitudes. One who would witness demonstrations of the power of God, needs only to look upon Jesus casting out demons, healing the afflicted, stilling the tempest, multiplying loaves and fishes (a miracle of creation), and raising the dead. One who would know something of the love of God needs only to look upon Jesus, our Passover, the Lamb of God, dying on the Cross, the innocent for the guilty, the Savior of all who will come to God through faith in His vicarious sacrifice. To see the God-man, the Anointed, the incarnate Word, is to see God, and to make Him real to men is to make God real to men. For the very essence of our faith is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). In His teaching, Jesus uses two designations for God which make Him a thousand times more understandable and more congenial to us than all the gobbledygook of the scientists and philosophers. "God is a Spirit," said Jesus, "and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Again, said He: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name" (Matthew 6:9). The term "Spirit" gives us insight into the being of God; the term "Father" gives us insight into our potential relationship with God.

"God is a Spirit." Without recourse to metaphysics, let us say that this means that as man is personal, so God is personal. It means that as God in some way similar to man thinks and feels and wills, so man is said to have been created in the image of God. We are not surprised, therefore, that when God revealed His great and incommunicable Name to the saints of old, it was the Name that fairly breathes personality. The polytheistic gods and goddesses of the pagan world were personifications; the God of the Bible is pure Personality: He is the I AM; with Him there is no past, present or future, because it is His nature to be timeless. The Divine Principle of Greek

philosophy was pantheistic, THAT WHICH IS; the God of the Bible is theistic, HE WHO IS. Only a person can say meaningfully, I am! Personality means vitality, activity, rationality, sociality, uniqueness, and otherness: our God is all these. The devotee of an impersonal deity must elbow his way past the language of Scripture to a kind of god that can never be real or congenial to persons.

“Our Father who art in heaven”—what vistas of faith and hope and love this term opens to our view! I hear someone raising the hue and cry of anthropomorphism: you are creating God in the image of man, is the objection. The old Greek Xenophanes raised this cry some twenty-six centuries ago. “If oxen and lions had hands and could fashion images,” said he, “as men do, they would make the pictures and images of their gods in their own likeness: horses would make them like horses, oxen like oxen,” etc. The implication is that man does the same: that God did not make man in His image; rather, that man has set up a God who is fashioned in man’s image. This, of course, is half false and half true. In the first place, it is false to assume that lions, horses or oxen could even conceive of a being they might call “God,” hence it is equally false that man should be placed in the same category with brute animals. The objection is true in the sense that man is compelled by his very lack of omniscience to think of any other form of being than human being in terms of his own experience. The person who argues that the world is just a vast machine is interpreting the physical world in terms of the characteristics which he finds in a machine. The person who will contend that his old dog is dreaming by the fireplace is interpreting animal behavior in terms of his own experience. Hence, man is compelled by the limitations of his intelligence to think of Divine being in terms of his own being—he cannot do otherwise. And the designation “Father” is the one which, above all others, makes God congenial to the commonality.

01.031. Volume 2

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art., article

intro., introduction

cf., compare

l., line

ch., chapter

ll., lines

chs., chapters

p., page

edit., edition

pp., pages

e.g., for example

par., paragraph

ff., following

sect., section

fn., footnote

sv., under the word

ibid., the same

trans., translated

i.e., that is

v., verse

in loc., in this place

w., verses

or connection

vol., volume

01.032. THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION

Lesson Twenty-Seven THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:9-21.

Scripture to Memorize: “And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:14-15).

1 Q. Do the Scriptures teach that man in his present state is totally depraved?

A. They teach that he is depraved in consequence of his estrangement from God, but not that he is totally depraved.

(1) Man in his present unnatural state is alienated from God by sin, and consequently more or less depraved. Ephesians 2:3—“among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.” Colossians 1:21—“and you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works,” etc. Paul describes the depravity of heathen nations, in Romans 1:24-32. Cf. Jude 1:4; Jude 1:8; Jude 1:10-16; Jude 1:18-19, etc. (2) Man is not totally depraved however, i.e., “wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body,” as the creeds give it. If man were totally depraved, he would be hopelessly lost; and all the overtures issuing from God’s love, all efforts of the Holy Spirit to touch his heart and quicken it to repentance and obedience, and all proclamations of the gospel designed to convict him of sin and of righteousness and judgment, would all be in vain. (3) The devil and his angels are of course totally depraved. But the precise degree of man’s spiritual derangement is nowhere clearly indicated in scripture. “But that it is of the positive or comparative and not of the superlative grade, is evident from our own daily observation and experience. Nothing is more common than to see wicked men growing worse and worse under the influence of their own personal transgressions. But if all men were as bad by nature as sin can make them, there could, of course, be no progress in human depravity. . . . The presumptuous sin committed against the Holy Spirit is a personal sin, and it is this, and this only, which fills up a man’s cup of iniquity and makes him totally depraved” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 58). See Matthew 12:31-32.

2. Q. In view of man’s ability, even in his present fallen state, to respond to the overtures and calls of God, what has God done for him?

A. God has worked out a Plan of Redemption for him.

3. Q. Why did God work out a Plan of Redemption for man?

A. God worked out a Plan of Redemption for man because He loves him.

Because man lapsed into sin and was in danger of perishing in sin for ever, God, out of His great love for him, planned and worked out a plan to avert such a tragedy. John 3:16-17—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the World; but that the world should be saved through him." Romans 5:8—"But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Ephesians 2:4—"but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us," etc. 1 John 4:10—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Emphasize the fact that if men reject these gifts and calls of God, they will perish forever, in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe.

4. Q. When did God first intimate that He proposed to redeem man?

A. He intimated it immediately after the temptation and fall of our first parents.

Genesis 3:14-15—"and Jehovah God said unto the serpent . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

5. Q. To whom did this mysterious oracle specifically allude?

A. It alluded to Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

(1) "In this very mysterious and sublime oracle we have evidently a double reference: 1. To the natural enmity that has ever existed between mankind and the serpent kind; 2. To the warfare that is still carried on between Christ, who is in the highest and most appropriate sense the Seed of the woman, and Satan, who is here symbolically represented by the serpent . . . and here we have, therefore, the first recorded promise of mercy to fallen man. Here began that mighty conflict which is symbolically represented by the enmity that exists between mankind and the serpent kind, but which will not be fully consummated till Christ, the Seed of the woman, shall have completely vanquished Satan and all his host of rebel followers" (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, pp. 64–66). (2) 1 John 3:8—"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Romans 16:20—"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." See Hebrews 2:14-15, Revelation 20:1-3; Revelation 20:7-10.

6. Q. In what special sense was Jesus the Seed of the woman?

A. In the sense that He was the Seed of a woman exclusively, i.e., He had no human father.

Isaiah 7:14—"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Matthew 1:20—"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Luke 1:35—"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God." Galatians 4:4—"but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law," etc. Cf. Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1-3; John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16, etc. Emphasize here the significance of the Virgin Birth. Jesus was the only person who ever came before the world of whom it is claimed that He was the Seed of a woman exclusively.

7. Q. What would have become of man, if God had not worked out a Plan of Redemption for him?

A. He would have been lost forever; because, if God had not provided a sufficient Atonement for the sins of the world, no human being could ever have been saved.

Without the sufficient Atonement for sin which was provided by Divine grace in the suffering and death of the Lamb of God (John 1:29), there would be for mankind nothing but “a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries” (Hebrews 10:27).

8. Q. Why could no human being ever have been saved, if God had not provided an Atonement for sin?

A.Because Divine Justice required an offering adequate to satisfy the Divine government and to sustain the majesty of the Divine law which was violated when man sinned; and no creature, least of all man, was able to provide such an offering. This all becomes quite clear when once we realize that sin is transgression of the Divine law, and not of human law. This is an essential truth quite generally overlooked by people of our day and age, who seem to have lost all sense of the true nature of sin and its tragic consequences. Consequently no offering that is of the earth or of earthly origin, no offering that man might bring, could be a sufficient satisfaction for the transgression of Divine law. This is the reason why Cain’s offering was rejected; it was an offering of the ground, earthly, and consequently inadequate. See Genesis 4:1-8. In view of man’s inability, therefore, to provide an adequate atonement for sin, God provided it for him, i.e., God did for man what man could not do for himself. Otherwise man would have been lost for ever. Cf. Psalms 89:14—“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne.” In view of these sublime truths, our rejection or neglect of God’s matchless gifts extended us through Jesus Christ, becomes utterly inexcusable!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-SEVEN

1. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that man in his present state is totally depraved?

2. Q. In view of man’s ability, even in his present fallen state, to respond to the overtures and calls of God, what has God done for him?

4. Q. When did God first intimate that He proposed to redeem man?

5. Q. To whom did this mysterious oracle specifically allude?

6. Q. In what special sense was Jesus the Seed of the woman?

7. Q. What would have become of man, if God had not worked out a Plan of Redemption for him?

8. Q. Why could no human being ever have been saved, if God had not provided an Atonement for sin?

01.033. THE ELEMENTS OF TRUE RELIGION

Lesson Twenty-Eight THE ELEMENTS OF TRUE RELIGION Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:11-22.

Scripture to Memorize: “That he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross” (Ephesians 2:15-16). “But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

9. Q. What was the first necessary step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A. The first necessary step was to reveal the elementary principles, laws and institutions of true religion.

10. Q. What is true religion?

A. True religion is the system of means of reconciliation whereby man is bound anew to God in covenant relationship.

(1) “Religion, as the term imports, began after the Fall; for it indicates a previous apostasy. A remedial system is for a diseased subject. The primitive man could love, wonder and adore, as angels now do, without religion; but man, fallen and apostate, needs religion in order to his restoration to the love and worship and enjoyment of God. Religion, then, is a system of means of reconciliation—an institution for bringing man back to God—something to bind man anew to love and delight in God” (A. Campbell, Christian System, p. 36). Again; “Religo with all its Latin family, imports a binding again, or tying fast that which was dissolved” (Campbell, ibid., p. 36, fn.). (2) The essential principle of music is harmony; of art, it is beauty; of government, authority; of sin, selfishness; so the fundamental principle of true religion is reconciliation. See Ephesians 2:11-22, 2 Corinthians 6:18-18.

11. Q. What are the essential elements of true religion?

A. They are: Altar, Sacrifice, and Priesthood.

(Teachers, this truth cannot be impressed too forcefully upon the minds of your pupils. It underlies all correct interpretation of the Scriptures, and all correct understanding of God’s dealings with the human race.) 12.Q.What are the two departments of true religion?

A. The two departments of true religion are: (1) the things that God has done and will do for us; and (2) the things which we must do for ourselves in obedience to Him; all of which matters, both on the Divine side and on the human side, result in binding us anew to Him in covenant relationship.

“The whole proposition must of necessity in this case come from the offended party. Man could propose nothing, do nothing to propitiate his Creator, after he had rebelled against Him. Heaven, therefore, overtures; and man accepts, surrenders and returns to God. The Messiah is a gift, sacrifice is a gift, justification is a gift, the Holy Spirit is a gift, eternal life is a gift, and even the means of our personal sanctification is a gift from God. Truly, we are saved by grace. Heaven, we say, does certain things for us, and also proposes to us what we should do to inherit eternal life . . . We are only asked to accept a sacrifice which God has provided for our sins, and then the pardon of them, and to open the doors of our hearts, that the Spirit of God may come in and make his abode in us. God has provided all these blessings for us, and only requires us to accept of them freely, without any price or idea of merit on our part. But he asks us to receive them cordially, and to give up our hearts to Him” (Campbell, ibid., p. 36).

13. Q. What is the root of true religion on the divine side?

A. The root of true religion on the divine side is the grace of God.

(1) All the principles, institutions, laws and blessings of true religion issue from the grace of God. “Grace,” says Cruden, “is taken for the free and eternal love and favor of God, which is the spring and source of all the benefits which we receive from Him.” Dr. Hovey defines grace as “unmerited favor to sinners.” (2) The mother who sacrifices herself for her sick child does it, not because she must, but because she loves the child. In like manner, to say that we are saved by grace, is to say that we are saved without necessity on the part of God to save us. This means that God did not provide a Plan of Redemption for man, with its accompanying benefits and blessings, because He was under any kind of obligation to man, or to any other creature, to have done so. It means, rather, that foreseeing man in a lost condition and in grave danger of perishing for ever, God, out of His infinite love for him, arranged, provided and offered the necessary plan and means to reclaim and regenerate him, to build him up in true holiness, and to prepare him for citizenship in heaven. Both creation and redemption have their source and root in God’s amazing mercy, love and compassion. Oh, when will the human race become appreciative of this great truth and its far-reaching implications! (3) John 3:16-17. Titus 2:11—“for the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men” (i.e., the promise and offer of salvation). Titus 3:5—“according to his mercy he saved us.” Ephesians 2:8—“by grace have ye been saved through faith.” Ephesians 1:6—“to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

14. Q. What is the root of true religion on the human side?

A. The root of true religion on the human side is our faith.

(1) Hebrews 11:6—“Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him,” John 14:1—“ye believe in God, believe also in me.” Ephesians 2:8—“by grace have ye been saved through faith.” Romans 5:1—“being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Galatians 3:26-27—“For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” (2) Every act of a truly religious life issues from our faith. Repentance, for instance, is faith turning the individual from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts 26:18). The good confession is faith declaring itself in the presence of witnesses. Baptism is faith yielding to the authority of Christ. The

Lord's Supper is faith remembering Jesus Christ. Prayer is faith communing with God through Christ, Liberality is faith acknowledging God's ownership and man's stewardship. Meditation is faith pondering, and praise is faith exalting our God and His Christ. Faith so motivates the truly religious life, that it is said in scripture that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

15. Q. What is true religion in its practical aspects?

A. It is benevolence and holiness.

James 1:27—"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

16. Q. In view of all the Divine arrangements for our redemption, what should we do?

A. The very least we can do, in return for all that God has done and will do for us, is to love Him and serve Him faithfully.

God gave His Son for us. The Son gave His life for us. The Holy Spirit pleads with us, through the gospel, to return to God. To reject all these Divine overtures and calls and gifts is base ingratitude! Romans 11:33-36, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT

9. Q. What was the first necessary step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

10. Q. What is true religion?

11. Q. What are the essential elements of true religion?

12. Q. What are the two departments of true religion?

13. Q. What is the root of true religion on the divine side?

14. Q. What is the root of true religion on the human side?

15. Q. What is true religion in its practical aspects?

16. Q. In view of all the Divine arrangements for our redemption, what should we do?

Chapter 35

01.034. THE BEGINNINGS OF RELIGION

Lesson Twenty-Nine THE BEGINNINGS OF RELIGION Scripture Reading: Genesis 4:1-16.

Scripture to Memorize: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh” (Hebrews 11:4).

17. Q. What are the two general kinds of religion?

A. They are: Revealed Religion, and Natural Religion.

18. Q. What do we mean by Revealed Religion?

A. By Revealed Religion, we mean those systems of religion which God has revealed to man.

19. Q. What do we mean by Natural Religion?

A. By Natural Religion, we mean the pagan or heathen systems of religion.

20. Q. Why do we speak of the heathen systems of religion as Natural Religion?

A.Because they are all efforts on the part of mankind to apprehend and know and worship God from the dim light of Nature, as interpreted by the unaided human intelligence. The religions usually named as pagan or heathen are: Brahmanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, and two or three others akin to these and subordinate. Brahmanism is of India. Buddhism had its origin in India, and spread to China and Japan. Confucianism is of China, as is Taoism. Hinduism is the name given to the multiplicity of cults which prevail in India. Zoroastrianism is derived from Zoroaster, the ancient persian philosopher. Mohammedanism, which originated in the seventh century A. D., is of Arabia; and its founder, Ubul ’l Kassim, later called Mohammed, borrowed his idea of the one God from the revealed religions. Strictly speaking, none of these systems can qualify as a religion, although we popularly speak of them as such. They are in reality ethical, metaphysical or philosophical systems.

21. Q. What is the fundamental difference between these pagan religions and the revealed religions?

A. The fundamental difference is, that all pagan or heathen religions show man seeking after God; whereas in the revealed religions, God is represented as reaching down to reclaim and redeem fallen man.

Job 11:7—“Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” 1 Corinthians 1:21—“For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.”

22. Q. What are the inadequacies of all pagan religions?

A. They are inadequate in every respect as spiritual forces.

(1) They lack the authority to retrain the evil passions and propensities of men. (2) They fail to beget and cherish in the human heart a consciousness of sin or a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. (3) They fail to provide an atonement for sin. (4) They fail to offer any plan of salvation from sin. (5) They fail to offer any means of eradicating the consequences of sin, such as physical death, etc. (6) They fail to provide an example of true holiness, such as Jesus gave us in His life. (7) They fail to offer sufficient incentives or means to growth in holiness. (8) In consequence of all these deficiencies, they fail to build a high type of human civilisation. They are saturated with such evils as superstition, animism, asceticism, ancestor worship, sensualism, etc.

23. Q. What are the revealed religions?

A. The revealed religions are: the Patriarchal Religion; the Hebrew or Jewish Religion, commonly called Judaism; and the Christian Religion, commonly called Christianity.

24. Q. Where do we find the authentic record of the principles, laws and institutions of these revealed religions?

A. In the Holy Scriptures.

(1) The laws and institutions of Patriarchal Religion are, recorded in the book of Genesis. (2) The Hebrew or Jewish Religion is revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures. (3) The Christian Religion is revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

25. Q. What is the only revealed religion that is in force today?

A. The only revealed religion that is in force today is Christianity.

Both Patriarchism and Judaism were abrogated and came to an end at the death of Christ. See John 1:17, 2 Corinthians 3:1-14, Galatians 3:23-28, Colossians 2:13-15, Hebrews 8:1-13, etc. The only religion through which God promises to enter into covenant relationship with man, in the present Dispensation, is Christianity, the religion revealed and established by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His Apostles. See John 14:6, 1 Timothy 2:5, Ephesians 4:4-6, etc.

26. Q. What was the first institution of revealed religion that God established?

A. The Altar.

27. Q. What was the Altar?

A. The Altar was an artificial erection of earth, turf, and unhewn stones, upon which sacrifices were offered.

Genesis 8:20—“Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.” Genesis 12:7-8—“And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the east, and Ai on the west; and there he builded an altar unto Jehovah, and called upon the name of Jehovah.” See Genesis 13:18; Genesis 22:9, etc. Exodus 20:24-26, “An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy

burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen; in every place where I record my name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee. And if thou make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stones; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it," etc. See Genesis 26:25; Genesis 33:20; Exodus 17:15; Joshua 8:30; Joshua 22:10; Judges 6:25-27; Judges 21:4; 1 Samuel 7:17; 1 Samuel 14:35; 2 Samuel 24:21; 2 Samuel 24:25; 1 Kings 18:30-32; 2 Chronicles 4:1, etc.

28. Q. What purpose was the Altar designed to serve?

A. It was to serve as a place of meeting for man with God, who was to be approached with a gift in the form of a sacrifice.

29. Q. What was the first positive ordinance of true religion that God ordained?

A. The ordinance of Sacrifice.

30. Q. Where do we find the first mention of Sacrifice in the Scriptures?

A. We find it in connection with the story of Cain and Abel, both of whom were sons of Adam and Eve.

(1) Genesis 4:3-5, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." (2) It is suggested that the story of Cain and Abel be used as the scripture basis for the presentation of this lesson to the smaller children.

31. Q. Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's?

A. Evidently because Abel's offering conformed to the requirements of God's law of Sacrifice, and Cain's did not.

(1) We are told in Hebrews 11:4, that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts." The difference, then, was not in their persons, but in their gifts. In Romans 10:17 we read that faith comes from hearing the Divine word. We therefore conclude that God must have ordained Sacrifice and specified its essential features, as soon no doubt as our first parents lapsed into sin; and that Abel brought an offering which conformed to the law of Sacrifice in every particular, whereas Cain's offering failed to meet the Divine requirements. (2) The acceptance of Abel's offering was, then, in consequence of his faith, which was evidenced by his implicit obedience to God's commands. On the other hand, Cain's offering was rejected because it was not in conformity to the law of Sacrifice, and hence manifested a spirit of presumption and unbelief; the same spirit which, later, led him to commit murder. See Genesis 4:8-16.

32. Q. What was the essential difference between Abel's offering and Cain's offering, that resulted in God's acceptance of the former and His rejection of the latter?

A. We conclude that the difference was in the fact that Abel's offering was a blood sacrifice, and Cain's offering was not a blood sacrifice.

(1) Cain presented to Jehovah an offering of the ground. But the ground itself had already been placed under a divine anathema. Genesis 3:17—“Cursed is the ground for thy sake,” etc. In short, it is evident that Cain wilfully and presumptuously disobeyed God; hence his offering was rejected. (2) Leviticus 17:11—“For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.” Hebrews 9:22—“and according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.” (3) It will thus be seen that Abel’s offering was in strict conformity to the law of Sacrifice in at least three particulars, viz., the victim was a “firstling” of his flock, its life was taken, and its blood was shed. Hence it was by faith that “Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.”

33. Q. What important lesson, respecting Divine ordinances, should we derive from this incident?

A.We should learn that men have no right to alter the ordinances of God in any particular; that for man to do so is, in fact, to manifest a spirit of presumption and unbelief. The Divine ordinances are sacred trusts which God has given His children to perpetuate, in the manner in which He ordained them to be kept. Baptism, for instance, was originally an immersion of a penitent believer in water, for the remission of sins. By what authority, then, have churchmen and theologians substituted for immersion, the sprinkling or pouring of a small quantity of water on the candidate’s head? The answer is: solely by their own authority, and without any Divine warrant for the substitution whatsoever. The result is misunderstanding, confusion and division, Thus do men make void the word of God with their own puerile opinions and traditions. Such is “the way of Cain” (Jude 1:11)—the way of presumption, unbelief, and ultimate rejection by the heavenly Father.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-NINE 17.Q.What are the two general kinds of religion?

18. Q. What do we mean by Revealed Religion?

19 Q. What do we mean by Natural Religion?

20. Q. Why do we speak of the heathen systems of religion as Natural Religion?

21. Q. What is the fundamental difference between these pagan religions and the revealed religions?

22. Q. What are the inadequacies of all pagan religions?

23. Q. What are the revealed religions?

24. Q. Where do we find the authentic record of the principles, laws and institutions of these revealed religions?

25. Q. What is the only revealed religion that is in force today?

26. Q. What was the first institution of revealed religion that God established?

27. Q. What was the Altar?

28. Q. What purpose was the Altar designed to serve?

29. Q. What was the first positive ordinance of true religion that God ordained?

30. Q. Where do we find the first mention of Sacrifice in the Scriptures?

31. Q. Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's?

32. Q. What was the essential difference between Abel's offering and Cain's offering, that resulted in God's acceptance of the former and His rejection of the latter?

33. Q. What important lesson, respecting Divine ordinances, should we derive from this incident?

01.035. THE ORDINANCE OF SACRIFICE

Lesson Thirty THE ORDINANCE OF SACRIFICE Scripture Reading: Hebrews 9:16-28.

Scripture to Memorize: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life” (Leviticus 17:11). “And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22).

34. Q. What was the first institution of true religion which God established?

A. The Altar.

35. Q. What was the first ordinance of true religion which God established?

A. The ordinance of Sacrifice.

36. Q. What was the ordinance of Sacrifice?

A. It was the solemn infliction of death upon an innocent and unoffending victim, and the subsequent offering of that victim to God upon the altar.

37. Q. To whom was Sacrifice offered?

A. It was offered to God only.

38. Q. For whom was Sacrifice offered?

A. It was offered for man.

39. Q. By whom was Sacrifice offered?

A. It was offered by a priest, or by someone acting in the capacity of a priest.

40. Q. What was the victim customarily offered as a sacrifice for sin in olden times?

A. It was usually a lamb, a firstling of the flock, without blemish or spot. Hence Christ, our Perfect Sacrifice for sin, is referred to in scripture as the Lamb of God “that taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Genesis 4:4—“and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock.” Exodus 12:5—“your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old.” Cf. John 1:29; John 1:36; 1 Peter 1:19; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Revelation 13:8, etc.

41. Q. What is the fourfold design of Sacrifice?

A. As respects God, it is a propitiation; as respects the sinner, it is a reconciliation; as respects sin, it is an expiation; as respects the saved, it is a redemption.

42. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a propitiation?

A. It is a propitiation, in the sense that it is designed to satisfy the demands of justice upon the sinner.

God's moral kingdom, like His physical world, is established upon a foundation of divine law. Transgression of this divine law is sin. Consequently, when the divine law is disobeyed, justice requires that something be done about it, in order that the sanctity and majesty of the law may be properly sustained. Even under human government, to allow infraction of the civil law to go unpunished or unpropitiated, is to encourage further violation and rebellion, and to eventually, in effect at least, completely nullify the law itself. A great many human teachers, in their eagerness to emphasize the love of God, completely ignore the fact of His unfailing justice. The Psalmist says: "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne" (Psalms 89:14). This being true, it follows that God cannot consistently allow transgression of His laws to go unpropitiated and at the same time extend mercy to the transgressor. To do so would be to condone sin, and to undermine the foundations of His government. "The indignity offered His person, authority and government, by the rebellion of man, as also the good of all His creatures, made it impossible for Him, according to justice, eternal right, and His own benevolence, to show mercy without sacrifice . . . In this sense only, God could not be gracious to man in forgiving him without a propitiation, or something that could justify Him both to Himself and all His creatures" (Campbell, Christian System, p. 39). See Romans 3:24-26. In short, God could not be infinitely just and extend mercy to the sinner, without an offering from or for the latter, sufficient to satisfy the demands of perfect Justice with respect to the divine law violated. Propitiation is, in a sense, a legal term.

43. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a reconciliation?

A.It is reconciliation, in the sense that it is designed to bring the offended party and the offender together, and so to make peace between them. The offended party is God, the offender is man. So far as it honors law and justice, then, Sacrifice reconciles God to forgive; and so far as it brings love and mercy to the offender, it overcomes the rebellion in his heart and reconciles him to his offended Sovereign. "God's 'anger is turned away' (not a turbulent passion, not an implacable wrath) but 'that moral sentiment of justice' which demands the punishment of violated law, is pacified or well pleased; and man's hatred and animosity against God is subdued, overcome and destroyed in and by the same sacrifice. Thus, in fact, it is, in reference to both parties, a reconciliation" (Campbell, ibid., p. 40). See Ephesians 2:15-16, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

44. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice an expiation?

A. It is an expiation in the sense that it is designed to actually cleanse and purify the heart of the guilt of sin.

Sacrifice is designed to do even more than to cover sin—it is designed to cancel it, to put it away, hence to cleanse and purify the heart and life of sin's guilt and pollution, See Hebrews 9:26.

45. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a redemption?

A. It is a redemption in the sense that it is designed to deliver the offerer from the bondage of sin and to consecrate him anew to the service of God.

See Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Acts 20:28; Galatians 3:13; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 9:12; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Peter

1:18-19; Revelation 5:9, etc.

46. Q. What is the meaning of the word Atonement?

A. It is equivalent to Propitiation.

(1) “The Hebrew term copher, translated in the Greek Old Testament by ilasmos, and in the common English version by atonement or propitiation, signifies a covering. The word copher ‘to cover’ or ‘to make atonement,’ denotes the object of sacrifice; and hence Jesus is called the ilasmos, the covering, propitiation or atonement for our sins” (Campbell, ibid., p. 38, fn.). (2) 1 John 2:2—“he is the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:10—“God . . . loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (3) To make atonement, means, then, to satisfy the claims of justice with respect to the divine law which has been violated. Leviticus 17:11—“it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.” It is thus obvious that atonement and propitiation are synonymous terms.

47. Q. What was the typical design of animal sacrifices in olden times?

A. They were designed to foreshadow and to point forward to the Supreme Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, the Perfect Atonement for ‘the sin of the world’ (John 1:29).

(1) This is another incontrovertible evidence of the divine origin of Sacrifice. (2) Revelation 5:9—“Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.” 1 Peter 2:24—“who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.” Hebrews 9:26—“but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

48. Q. What great truth did God establish with respect to His ordinances, in the Altar and in Sacrifice?

A. He established the truth that all His positive ordinances are divine appointments.

(1) All positive ordinances are divine appointments. When you agree, for instance, to meet a friend at a certain time and place, that is an appointment. So God’s positive ordinances are appointments where Divine grace and human faith meet in a solemn tryst. (2) In olden times God and man met at the altar of sacrifice. See Genesis 22:1-19, Exodus 20:24-26. (3) Similarly, the Christian ordinances are divine appointments. In the ordinance of Christian baptism, God meets the penitent believer and there confers upon him, through the efficacy of the atoning blood of Christ, the full and free blessing of remission of sins. Hence baptism is said, in scripture, to be the institution in which sins are washed away (Acts 22:16); and is also said to be for salvation (Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:21), for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and for induction into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27). (4) The Lord’s Supper is likewise the divinely-appointed observance in which the children of God under the new covenant meet with their Savior, King, and Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, in solemn religious convocation and communion, on each first day of the week. See Matthew 26:26-29, Luke 22:14-20, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29, etc. (5) On the human side, then, the ordinances are essentially manifestations and acts of faith, When the truth is once fully appreciated by Christian people that the Lord’s ordinances are not rites, forms or meaningless

ceremonies; but solemn, spiritual, heart acts, essentially acts of faith, and solemn meetings with our heavenly Father and with our great Redeemer, then indeed a great spiritual awakening will be engendered throughout the whole of Christendom. The thing most needed in this day and age is a correct evaluation of the divine ordinances in the light of scripture teaching.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY

34. Q. What was the first institution of true religion which God established?

35. Q. What was the first ordinance of true religion which God established?

36. Q. What was the ordinance of Sacrifice?

37. Q. To whom was Sacrifice offered?

38. Q. For whom was Sacrifice offered?

39. Q. By whom was Sacrifice offered?

40. Q. What was the victim customarily offered as a sacrifice for sin in olden times?

41. Q. What is the fourfold design of Sacrifice?

42. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a propitiation?

43. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a reconciliation?

44. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice an expiation?

45. Q. In what sense is Sacrifice a redemption?

46. Q. What is the meaning of the word Atonement?

47. Q. What was the typical design of animal sacrifices in olden times?

48. Q. What great truth did God establish with respect to His ordinances, in the Altar and in Sacrifice?

Chapter 37

01.036. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE PATRIARCHS

Lesson Thirty-One WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE PATRIARCHS Scripture Reading: Hebrews 11:1-22.

Scripture to Memorize: “Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). “Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him” (Hebrews 11:6). “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. And if indeed they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city” (Hebrews 11:13-16).

49. Q. What was the first revealed religion?

A. The Patriarchal Religion.

50 Q. What was the Patriarchal Religion?

A. It was the religion which prevailed in earliest times, and which was administered by heads of families, men of great faith in God.

51. Q. By what name are these men of faith of the most ancient times, known in the Scriptures?

A. They are known as the Patriarchs.

Acts 7:8-9—“and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, moved with jealousy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt.” Hebrews 7:4—“Abraham, the patriarch.” Acts 2:29—“the patriarch David.” etc.

52. Q. Where do we find the history of the Patriarchal Era?

A. In the book of Genesis.

53. Q. Who were the Patriarchs?

A. They were men of the most ancient times, who governed their respective families or descendants by paternal right.

54. Q. What is the common designation for Patriarchal government and religion?

A.It is commonly known as family government and religion, in that the family was the social unit. As a matter of fact, the family, and not the individual, has been the primary social unit from the beginning of time. The race began with the first family, of which Adam was the father and head,

and Eve the mother. God Himself instituted marriage, the home and the family. See Genesis 2:18-25.

55. Q. What was the Patriarchal form of government?

A. It was that form of government which prevailed in the most ancient times, in which the father of the family retained and exercised authority over his descendants as long as he lived.

56. Q. What was the Patriarchal form of religion?

A. It was that form of religion in which the Patriarch or father of the family acted as mediator between God and the members of his household.

57. Q. What three offices were administered by a Patriarch by divine authority?

A. The offices of prophet, priest and king.

(1) As prophet, the Patriarch received God's revelations and handed them on to his household. (2) As priest, he acted as mediator between God and his family, in all the exercises and ordinances of worship; and offered sacrifices for his own sins and the sins of his household. (3) As king, he was the ruler of his household, and his will was the absolute law from which there was no appeal. The Patriarch retained this authority over his descendants as long as he lived, regardless of any new connections they may have formed.

58. Q. Who were the outstanding men of the Patriarchal Era?

A. They were: Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

(1) Adam, the first man, was the progenitor of the human race. (2) The name of Abel, one of his sons, has gone down in sacred history, in connection with the first recorded instance of sacrifice, as a man of great faith. Genesis 4:1-8, Hebrews 11:4. (3) Enoch, who was in the direct line from Adam to Noah, through Seth, was a man of such great faith and piety that God translated him "that he should not see death." Genesis 5:21-24, Hebrews 11:5. (4) Noah is described as "a righteous man, and perfect in his generations" (Genesis 6:9). It was through Noah that God perpetuated the human race and preserved His Plan of Redemption for man, after sweeping away the iniquitous antediluvian world in the Deluge. The name of Noah will always be associated in our thinking with the building of the Ark. Genesis 6:1-22, Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-22, Genesis 9:1-29, Hebrews 11:7. (5) Abraham was perhaps the greatest of all the Patriarchs. He was originally a Chaldean, until God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees and made him the father of the Hebrew people. It was with Abraham and his posterity that God originated and established the old testament. Genesis 12:1-20, Genesis 13:1-18, Genesis 14:1-24, Genesis 15:1-21, Genesis 16:1-16, Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33, Genesis 19:1-38, Genesis 20:1-18, Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-34, Hebrews 11:8-19. (6) Isaac, the child of promise, was the son of Abraham and Sarah. Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-34, Genesis 26:1-35, Genesis 27:1-46, Hebrews 11:20. (7) Jacob was the son of Isaac and Rebekah. His name was later changed to Israel, from which the terms "children of Israel" and "Israelites" were derived. He was the father of the twelve "princes" who became the heads of the twelve tribes. Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31,

Genesis 35:1-29, Genesis 36:1-43, Genesis 37:1-36, Genesis 38:1-30, Genesis 39:1-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Genesis 42:1-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34, Genesis 45:1-28, Genesis 46:1-34, Genesis 47:1-31, Genesis 48:1-22, Genesis 49:1-33, Hebrews 11:21. (8) Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel, was sold by his brothers into Egyptian bondage, and was subsequently exalted to the high office of Prime Minister of that great nation. Genesis 37:1-36, Genesis 38:1-30, Genesis 39:1-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Genesis 42:1-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34, Genesis 45:1-28, Genesis 46:1-34, Genesis 47:1-31, Genesis 48:1-22, Genesis 49:1-33, Genesis 50:1-26, Hebrews 11:22. The Hebrew people still look back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as their national forbears.

59. Q. What fundamental institution of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

A. The Altar.

60. Q. What fundamental ordinance of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

A. The ordinance of Sacrifice.

61. Q. What first essential principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

A. The very first principle of true religion, namely, that apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (Leviticus 17:11, Hebrews 9:22).

62. Q. Why did God require that sacrifice for sin should include the shedding of blood?

A. Because life is in the blood; consequently a blood sacrifice is the only fit atonement for sin.

Leviticus 17:11—“it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.” Hebrews 9:22—“apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.”

63. Q. Does this mean that the ancients received actual remission of sins through animal sacrifices?

A. No. It means that their sins were passed over from year to year, until the fulness of time came, in which the Perfect Atonement was made for the sins of the whole world.

(1) The animal sacrifices of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations could not and did not take away sins. Hebrews 10:1-4, “For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh . . . but in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made of sins year by year. For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin.” Romans 3:23-25, “Christ Jesus whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God.” (2) Animal sacrifice was typical of the Supreme Sacrifice of the Lamb of God. It “could only prefigure a life and a blood that could truly, and justly, and honorably expiate sin” (Campbell, Christian System, p. 51). The law had merely “the shadow of the good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1). (3) Animal sacrifice was the substitute provided by Divine grace for all the faithful, until such time as the actual and all-sufficient Atonement should be made. John 1:29—“Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!” The sublimity of this text is in the fact that here the sins of all humanity are all bundled together and contemplated as a unit. Note well: “the sin of the

world." Galatians 4:4-6, "but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son . . . that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Hebrews 9:11-12, "but Christ . . . through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:26—"but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 10:10—"we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (4) "The sacrifices of bulls and goats were like token-money, as our paper-promises to pay, accepted at their face-value till the day of settlement. But the sacrifice of Christ was the gold which absolutely extinguished all debt by its intrinsic value. Hence, when Christ died, the veil that separated man from God was rent from the top to the bottom by supernatural hands. When the real expiation was finished, the whole symbolical system representing it became functum officio, and was abolished. Soon after this, the temple was razed to the ground, and the ritual was rendered forever impossible" (A. A. Hodge, Popular Lectures, p. 247).

64. Q. What second principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

A. The principle that acceptance with Him is always on the ground of faith.

(1) Hebrews 11:4—"by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Hebrews 11:7—"By faith Noah . . . prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Hebrews 11:8—"By faith Abraham . . . obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance." Hebrews 11:13—"these all died in faith," etc. (2) Hebrews 11:6—"without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Romans 5:1—"being therefore justified by faith," etc.

65. Q. What third essential principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

A. The principle that true faith always manifests itself in works of faith, i.e., in obedience to the laws and commands of God.

(1) Hebrews 11:4—by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice. Hebrews 11:7—by faith Noah built an ark to the saving of his house. Hebrews 11:8—by faith Abraham obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance. Hebrews 11:17—by faith Abraham offered up Isaac. (2) James 2:21-22—"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect." (It should be explained that by "works" as the term is used here by James, is meant works of faith; not works of the moral law, such as Paul contemplates in Romans 3:20, by which, he says, no flesh shall be justified). Faith that does not manifest itself in acts of faith, i.e. in obedience to the commands of God, is lifeless and impotent; it is mere intellectual assent to testimony, that is barren of beneficent results or accomplishments. James 2:26—"For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead."

66. Q. On what grounds, then, were the faithful souls of Patriarchal times accepted with God?

A. They were accepted on the ground of their faith which manifested itself in their obedience to the law of Sacrifice and to all the laws of God which were in force throughout the Patriarchal dispensation; and on the further ground of the certainty of that Perfect Atonement for sin which was made once at the end of the ages.

(1) This Atonement was a matter of Divine decree. Acts 2:23—“him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” This Atonement procured actual remission of sins for the faithful of all dispensations. See Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 7:27; 1 Peter 2:24, etc. (2) Although the faithful of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations did not actually receive the remission of their sins until Christ died on the Cross, yet they were obviously well-pleasing unto God and accepted with Him on the grounds stated above. Consequently, although they could not enter heaven in advance of Christ, yet they could and did, by virtue of the mercy extended to them on account of the Redeemer to come, prove themselves worthy of the divine inheritance and enter into it with Him. Hebrews 9:15—“And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Ephesians 4:8—“when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive,” etc. That some sort of an intermediate state was provided for these faithful souls of ancient times, until Christ came and died for them, is the view of some Christian scholars. Note, in this connection, the significance of the phrase, “Abraham’s bosom,” as used by Jesus, in Luke 16:22-23. However, we must always keep in mind that the kingdom (reign) of God is characterized by timelessness, and any attempt to apply our human measurements (chronology) to it is hardly warranted. (Cf. 2 Peter 3:8.) With the God of the Bible there is no past, no future, but always the Everlasting Now (2 Corinthians 6:2).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON

THIRTY-ONE 49.Q.What was the first revealed religion?

50. Q. What was the Patriarchal Religion?

51. Q. By what name are these men of faith of the most ancient times, known in the Scriptures?

52. Q. Where do we find the history of the Patriarchal Era?

53. Q. Who were the Patriarchs?

54. Q. What is the common designation for Patriarchal government and religion?

55. Q. What was the Patriarchal form of government?

56. Q. What was the Patriarchal form of religion?

57. Q. What three offices were administered by a Patriarch by divine authority?

58. Q. Who were the outstanding men of the Patriarchal Era?

59. Q. What fundamental institution of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

60. Q. What fundamental ordinance of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

61. Q. What first essential principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

62. Q. Why did God require that sacrifice for sin should include the shedding of blood?

63. Q. Does this mean that the ancients received actual remission of sins through animal sacrifices?

64. Q. What second principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

65. Q. What third essential principle of true religion did God establish through the Patriarchs?

66. Q. On what grounds, then, were the faithful souls of Patriarchal times accepted with God?

Chapter 38

01.037. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH ABRAHAM

Lesson Thirty-Two WHAT GOD DID THROUGH ABRAHAM Scripture Reading: Genesis 17:1-14; Genesis 22:15-18; Galatians 3:15-29.

Scripture to Memorize: “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:26-29).

67. Q. What was the Patriarchal Dispensation?

A. The Patriarchal Dispensation was that particular period in which God revealed His laws, established His institutions, and dispensed the benefits and blessings of His grace, through fathers or heads of families who were known as the Patriarchs.

(1) The Standard Dictionary defines a dispensation as “the particular way by which, at different periods, God has made known His dealings with mankind.” (2) The history of Redemption, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures, extends over three dispensations, viz., the Patriarchal Dispensation, the Jewish or Mosaic Dispensation, and the Christian Dispensation. The personal ministry of Jesus on earth was of course a special dispensation in itself.

68. Q. By what is the duration of a dispensation determined?

A. By the type of priesthood that prevails throughout the dispensation.

(1) The ordinance of Sacrifice required that sacrifice for sin should be offered to God alone; that it should be offered by man; and that it should be offered by a priest or by someone acting in the capacity of a priest. (2) In the Scriptures, the word priest denotes a person ordained and consecrated of God to offer sacrifices for his own sins and for the sins of the people, in which capacity he acted as mediator between God and man.

69. Q. What type of priesthood prevailed throughout the Patriarchal Dispensation?

A. The Patriarchal priesthood.

(1) During the Patriarchal era, the patriarch or father of the family acted as priest of his own household, and officiated at the domestic altar; and was succeeded at death by his firstborn son. (2) With the establishment of the Jewish or Mosaic Dispensation, the Patriarchal priesthood was set aside, and the Levitical (or Aaronic) priesthood was instituted. See Question 85. (3) In the present or Christian Dispensation, under the new covenant, all Christians are priests unto God, and Christ Himself is their High Priest. See 1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10; Revelation 20:6; Hebrews 7:16-17; Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 9:24-28, etc. See Question 152. There is neither authority for, nor need of, a special human priesthood under the reign of the Holy Spirit.

70. Q. How did God make His laws known in Patriarchal times?

A. He communicated them to the Patriarchs who in turn handed them down to their posterity by word of mouth.

Genesis 2:16—“Jehovah God commanded the man, saying,” etc. Genesis 7:1—“Jehovah said unto Noah,” etc. Genesis 9:1—“God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them,” etc. Genesis 12:1—“Jehovah said unto Abram,” etc. Genesis 15:1—“the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying,” etc. Genesis 22:1—“God did prove Abraham, and said unto him,” etc.

71. Q. Who was perhaps the greatest of the Patriarchs?

A. Abraham, who, because of his great faith, is known in scripture as “the friend of God” and the father of all the faithful.

(1) Isaiah 41:8—“the seed of Abraham my friend.” James 2:23—“he was called the friend of God.” (2) Romans 4:16—“Abraham who is the father of us all,” i.e., the children of God of both covenants. His name was originally Abram which means “exalted father” (Genesis 11:26; Genesis 12:1); later, it was changed to Abraham which means “father of a multitude” (Genesis 17:5).

72. Q. In what incident did Abraham especially demonstrate the greatness of his faith?

A. In the incident in which he showed his willingness to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, in obedience to God’s command.

See Genesis 22:1-24. Here was an instance in which God’s positive law (“Take now thy son . . . and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering”) superseded His moral law (the law forbidding the taking of human life, Genesis 9:6, Exodus 20:13). No matter to what extent, however, the sentiment of filial affection may have protested against his doing the thing commanded, Abraham raised no questions, nor did he hesitate in the least, but acted in implicit obedience to the Divine command. Hebrews 11:17-19, “By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac; yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; even he to whom it is said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back.”

73. Q. What, firstly, did God do through Abraham?

A. It was through Abraham that He originated the Hebrew people.

(1) Genesis 12:2—“I will make of thee a great nation.” Genesis 17:4—“thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations.” Genesis 22:17—“I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore,” etc.

(2) It should be explained that Abraham was originally a Chaldean. When he first appears in the Bible narrative his home was in Ur of the Chaldeas (Genesis 11:28), a city of Mesopotamia near the source of the river Tigris. There God called him to go into Canaan and made him the progenitor of the Hebrew people.

74. Q. What, secondly, did God do through Abraham?

A. He originated and established the old covenant with Abraham and his posterity.

(1) It should be explained here that the Bible consists of two parts, viz., the Old Testament Scriptures and the New Testament Scriptures. (2) The Old Testament Scriptures contain the record of the origination, establishment and development of the old covenant which God made with Abraham and his posterity, and which was mediated through Moses. The New Testament Scriptures reveal the principles, laws and institutions of the new covenant, which God has made with all true believers, through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

75. Q. What was the Abrahamic Promise?

A. It is the name generally given to the four elementary promises which God made to Abraham when He originated the old covenant through him.

These promises were: (1) that Abraham should have a numerous offspring, Genesis 13:16; Genesis 15:3-5; Genesis 17:2-4; Genesis 22:17. (2) That God would be a God to him and to his seed after him, Genesis 17:1-8. (3) That He would give to Abraham and to his seed an everlasting possession, Genesis 12:7; Genesis 13:15; Genesis 15:18-21; Genesis 17:8. (4) That He would bless all the nations of the earth through him and his seed, Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18.

76. Q. In what manner was the Abrahamic Promise fulfilled?

A. It was fulfilled in a twofold manner; (1) literally, through the fleshly seed of Abraham, the Hebrew people; and (2) spiritually, through the spiritual seed of Abraham, the church of Christ.

(1) This twofold reference of the Abrahamic Promise may be described also as typical, and antitypical. “The first element, for instance, was a pledge to Abraham that he would have a numerous family, first, according to the flesh; and secondly, according to the Spirit; the second, that God would be a God to both of these families, though in a far higher sense to the latter than to the former; the third, that each of these families would become heirs to an inheritance; and the fourth, that through each of them the world would be blessed” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 76). (2) Romans 4:1-17, especially Romans 4:16—“to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.” Galatians 3:26-29, “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ . . . And if ye are Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to the promise.” (3) The old covenant was a fleshly covenant; the new is a spiritual covenant, established upon better promises. See Jeremiah 31:31-34, 2 Corinthians 3:1-14, Hebrews 8:6-13, etc. (4) The fundamental difference between the old covenant and the new, is in the fact that those who belonged to the old did so by virtue of the fact that the blood of Abraham flowed in their veins; whereas those who belong to the new, do so by virtue of the fact that they have the faith of Abraham in their hearts. The old covenant took in those born of Hebrew parents who were inducted into the covenant by circumcision when eight days old, and those servants who were bought with Hebrew money, proselyted and also inducted into the covenant by circumcision; in other words, infants and heathen servants who had to be taught to know God after their induction into the covenant. But the promise was that, under the new covenant, “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah.” That is, they must be old enough to know God as He has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, before they are eligible for induction into the new covenant. This is surely

sufficient to convince any thinking person that infant church membership is not only unscriptural but impossible. See Genesis 17:9-14, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:6-13. Those who would belong to the new covenant must be old enough to believe before they can be inducted into it. John 3:3—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Galatians 3:26—"For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus." Romans 5:1—"Being therefore justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

77. Q. To whom did the Abrahamic Promise specifically allude?

A.It alluded to Jesus Christ, who was the Seed of Abraham in a special sense. That is, He was the Seed of Abraham, on His human side, through Mary. Galatians 3:7-8—"Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed." Galatians 3:16—"Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not. And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In other words, it is through Jesus Christ, who was the Seed of Abraham through the Virgin Mary, that the provisions of the Abrahamic Promise are being realized in their nobler, spiritual significations.

78. Q. What was the sign and seal of the old covenant which God originated through Abraham?

A. Fleshly Circumcision.

See Genesis 17:9-14. The design of Circumcision was twofold:

1. "To separate Abraham and his posterity according to the flesh, from the rest of mankind, and thus to serve as a sign, seal, and token of the Old or National Covenant."

2. In its religious import, it was to typify "the cutting off of the body of sin from the soul, and the subsequent sealing of it by the Holy Spirit" (Milligan, ibid., pp. 80–81). See Romans 2:28-29, Php 3:3, Colossians 2:9-12, Ephesians 1:13-14. Under the present dispensation, the indwelling Spirit is Himself the sign and seal of our inclusion in the new covenant. See Acts 2:38, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, Romans 8:15-17, Ephesians 1:13-14.

79. Q. What, then, do we find in the Old Testament Scriptures?

A. We find the record of the unfolding of the literal or carnal side of the Abrahamic Promise, in the history of the Hebrew people.

80. Q. What do we find in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. We find the record of the unfolding of the spiritual side of the Abrahamic Promise, in and through the spiritual family of Abraham, the church of Christ. Galatians 3:26-29.

81. Q. What great lesson do we learn from these truths?

A.That the subject-matter of the entire Bible is a unit; therefore the Bible must be of Divine origin. No thinking person can become familiar with the internal unity of the Bible as a whole, without realizing that it is a book from God whose contents were revealed by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-TWO 67.Q.What was the Patriarchal Dispensation?

68. Q. By what is the duration of a dispensation determined?

69. Q. What type of priesthood prevailed throughout the Patriarchal Dispensation?

70. Q. How did God make His laws known in Patriarchal times?

71. Q. Who was perhaps the greatest of the Patriarchs?

72. Q. In what incident did Abraham especially demonstrate the greatness of his faith?

73. Q. What, firstly, did God do through Abraham?

74. Q. What, secondly, did God do through Abraham?

75. Q. What was the Abrahamic Promise?

76. Q. In what manner was the Abrahamic Promise fulfilled?

77. Q. To whom did the Abrahamic Promise specifically allude?

78. Q. What was the sign and seal of the old covenant which God originated through Abraham?

79. Q. What, then, do we find in the Old Testament Scriptures?

80. Q. What do we find in the New Testament Scriptures?

81. Q. What great lesson do we learn from these truths?

Chapter 39

01.038. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH MOSES

Lesson Thirty-Three WHAT GOD DID THROUGH MOSES Scripture Reading: Hebrews 11:24-29; Hebrews 3:1-6.

Scriptures to Memorize: “And Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken; but Christ as a son, over his house, whose house are we, if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end” (Hebrews 3:5-6). “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

82. Q. What was the institution of worship in the Patriarchal Dispensation?

A. The Altar.

83. Q. When did the Patriarchal Dispensation come to an end?

A. It came to an end when the Hebrew people were organized into a nation at Mount Sinai, under the leadership of Moses.

84. Q. What followed the Patriarchal Dispensation?

A. The Jewish or Mosaic Dispensation.

85. Q. What type of priesthood prevailed throughout the Jewish Dispensation?

A.The Levitical or Aaronic Priesthood. With the establishment of the Mosaic ritual, a particular order of men was appointed to the priesthood, with most solemn and imposing ceremonies; and from that time, the offering of sacrifices was restricted, in the main, to those who were duly invested with the priestly office. See Exodus 28:1-43, 2 Chronicles 26:18. At the same time, the Altar was incorporated into the Tabernacle, and became known as the Altar of Burnt-Offering; and by this change it ceased to be a family altar and became a national altar. All the posterity of Aaron were, at this time, divinely appointed to be priests, except of course such as were disqualified by special provisions of the Mosaic Code. The office of High Priest was also established, and Aaron himself, the great-grandson of Levi and brother of Moses, was divinely designated to be the first man to occupy that exalted office (Exodus 6:16-20); and, by divine appointment also, the firstborn of the family, in direct descent and in regular succession from Aaron, came into incumbency of the office by divine right. The High Priest thus became the chief of the whole Jewish priesthood, and later the virtual head of the Jewish Theocracy. The Aaronic succession continued, despite numerous apostasies and captivities, down to the time of Jesus; and came to an end only with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman legions under Titus, A. D. 70, and the subsequent dispersion of the Jews among all nations.

86. Q. How is Moses described in the scripture records?

A. He is described as the great Lawgiver of Israel and the Mediator of the Old Covenant.

Galatians 3:19—“the law was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator.” John 1:17—“the law was given through Moses.” John 7:19—“Did not Moses give you the law?” Cf. Exodus 20:18-21, Deuteronomy 5:4-5.

87. Q. What, firstly, did God do through Moses?

A.It was through Moses that He organized the children of Israel into a nation and established the Theocracy. A theocracy is defined as “a government of a state by the immediate direction of God”; hence the Hebrew commonwealth, before it became a kingdom, is usually referred to as a theocracy. The Old Sinaitic Covenant was essentially a national covenant, and the Mosaic Code was for both the civil and religious government of the nation. For purposes of comparison, the Decalogue or Ten Commandments might be said to correspond to our federal Constitution; and the other laws, statutes and commandments of the Mosaic Code, to the body of statutory law by which our society is organized and its government administered. The New Covenant, by way of contrast, is strictly spiritual, and separate from the state in every particular. Jesus Himself tells us to “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21).

88. Q. What were the outstanding features of the Mosaic Ritual?

A. They were: (1) Circumcision, (2) the Passover, (3) the Sabbath, (4) the Levitical Priesthood, (5) the Tabernacle, (6) the Solemn Sacrifices, and (7) the Solemn Feasts and Convocations.

(These matters will be discussed in detail in a subsequent lesson.) 89.Q.Where is the Mosaic Code and Ritual revealed?

A. In the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

90. Q. What, secondly, did God do through Moses?

A. Through the mediation of Moses, He enlarged the Abrahamic covenant into a national covenant, retaining Circumcision as the seal of the covenant.

Just four hundred and thirty years after the Promise was given to Abraham (Galatians 3:17), its carnal or typical side was fully developed in the Sinaitic or Old Covenant. Genesis 17:7—“I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations” (the words of Jehovah to Abraham when the Promise was given). The Mosaic covenant and ritual was therefore, but an enlargement of the Abrahamic covenant, which took in Sacrifice, the essential ordinance of the Patriarchal system, also. It will thus be seen that the whole procedure was a progressive development of true religion.

91. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through Moses?

A. It was through Moses that He revealed the eternal principles of right and wrong, in the provisions of the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments.

(This proposition will be treated in detail in Lesson Thirty-Four.)

92. Q. What is the Old Covenant or Mosaic System commonly designated in the apostolic writings?

A.It is usually referred to as the Law. The Mosaic System is so called because it was essentially a legal system. John 1:17—“For the law was given through Moses.” John 7:10—“Did not Moses give you the law?” Galatians 3:24—“the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ.”

93. Q. What were the successive institutions of worship under the Jewish Dispensation?

A. The Tabernacle, the Temple, and the Synagogue.

(1) The Tabernacle began with Moses. God Himself gave Moses all the plans and specifications for it. See Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-27, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18. It was a portable institution adapted to the needs of the people during the period of their wanderings in the wilderness. (2) The Temple was built by Solomon, who received the idea and inspiration from his father David. See 2 Chronicles 1:1-17, 2 Chronicles 2:1-18, 2 Chronicles 3:1-17, 2 Chronicles 4:1-22, 2 Chronicles 5:1-14, 2 Chronicles 6:1-42, 2 Chronicles 7:1-22. The general design of the Tabernacle was carried out, on a grander scale of course, in the building of the Temple. The first Temple was built at Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, about one thousand years before Christ. The Temple was designed to serve the people as a national institution of worship after they had become firmly established in Canaan. (3) The Synagogue began with Ezra, after the Exile. In purpose it was similar to our local churches; hence there was a synagogue in each community. Each synagogue served for a place of worship, a law-court, and a school; and was presided over by local elders or “rulers” (Luke 13:14; Mark 5:22; Acts 13:15; Acts 18:8).

94. Q. When did the Jewish Dispensation end?

A. It ended with the death of Christ on the Cross. By His death He abrogated the Old Covenant, and at the same time ratified and established the New Covenant.

(1) Hebrews 9:16—“For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it.” Colossians 2:14—“having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us; and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.” See also Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13; 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, etc. (2) “The Old Sinaitic Covenant had to be taken out of the way, before a new covenant could be fully inaugurated as a separate and independent Institution. This was done at the death of Christ. Henceforth it was no longer binding on any one as a religious Institution; though it was, through the forbearance of God, allowed to remain as a civil and social Institution for about thirty-six years longer, until Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in A. D. 70” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 78). (3) The New Covenant, moreover, was not merely an enlargement of the Old. It was distinctly a new covenant. Jeremiah 31:31—“I will make a new covenant,” etc. Ephesians 2:15-16—“that he (Christ) might create in himself of the two (i.e., of Jew and Gentile) one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross.” Note well: “one new man.” Cf. Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 12:13, etc.

95. Q. On what grounds accepted with God? were the faithful souls of the Jewish Dispensation

A. They were accepted on the ground of their faith which manifested itself in their obedience to the laws of God which were in force throughout the Jewish Dispensation; and on the further ground of the certainty of the Perfect Atonement for sin which was made once at the end of the

ages.

Deuteronomy 7:12-13, “And it shall come to pass, because ye hearken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, that Jehovah thy God will keep with thee the covenant and the loving kindness which he sware unto thy fathers; and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee,” etc. See also Deuteronomy 8:6-20; Deuteronomy 28:1-6; Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Deuteronomy 30:1-10, etc. See also Nehemiah 9:9-37, etc. Hebrews 9:15—“And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Galatians 4:4-5—“But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” See Question 66.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-THREE

82. Q. What was the institution of worship in the Patriarchal Dispensation?

83. Q. When did the Patriarchal Dispensation come to an end?

84. Q. What followed the Patriarchal Dispensation?

85. Q. What type of priesthood prevailed throughout the Jewish Dispensation?

86. Q. How is Moses described in the scripture records?

87. Q. What, firstly, did God do through Moses?

88. Q. What were the outstanding features of the Mosaic Ritual?

89. Q. Where is the Mosaic Code and Ritual revealed?

90. Q. What, secondly, did God do through Moses?

91. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through Moses?

92. Q. What is the Old Covenant or Mosaic System commonly designated in the apostolic writings?

93. Q. What were the successive institutions of worship under the Jewish Dispensation?

94. Q. When did the Jewish Dispensation end?

95. Q. On what grounds were the faithful souls of the Jewish Dispensation accepted with God?

01.039. THE DECALOGUE

Lesson Thirty-Four THE DECALOGUE Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1-7; Matthew 19:16-22; Matthew 22:34-39.

Scripture to Memorize: “And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40).

96. Q. What is meant by the Decalogue?

A. By the Decalogue is meant the Ten Commandments.

97. Q. What is the First Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

Exodus 20:3. Literally, before my face. This does not mean. Thou shalt put me above all other gods, as modern sophists have tried to make it appear to mean. It means, rather, Thou shalt not worship any other gods, or, Thou shalt have no other gods but Me. Cf. Deuteronomy 6:13-14—“Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God, and him shalt thou serve . . . Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you.” This command was directly against polytheism; and, indirectly against infidelity, heresy, materialism, skepticism, etc. Cf. Acts 14:15—“that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God.” Ephesians 4:6—“one God and Father of all.” Acts 17:24—“the God that made the world and all things therein,” etc.

98. Q. What is the Second Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image.”

Exodus 20:4-6. This is a prohibition of image worship and idolatry; and, indirectly, of such sins as superstition, witchcraft, necromancy, and occultism (consorting with fortunetellers and spirit mediums); of sacrilege (profanation of holy things); and of simony (using spiritual things for commercial ends). Cf. 1 John 5:21—“My little children, guard yourselves from idols.”

99. Q. What is the Third Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.”

Exodus 20:7. This is directed against swearing, blasphemy, cursing, breaking of religious vows, derision of religion, irreverence, perjury, etc. Cf. Matthew 5:34, the words of Jesus, “Swear not at all.” James 5:12—“but above all things, my brethren, swear not,” etc.

100. Q. What is the Fourth Commandment?

A. It is: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

Exodus 20:8-11. This command is not re-enacted in the New Testament, for the obvious reason that Christians have, from apostolic times, kept the first day of the week, the Lord's Day. The observance of the first day of the week was instituted and authorized by the apostles themselves, who were guided into all the truth by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13), as soon as the gospel was first proclaimed as fact and the first local churches were established. See Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10. Under the old dispensation, the seventh day was set aside as the Sabbath, instead of the first, second, third, etc., day of the week, because that was the "day" on which God rested at the conclusion of His creative activity (Exodus 20:11). Moreover, the Sabbath itself was designed to be a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deuteronomy 5:15) and would therefore have no significance for Gentiles. We as Christians keep the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, as a memorial of the resurrection of Jesus, which occurred on that day (Mark 16:9). Hence there is neither command nor precedent in the apostolic writings for Christians to keep the Jewish Sabbath. The Lord's Day is intended to be essentially a day of Christian worship, benevolence and service. We profane it exceedingly when we spend it in intemperance or debauchery, or in extravagant games, sports, amusements, revelings, and such like.

101. Q. What is the Fifth Commandment?

A. It is: "Honor thy father and thy mother."

Exodus 20:12. This is directed against disrespect, irreverence, disobedience, etc., on the part of children towards their parents. Cf. Ephesians 6:1—"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Cf. Ephesians 6:4—"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."

102. Q. What is the Sixth Commandment?

A. The Sixth Commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill."

(1) Exodus 20:13. This is directed against the taking of human life in any form, such as homicide, suicide, infanticide, abortion, etc. How about "birth control," i.e., contraception? Is it the taking of incipient life? (2) This command does not apply of course in matters wherein we act as instruments of the state, as, for instance, in war, in the execution of criminals, or in protecting life from unjust attack; for we are commanded to "be in subjection to the higher powers," i.e., our civil rulers. See Romans 13:1-7. (3) This command is directed also against hatred, for, we are told, "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15); and against envy, quarreling, abusive words, imprecations, slander, scandalmongering, seduction, or any other practice that tends to destroy spiritual life. Cf. Romans 13:9-10—"Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet," etc.

103. Q. What is the Seventh Commandment?

A. It is: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Exodus 20:14. This is directed against adultery (illicit sexual 'intercourse between married persons, thus breaking the marriage vows); against fornication (illicit sexual intercourse between unmarried persons, or between one who is married and one who is unmarried); against sex perversion, sex abuse, sodomy, lasciviousness, lewdness, and all forms of sexual and social

impurity. Cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, “neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:18—“Flee fornication.” 1 Corinthians 5:9—“have no company with fornicators.” Cf. Romans 1:26-27; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3-5; Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 1:9-10, etc.

104. Q. What is the Eighth Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt not steal.”

Exodus 20:15. This is directed against robbery, theft, extortion, fraud, usury, etc. Cf. Ephesians 4:28—“Let him that stole steal no more.”

105. Q. What is the Ninth Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt not bear false witness.”

Exodus 20:16. This command is directed against lying, railing, hypocrisy, detraction, calumny, false suspicion, and, in general, all sins by which the honor or character of our neighbor is injured. Cf. Colossians 3:9—“lie not one to another.” Ephesians 4:25—“Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor.”

106. Q. What is the Tenth Commandment?

A. It is: “Thou shalt not covet.”

Exodus 20:17. Covetousness is the most universal of all sins, yet seldom realized or admitted by the individual. The sins of envy and jealousy usually have their root in covetousness. This command is directed, therefore, against love of worldly goods, stinginess, God-robbery (Malachi 3:7-10), jealousy, envy, discontent, etc. The implication of the command is that we should be content with what we possess, and should not be envious of what belongs to others. Ephesians 5:3—“covetousness, let it not even be named among you.” Luke 12:15—here Jesus says: “Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Cf. Colossians 3:5, 1 Corinthians 5:11, Romans 13:9-10, etc.

107. Q. What are the two greatest Commandments of the Law?

A. They are: the Command that we should love God wholeheartedly, and the Command that we should love our neighbors as ourselves.

(1) Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus 19:17-18, Matthew 22:35-40, “And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, trying him: Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets.” (2) These two Commandments, although not themselves included in the Decalogue, embrace within their scope, inferentially at least, all our obligations to God and all our obligations to our fellow-men. For this reason they are said to be the two greatest Commandments of the Law.

108. Q. Are the Ten Commandments binding upon Christians, i.e., upon God's children under the, New Covenant?

A. They are all, with but one exception, binding upon Christians.

109. Q. Why are they binding upon Christians?

A. They are binding upon Christians because they have been re-enacted, with but one exception, in the New Testament.

110. Q. Which one of the Ten Commandments has not been re-enacted in the New Testament and is therefore not binding upon Christians?

A. The Fourth Commandment, i.e., the Commandment to keep the Sabbath, has not been re-enacted in the New Testament, and is therefore not binding upon Christians.

(This is fully explained under Question 100.)

111. Q. How were the Ten Commandments first revealed to the Hebrew people?

A. The words of the Ten Commandments were spoken by Jehovah Himself to the children of Israel at Sinai.

Exodus 19:1-25, Exodus 20:1-26. The people were first required to wash their clothes, to sanctify themselves, in short, to make all necessary preparations to meet with God Almighty Himself. Two days were spent in ceremonies of purification and preparation for this sublime event. Then on the third day Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and while the whole assembly stood at the foot of Sinai, God Himself descended to the summit of the holy mountain, in the midst of fire, with thunderings, lightnings, and the sound of a great trumpet. Exodus 19:18—"And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Then at length, while the people were greatly moved with awe, God spoke out of the midst of the fire, in such manner as to be heard by all the people, the sublime words of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:17). After the Decalogue was concluded, the people retired from the foot of the mountain, and requested that God henceforth communicate His words to them through Moses. This request was granted. The Ten Commandments were later written on two tablets of stone, which were delivered to the Israelites through Moses, to serve as their Fundamental Law. See Exodus 31:18; Exodus 32:1-20; Exodus 34:1-9; Exodus 34:27-35.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-FOUR 96.Q.What is meant by the Decalogue?

97. Q. What is the First Commandment?

98. Q. What is the Second Commandment?

99. Q. What is the Third Commandment?

100. Q. What is the Fourth Commandment?

101. Q. What is the Fifth Commandment?

102. Q. What is the Sixth Commandment?

103. Q. What is the Seventh Commandment?

104. Q. What is the Eighth Commandment?

105. Q. What is the Ninth Commandment?

106. Q. What is the Tenth Commandment?

107. Q. What are the two greatest Commandments of the Law?

108. Q. Are the Ten Commandments binding upon Christians, i.e., upon God's children under the New Covenant?

109. Q. Why are they binding upon Christians?

110. Q. Which one of the Ten Commandments has not been re-enacted in the New Testament and is therefore not binding upon Christians?

111. Q. How were the Ten Commandments first revealed to the Hebrew people?

01.040. WHY THE LAW WAS ADDED

Lesson Thirty-Five WHY THE LAW WAS ADDED Scripture Reading: Galatians 3:15-28; Romans 7:1-6; Galatians 5:16-25.

Scriptures to Memorize: “What then is the law? it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator” (Galatians 3:19). “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:3-4).

112. Q. What is meant by the Law in the scriptures quoted above?

A.By the Law is meant the entire Mosaic System. The Mosaic System is spoken of as the Law in all the apostolic writings, because it was essentially a legal system. The entire Old Covenant was a Covenant of Law. See John 1:17; John 7:10.

113. Q. What was the purpose of the Mosaic Law?

A. It was “added because of transgressions, till the seed should come,” Galatians 3:19.

(1) The Promise, was given first, i.e., the Abrahamic Promise. Then the Law was added, i.e., added to the Promise. Furthermore, it was added “because of transgressions,” i.e., on account of the rapid spread of sensualism, idolatry and moral corruption, it became necessary to reveal and establish the eternal principles of right and to distinguish the right from the wrong. This was done in and through the Law, particularly the Ten Commandments. It was added, moreover, till the Seed should come, i.e., Christ, who was Himself the fulfilment of the Law by His own perfect example of righteousness and holiness. Matthew 5:17—“Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill.” Hence, when He died on the Cross, the Law was abrogated as a covenant, and the Covenant of Grace was ushered in. John 1:17—“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (2) The design of the Old Covenant or the Covenant of Law was fourfold: 1. It was to serve as a civil and religious code for the government of the Hebrew nation. 2. It was added to convict and convince men of sin, by giving them a perfect rule of moral conduct. Romans 3:20—“for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.” Romans 7:7—“I had not known sin, except through the law; for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” 3. It was “to prevent the universal spread of idolatry, by preserving among men the knowledge and practice of true religion, till Christ should come.” 4. Finally, the entire Old Covenant was for the purpose of giving to the world a pictorial outline of the Plan of Redemption as consummated in the Christian System, by means of certain types and symbols, rites and ceremonies, addressed as object lessons to men’s physical senses. (See Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, pp. 83–85). Most of the characters, institutions and events of the Old Covenant were typical of Christ and His Church.

114. Q. What great truth did God reveal and establish through the Mosaic System?

A. The truth that the law is inadequate to save men from their sins.

(1) Law is not designed to make us better men and women, nor can it possibly make us more spiritually-minded. Its function is to define what is right, and to distinguish right from wrong. Its penalty is for the purpose of restraining the lawless. Therefore law is inadequate to save men from their sin. Romans 3:20—"by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." 1 Corinthians 15:56—"the sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law." (2) A person may keep the moral law diligently and circumspectly, and still fall far short of salvation. Hence the folly of expecting to be saved on the ground of respectability, of being a good citizen, a moral man, etc. Salvation is not on the ground of obedience to the moral law, but is a gift of God to be accepted and appropriated on our part by the obedience of faith. (See Question 14). Law merely defines and points out sin, and provides the penalty; hence it is wholly inadequate to remove the guilt of sin. (3) Hence what the Law could not do for man, God did for him, in that out of His divine grace He provided a Savior for him, who is able to save him from his sins. Romans 8:3—"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (4) It follows, therefore, that if men reject the only Sacrifice for sin which God has provided, the Lamb of God Himself, they are without promise and without hope; for the simple reason that there is no other Sin-offering, no other Atonement, no other means of salvation. John 14:6—"no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." Salvation is through Christ alone; no human being was ever pardoned except on the merits of Christ's atoning blood.

115. Q. Are the Ten Commandments binding upon us who live in the Christian Dispensation and under the New Covenant?

A. Those which have been re-enacted in the New Testament are binding upon us.

(1) A testament is a will. God has made two wills. The old was made with reference to the fleshly seed of Abraham, through the mediation of Moses. The new is made with reference to all true believers, through the mediation of Jesus Christ: and is therefore known as "The Last Will and Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2) It is a well-known principle of law that a final will abrogates and supersedes all previous wills that may have been made. Therefore, we who live in the Christian Dispensation are under the provisions of the New Testament. (3) Oftentimes when a man makes two wills, he will take certain provisions of the old will and incorporate them in his new will. Those provisions become binding, not because they were in the old will, but because they have been re-enacted in the new will. Consequently the moral principles embodied in the Ten Commandments, which have been re-enacted in the New Testament, are binding upon us, not because they were in the Old Testament, but because they are re-enacted in the New. (4) As shown in Lesson Thirty-Four, all the Commandments, or the moral principles embodied in them, have been re-enacted in the apostolic writings, with but one exception. (See Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-5, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15, etc.) The sole exception is the Fourth Commandment. There is no command in the New Testament Scriptures that Christians should keep the Sabbath. As previously explained, we as Christians are divinely authorized to keep the first day of the week, the Lord's Day. The other Commandments have been re-enacted in the New Testament, however, and are therefore binding upon us.

116. Q. Will the keeping of the Ten Commandments make one a Christian or procure salvation for anyone under the New Covenant?

A.No. We cannot be Christian if we do not earnestly strive to keep the Commandments; but, on the other hand, we may keep all the Commandments and fall short of salvation, for the simple reason that salvation is only through Christ, and must be accepted on our part by faith in Him. As the moral principles embodied in the Ten Commandments have been incorporated in the civil law of all civilized nations, it follows that one must obey the Commandments in order to keep out of jail, On the other hand, we may obey all the Commandments, and still not be Christians; for there is nothing in the Ten Commandments about Christ, the gospel, the church, etc. We could keep the Commandments and not even know about Christ, not believe in Him, not accept Him as our Saviour, not be baptized, not observe the Lord's Supper, in fact not keep any of the appointments essential to our salvation and growth in holiness. Therefore the Ten Commandments are wholly inadequate so far as the matter of procuring salvation for anyone is concerned. For a clear illustration of this truth, see the story of the rich young ruler, Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 18:18-30.

117. Q. What great lesson should we derive from these truths?

A. We should learn that salvation is not a reward which we can merit by our obedience to the moral law, but that it is a gift which can be received only through our faith in Christ and appropriated only through our obedience to His commands and appointments.

John 14:1—"ye believe in God, believe also in me." John 14:6—"Jesus said unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." Romans 3:20—by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Ephesians 2:8—"for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that (salvation) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Titus 3:5—"Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us." Romans 6:23—"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-FIVE 112.Q.What is meant by the Law in the scriptures quoted above?

113. Q. What was the purpose of the Mosaic Law?

114. Q. What great truth did God reveal and establish through the Mosaic System?

115. Q. Are the Ten Commandments binding upon us who live in the Christian Dispensation and under the New Covenant?

116. Q. Will the keeping of the Ten Commandments make one a Christian or procure salvation for anyone under the New Covenant?

117. Q. What great lesson should we derive from these truths?

Chapter 42

01.041. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE HEBREW PROPHETS

Lesson Thirty-Six WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE HEBREW PROPHETS Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-12.

Scriptures to Memorize: “God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners” (Hebrews 1:1). “For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

118. Q. Who were the Prophets?

A.The Prophets were men specially called and enlightened by God, to reveal His communications to the Hebrew people and their rulers, particularly throughout the centuries of religious apostasy and national decay. The Prophets were both evangelists and reformers. They were the revealers of God’s will, historians of the nation, instructors of the people, privy counselors to their kings, zealous upholders of true religion, and denouncers of sin in all its forms. They were also foretellers of the various details of the life and work and reign of the coming Messiah. They were preachers of personal holiness, national righteousness, and social justice. For pure devotion, zeal, fearlessness, and spiritual passion, the Prophets were the outstanding leaders of all Hebrew history.

119. Q. Who was the first of the great Prophets?

A. Samuel, the founder of the School of the Prophets.

See Acts 3:24; 1 Samuel 10:5-10; 1 Samuel 19:20; 2 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 2:5; 2 Kings 4:38, etc.

120. Q. Name the great Hebrew Prophets.

A. They were: Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John the Baptizer.

121. Q. Name the lesser Hebrew Prophets.

A. They were: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

122. Q. What special work did God do through the Hebrew Prophets?

A.He handed down through them a series of predictions covering all the circumstances of the entrance of the Word into human flesh and His dwelling among men as their Messiah and Redeemer. The Prophets foretold that the Messiah would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:13-14, Micah 5:3; Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-35); that He would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David (Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1-11; Luke 2:1-7, John 7:40-42); that a forerunner would prepare the world for His advent. (Malachi 3:1-2; Malachi 4:5-6; Isaiah 40:3; John 1:22-23; Mark 1:1-7; Matthew 3:1-3; Matthew 11:9-11); that He would possess the Holy Spirit without measure (Isaiah 11:1-9; John 3:34); that His ministry would be authenticated by miracles of mercy (Isaiah 42:1-7, Acts

10:38); that He would be betrayed by one of His own disciples (Psalms 41:9; Mark 14:43-49; John 18:1-5); that the betrayer would return the thirty pieces of silver, the price of His betrayal (Zechariah 11:12-13; Matthew 27:3-10); that another would be chosen to fill the betrayer's place (Psalms 109:8; Acts 1:15-20); that His followers would forsake Him in His hour of peril and suffering (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:31-56); that He would be scourged, mocked and abused (Isaiah 50:6; John 19:1; Mark 14:65; Matthew 27:27-31); that He would suffer in silence, as the sacrificial Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:4-7; John 1:29; Mark 15:2-5; Acts 8:32-35); that He would be crucified, and His hands and feet pierced (Psalms 22:16; Luke 23:33; Zechariah 12:10; Zechariah 13:6; Acts 2:22-23; Acts 2:27); that vinegar and gall would be given Him to drink (Psalms 69:20-21; Matthew 27:33-34); that His executioners would divide His garments (Psalms 22:18; John 19:23-24); that He would endure the Cross even unto death (Psalms 22:1-21; Matthew 27:46; Luke 24:25-27; Acts 26:22-23); that He would die (Isaiah 53:8; Luke 23:46); that He would make His grave with both the wicked and the rich (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:38; Matthew 27:57-60); that not a bone of His body would be broken (Psalms 34:20; John 19:32-36); that He would be raised up from the dead (Psalms 16:10; Psalms 17:15; Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:39-40; John 2:19-22; Luke 24:1-7; Acts 13:34-37; Acts 2:23-27; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4); that He would ascend to the Father in heaven (Psalms 8:5-6; Psalms 110:1; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 4:8-10; Hebrews 12:2); that He would be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords (Psalms 24:7-10; Psalms 2:6; Acts 2:33; Php 2:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:15); that He would send the Holy Spirit, according to promise, to carry on His work in the world (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:1-33; Acts 4:31; John 15:26-27, John 14:16-17).

123. Q. What was the purpose of these Messianic predictions?

A. They were for the purpose of identifying the true Messiah when He should appear among men.

(1) These predictions were made over a period extending from some one thousand years to three hundred years before Christ. It follows, therefore, that the One in whose life and ministry and work these predictions were all fulfilled, was, beyond all reasonable doubt, the true Messiah. This One was Jesus of Nazareth, our Redeemer, our High Priest, and our King. (2) Prophecy and its fulfilment is another incontrovertible proof of the Divine origin of the Scriptures. 2 Peter 1:21—"For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." 1 Peter 1:10-11—"Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them."

124. Q. Who was the last of the great Hebrew Prophets?

A. John the Baptizer.

See Matthew 3:1-6; Malachi 4:5-6; Matthew 11:11-30; Mark 9:11-13, Luke 1:13-17.

125. Q. What was the specific work of John the Baptizer?

A. He was sent to call the Jewish nation to repentance, and to herald the appearance of the Messiah.

See Matthew 3:1-17; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 1:13-17; Luke 3:1-22; John 1:19-34; Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1-2; Malachi 4:5-6.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-SIX 118.Q.Who were the Prophets?

119. Q. Who was the first of the great Prophets?

120. Q. Name the great Hebrew Prophets.

121. Q. Name the lesser Hebrew Prophets.

122. Q. What special work did God do through the Hebrew Prophets?

123. Q. What was the purpose of these Messianic predictions?

124. Q. Who was the last of the great Hebrew Prophets?

125. Q. What was the specific work of John the Baptizer?

Chapter 43

01.042. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE HEBREW PEOPLE

Lesson Thirty-Seven WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE HEBREW PEOPLE Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.

Scriptures to Memorize: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4). “So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Galatians 3:24-25).

126. Q. Why did not God send His Son into the world to save the world immediately after the fall of our first parents?

A. Evidently because considerable time was necessary in order to prepare Christianity for mankind, and to prepare mankind for the reception and enjoyment of Christianity.

Why did the Redeemer wait four thousand years and more, before He came into the world to suffer and die for us and to save us from our sins? Why was not the kingdom established in its fulness immediately after man’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden? To these questions, we might counter with the following: Why did not God so constitute the acorn that it would grow into an oak instantaneously? Or, why has He not so constituted an infant that it will grow into a man or woman in a few minutes, or in a few weeks or months? None of these questions is so easily answered. It seems, however, that “sundry matters had first to be practically demonstrated before the Gospel could be fully and properly revealed to mankind as the power of God for the salvation of every true believer” (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 73).

127. Q. What proposition was left to the Gentiles to demonstrate, in preparing the world for Christianity?

A.It was left to the Gentiles to demonstrate the inadequacy of Natural Religion to meet and supply the wants of our fallen race. This proposition the Gentiles demonstrated by their numerous failures in theoretical and practical morality, such as, for instance, Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Cynicism, etc., and all forms of Philosophy; and by their equally numerous failures in trying to establish an adequate system of religion with only the dim light of Nature to guide them. This matter is fully discussed in Questions 22, 23, and 24. Romans 1:20-32, “For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” The reference here is to animal worship, and even insect worship, which prevailed among the ancient heathen peoples. Continuing: “Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie,

and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due." The reference here is to the degrading sexual practices which prevailed among the ancients, such as abortion, sodomy, sex perversion, etc., and which prevail all too generally even in our day. Continuing: "And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful; who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them." This entire section is a scathing delineation and denunciation of the sins of heathendom. See also 1 Corinthians 1:21—"For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." How utterly absurd, then for any human being to attempt to apprehend and know and worship God rightly from the revelation of Nature! How true, by way of contrast, the words of Jesus: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

128. Q. What, firstly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

A. Through the Hebrew people, He perpetuated and increased the knowledge of Himself, His attributes and His works, among men.

Through the Patriarchs, He revealed His self-existence, His unity, His personality, His spirituality and His benevolence. Through Moses and the demonstrations in Egypt and in the Wilderness, He revealed His Omnipotence. Through the Prophets especially, He revealed His wisdom and holiness. And throughout the entire history of the Hebrew people, He revealed His infinite justice, righteousness, and compassion.

129. Q. What, secondly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

A. Through the Hebrew people, He perpetuated and developed the essential principles, laws and institutions of true religion.

Those elements of true religion are, as we have learned: Altar, Sacrifice and Priesthood.

130. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

A.Through them He revealed the essential principles of moral conduct, and of national and social righteousness. The principles of moral conduct, i.e., of right and wrong, "for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." Ecclesiastes 12:13—"Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Proverbs 14:34—"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." Psalms 111:10—"The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have they that do his commandments." The Prophets were outstanding advocates of social justice and national righteousness. Amos 5:11—"Forasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye

shall not dwell in them," etc. Amos 5:14—"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live," etc. Isaiah 1:15-17, "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: our hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widows." Jeremiah 25:5-6, "Return ye now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that Jehovah hath given unto you and to your fathers, from of old and even for evermore; and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the work of your hands: and I will do you no hurt."

131. Q. What, fourthly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

A. Through them especially He made known the inadequacy of Law to save people from their sins.

Romans 8:3—"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Hebrews 10:1—"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh." The Hebrew people were specially called and used of God to demonstrate the exceeding sinfulness of sin, our inability to save ourselves through works of the moral law, and consequently the need on our part of personal regeneration and holiness.

132. Q. What, fifthly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

A. Through them He built up a system of type, symbol and prophecy, designed to identify the true Messiah at His coming, and to establish the divine origin of the entire Christian System.

1 Corinthians 10:11—"Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." Romans 15:4—"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope." Hebrews 10:1—"For the law having a shadow of good things to come," etc. Most of the characters, institutions and events of the Old Covenant were typical of Christ and His Church. Adam, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Jonah, etc., were all types of Christ. The deliverance of Noah from the ungodly antediluvian world, through water, was typical of our deliverance from the bondage and corruption of sin, through baptism, water in each case being the transitional element through which deliverance is wrought (1 Peter 3:20-21). The Tabernacle and the Temple were both types of the Church. The Paschal Lamb, the Smitten Rock, The Brazen Serpent, etc., were typical of Christ. The Levitical Priesthood was typical of the priesthood of all Christians. Canaan was a type of Heaven. In fact the entire Mosaic System was, in its essential features, typical of the Christian System. Typology is a most convincing proof of the divine origin of the Scriptures, for it must be admitted that the points of resemblance between the types and their corresponding antitypes were designed and preordained by the same God who established them and revealed them through His Holy Spirit. We may rightly say, therefore, that The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, And the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-SEVEN

126. Q. Why did not God send His Son into the world to save the world immediately after the fall of our first parents?

127. Q. What proposition was left to the Gentiles to demonstrate, in preparing the world for Christianity?

128. Q. What, firstly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

129. Q. What, secondly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

130. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

131. Q. What, fourthly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

132. Q. What, fifthly, did God do through the Hebrew people?

01.043. WHAT GOD DID THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST

Lesson Thirty-Eight WHAT GOD DID THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST Scripture Reading: John 14:1-10.

Scriptures to Memorize: “God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son” (Hebrews 1:1-2). “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9).

133. Q. What, firstly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. Through Jesus Christ God revealed Himself to mankind.

(1) Hebrews 1:1-2—“God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son.” John 1:18—“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” John 12:45—“he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me.” John 14:9—“he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (2) If you would listen to the wisdom of God, hear, study, meditate upon the teaching of Jesus. No human being has ever been able to add one moral or spiritual truth to the body of teaching which He left in the world. John 7:46—“Never man so spake.” Matthew 7:28—“the multitudes were astonished at his teaching,” etc. (3) If you would know something of the holiness of God, contemplate the matchless purity of Jesus, who not only gave a perfect teaching, but a perfect example as well. John 8:46—“which of you convicteth me of sin?” He made the will of His heavenly Father the supreme rule of conduct in His life. John 4:34—“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” And to the last moment of His incarnate life, even during His agony in the garden, the burden of His prayer was, always, “nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). (4) If you would see the power of God contemplate all the “mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him” (Acts 2:22). In this connection, note the wide variety of His miracles as to kind, such as, the feeding of a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, the turning of water into wine, the cursing of the fig tree, the stilling of the tempest, the casting out of demons, the healing of the sick of all manner of diseases, and the raising of the dead. He had but to speak, and all Nature obeyed His voice. Matthew 8:27—“and the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?” (5) If you would comprehend the love of God for man, behold the Sacrificial Lamb suffering upon Calvary’s tree, the innocent for the guilty, offering Himself voluntarily and freely for the sins of the whole world. Isaiah 53:5—“He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” John 15:13—“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” 1 John 4:10—“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

134. Q. What, secondly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. Through Jesus Christ He gave to all mankind a Perfect Pattern of living, a Perfect Example of righteousness and holiness.

Hebrews 4:15—“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 7:26—“For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” etc. Because of His personal purity, God has presented Him to us as our only Leader and Exemplar in the conflict of life. Isaiah 55:4—“Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples.” Matthew 17:5—“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” Ephesians 5:1-2—“Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us.” 1 Thessalonians 1:6—“And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord.” Hebrews 12:1-2—“Therefore let us also . . . lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” One reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14) was, that He might show us by His example how we should live and walk in order to please God.

135. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. In Jesus Christ God provided an all-sufficient Atonement for the sins of the whole world.

(This subject will be treated fully in Lesson Thirty-Nine.) 136.Q.What, fourthly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. Through Jesus Christ He ratified and established the New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace, with its essential principles, laws, institutions, blessings, and rewards.

(1) The New Covenant was ratified when Christ died on the Cross. Hebrews 8:6—“But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises.” Hebrews 9:15-16, “And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it.” (2) The New Covenant is the Covenant of Grace. Romans 8:3—“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” John 1:17—“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” Romans 6:14—“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.” Romans 5:21—“that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (3) The New Covenant is the Gospel Covenant. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, “Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.” Romans 1:16—“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

137. Q. What, fifthly, did God do through his Son Jesus Christ?

A. Through Jesus Christ He achieved the conquest of death and procured for His saints the hope and certainty of a glorious immortality.

Acts 2:32—“This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses.” Acts 10:40—“Him God raised up the third day.” John 11:25-26—“I am the resurrection, and the life . . . whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.” 2 Timothy 1:10—“our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Romans 8:11—“he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Php 3:20-21—“the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.” Our Lord Jesus Christ proposes to redeem us not only from the bondage of sin, but from the bondage of death as well. Romans 8:23—“we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Cf. also 1 Corinthians 15:35-57.

138. Q. What, finally, does God propose to do through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. He proposes nothing short of the complete purging of our world of all the works of the devil.

Hebrews 2:14-15—“Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” 1 John 3:8—“To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 Corinthians 15:25-26—“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.” Revelation 20:10—“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Revelation 20:14—“And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 21:4—“and death shall be no more.” 2 Peter 3:13—“But, according to promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-EIGHT 133.Q.What, firstly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

134. Q. What, secondly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

135. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

136. Q. What, fourthly, did God do through His Son Jesus Christ?

137. Q. What, fifthly, did God do through his Son Jesus Christ?

138. Q. What, finally, does God propose to do through His Son Jesus Christ?

01.044. THE ATONEMENT

Lesson Thirty-Nine THE ATONEMENT Scripture Reading: Hebrews 7:26-28; Hebrews 9:11-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: “But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:11-12). “For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself” (Hebrews 7:26-27).

139. Q. What was probably the most fundamental work that God wrought through His Son Jesus Christ?

A. The most fundamental work that God wrought through Christ, was the Atonement.

140. Q. What is meant by the Atonement?

A. By the Atonement is meant the Supreme Sacrifice of the Lamb of God Himself, offered by Himself acting in the capacity of our High Priest, for the sins of the world.

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:3—“Christ died for our sins.” Hebrews 9:26—“but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” John 1:29—“Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” Note how the sins of all humanity are, in this text, bundled together and contemplated as a unit—“the sin of the world.” This means that the Lamb of God Himself is the all-sufficient Atonement for all sin. (2) “The Scriptures teach that Christ obeyed and suffered in our stead, to satisfy an immanent demand of the Divine Holiness, and thus remove an obstacle in the Divine Mind to the pardon and restoration of the guilty” (A. H. Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 713).

141. Q. What is the first great truth involved in the Atonement?

A. The truth that the Lamb of God is Himself our all-sufficient Propitiation.

It was never God’s purpose to pass by any transgression of His law without a just and adequate satisfaction. As Watson says: “A government which admitted no forgiveness, would sink the guilty to despair; a government which never punishes offense, is a contradiction; it cannot exist. Not to punish the guilty, is to dissolve authority; to punish without mercy is to destroy, and where all are guilty, to make the destruction universal.” Hence, in view of the fact that man was himself unable to provide an adequate atonement for his sins, God provided it for him. The first object of the incarnation and death of Christ was to meet and satisfy the demands of Justice upon the sinner. Romans 3:24-25—“Christ Jesus whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood.” 1 John 2:1-2—“Jesus Christ the righteous . . . he is the propitiation for our sins.” The

demands of Justice were met and satisfied more fully and perfectly by Christ's offering of Himself for us, than if all the penalties of violated law had been inflicted upon the offending parties.

142. Q. What is the second great truth involved in the Atonement?

A. The truth that the Lamb of God is our all-sufficient Reconciliation.

Another object of the incarnation and death of Christ was that God, by such a demonstration of His infinite love for man, might furnish the incentives sufficient to change the heart and disposition of the sinner and thus win him back into covenant intimacy with Himself. The problem before the Divine Government was not only that of satisfying the claims of Justice, but also that of subduing and overcoming the rebellion in man's heart. Obviously that could not have been done by any infliction of punishment, because punishment would merely have increased the spirit of rebellion and widened the breach. Hence the only course to pursue to attain the end in view, was for God to make a demonstration of His amazing love and mercy, sufficient to overcome the rebellion in the sinner's heart. To this end Christ gave Himself freely for us all, that He might woo and win us back to God. Ephesians 2:15-16—"that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross." 2 Corinthians 5:19—"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

143. Q. What is the third great truth involved in the Atonement?

A. The truth that the Lamb of God is our sufficient Expiation.

Isaiah 53:5—"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Hebrews 9:26—"Now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." 1 John 3:5—"and ye know that he was manifested to take away sins." Hebrews 9:14—"how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

144. Q. What is the fourth great truth involved in the Atonement?

A.The truth that the Lamb of God is our all-sufficient Redemption. His redemption is two fold, viz., the redemption of our spiritual nature from the bondage of sin (i.e., the guilt of sin), and the redemption of our fleshly nature from the bondage of death (i.e., the consequences of sin). This redemption includes also redemption from deformity. There will be no cripples in Heaven. Romans 3:24—"being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:13—"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20—"ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." Acts 20:28—"to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." Romans 8:23—"even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Cf. Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 3:3; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26; Php 3:20-21; Romans 8:11; Revelation 20:10; Revelation 20:14; 1 Corinthians 15:35-57.

145. Q. Did Jesus die for us because He was under obligation of any kind to have done so?

A. No. He gave Himself voluntarily, willingly, and freely, for our sins.

1 Corinthians 15:3—“Christ died for our sins.” Galatians 1:3-4—“our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins.” 1 Peter 2:24—“who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree.” Romans 5:8—“while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Titus 3:13-14—“Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.” Ephesians 5:25—“even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it.” God gave His Son, and the Son gave His life, not because either was under obligation to have done so, but because both Father and Son loved us too much to allow us to perish forever, without the opportunities and means of salvation.

146. Q. Are the provisions and benefits of Christ’s death for all men, unconditionally?

A. No. They are for those only, who accept and appropriate them by faith.

(1) Revelation 22:17—“he that will, let him take the water of life freely.” John 10:10—“I am come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” John 5:40—“ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.” Like John 13:3—“Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.” Hebrews 5:9—“having been made perfect (i.e., through suffering), he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” (2) While the Sacrifice which Christ provided is as universal as sin in its scope, the sins only of the obedient are expiated by it. “Its design, then, is necessarily limited to all who come to God by it; while its value and efficacy are equal to the salvation of the whole world, provided only they will put themselves under the covering of its propitiatory power” (Campbell, Christian System, p. 43). (See Question 46.)

147. Q. What, then, is the most fundamental fact of all time and eternity?

A. The most fundamental fact of all time and eternity is the Atonement.

(1) It is the only Sacrifice for sin—the all-sufficient and final demonstration to the world of God’s love and mercy. All the animal sacrifices of preceding dispensations were related to it only as substitutes and types. Christ, we are told, officiated as our High Priest “once for all, when he offered up himself” (Hebrews 7:27). He was “once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:28). “Now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26). He “suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). “For the death that he died, he died unto sin once” (Romans 6:10); and having thus “offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10:12). (2) We are told, furthermore, that all through the coming ages the moral splendors of God’s character and work are to find their most vivid illustration in the works and wonders of redemption; “that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 3:7). (3) Finally, in order that we may understand, even though imperfectly, how closely related the Atonement stands to the whole moral universe, we need only read that it was God’s eternal purpose “unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth” (Ephesians 1:10). “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Corinthians 15:25). “Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Php 3:9-10). It will thus be seen that the Atonement is central, in the moral universe, in revelation, in redemption, in this world, and in the ages to come.

148. Q. What tragic implication is involved in the notion that the death of Jesus was only a martyrdom?

A. If the death of Jesus was a martyrdom and nothing more, it follows that mankind is still without an Atonement and consequently hopelessly lost in sin.

(1) If the death of Jesus was merely that of a human being, it had no more efficacy in satisfying the demands of Justice upon a sinful race, than the death of Socrates, or Abraham Lincoln, or of any other man who has given his life for the betterment of the race, would have. (2) If Jesus died merely as a martyr, and not as the Atonement for the sins of the world, then the whole human race is back where it was two thousand years ago, floundering in the mire of Natural Religion and Philosophy. (3) The death of Jesus was a Perfect Sacrifice for sin, because He was the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14); because He was divine as well as human, God as well as man, the God-man, the Divine-human Person (Matthew 1:23), the One who "hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15), the One who was "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 9:26). The Divine nature which He offered up was self-existent and holy. The human nature which He offered up was equally unstained by human corruption and depravity. Therefore in giving Himself He offered up a Divine gift which was amply sufficient to satisfy the demands of Justice with regard to the transgression of Divine law. In short, His was the Perfect Atonement for sin; and so we sing, with Isaac Watts:

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my God;

All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small;

Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all."

149. Q. What, then, is our Altar under the Christian Dispensation?

A. Our Altar is Calvary.

150. Q. What is our Sacrifice?

A. Our Sacrifice is Christ who, as our High Priest, offered Himself, as the Lamb of God, for the sins of the world.

151. Q. Who is our High Priest under the Christian Dispensation?

A. Christ Himself.

Hebrews 7:17—"Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalms 110:4); that is, like Melchizedek who was both "king of Salem" and "priest of God Most High" (Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33), Christ is our High Priest and also our King. 1 Timothy 1:17—"Now unto the King eternal." 1 Timothy 6:15, Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:16—"the King of kings, and Lord of lords." See also Hebrews 7:26-27; Hebrews 9:11-12.

152. Q. What is our Priesthood under the Christian Dispensation?

A. It is a priesthood of all believers.

1 Peter 2:5—“ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:9—“ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood,” etc. Revelation 1:5-6—“Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father.” Cf. Revelation 5:10; Revelation 20:6. Romans 12:1—“I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.” Hebrews 13:15—“through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name.”

153. Q. Is there any authority in the New Testament for a special human priesthood under the Christian Dispensation?

A. There is not.

There is neither command nor precedent for a special order of priests under the Covenant of Grace. Jesus says: “Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven” (Matthew 23:9).

154. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

A.It is our privilege, and should be our greatest joy, to offer up to God spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, devotion and service. The following chart will serve as a summarization of the development of true religion through the ages:

Dispensation

Altar

Sacrifice

Priesthood

Patriarchal

Family Altar

Animal Sacrifice

Patriarchal Priesthood

Jewish

National Altar

Animal Sacrifice

Levitical Priesthood

Christian

Calvary—the Universal Altar

The Lamb of God

The Priesthood of all Believers

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON THIRTY-NINE

139. Q. What was probably the most fundamental work that God wrought through His Son Jesus Christ?

140. Q. What is meant by the Atonement?

141. Q. What is the first great truth involved in the Atonement?

142. Q. What is the second great truth involved in the Atonement?

143. Q. What is the third great truth involved in the Atonement?

144. Q. What is the fourth great truth involved in the Atonement?

145. Q. Did Jesus die for us because He was under obligation of any kind to have done so?

146. Q. Are the provisions and benefits of Christ's death for all men, unconditionally?

147. Q. What, then, is the most fundamental fact of all time and eternity?

148. Q. What tragic implication is involved in the notion that the death of Jesus was only a martyrdom?

149. Q. What, then, is our Altar under the Christian Dispensation?

150. Q. What is our Sacrifice?

151. Q. Who is our High Priest under the Christian Dispensation?

152. Q. What is our Priesthood under the Christian Dispensation?

153. Q. Is there any authority in the New Testament for a special human priesthood under the Christian Dispensation?

154. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

Chapter 46

01.045. SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE WORD “RELIGION”

SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE WORD “RELIGION” A few remarks are in order here about the etymology of the word, “religion.”

Cicero (De Natura Deorum, 2, 28, 72) derives it from the Latin third-conjugation verb relego, relegere, meaning “to go over again,” that is, in reading, in speech, or in thought, “to consider carefully,” and hence, as used by him—Cicero—to mean “reverent observance” (of duties to the gods). Although this may have been the pagan notion of the word, certainly it is not the Biblical meaning of it.

According to Lactantius (Divina Instituta, 4, 28) and Augustine (Retractiones, 1, 13), “religion” derives from the first-conjugation Latin verb, religo, religare, meaning “to bind back,” “to bind anew,” etc. Harper’s Latin Dictionary (Andrews’ Freund, revised by Lewis and Short) has this to say (s.v.): “Modern etymologists mostly agree with this latter view, assuming as root, lig, to bind, whence also lictor, lex, and ligare; hence, religio sometimes means the same as obligatio.” The close relationship of the family of words formed around the root lig (ligament, ligature, oblige, etc.) to that formed around the root leg (lex, legis, “law,” legislate, legal, etc.) is too obvious to be ignored. These two families of words both have the connotation of a binding force. Whatever the word “religion” may have meant to the pagan world, the fact remains that the essence of Biblical religion is a binding of a person anew to God (healing of the schism caused by sin: the God of the Bible is the covenant God), and is fully expressed in the word “reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). As a consequence of this healing through regeneration and continuous sanctification, the righteous person ultimately attains holiness (from holon, “whole), which is wholeness or perfection (that is, completeness, from per plus facere, “to make thorough, complete”). Matthew 5:48—“Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” The attainment of this perfection is consummated, of course, in the ultimate redemption of the body (Romans 8:18-24; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Php 3:20-21, etc.).

01.046. SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE DISPENSATIONS

SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE DISPENSATIONS

Also, it will be noted that in Lesson Twenty-Nine of this section, I have referred to the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian systems as three revealed “religions.” Strictly speaking, however, according to the teaching of the Bible itself, these are three successive Dispensations of the one progressive revelation of true religion. The Dispensations changed—from the family to the national to the universal—as the type of priesthood changed. The Patriarchal Dispensation was the age of family rule and family worship, with the patriarch (paternal head) acting as prophet (revealer of God’s will), priest (intercessor) and king for his entire progeny. The Jewish Dispensation was ushered in with the establishment of a national institution of worship (the Tabernacle, and later the Temple) and a national priesthood (the Levitical or Aaronic priesthood). The Christian Dispensation had its beginning with the abrogation of the Old Covenant and the ratification of the New by one and the same event—the death of Christ on the Cross (although the Jewish Institution was permitted to remain as a social and civil institution some forty years longer, that is, down to the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of its people by the Roman armies, A.D. 70). (Cf. John 1:17, Galatians 3:23-29, 2 Corinthians 3:1-11, Colossians 2:13-15, and especially the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews.) Under the Christian System all Christians are priests unto God, and Christ is their High Priest (1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 5:10; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 2:17, also Hebrews 3:1-19, Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 7:1-28; 1 Timothy 2:5, 1 John 2:1, etc.). It will be recalled that Alexander Campbell referred to the Patriarchal Dispensation as the starlight age, to the Jewish Dispensation as the moonlight age, to the special ministry of John the Baptizer (to the Jewish nation) as the twilight age, and to the present or Christian Dispensation (which may also rightly be designated the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit) as the sunlight age, of the unfolding of the divine Plan of Redemption. These successive “ages,” therefore, embrace the successive stages in the revelation of true religion as set forth in the Bible. Refusal to recognize this fundamental unity of the Bible as a whole can result only in confusion, presumption, and ultimate rejection by the Author of the Bible Himself.

It will be noted also that Christ Himself is both Sacrifice and Priest in the present Dispensation. In the diagram following Lesson 39 herein, I have suggested that our universal Altar in this Dispensation was Calvary or the Cross. I am not unmindful of the fact that there are Bible scholars who insist that our Lord’s perfect human nature was itself the Altar upon which He, as the Lamb of God who “taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29) offered up His divine nature as the perfect Sacrifice (Atonement or Covering) for human sin. I consider this point well taken. (Cf. Hebrews 10:5; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 4:14-16; Luke 1:26-28, etc.) Does not Luke’s language here mean that the Holy Spirit created the physical nature of Jesus in the womb of the virgin? That is to say, as the Spirit brooded over the primeval chaos “in the beginning,” to initiate the physical or cosmic creation, so did the same Spirit brood over (“overshadow”) the womb of the virgin Mary thus to initiate the new creation (re-creation). (Cf. Genesis 1:2, Galatians 4:4, Luke 1:35, etc.) The handiwork of this last brooding was the perfect human nature of God’s Only Begotten, the human

nature that was designed to serve as the perfect Altar for His Atoning Sacrifice of His divine nature (John 1:1-3; John 1:14). Nor does this mean that He was any the less human because of this divine “overshadowing” (Matthew 1:23). On the contrary, is not sin always more painful, more tragic, more repulsive, to Perfection—Holiness—than it could ever be to us ordinary mortals? Cf. Luke 22:44, Hebrews 5:7, Matthew 27:46, Isaiah 63:3. This perfect body which was of the Spirit’s begetting was by this fact qualitatively prepared to be the perfect Atonement for sin, and so constituted that death had no power over it (Psalms 16:8-10; Acts 2:24-32; Acts 13:35-37). Thus do the basic doctrines of the Christian faith—the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, and the Resurrection—all combine in the divine plan to which each contributes its indispensable part: to reject one of these doctrines is to reject them all.

Finally, this divine begetting of the physical nature of God’s Only Begotten makes clear the reason for God’s law respecting the constituent elements of the sacrificial altars of the Patriarchal and Jewish Dispensations, namely, that these altars were to be constructed of “unhewn” (that is, natural) stones (no tool was to be used upon them, Exodus 20:24-25, Deuteronomy 27:5-6). Thus did the altars of olden times serve as types of the Universal Altar (Christ’s perfect human nature), just as the sacrificial lambs offered upon them served as types of the Lamb of God, our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). To summarize: in the Christian Dispensation, Christ Jesus is our Altar, our Sacrifice, and our one and only Priest (King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, Psalms 110:4; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:1-25). It was the Mystery of God’s Will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ “unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say, in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will,” etc. (Ephesians 1:9-12).

01.047. THE NEW COVENANT

Lesson Forty THE NEW COVENANT Scripture Reading: Hebrews 8:1-13; 2 Corinthians 3:1-18.

Scriptures to Memorize: “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). “So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor” Galatians 3:24-25). “But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises” (Hebrews 8:6).

1. Q. What was the first step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A.The first step was the Divine announcement that redemption would be provided for man, through the Seed of a woman. The mysterious oracle in which this Divine announcement was included, was spoken by Jehovah Himself, immediately after the fall of our first parents. (See Lesson Twenty-Seven, Questions 4–6 inclusive.) Genesis 3:14-15.

2. Q. What was the second step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A. The second step was the giving of the Abrahamic Promise and the inauguration of the Old Covenant with Abraham and his posterity.

Genesis 12:1-4; Genesis 13:14-18; Genesis 15:3-5; Genesis 17:1-14; Genesis 22:9-19; Galatians 3:7-9; Galatians 3:16; Galatians 3:23-29, etc. (See Lesson Thirty-Two, Questions 74–80 inclusive.)

3. Q. What was the third step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A.The third step was the establishment of the Mosaic System to prepare the way for and point forward to, in type, symbol and prophecy, the events, institutions and laws of the Christian System. The Abrahamic covenant was enlarged into a national covenant at Sinai, through the mediatorship of Moses. At the same time the Law was given, in which the eternal principles of right and wrong were established. This entire Old Covenant was for the purpose of preparing the way for, and proving the divine origin of, the New Covenant and its institutions. (See Lessons Thirty-Three-Thirty-Five inclusive.)

4. Q. What was the fourth step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A.The fourth step was the raising up of the Hebrew prophets to foretell the details of the life, work and reign of the Messiah. This body of Old Testament prophecy was for the purpose of identifying the true Messiah at His coming. The Messianic predictions of the Old Testament were all fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus. (See Lesson Thirty-Six.)

5. Q. What was the fifth step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A. The fifth step was the ministry of John the Baptizer.

(See Lesson Thirty-Seven, Questions 124–125.) 6.Q.What was the special work of John the Baptizer?

A. It was to herald the advent and reign of the Messiah.

John was the forerunner of the Christ. (The title Christ means The Anointed One.) See Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:3, Luke 3:4-6, John 1:23. Cf. Luke 1:76—“Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways.”

7. Q. What was the sixth step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?

A. The sixth step was the ministry of the Incarnate Word.

(1) The Incarnate Word, i.e., the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), was Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of the living God. It was He who executed God’s Plan of Redemption for us. (2) This phase of the unfolding of God’s plan included: the entrance of the Word into human flesh; His work and ministry as the Revealer of God and our Perfect Exemplar; His death on the Cross as the all-sufficient Atonement for the sins of the world; His death, burial and resurrection; His ascension to the right hand of the Father; and His coronation as King of kings and Lord of lords. (See Lessons Thirty-Eight and Thirty-Nine.)

8. Q. What was the connection between the personal ministry of Jesus and the Jewish nation?

A. The personal ministry of Jesus was a special dispensation of God’s grace towards the Jewish nation.

(1) John 1:11—“He came unto His own, and they that were his own received him not.” His own people rejected Him, and their ecclesiastical leaders coerced the Roman officials into executing the death sentence. The rabble shouted: “His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew 27:25). (2) The personal ministry of Jesus was under the Mosaic Law, to which He rendered a faultless obedience. Matthew 5:17—“Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill.” Jesus fulfilled the Mosaic Code in the sense that He obeyed its requirements perfectly. (3) The First Commission was: “Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:5-6). It was not until after His death, burial and resurrection, that He gave the last and Great Commission; in which He authorized His evangelists to go into all the world (Mark 16:15) and make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:19).

9. Q. When did the present or Christian Dispensation begin?

A. It began with the ratification of the New Covenant by the death of Christ.

10. Q. What is the New Covenant?

A. It is the Covenant of Grace mediated by Jesus Christ.

(1) In scripture, a covenant is a solemn religious compact or agreement. “The Greeks had two words for covenant, viz., syntheke, and diatheke. The former was used to denote a solemn agreement made between equals; and the latter, to denote any arrangement made by a superior for the acceptance of an inferior. And hence it is, that all of God’s covenants are expressed in

Greek by the word diatheke" (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 77, fn.). (2) Three factors enter into the making of every covenant, viz., the covenanter, the covenantee, and the stipulations agreed upon. (3) The Bible is the history of two great Covenants. The first or Old Covenant, the Covenant of Law (otherwise known as "the letter," "the ministration of death," "the ministration of condemnation," etc.) was made with the Hebrew people through the mediatorship of Moses. The last or New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace, the Gospel Covenant (otherwise known as "the spirit," "the ministration of the spirit," "the ministration of righteousness," etc.) is entered into, with all obedient believers, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. See Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 1:17; 2 Corinthians 3:1-11; Hebrews 8; Galatians 3:24-29; Colossians 2:13-15, etc.

11. Q. What was the final step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

A.The final step was the inauguration of the Christian System, its principles, laws and institutions. This last phase of the unfolding of God's plan included: (1) the giving of the Great Commission; (2) the descent of the Holy Spirit to act as the Agent of the God-head upon earth during the present Dispensation; (3) the proclamation of the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel; (4) the incorporation of the church of Christ; (5) the establishment of the Christian ordinances and Christian worship; (6) the writing and compiling of the New Testament Scriptures to serve as an all-sufficient guide in religious faith and practice for the true Church until Jesus comes again.

12. Q. For what should we who live in the present Dispensation be especially thankful?

A.We should be especially thankful that we are under the provisions of the New Covenant "which hath been enacted upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6) The Old Covenant was ritualistic, legal, ceremonial; the New is essentially spiritual. The basis of membership in the Old was fleshly; the basis of membership in the New is spiritual. John 3:3—"Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Old was the "ministration of death," in the sense that the penalty for its violation was usually capital punishment (stoning to death); and the "ministration of condemnation," in the sense that the tendency of the Law was to identify sin and thus condemn the sinner (2 Corinthians 3:7; 2 Corinthians 3:9). The New is the "ministration of the spirit" in the sense it is spiritual in its essential nature; and "the ministration of righteousness" in the sense that it is primarily designed to nurture faith and holiness in the individual (2 Corinthians 3:8-9). In addition to all this, the New "hath been enacted upon better promises," viz., remission of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life (Acts 2:38, Romans 6:23). Let us therefore thank God that we are living under the provisions, privileges and blessings of the New Covenant!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY

1. Q. What was the first step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

2. Q. What was the second step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

3. Q. What was the third step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

4. Q. What was the fourth step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

5. Q. What was the fifth step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?

6. Q. What was the special work of John the Baptizer?

7. Q. What was the sixth step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?
8. Q. What was the connection between the personal ministry of Jesus and the Jewish nation?
9. Q. When did the present or Christian Dispensation begin?
10. Q. What is the New Covenant?
11. Q. What was the final step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man?
12. Q. For what should we who live in the present Dispensation be especially thankful?

Chapter 49

01.048. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

Lesson Forty-One WHAT GOD DID THROUGH THE APOSTLES Scripture Reading: Acts 1:1-8, 2 Corinthians 5:16-20.

Scriptures to Memorize: “But ye shall receive power, when, the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20).

13. Q. What do we mean by the New Testament?

A. By the New Testament, we mean the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

(1) The word covenant is, in the Latin, testamentum, rendered in our language, testament. A testament is, in ordinary terms, a will. A will is defined as “a legal document disposing of one’s property at death.” (2) Hence the New Testament is the formal and authoritative instrument through which Jesus Christ, the Testator, at His death, authorized the continued disposition to men, on the terms specified therein, of the blessings and gifts of Divine grace, throughout the present or Christian Dispensation. (3) The Christian System is spoken of as a covenant, in the sense that it is a solemn proposal from God, through Christ, addressed to sinful men, inviting them to turn again (conversion) and enter into a spiritual compact with their heavenly Father and their Redeemer; and stating the terms upon which such solemn agreement may be consummated. (4) The Christian System is spoken of as a Testament, in the sense that it is the final and authoritative revelation of the will of God, through Jesus Christ, respecting the means and provisions for man’s eternal redemption. This Last Will and Testament is recorded in that portion of the Bible which we know as the New Testament Scriptures.

14. Q. What are the essential elements of a testament or will?

A. They are: (1) the will-maker, or testator; (2) the stipulations; and (3) the executor or executors.

15. Q. When did the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ go into effect?

A.It went into effect at the death of Christ. A will becomes effective as soon as the will-maker dies. Hence the New Testament went into effect when Christ died on the Cross. Hebrews 9:16—“For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it.”

16. Q. What was the first necessary step in the execution of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

A. The first necessary step was the probating of the instrument. The first necessary step in the execution of any will is the certification of its authenticity in open court. This step is known as the

probating of the will.

17.Q.When was the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ probated? A.It was probated on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, A. D. 30. On that memorable day, the terms and conditions of the New Testament (i.e., the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel Covenant) were publicly announced for the first time. They were announced by the Apostles as the divinely-appointed executors; and they were properly authenticated by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. (See the entire second chapter of Acts; cf. 1 Peter 1:12.)

18. Q. Who were the executors of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

A.The Apostles. An executor is “a person appointed by a testator in his will to see that the terms of the will are duly carried out.” Our Lord appointed the Apostles the executors of His Last Will and Testament. Matthew 18:18—“What things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” John 20:21-23, “Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” John 17:18—“As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.” These scriptures all have reference to the Apostles only. Cf. Acts 1:1-8.

19. Q. Who, then, were the Apostles?

A. The Apostles were men specially called, trained and qualified by Christ Himself, for the work of executing His Last Will and Testament.

(1) They were men whom Jesus Himself called. Matthew 4:18-21; Matthew 9:9; Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 1:16-19; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 5:10; Luke 6:13-16; John 1:35-51, etc. His personal appearance to Saul of Tarsus was for the purpose of calling the latter to the apostleship. Acts 26:15-18. (2) They were men whom Jesus Himself personally trained and qualified for their work. See Acts 1:21-22; John 17:7-16; 1 Corinthians 13:3-7, etc. (3) They were men who actually saw the Lord after His resurrection. See Acts 10:40-41; 1 John 1:1-4; Acts 9:1-9; Acts 26:12-18, etc.

20. Q. Name the original Twelve Apostles.

A.They were: (1) Simon Peter; (2) Andrew; (3) James, and (4) John, the sons of Zebedee; (5) Philip; (6) Bartholomew (Nathanael); (7) Matthew (Levi); (8) Thomas; (9) James the son of Alpheus; (10) Judas (also Thaddeus, or Jude); (11) Simon Zelotes (the Cananean); and (12) Judas Iscariot. Of this original group Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ and fell from the apostleship. Later, Matthias was selected to take his place. See Acts 1:15-26. That the selection of Matthias was divinely ratified, is evident from a comparison of Acts 1:26 with Acts 6:2. Acts 1:26—“the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.” Acts 6:2—“and the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them,” etc.

21. Q. Who was specially called, trained and qualified to be the Apostle to the Gentiles?

A. Paul.

Saul was his Hebrew name, but he was also born a Roman citizen and bore the additional name of Paul. See Acts 26:12-19; Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 14:37, etc.

22. Q. What is the term most commonly applied to the Apostles in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. They are alluded to most frequently as “witnesses.”

Acts 1:8—“ye shall be my witnesses.” Acts 2:32—“This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses.” Acts 10:40-41—“Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.” Luke 24:48—“Ye are witnesses of these things.” Jesus, in commissioning Paul, said: “to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee” (Acts 26:16). Cf. also Acts 1:22, 1 Corinthians 9:1, 2 Peter 1:16-18, 1 John 1:1-4, etc.

23. Q. What is the signification of the term “witness”?

A. It signifies authenticity,

(1) A witness is one who testifies; one who testifies with regard to what he has seen, with his own eyes; and one whose testimony is therefore authentic. (2) The Apostles were not priests; nor were they theologians, philosophers, clergymen, or social reformers. They were primarily and essentially witnesses. They were men who testified with regard to what they had actually seen. Acts 10:41—“to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.” 1 John 1:1—“that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled,” etc. We are therefore justified in accepting the testimony of the Apostles as authentic.

24. Q. Where is the apostolic testimony recorded?

A.It is recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. In and through the New Testament Scriptures, the Apostles have literally become witnesses of Christ unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). We, as disciples, evangelists, elders, deacons, teachers, etc., cannot be witnesses of Christ; rather, we are the propagators and preachers of the apostolic witness or testimony. 2 Timothy 2:2—“and the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

25. Q. What other special designation is given to the Apostles in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. They are called “ambassadors” of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:20—“we are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ.” Ephesians 6:19-20—“the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains.”

26. Q. What is the signification of the term “ambassador”?

A. It signifies authority.

(1) An ambassador is a government agent of highest rank. Hence the term “ambassador” is the only one that can be used to appropriately describe the dignity and rank of the apostolic office. (2) An ambassador is always vested with the authority of the government which he is sent out to represent. The Apostles were ambassadors of Christ, therefore, in the sense that they were sent out fully clothed with His divine authority. John 17:18—“As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.” John 20:21; John 20:23—“as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you . . . whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Mark 16:20—“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed.”

27. Q. How were the Apostles specially qualified for the work they were sent out to do?

A. They were specially qualified by having been given the Holy Spirit to accompany them, to direct them in their work, and to guide them into all the truth.

Note the many promises that were made to the Apostles, and to the Apostles only. Matthew 10:19-20—“It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” John 14:26—“But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you,” Luke 24:48-49—“Ye are witnesses of these things . . . but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high.” Acts 1:8—“But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses,” etc. Cf. John 14:16-17; John 15:26-27; John 16:7-15; John 20:21-23, etc. Acts 2:4—“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” It should be made clear that these promises were to the Apostles only, not to all Christians. To interpret them as having reference to all believers, as is frequently done, is to give them a wholly unscriptural implication.

28. Q. For what purpose were the gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the Apostles in such great measure?

A.For the purpose of making them infallible witnesses. This guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit was for the purpose of clothing them with infallibility. They were thus safeguarded against error in executing the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. John 16:13—“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth . . . and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.” Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Acts 15:28, etc.

29. Q. Did the Apostles have any successors?

A.They did not; for the obvious reason that witnesses cannot have successors. A witness can testify only with regard to what he himself has seen, with his own eyes; hence a witness cannot have successors. There is not one iota of evidence in the New Testament Scriptures, either by direct statement or by inference, that the Apostles called or qualified, or delegated their authority to, any man or group of men to succeed them. With the establishment of the Church, and the writing of the New Testament Scriptures, the office and work of the Apostles came to an end. The dogma of “apostolic succession” is a monstrous fabrication of purely human origin, and without any divine warrant whatsoever.

30. Q. What, firstly, did God do through the Apostles?

A. Through the Apostles, He revealed and established the principles, laws and institutions of the New Covenant.

31. Q. What, secondly, did God do through the Apostles?

A. Through the Apostles, He gave the Great Commission under which the Church functions in evangelizing the world.

Acts 1:2—“until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen.” This “commandment” is generally known as the Great Commission—“the marching orders of the King.” Matthew 28:19-20, “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Mark 16:15-16—“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.”

32. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through the Apostles?

A. Through the Apostles, He set up the church of Christ to preserve and proclaim the Gospel for a testimony unto all the nations (Matthew 24:14).

33. Q. What, fourthly, did God do through the Apostles?

A.Through the Apostles, He embodied the Christian Revelation in permanent form in the New Testament Scriptures) for the guidance of His people under the New Covenant. The Apostles’ teaching, as embodied in the New Testament Scriptures, is for the administration of the Church throughout the Christian Dispensation. We read that the church at Jerusalem “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42); so should all Christians. The New Testament canon is our all-sufficient guide in religious faith, worship and practice. It is the only Discipline we need. Let us therefore plead with believers everywhere to abandon all divisive and unscriptural creeds and confessions, which have been written by men; and to adhere solely to the teaching of the New Testament Scriptures.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-ONE 13.Q.What do we mean by the New Testament?

14. Q. What are the essential elements of a testament or will?

15. Q. When did the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ go into effect?

16. Q. What was the first necessary step in the execution of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

17. Q. When was the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ probated?

18. Q. Who were the executors of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

19. Q. Who, then, were the Apostles?

20. Q. Name the original Twelve Apostles.

21. Q. Who was specially called, trained and qualified to be the Apostle to the Gentiles?

22. Q. What is the term most commonly applied to the Apostles in the New Testament Scriptures?

23. Q. What is the signification of the term “witness”?

24. Q. Where is the apostolic testimony recorded?

25. Q. What other special designation is given to the Apostles in the New Testament Scriptures?

26. Q. What is the signification of the term “ambassador”?

27. Q. How were the Apostles specially qualified for the work they were sent out to do?

28. Q. For what purpose were the gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the Apostles in such great measure?

29. Q. Did the Apostles have any successors?

30. Q. What, firstly, did God do through the Apostles?

31. Q. What, secondly, did God do through the Apostles?

32. Q. What, thirdly, did God do through the Apostles?

33. Q. What, fourthly, did God do through the Apostles?

Chapter 50

01.049. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

Lesson Forty-Two THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH Scripture Reading: Matthew 16:13-20; Acts 2:37-47.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). “They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41).

34. Q. What do we mean by the Christian Institution?

A. By the Christian Institution, we mean the Institution divinely established and appointed for the worship and service of God through Jesus Christ, throughout the Christian Dispensation.

Romans 12:1—“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20—“Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price; glorify God therefore in your body.” 1 Peter 2:5—“ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 2:19-22, “So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each-several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” Hebrews 10:25—“not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh.”

35. Q. What is the Christian Institution?

A. The Christian Institution is the church of Christ.

Ephesians 3:21—“Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever.” Acts 20:28—“the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.” Hebrews 11:23—“the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven.”

36. Q. What is the derivation of the word “church”?

A.The word “church” in its derivative sense, means literally “whatever belongs or pertains to the Lord.” The word church (English), kirk (Scotch), kirche (German), is but a corruption of the Greek word kuriakos, and means, primarily, belonging to the Lord. This word was at first most likely used as an adjective for the purpose of defining the noun ekklesia, which among the ancients, denoted an assembly of any kind. It was only natural, therefore, that the Greek Fathers should have combined the two original words, in order to more clearly indicate the church of Christ as “the assembly of the Lord” or “the Lord’s assembly.”

37. Q. What, then, is the church of Christ?

A. The true church of Christ is the body of obedient believers under the New Covenant who belong to God through Christ.

(1) The true Church takes in all who are in Christ. Romans 8:1—“there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” 2 Corinthians 5:17—“if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.” Galatians 3:26-27—“For ye are all sons of God through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ.” To be in Christ, is to be in the church of Christ, and vice versa; for the Church is the body of Christ. (2) It will thus be seen that the Kingdom is a more comprehensive term than the Church, in the fact that it takes in those elect of God who cannot, in the very nature of the case, belong to the Church; such as (a) the saved of all preceding dispensations; and (b) the innocent and irresponsible, including infants, of all dispensations. Ephesians 4:8—“when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive.” Mark 10:14–“Suffer the little children to come unto me . . . for to such belongeth the kingdom of God.”

38. Q. Did the church of Christ exist in Old Testament times?

A.No. There was no such institution as the church of Christ in Old Testament times. The institution of worship in the Patriarchal Dispensation was the Altar. In the Jewish Dispensation, it was the Tabernacle, the Temple, and the Synagogue, in succession. These institutions were forerunners of the Church, and, in certain respects, were typical of it. But the church of Christ itself was not established in either of the Old Testament Dispensations. To speak of the Hebrew Theocracy as the “Jewish Church,” as some do, is unscriptural and misleading.

39. Q. Was the church of Christ established in the time of John the Baptizer?

A. No. John’s ministry was to the Jewish nation, and under the Mosaic law.

40. Q. Did Jesus Himself establish the Church while He was on earth?

A.No. The personal ministry of Jesus Christ was under the Old Covenant and, likewise, under the Mosaic law. The personal ministry of the Incarnate Word was under the Law of Moses, to which He rendered a faultless obedience. By His death on the Cross, He abrogated the Covenant of Law and ratified the Covenant of Grace. Colossians 2:14—“having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us; and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.”

41. Q. When was the Christian Institution set up?

A. It was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, A. D. 30.

(1) The word church is found only twice in the Gospel narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, viz., (a) in Matthew 18:17, where Jesus describes the procedure that is to be followed in effecting reconciliation between brethren; and (b) in Matthew 16:18, where Jesus says: “Upon this rock ‘I will build my church.” It will be noted that in this last-quoted text Jesus Himself refers to the Church as yet a thing of the future. He says: will build, not have built; thus precluding all such notions as, that the Church was established in the time of Adam, Abraham, or Moses, etc. This statement also disproves the theory that the Church was established in the time of John the Baptizer, for John had already been beheaded when these words were spoken. Moreover, the Scriptures teach clearly that the personal ministry of Jesus was under the Law (Matthew 5:17-18); hence the

Church, which is distinctly a New Testament institution, could not have been established until the Old Covenant had been abrogated and the New ratified and established by the death of Christ. (2) Beginning with the book of Acts, therefore, and throughout the rest of the New Testament Scriptures, the Church is alluded to repeatedly, and always as an established and functioning institution. As a matter of facts, Acts of Apostles is the history of the establishment, direction and expansion of the Church, under apostolic preaching and guidance. (3) It is quite generally admitted today that the church of Christ was established on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30, when the Holy Spirit descended in fulfilment of promise, when the Gospel was proclaimed in fact for the first time and sinners were first accepted into covenant relationship with God, through Christ, on the specific terms and conditions of the New Testament. (See Acts 2:1-47) Acts 2:41—"they then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them (literally, added together) in that day about three thousand souls." Cf. Acts 2:47—"And the Lord added to them (literally, added together) day by day those that were saved" (literally, those that were being saved). This language clearly describes the incorporation of the body of Christ, the Church. From this time on, in the book of Acts and in the Epistles, the Church is invariably referred to as an established and functioning institution.

42. Q. What positive proof have we that the church of Christ was established on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30?

A. The fact that the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30, to incorporate the Church, to indwell it and vitalize it, and to enter upon His work of realizing and consummating God's Plan of Redemption for man, is the final and positive proof that the Church was established on that day.

(1) If the Church existed prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, as described in the second chapter of Acts, it was a lifeless institution; as dead, in fact, as the body of man was, which Jehovah God formed of the dust of the ground, before He breathed into it the breath of life (Genesis 2:7). For it was on this first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord, that the Spirit descended for the purpose of incorporating, vitalizing and indwelling the body of Christ. The language of Acts 2:41-47, as shown above, clearly describes the forming of the body, i.e., the incorporation of the Church. Where there is Spirit, there is life; hence the true Church is not an organization, but an organism. That is, it is a body of obedient believers in Christ, vitalized by the indwelling and abiding presence of the Spirit of God. (See John 7:37-39, Joel 2:28, Luke 24:45-49, Acts 1:1-8, Acts 2:1-47, etc.) From these facts it is obvious that there could not have been any church in existence, in the New Testament sense of the term, prior to the advent of the Holy Spirit, on Pentecost, A. D. 30. (2) The first thing the Holy Spirit did on that day was to bestow His gifts and powers in baptismal measure upon the Apostles, thus qualifying them for the work that Christ Himself had called them to do. The next thing the Spirit did, on that day, was to reveal the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel, through their preaching. The last thing He did was to form into a body the three thousand persons who heard the message on that day, who accepted its facts, repented of their sins, and submitted to Christian baptism. The Spirit's work on the day of Pentecost was threefold: (a) the qualifying of the Apostles for their task, (b) the revelation of the Gospel, with its facts, commands and promises; and (c) the incorporation of the church of Christ. (3) Note the following summation of facts with respect to the inauguration of the Christian Institution: "First, as a new covenant, it was ratified by the blood of Christ; as a testament, it was

not a binding force while the testator lived; as a kingdom, it was not established until the King ascended and was crowned; as a church, its history shows that it was not organized while Jesus lived on earth; as the great salvation, it only ‘began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.’ Finally, as the gospel, it was founded on the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and was not preached until these facts had transpired” (Phillips, The church of Christ, pp. 131–132).

43. Q. What, then, was the day of Pentecost, A.D. 30?

A. It was the birthday of the church of Christ.

(1) The point should be emphasized here that Christ Himself, through the instrumentality of His Apostles guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, established His Church. In advance of its actual beginning, he said: “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). This Church had its inception on Pentecost, A. D. 30, at Jerusalem: and its history under the preaching and guidance of the Apostles is related in the book of Acts. (2) So, while the world thinks in terms of the Roman Church, of Luther’s Church, of Calvin’s Church, of Wesley’s Church, etc., let us make it our special business to call attention to the fact that our Lord Himself established a church; that the church which He established is the true Church, the Church which He purchased with His own precious blood (Acts 20:28). (3) This Church was, and is, neither Greek Catholic, nor Roman Catholic, nor Protestant, nor a denomination of any kind whatsoever. It is Christ’s Church, His body, the church of Christ; the only Church authorized by the Scriptures. (4) Let us give ourselves unsparingly, therefore, to the great task of restoring and reproducing this Church in its original simplicity and purity, according to the pattern laid down in the New Testament Scriptures, This is what we mean by “the restoration of primitive Christianity, its laws, ordinances and fruits.”

44. Q. What do we celebrate on the seventh Lord’s Day after Easter each year?

A. We celebrate the anniversary of Pentecost, the birthday of the church of Christ.

It is our conviction that the anniversary of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, should be observed annually with appropriate doctrinal messages, especially by those congregations which advocate the restoration of New Testament Christianity. Pentecost should be an outstanding day in the Christian calendar.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-TWO 34.Q.What do we mean by the Christian Institution?

35. Q. What is the Christian Institution?

36. Q. What is the derivation of the word “church”?

37. Q. What, then, is the church of Christ?

38. Q. Did the church of Christ exist in Old Testament times?

39. Q. Was the church of Christ established in the time of John the Baptizer?

40. Q. Did Jesus Himself establish the Church while He was on earth?

41. Q. When was the Christian Institution set up?

42. Q. What positive proof have we that the church of Christ was established on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30?

43. Q. What, then, was the day of Pentecost, A.D. 30?

44. Q. What do we celebrate on the seventh Lord’s Day after Easter each year?

01.050. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Lesson Forty-Three THE CHURCH OF CHRIST Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-11.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me” (John 17:20-21). “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were, called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all” (Ephesians 4:4-6).

45. Q. In what two general forms does the church of Christ exist?

A. It exists as: (1) the universal or catholic Church; and (2) the local church.

46. Q. What is the universal or catholic Church?

A. The universal or catholic Church takes in all the elect of God under the New Covenant.

(1) The church universal is the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, the temple of God, the household of the faith, etc. As the word “catholic” means “universal,” it follows that the only true catholic Church is the church of Christ.

(2) By “the elect of God” is meant: all obedient believers, or all who are truly in Christ. Romans 8:1—“There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,” etc.

47. Q. What is the essential nature of the universal or catholic Church?

A. It is essentially invisible, mystical, and spiritual.

(1) It is invisible in the sense that its “citizenship” is in heaven. Php 3:20—“For our citizenship is in heaven,” etc. Hebrews 12:23—“the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven.” Revelation 13:8—“every one whose name hath not been written . . . in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain.” (2) It is mystical in the sense that its essential construction is beyond human understanding. John 10:14—here Jesus says: “I know mine own, and mine own know me.” As Christ alone can discern the thoughts and intents of the human heart, He is the only one who can distinguish the truly believing and penitent, from those whose profession is merely nominal; hence He, in His capacity as Head of the church, must determine the constituency of His body. In the Scriptures, therefore, the Lord is said to do the adding to His own Church (Acts 2:47); and it follows that no one but He has the prerogative of excommunication. Ephesians 2:21-22—“in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” The actual construction of this “holy temple” is beyond human conception or description, and is known only to the Lord Himself; hence it can be described only by metaphor, such as the temple of God, the body of Christ, etc. (3) It is spiritual, in the sense that it is essentially holy. 1 Peter 2:5—“Ye also, as living stones, are built

up a spiritual house." Ephesians 5:27—"a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

48. Q. In what concrete form is the universal church of Christ manifested in our visible world?

A. It concretes itself upon earth in the local church.

49. Q. What is the local church?

A. It is the assembly or congregation of obedient believers in a given community.

(1) Naturally the Church universal must have some sort of a local and visible manifestation, for practical purposes. This it has in the local congregation of Christians. (2) The local church is the assembly or congregation of the saints in a given community, who are thus united and held together by the mutual bond of union with Christ and; possession of the indwelling Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:27—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." 1 John 1:7—"if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." Romans 6:5—"if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death," etc. 2 Corinthians 13:14—"the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." (3) The local congregation exists and functions for purposes of fellowship, worship, service and evangelism. It is the concrete and practical manifestation of the Church catholic. Romans 16:16—"the churches of Christ salute you." 1 Corinthians 1:1—"unto the church of God which is at Corinth."

50. Q. What is the essential nature of the local church?

A. It is essentially visible, temporal and practical.

(1) It is the local recruiting-station, where aliens are convicted of sin and converted to righteousness through the preaching of the Gospel. (2) It is the spiritual training-school, in which the saints are nurtured in the admonition. of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). (3) It is the local assembly of the saints for public worship. Hebrews 10:25—"not forsaking our own assembling together." 1 Corinthians 11:20—"when therefore ye assemble yourselves together." (4) It is the local household of the faith, whose members come together on each first day of the week around the Family Table (the Lord's Table), to partake of the Family Feast of Remembrance (the Lord's Supper). See Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 10:14-21; 1 Corinthians 11:20-33, etc. (5) It is not a museum for the exhibition of sanctimonious professors of religion, but a workshop for the shaping and forging of imperfect Christians into vessels meet for the inheritance of the saints (Colossians 1:12). See 1 Peter 2:2, 1 Corinthians 3:2, 2 Peter 3:18.

51. Q. In what visible form did the church of Christ have its beginning?

A. The church of Christ had its beginning in the local church at Jerusalem.

(1) This local church, established on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30, was the first church of Christ in the world. Acts 8:1—"the church which was in Jerusalem." (2) As time went on, local churches sprang up and flourished in Antioch, Iconium, Derbe, Lystra, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, etc., in fact, in every community where the Gospel was preached. (3) Thus the Church universal, beginning from Jerusalem, increased and spread over the entire known world of apostolic times. The history of its rise and spread is related in the book of Acts of Apostles.

52. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Greek Catholic Church?

A.No; for that was three centuries before the beginning of the Greek Catholic (Orthodox) Church. The history of the church in Jerusalem extended over the period from A. D. 30 to 70. The Greek Church did not come into existence until after the Council of Nicea, which was held in the year 325.

53. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Roman Catholic Church?

A. No; for that was some six or seven centuries before the actual beginning of the Roman Church.

Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. II, traces the rise of the medieval Roman Hierarchy clearly (1) from the first Christian congregations in which the ministry of bishop (overseer) and that of presbyter (elder) was one and the same (Acts 20:17-35); (2) to the gradual separation of the bishopric from the eldership, and the recognition of a ruling bishop in each local church; (3) to the recognition of the primacy of the metropolitan bishops; (4) to the establishment of the distinction between “clergy” and “laity”; (5) to the assertion of the claim of primacy over all other bishops by the Bishop of Rome. The union of church and state began to take shape with the Nicean Council, A. D. 325. The able and aggressive Leo (flourished about A. D. 450) was the most vigorous in pressing the claim of the primacy of the Roman bishopric. As early as A. D. 425, the Emperior Valentinian III had decreed that all the bishops of the West should obey the Bishop of Rome. In A. D. 533 the Emperor Justinian, by imperial edict, proclaimed the Bishop of Rome the Head of the whole Church. The introduction of Latin worship capped this hierarchical development, about A. D. 666. However, the dogma of Papal Infallibility (ex cathedra) was not decreed until the Vatican Council of 1870.

54. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Protestant Church?

A. No; for that was some fourteen or fifteen centuries before the origin of Protestantism.

Protestantism had its beginnings in the work of such men as John Wyclif (1324–1384); John Huss (1369–1415); Savonarola (1452–1498); Martin Luther (1483–1546); John Knox (1505–1572); John Calvin (1509–1564); Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531); Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560), etc. The greatest of the later Reformers were John Wesley, George Fox, and Roger Williams.

55. Q. What, then, was this first church, the church in Jerusalem?

A. It was a church of Christ.

(1) It was Christ’s church, the church of Christ, in Jerusalem. (2) Similarly, all local churches in apostolic times were called “churches of Christ.” Romans 16:16—“all the churches of Christ salute you.”

56. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a denomination? Or, was it affiliated with any denomination?

A. No; it was undenominational, non-sectarian; for there were no denominations in apostolic times.

(1) It was just the church, Christ's church, Christ's body, in Jerusalem—nothing more, nothing less, (2) The word denomination means division, literally. There were no denominations in apostolic times, in the modern sense of the term. (3) The present-day denominational order is a human addition to the true church of Christ, and is the consequence of human apostasy, human theology, and human authority.

57. Q. What, then, is the Church revealed and described in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. The Church described in the New Testament Scriptures is the church of Christ.

It should be made so clear that your pupils will never forget it, that the church of Christ was in existence long before there was such a thing as the Greek Catholic Church, or the Roman Catholic Church, or a Protestant Church, etc. It should be explained also, at this point, that the objective of the Restoration Movement is to reproduce the church of Christ, in all its essential and permanent features, as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

58. Q. What, then, is the truth catholic Church?

A. The true catholic or universal Church is the church of Christ.

Hence the absurdity of a so-called "Roman Catholic" Church. How could the true catholic Church be "Roman" and "catholic" at the same time? If it is truly catholic, it cannot have any distinguishing or denominational aspects, such as "Greek," "Roman," "Anglican," Lutheran," "Episcopalian," etc. The true catholic Church, the church of Christ, is neither Roman, nor Greek, nor Anglican, nor Protestant, nor denominational in any sense of the term. It is the body of Christ, which takes in all the elect of God under the New Covenant.

59. Q. Can we today belong to the church of Christ without belonging to a denomination?

A. Certainly. We can belong to the church of Christ by complying with the requirements, enjoined upon us by the Apostles themselves as necessary to salvation and union with Christ; and by continuing steadfastly in all the essentials of Christian worship and living as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

(1) The terms of admission into the church of Christ are: belief in Christ, repentance from sin, confession of Christ, and baptism into Christ. See Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 11:6; John 14:1; Acts 16:31; Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Acts 26:18; Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:26-27; John 3:3-5, etc. (2) When we comply with the divine requirements laid down in the apostles' teaching as necessary to induct us into Christ, we are then in the church of Christ. That is, the means by which we are inducted into Christ, also induct us into His body, the Church. For, according to New Testament teaching, all who are in Christ are in His body or Church, and vice versa. They are Christians therefore, nothing more, nothing else; and should continue steadfastly in all the essentials of Christian worship and living (Acts 2:42, Galatians 5:22-23). (3) To belong to a denomination, they must add to these scriptural requirements. They must affiliate with a human organization, submit to a man-made creed, adopt practices of human origin, and wear a human and distinguishing name. But this is not necessary. It is even more than unnecessary—it is antiscriptural. See Ephesians 4:4-6; John 17:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, etc.

60. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

A. The lesson that we should be Christians only, and thus avoid contributing to the sin of denominationalism.

(1) We should be Christians—not the only Christians, but Christians only. (2) We should take the New Testament Scriptures as our only guide in Christian faith, worship and practice. (3) We should "continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). (4) We should exemplify in our lives the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). (5) Thus "adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:10), we should leave the first principles of Christ and press on unto perfection (Hebrews 6:1). This is God's plan for us. May we live in harmony with it, and thus attain "the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11). (6) The notion one often hears expressed that denominationalism is "legitimate," "unavoidable," or even "God-designed," is absolutely without warrant in Scripture. On the contrary partyism is declared, by the Apostle Paul, to be evidence of carnality (1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-8). "Factions, divisions, parties," etc., are listed in Scripture among "the works of the flesh": by no stretch of the imagination could these rightfully be categorized under the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:19-24). Denominationalism is of human authority strictly: it has its roots in human speculative theology. It arose, of course, from the successive efforts of churchmen to find their way out of the morass of medieval hierarchism, dogmatism, and superstition, back to the purity of New Testament teaching and practice. In our day it is maintained almost entirely by the power of tradition. To love a denomination as such, that is, because of the tradition it embodies, is sectism pure and simple. Moreover, it is the direct antithesis of our Lord's own prayer for the unity of His people (John 17:20-21).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-THREE 45.Q.In what two general forms does the church of Christ exist?

46. Q. What is the universal or catholic Church?

47. Q. What is the essential nature of the universal or catholic Church?

48. Q. In what concrete form is the universal church of Christ manifested in our visible world?

49. Q. What is the local church?

50. Q. What is the essential nature of the local church?

51. Q. In what visible form did the church of Christ have its beginning?

52. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Greek Catholic Church?

53. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Roman Catholic Church?

54. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a Protestant Church?

55. Q. What, then, was this first church, the church in Jerusalem?

56. Q. Was this first church, the church in Jerusalem, a denomination? Or, was it affiliated with any denomination?

57. Q. What, then, is the Church revealed and described in the New Testament Scriptures?

58. Q. What, then, is the truth catholic Church?

59. Q. Can we today belong to the church of Christ without belonging to a denomination?

60. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?

Chapter 52

01.051. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (Concluded)

Lesson Forty-Four THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (Concluded) Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:10-22; Ephesians 3:14-21; Ephesians 5:22-33.

Scriptures to Memorize: “He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27). “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, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

61. Q. Who is the Head of the church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Head of the true Church.

Matthew 28:18—“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.” Ephesians 1:22-23—“and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body.” Ephesians 5:23—“Christ also is the head of the church.” See Ephesians 4:15-16, Colossians 1:18, Colossians 2:10, etc. The true church of Christ has no other head. Ephesians 4:5—“one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

62. Q. Who is the Foundation of the church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Foundation of the true Church.

(1) Matthew 16:18—“upon this rock I will build my church,” i.e., upon the truth to which Peter had just given expression, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This is the fundamental truth upon which the Church, the Gospel, in fact the entire Christian System, is built. To say that the Church rests upon the foundation of His Divine Sonship and Messiahship, is equivalent to saying that it is built upon Christ Himself. 1 Corinthians 3:11—“For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (2) Moreover, as the Apostles were ambassadors of Christ, the executors of His Last Will and Testament, fully clothed with His authority and infallibility through the gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon them in baptismal measure; the Church is also said to have been erected upon the foundation of the prophetic and apostolic testimony, which is the word of Christ. Ephesians 2:20—“being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone.”

63. Q. What is the Creed of the church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Creed of the true Church.

John 20:31—“that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” Acts 16:31—“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” John 14:1—“Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” 2 Timothy 1:12—“for I know him whom I have believed.” The living Creed of the living Church of the living God is the ever-living Christ. Revelation 1:17-18—“I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

64. Q. In what formula is this Creed expressed?

A. In the formula: I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(1) Matthew 16:16—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This is the fundamental truth of Christianity, which in turn rests upon the fundamental fact of Christianity, that God raised up Jesus from the dead. Romans 10:9-10—“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (2) The expression of this creedal formula by the individual, is the “good confession” (1 Timothy 6:13), which is made with the mouth (Romans 10:9) unto salvation (Romans 10:10). (3) Jesus is His name (Matthew 1:21). Christ is His title. The word Christ means The Anointed One. As prophets, priests and kings were anointed into office in olden times, it follows, that to confess Jesus as our Christ, is to accept Him as our Prophet, the Revealer of God, the One to whom we go for the words of eternal life (John 6:68); as our High Priest who maketh intercession for us at the right hand of God the Father (Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 2:1, 1 Timothy 2:5); and as our King who has all authority over our lives (Matthew 28:18). (4) This Creed and its formula are both heaven-sent (John 1:14; John 3:17; Matthew 16:17), scriptural, simple, comprehensive, and all-sufficient. No other creeds or confessions are necessary.

65. Q. What is the all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the true Church?

A. The all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the Church in faith and practice is the New Testament canon.

(1) The New Testament canon, i.e., the New Testament Scriptures as a whole, is the apostles’ teaching, which is also the teaching of Christ as revealed by the Holy Spirit. John 16:13-15; John 14:26; John 20:21-23; Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 2:1-15; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16, etc. Acts 2:42—“and they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching,” etc. (2) In the New Testament Scriptures “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” are fully revealed. 2 Peter 1:3; cf. Jude 1:3. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, we are told that the Scriptures are sufficient to furnish all Christians “completely unto every good work”; therefore no human additions are needed. The New Testament itself, which is the word of Christ, is the authoritative and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice for the church of Christ.

66. Q. What are the terms of admission into the church of Christ?

A. They are: (1) belief in Christ, which includes the acceptance of Him as a personal Savior; (2) repentance from sin; (3) public confession of Christ; and (4) baptism into Christ.

(1) John 20:30-31, Acts 16:31, John 14:1. (2) Acts 2:38, Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30, Acts 26:18. (3) Matthew 10:32-33, Romans 10:9-10, 1 Timothy 6:13. (4) Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38;

Acts 8:36-39; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:26-27; John 3:3-5, etc. (See Question 96.)

67. Q. What are the members of the church of Christ called, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. They are called disciples, believers, brethren, saints, priests, and Christians.

(1) Disciples, Acts 19:30. (2) Believers, Acts 5:14. (3) Brethren, 1 Corinthians 6:8, 1 Timothy 4:6. (4) Saints, Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:2. (5) Priests, 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 5:10; Revelation 1:6, etc. (6) Christians, Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16.

68. Q. What does the word “Christian” mean?

A. The word “Christian” means “of Christ” or “belonging to Christ.”

69. Q. What names are given to the Church itself, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. In its universal aspect, it is called “the church,” “the church of God,” “the church of the living God,” “the church of the Lord,” “the general assembly and church of the firstborn.” Local congregations are called “churches,” “churches of God,” and “churches of Christ.”

(1) Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Timothy 3:5; 1 Timothy 3:15; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 12:23. (2) 1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 16:16; Revelation 2:12; Revelation 2:18, etc.

70. Q. By what four great metaphors is the Church described, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. It is spoken of as the temple of God, as the body of Christ, as the bride of Christ, and as the household of God.

(1) The temple of God, Ephesians 2:21-22. This metaphor suggests dignity, solidarity, strength. (2) The body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12; Eph 1:-22-23; Colossians 1:24, etc. This metaphor suggests a fellowship of parts or members. (3) The bride of Christ, Ephesians 5:22-33, Galatians 4:26; Revelation 21:2; Revelation 21:9; Revelation 22:17. This metaphor suggests purity, constancy, service, etc. (4) The household of God; or, the household of the faith, Ephesians 2:19, Galatians 6:10. This metaphor suggests affinity of interest, purpose and work.

71. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these metaphors of the Church?

A. We should learn that the Church is most intimately related to Christ, and His partner in the great work of redeeming humanity; and that any one who ignores the Church or holds the Church in contempt cannot possibly please or honor Christ Himself.

Acts 20:28—“the church of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood.” Ephesians 5:25—“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it.” And so we sing, in the words of Timothy Dwight:

“I love Thy Church, O God; Her walls before Thee stand, Dear as the apple of Thine eye, And graven on Thy hand. For her my tears shall fall, For her my prayers ascend, To her my cares and toils be given Till toils and cares shall end.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-FOUR 61.Q.Who is the Head of the church of Christ?

62. Q. Who is the Foundation of the church of Christ?

63. Q. What is the Creed of the church of Christ?

64. Q. In what formula is this Creed expressed?

65. Q. What is the all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the true Church?

66. Q. What are the terms of admission into the church of Christ?

67. Q. What are the members of the church of Christ called, in the New Testament Scriptures?

68. Q. What does the word “Christian” mean?

69. Q. What names are given to the Church itself, in the New Testament Scriptures?

70. Q. By what four great metaphors is the Church described, in the New Testament Scriptures?

71. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these metaphors of the Church?

Chapter 53

01.052. WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH THE CHURCH

Lesson Forty-Five WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH THE CHURCH Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20; Matthew 24:3-14.

Scriptures to Memorize: “That thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14).

72. Q. Who is the Administrator of the church of Christ?

A. The Holy Spirit is the Administrator of the true Church.

(1) Christ is the Head of the Church. On His return to the Father, however, the Holy Spirit “came down from heaven” to act as His Agent. (2) The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to incorporate, indwell and administer the true Church throughout the present Dispensation. (3) The special work of the Holy Spirit in this Dispensation is to apply Christ’s atoning work to the hearts of men, and to realize and consummate God’s Plan of Redemption for man.

73. Q. Through what means does the Holy Spirit administer the church of Christ?

A. He does so through the Word of Christ, i.e., the New Testament Scriptures.

(1) It is through the Word that the Holy Spirit (a) convicts sinners, and (b) sanctifies the saints. John 16:8—“And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” Cf. Acts 2:37. Colossians 3:16—“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (2) It is through the Word of Christ that the Holy Spirit organizes the local church, designates its officiary, and administers its affairs. Acts 20:28—“to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops,” etc.

74. Q. What are the three classes of officers authorized by the Holy Spirit for the local churches of Christ?

A. They are: Evangelists, Elders, and Deacons.

(1) Evangelists are also spoken of as ministers. Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5; 1 Timothy 4:6, etc. Evangelists are fundamentally preachers of the Gospel, bearers of the glad tidings, etc. 1 Timothy 5:17, 2 Timothy 4:12, 1 Corinthians 1:21, Romans 10:14, etc. (2) Elders are also known as bishops, pastors, overseers, presbyters, etc. Titus 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Php 1:1; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 4:14, etc. To the elders of the local church is committed the spiritual leadership of the flock. (3) Deacons, Acts 6:1-6, Php 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The word deacon means, literally, servant. Deacons are elected to look after the material and temporal interests of the local church. (4) It should be made clear at this point, that the apostolic and prophetic offices were extraordinary and temporary; that is, they belonged only to the infancy of the Church. The Apostles were witnesses and ambassadors of Christ, as we have already

learned. (See Lesson Forty-One.) The prophets were inspired teachers. Acts 11:27; Acts 13:1-2; Ephesians 4:11. The apostolic and prophetic offices came to an end when the written Word was compiled and installed in the Church. We have the inspired Book, the New Testament Scriptures, which is truly the apostles' teaching, as our all-sufficient guide in religious faith and practice. 1 Corinthians 13:8, Romans 10:8, 2 Peter 1:3, Jude 1:3, etc.

75. Q. What, firstly, is God doing through the Church?

A. Through the church of Christ, God is perpetuating and perfecting the essential laws, principles and institutions of true religion.

(1) Our Altar is Christ, the sacrificial Altar for all mankind. (2) Our Sacrifice is the Lamb of God Himself. John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 7:26-27, etc. (3) Our High Priest is Christ, and our Priesthood is a priesthood of all Christians. Hebrews 9:11-12; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10; Hebrews 13:15; Romans 12:1.

76. Q. What, secondly, is God doing through the Church?

A. Through the church of Christ, God is preserving and perpetuating the means and appointments of true Christian worship.

77. Q. What are the means and appointments of true Christian worship?

A. They are: (1) the preaching and teaching of the New Testament Scriptures, the apostles' teaching; (2) the contribution of tithes and offerings; the Lord's Supper, or breaking of bread; and prayer.

(1) Acts 2:42—"they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." (2) The apostles' teaching, which is the word of Christ, was at first oral, but is now embodied in the New Testament Scriptures. It is to be taught and proclaimed by faithful men, 2 Timothy 2:2. (3) Fellowship, from the Greek word koinonia, which is rendered "contribution" in Romans 15:26; and, in 2 Corinthians 8:4, is given "the fellowship in the ministering to the saints." The term evidently alludes to the contribution and distribution of tithes and offerings, for the support of the ministry, the care of the needy, the aged, the distressed, etc. The offering is an essential part of Christian worship. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. (4) The breaking of bread, otherwise known as the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20), and as the Communion of the Body and of the Blood of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16). The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the Atonement; it commemorates and pictorilizes the death and suffering of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). It is the very heart and center of all true Christian worship. (5) Prayer, which is a necessary and vital part of true worship, and the only means which the Christian has to secure daily forgiveness of sin. Acts 8:22, 1 John 1:9, 1 John 2:1. 1 Thessalonians 5:17—"pray without ceasing."

78. Q. What does Jesus say with regard to true worship?

A.He says: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). That is, true worship is the communion of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit, according to the terms, means and appointments laid down in the Word of truth. For Christians, the Word of truth is the New Testament Scriptures.

79. Q. Through what local institution does God thus perpetuate the means and appointments of true Christian worship?

A.Through the local assembly or congregation of obedient believers, i.e., the local church. The church universal concretes itself on earth in the local congregation of Christians. It is through the local church that the means and appointments of true Christian worship are thus preserved; and not through a lodge, club, fraternity, or human society of any kind. 1 Corinthians 11:20—"when therefore ye assemble yourselves together." Hebrews 10:25—"not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is." Ephesians 2:22—"ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

80. Q. What is the day divinely appointed for Christian worship and service?

A. The first day of the week, known as the Lord's Day.

Acts 20:7—"Upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread," etc. Revelation 1:10—"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The Lord's Day is essentially a memorial of the resurrection of Christ. Mark 16:9—"Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week," etc.

81. Q. What, thirdly, is God doing through the Church?

A. Through the church of Christ, God is preserving and perpetuating His divine ordinances.

82. Q. What are the Christian ordinances?

A. They are: Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

(1) Baptism, scripturally, is the immersion of a penitent believer in water, in obedience to the command of Christ. See Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38, Acts 8:36-39, Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:3-4, etc. (2) The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the suffering and death of Christ on the Cross. See 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

83. Q. Should we speak of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as "ordinances of the Church"?

A. No. They are ordinances of Christ, which He has ordained for the Church to keep.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not "ordinances of the Church." They were instituted by Christ Himself for the Church to observe in their original manner and frequency of observance. See Matthew 26:26-29, Luke 22:14-23, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:16. No group of churchmen, clergymen, theologians or priests; no assembly, conference, council, synod or congregation has any right to change, in any particular whatsoever, the observance of the Lord's ordinances as described in the New Testament Scriptures. They should be regarded as sacred trusts, to be perpetuated by the Church in their original simplicity and purity.

84. Q. What, fourthly, is God doing through the Church?

A. Through the church of Christ, God is preserving and perpetuating His Word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:19—"Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth." Matthew 24:35—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." 1 Timothy 3:15—"the church of the

living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Departure from God's truth is heresy, and it is the duty of the Church to resist and expose heresy. 2 John 1:9, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God. . . . If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."

85. Q. What, fifthly, is God doing through the Church?

A. Through the church of Christ, God is causing the Gospel to be preached for a testimony unto all the nations.

Mark 16:15—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." Matthew 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations," etc. Matthew 24:14—"this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." The field is the world.

86. Q. What, sixthly, is God doing through the Church?

A.Through the church of Christ, God is perpetuating and realizing His Plan of Redemption for mankind. The Father originates and plans. The Son executes. The Spirit applies, realizes and consummates. So the Holy Spirit is the Agent of the Godhead throughout the present Dispensation, in applying the benefits of Christ's redemptive work to the hearts and lives of men and women; thus regenerating them, sanctifying them, and making them partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), and fitting them for their eternal inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away (1 Peter 1:4). 1 Peter 1:2—"according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

87. Q. What, then, is the twofold mission of the Church?

A. The twofold mission of the church of Christ is: (1) to preserve the truth of God in its simplicity and purity; and (2) to proclaim the truth of God for a testimony unto all the nations.

88. Q. What fundamental truth with regard to the Church should be impressed upon the minds of people of our day and age?

A.The truth that the one and only institution in which God has promised to enter into covenant relationship with men, throughout the Christian Dispensation, is the church of Christ. In saying this, we make no exceptions or qualifications. No man can hope to be saved on the ground of his morality, respectability, good citizenship, etc.; or in consequence of his social, fraternal, or political connections. We cannot be saved because we are good Masons, good Odd Fellows, good citizens, etc. Salvation is only in Christ; and to be in Christ, scripturally, is to be in the church of Christ, which is his body. "Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:21).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-FIVE 72.Q.Who is the Administrator of the church of Christ?

73. Q. Through what means does the Holy Spirit administer the church of Christ?

74. Q. What are the three classes of officers authorized by the Holy Spirit for the local churches of Christ?

75. Q. What, firstly, is God doing through the Church?

76. Q. What, secondly, is God doing through the Church?

77. Q. What are the means and appointments of true Christian worship?

78. Q. What does Jesus say with regard to true worship?

79. Q. Through what local institution does God thus perpetuate the means and appointments of true Christian worship?

80. Q. What is the day divinely appointed for Christian worship and service?

81. Q. What, thirdly, is God doing through the Church?

82. Q. What are the Christian ordinances?

83. Q. Should we speak of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as "ordinances of the Church"?

84. Q. What, fourthly, is God doing through the Church?

85. Q. What, fifthly, is God doing through the Church?

86. Q. What, sixthly, is God doing through the Church?

87. Q. What, then, is the twofold mission of the Church?

88. Q. What fundamental truth with regard to the Church should be impressed upon the minds of people of our day and age?

01.053. THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Lesson Forty-Six THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.

Scriptures to Memorize: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Romans 1:16). “But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema” (Galatians 1:8).

89. Q. What message is the Church commissioned to preach to all nations?

A. The Gospel (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16).

90. Q. What does the word “gospel” mean?

A. The word “gospel” means “good news” or “glad tidings.”

91. Q. What is the Gospel of Christ?

A. It is the good news about Christ and about salvation in His name.

Luke 2:10-11—“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Acts 4:12—“in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.” Acts 10:43—“to him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 8:12—“But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”

92. Q. What does the Gospel of Christ include?

A. It includes (1) three facts to be believed, (2) three commands to be obeyed, and (3) three gifts to be enjoyed.

(1) Mark 1:14—“believe in the gospel.” 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, “Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures,” etc. (2) Romans 10:16—“they did not all hearken to the glad tidings” (A. V.—“they have not all obeyed the gospel”). 2 Thessalonians 1:8—“rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus.” That which is to be obeyed must of necessity have commands. (3) James 1:17—“every good and every perfect gift is from above.” Romans 11:29—“for the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of.” Ephesians 4:8—“When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

93. Q. What are the three great facts of the Gospel?

A. The three great facts of the Gospel are the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4—“that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.” Acts 2:23-24; Acts 2:32—“him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death. . . . This Jesus dig God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.” Romans 5:8—“while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Acts 10:39-40—“whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day,” etc.

94. Q. Who were the divinely appointed witnesses of these three facts of the Gospel?

A. The Apostles.

Acts 1:22; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:32; Acts 10:40-41, etc. (See Questions 22–24 inclusive.) 95.Q.When were the facts of the Gospel first proclaimed as such?

A. On the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30.

(1) From Adam to Abraham, the Gospel existed in the purpose of God only. It was at first merely intimated (in the mysterious oracle of Genesis 3:15). Ephesians 6:19—“the mystery of the gospel.” Ephesians 3:4-5—“the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known,” etc. Ephesians 3:11—“the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.” (2) From Abraham to Isaiah, the Gospel existed in promise. It was preached to Abraham, we are told; but only in promise. Galatians 3:8. (3) From Isaiah to Malachi, the Gospel existed in prophecy, i.e., in the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew prophets. See Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 53:1-9, etc. Cf. 1 Peter 1:10-12. (4) During the personal ministry of Jesus, the Gospel was in process of preparation; hence it was called “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matthew 4:23), i.e., the good news that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 10:7). (5) It is obvious, however, that the facts of the Gospel could not have been proclaimed as facts prior to their actual occurrence; that is, not until after Jesus died and was raised up from the dead. Hence we find that the Gospel was actually proclaimed for the first time, in fact, on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord. See Acts 2:22-36.

96. Q. What are the three great commands of the Gospel?

A. They are: believe on the Lord Jesus, repent, and be baptized.

(1) Acts 16:31—“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” Mark 16:16—“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” John 20:30-31; John 14:1, etc. (2) Luke 13:3—“Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.” Acts 3:19—“Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts 17:30—“The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent.” Acts 26:18—“to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins,” etc. (3) Acts 2:38—“Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.” Cf. Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:19, Galatians 3:26-27, Romans 6:3-4, etc.

97. Q. What are the three great gifts of God offered to man through the Gospel?

A. They are: remission of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

(1) Acts 2:38—“Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.” Acts 10:43—“through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.” Luke 24:47—“that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” Ephesians 2:8—“for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (i.e., it is salvation that is the gift of God; cf. John 3:16). (2) John 7:39—“this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive.” Acts 2:38—“Repent ye, and be baptized . . . unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (i.e., the Holy Spirit as a gift). Romans 5:5—“the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.” 1 Corinthians 3:16—“Know ye that . . . the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” 1 Corinthians 6:19—“Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have from God?” 2 Corinthians 1:22—“God, who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” (3) Romans 5:21—“that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Matthew 25:46—“these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life” (Jesus). Romans 6:23—“the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

98. Q. What is the fundamental truth of the Gospel?

A.The fundamental truth of the Gospel is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This truth was first confessed by Simon Peter (Matthew 16:16—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”). This is the truth which must be confessed by all who would be saved from their sins. John 20:30-31—“Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.” Matthew 10:32-33—“Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.”

99. Q. What is the most fundamental fact of the Gospel?

A. The most fundamental fact of the Gospel is that God raised His Son Jesus Christ from the dead.

(1) Matthew 16:18—“I also say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” The rock upon which the Church is built, is the truth, first voiced by Peter (Matthew 16:16), that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Had Jesus gone into the grave and not come forth, the gates of Hades (the grave) would have prevailed against the truth that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But the fact hat He did come forth from the grave, that God raised Him up, that death had no dominion over Him, is the final and positive proof that He was all that He claimed to be—the Christ, the Son of the living God. Romans 1:4—“who was declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord.” Acts 2:24—“whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” Cf. Acts 2:32-36. (2) Thus the fundamental truth of the Gospel rests upon the fundamental fact of the

Gospel. Romans 10:9-10—“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

100. Q. What is the fundamental requirement of the Gospel?

A. The fundamental requirement of the Gospel is obedience to Christ.

Matthew 17:5—“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” John 15:14—“Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you.” John 14:15—“If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.” Hebrews 5:9—“he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” Cf. Matthew 7:24-27.

101. Q. What is the most fundamental gift or reward of the Gospel?

A. The most fundamental gift or reward of the Gospel is eternal life.

2 Timothy 1:9-10—“our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” John 17:3—“This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.” John 3:36—“He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” 1 John 5:12—“He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.” Cf. John 3:16, 2 Peter 1:11.

102. Q. By what various designations is the Gospel described in the New Testament Scriptures??

A. By various designations which indicate its divine origin, content and design.

It is called “the gospel” (Romans 1:16); “the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1); “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24); “the gospel of God” (Romans 1:1); “the gospel of his Son” (Romans 1:9); “the gospel of Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:12, Galatians 1:7); “the gospel of the glory of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:4); “the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation” (Ephesians 1:13); and “eternal good tidings” (Revelation 14:6).

103. Q. What does God do through the Gospel?

A. Through the Gospel He calls men to remission of sins and eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

104. Q. What does Paul say about the Gospel?

A. He says that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (Romans 1:16).

(1) Note that is not a power, nor one of the powers, but the power of God unto salvation, (2) Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:21—“it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.”

105. Q. Why is the Gospel the power of God unto salvation?

A. It is the power of God unto salvation because the Holy Spirit is in it and operates through it.

(1) The Holy Spirit exerts His influences and powers through the Gospel, to convict sinners and to sanctify Christians. The principle of spiritual life embodied in the Gospel is the presence and power of the Spirit therein; hence, we are exhorted to receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save our souls (James 1:21). (2) The presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the Bible sets it apart from all other books; distinguishes Scripture from all other literature. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church sets it apart from all human institutions. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel distinguishes it from all human messages and systems. Let us therefore thank God for the glad tidings.

“Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace, Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.”

106. Q. How may we enjoy the wonderful gifts of God that are offered to us through the Gospel?

A. We may enjoy them by believing the facts of the Gospel, by obeying the commands of the Gospel, and by continuing steadfastly in all the exercises and appointments of Christian faith, worship and practice.

2 Peter 1:10-11—“Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” Revelation 2:7—“To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.” Revelation 2:11—“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” Let us therefore cherish the Gospel of Christ, and devote ourselves zealously to its proclamation; for we are told that “they that are 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).

“Should all the forms which men devise Attack my faith with treacherous art, I’d call them vanity and lies, And bind the gospel to my heart.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-SIX 89.Q.What message is the Church commissioned to preach to all nations?

90. Q. What does the word “gospel” mean?

91. Q. What is the Gospel of Christ?

92. Q. What does the Gospel of Christ include?

93. Q. What are the three great facts of the Gospel?

94. Q. Who were the divinely-appointed witnesses of these three facts of the Gospel?

95. Q. When were the facts of the Gospel first proclaimed as such?

96. Q. What are the three great commands of the Gospel?

97. Q. What are the three great gifts of God offered to man through the Gospel?

98. Q. What is the fundamental truth of the Gospel?

99. Q. What is the most fundamental fact of the Gospel?

100. Q. What is the fundamental requirement of the Gospel?

101. Q. What is the most fundamental gift or reward of the Gospel?

102. Q. By what various designations is the Gospel described in the New Testament Scriptures?

103. Q. What does God do through the Gospel?

104. Q. What does Paul say about the Gospel?

105. Q. Why is the Gospel the power of God unto salvation?

106. Q. How may we enjoy the wonderful gifts of God that are offered to us through the Gospel?

Chapter 55

01.054. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST

Lesson Forty-Seven THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST Scripture Reading: John 4:15-26; John 14:1-10; Acts 3:19-26.

Scriptures to Memorize: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18). “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). “God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

107. Q. What was the name given to the Son of God to indicate the nature and design of His work in the world?

A. The name Jesus.

“Jesus” means “Savior.” This name was given by Divine authorization. Matthew 1:21—“Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins” (the words of the Annunciating Angel, to Joseph).

108. Q. What is His official title?

A. His official title is: Christ.

109. Q. What does this title mean?

A.“Christ” means “The Anointed One.” The terms “Messiah” (Hebrew), “Christos” (Greek), and “Christ” (English), all mean “The Anointed One.” A great many people have the idea that “Christ” is a part of His name, and hence use the words “Jesus Christ” in the same manner as, for instance, “George Washington.” This is erroneous. To illustrate: “Edward King” may be the name of a man; but “Edward the King” would indicate a monarch. So, “Jesus” was the name divinely bestowed upon the Son of God, but “Christ” is His official title. Jesus the Christ (or Jesus Christ) is, then, The Anointed One of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:14-15).

110. Q. What three classes of rulers were inducted into office, in Old Testament times, by the ceremony of anointing?

A. The prophets, priests, and kings.

111. Q. What was the design of the ceremony of anointing?

A. It was the outward sign of investiture to sacred office.

(1) It was the custom by Divine warrant in Old Testament times, to solemnly anoint into office all those who were called to be prophets, priests, and kings. See Exodus 28:41; Leviticus 16:32; 1 Samuel 9:16; 1 Samuel 15:1; 1 Samuel 16:12-13; 1 Kings 19:15-16, etc. (2) This anointing was emblematic of investiture to sacred office, and of particular sanctification or designation to the service of God. To anoint meant, says Cruden, “to consecrate and set one apart to an office”

(Concordance). (3) The element used in the ceremony of anointing was olive oil (Exodus 30:22-25). This “holy anointing oil” was typical of the comforting and strengthening gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit.

112. Q. When did the Anointing of Jesus take place?

A. It took place immediately after His baptism.

113. Q. How was His divine anointing signified to the world?

A. It was signified by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him.

(1) Necessarily His Anointing took place at the beginning of His ministry. Matthew 3:16-17—“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (2) The Anointing of” Jesus was a matter of Old Testament prediction. See Psalms 45:7; Hebrews 1:9; Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:16-19. (3) Acts 4:27—“Against the Lord, and against his Anointed.” Acts 10:38—“even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power,” etc. (4) The ceremony of anointing, in olden times, often preceded that of coronation by a considerable period of time, as, for instance, in David’s case. Hence, while the Anointing of Jesus took place at the beginning of His ministry, His Coronation did not occur until after His resurrection from the dead.

114. Q. What, then, is the special signification of His title, “Christ”?

A. This title describes Him in His threefold official capacity, as Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church.

() “One particularly designed and chosen by God, to be the King, Priest and Prophet of His church, namely, Christ Jesus; who was filled with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner, and thereby consecrated and authorized to be the Messiah” (Cruden, Concordance). (2) Make it clear at this point, that to confess Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” is to accept Him as Prophet to whom we go for the words of eternal life; as Priest, who offered Himself as the Perfect Sacrifice for sin, and who continually makes intercession for us; and as King who has all authority over our hearts and lives. Note the profound import and comprehensiveness of “the good confession.”

115. Q. What is a prophet, in the scriptural sense of the term?

A. A prophet, in scripture, is one who reveals the will of God to man.

“Here we must avoid the narrow interpretation which would make a prophet a mere foreteller of future events. He was rather an inspired interpreter of the divine will, a medium of communication between God and men” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 710). E. g., Abraham (Genesis 20:7); the patriarchs (Psalms 105:15); John the Baptizer (Matthew 11:9-10); New Testament interpreters and expounders of the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 3:5; Ephesians 4:11, etc.).

116. Q. What are the four essential functions of the prophetic office?

A.They are: (l) revelation; (2) instruction, or teaching; (3) prediction; and (4) demonstration, or miracle-working. The true prophet was one who revealed the will of God to his people; one who instructed his people in the essentials of righteousness and holy living; one who foretold important future events; and one who authenticated his ministry by performing miracles.

117. Q. In what sense was Jesus pre-eminently the Prophet of God?

A. In the sense that He exercised the functions of the prophetic office perfectly.

(1) He was the final and perfect revelation of God to mankind. John 1:18—"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son . . . he hath declared him." John 8:26—"howbeit he that sent me is true; and the things Which I heard from him, these speak I unto the world." John 14:9—"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Cf. John 17:8, Hebrews 1:1-2, etc. (2) He is the Supreme Teacher of all time. Mark 1:22—"they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." John 7:46—"Never man so spake." No one has ever been able to add anything to the body of moral and spiritual truth which He left in the world. (3) He foretold significant future events, such as (a) the circumstances of His own betrayal, suffering, death, and resurrection (Matthew 9:15; Matthew 17:12; Matthew 17:22-23; Matthew 20:17-19; Matthew 26:1-2; Matthew 26:10-12; Matthew 26:33-34; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:9; Matthew 26:20-25; Luke 9:44; Luke 11:29-32; Luke 13:31-35; Mark 9:31; John 3:14-15; John 2:19-22; John 6:70-71; John 16:32, etc.); (b) His ascension to heaven (John 6:62; John 7:33-34; John 16:5-7); (c) His ultimate return in power and glory (Matthew 26:63-64, John 14:3); (d) the advent of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39; John 14:16-18; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7-10; Luke 24:49); (e) the growth and progress of His kingdom (Matthew 13:31-33; Mark 4:26-29; Mark 9:1); (f) the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44; Luke 23:28-31); (g) the complete destruction of the Temple (Matthew 24:1-2); (h) the rejection of the Jews and their dispersion among all peoples (Matthew 21:42-45; Matthew 23:35-39; Luke 21:20-24); (i) the calling of the Gentiles (Matthew 8:11-12, John 10:16); (j) the precursors of His second coming and of the end of our age (Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:36-43; Matthew 13:47-50; Matthew 11:21-23; Matthew 24:3-22; Matthew 24:29-44; Luke 21:10-11; Luke 21:25-28, etc.) Many of these predictions have already been literally fulfilled. (4) God also authenticated His ministry and work by many wonderful miracles. Acts 2:22—"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you." Note the wide variety of His miracles as to kind: the stilling of the tempest, the feeding of a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, the turning of water into wine, the blasting of the fig tree, the casting out of demons, the healing of the sick, the raising of the dead, etc. He had but to command, and all Nature obeyed His voice.

118. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the prophetic office and work of Christ foretold?

A. It is foretold by Moses, in Deuteronomy 18:15-19.

Cf. John 4:16-19, Matthew 21:11, Acts 3:22-26, etc.

119. Q. What was the first stage of Christ's prophetic work?

A. It was His preparatory work, as the Word of God, in enlightening mankind, prior to His advent in the flesh.

John 8:58—“Before Abraham was born, I am.” Colossians 1:16-17—“for in him were all things created . . . and he is before all things, and in him all things consist.” In 1 Corinthians 10:4, it is said that the children of Israel under Moses “drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ.” For instances of pre-incarnate manifestations of the Word of God (the Logos), see Genesis 14:17-20, Hebrews 7:1-3; Genesis 18:1-22; Joshua 5:13-15; Judges 13:6-7; Daniel 3:24-25, etc. We must not forget that all preparatory and preliminary knowledge of God given to man in the early ages of the world, came from the Word Himself, who has always been the Revealer of God.

120. Q. What was the second stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

A.It was His ministry and work in the flesh. In His earthly ministry, Christ was the Prophet par excellence. “While He submitted, like the Old Testament prophets, to the direction of the Holy Spirit, unlike them, He found the sources of all knowledge and power within Himself. The word of God did not come to Him: He was Himself the Word”(Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 712). See John 1:18; John 8:26; John 14:9; John 17:8; Hebrews 1:1-2, etc. His entire ministry in the flesh was a revelation of the wisdom, power, holiness, love and compassion of the heavenly Father.

121. Q. What is the third stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

A.It is His continued direction and guidance of His Church on earth, since His ascension to the Father. His prophetic activity is thus continued: (a) through the agency of the Holy Spirit, (b) by means of His word as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures, and (c) through the instrumentality of His prophets, apostles and ministers. See John 16:13-15; Acts 1:1-3; Acts 2:1-4; Romans 10:6-10; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:2; 2 Timothy 4:1-5, etc. John 6:63—“the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.” Matthew 24:35—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”

122. Q. What will be the final stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

A. It will be His final revelation of the Father to His saints in glory.

John 16:25—“The hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in dark sayings, but shall tell you plainly of the Father.” 1 Corinthians 13:12—“Now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.” Revelation 21:23—“And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb.” “Thus Christ’s prophetic work will be an endless one, as the Father whom He reveals is infinite” (Strong, ibid., p. 712.).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-SEVEN

107. Q. What was the name given to the Son of God to indicate the nature and design of His work in the world?

108. Q. What is His official title?

109. Q. What does this title mean?

110. Q. What three classes of rulers were inducted into office, in Old Testament times, by the ceremony of anointing?

111. Q. What was the design of the ceremony of anointing?

112. Q. When did the Anointing of Jesus take place?

113. Q. How was His divine anointing signified to the world?

114. Q. What, then, is the special signification of His title, “Christ”?

115. Q. What is a prophet, in the scriptural sense of the term?

116. Q. What are the four essential functions of the prophetic office?

117. Q. In what sense was Jesus pre-eminently the Prophet of God?

118. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the prophetic office and work of Christ foretold?

119. Q. What was the first stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

120. Q. What was the second stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

121. Q. What is the third stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

122. Q. What will be the final stage of Christ’s prophetic work?

01.055. THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST

Lesson Forty-Eight THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST Scripture Reading: Hebrews 7:20-28; Hebrews 9:23-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17). “For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (Hebrews 7:26). “Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

123. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the priestly office and work of Christ foretold?

A. It is foretold in Psalms 110:4.

Psalms 110:4—“Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” Cf. Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 5:6; Hebrews 5:10; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:1-3, etc.

124. Q. What book of the New Testament treats especially of the Priesthood of Christ?

A. The Epistle to the Hebrews.

125. Q. What was one reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might, in His capacity of Prophet, reveal God to mankind.

John 1:18; John 8:26; John 14:9; John 17:8; Hebrews 1:1-2.

126. Q. What was a second reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might, in His capacity of King, destroy the works of the devil, deliver His people from the bondage of sin and death, and bring many sons unto glory.

1 John 3:8—“To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” Hebrews 2:9-10—“But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” 1 Corinthians 15:25-26—“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.”

127. Q. What was a third reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might acquaint Himself with our frailties, and thus qualify Himself to act as our merciful and faithful High Priest.

Hebrews 2:14-18, “Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage . . . Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”

128. Q. What is a priest, in the scriptural sense of the term?

A. A priest, according to scripture, is a person divinely appointed to transact with God on behalf of man.

129. Q. What are the three essential qualities which a priest must possess?

A. They are: power or authority, purity, and sympathy.

130. Q. To what extent do these qualities inhere in Christ?

A. They inhere in Christ pre-eminently and perfectly.

(1) His power or authority. Matthew 9:6—“But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins,” etc. Matthew 28:18—“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Hebrews 7:24—“he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable.” His authority is “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life” (Hebrews 7:16); that is, it is inherent in His Divine nature as the eternal Word, the only begotten Son of God, etc. Cf. John 8:58; John 1:1-3; Revelation 1:17-18. (2) His purity. Hebrews 7:26—“For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Hebrews 7:28—“For the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was after the law, appointeth a Son, perfected for evermore.” (3) His sympathy. Hebrews 4:15—“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 2:17-18—“Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”

131. Q. What are the two essential functions of a priest, according to the Scriptures?

A. They are (l) to offer sacrifice, and (2) to make intercession.

132. Q. What sacrifice for sin did Christ offer up, acting in His capacity of High Priest?

A. He offered up Himself as the Supreme Sacrifice and as the Perfect Atonement for the sins of the world.

(1) Hebrews 7:27—“who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself.” Hebrews 9:24-26, “For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: nor yet that

he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 10:12—"but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (2) While this Supreme Sin-offering was made for all mankind, its benefits and blessings are only for those who accept Him as their Savior and obey his commands. (Point out, in this connection, that any sort of a gift must be accepted before it can be enjoyed). Hebrews 5:9—"having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

133. Q. Why was His Sacrifice a Perfect Sin-offering?

A. It was a Perfect Sin-offering, because He Himself, the Lamb of God, was "holy, guileless and undefiled" (Hebrews 7:26).

Hebrews 9:14—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself up without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

134. Q. What other work does Christ do for His people, in His capacity as their High Priest?

A. He makes intercession for them at the right hand of God.

"The Priesthood of Christ does not cease with His work of atonement, but continues forever. In the presence of God He fulfils the second office of the priest, namely that of intercession" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 773). Hebrews 7:23-25, "And they indeed have been made priests many in number, because that by death they are hindered from continuing: but he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." 1 John 2:1—"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Romans 8:34—"It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." In view of this continuous intercession of our unchangeable High Priest, we should, as Christians, "have boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19-22).

135. Q. Since Christ exercises the function of High Priest, who, then, are His subordinate priests under the New Covenant?

A. The Scriptures teach that all Christians are priests.

(1) 1 Peter 2:5—"ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:9—"ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood." Revelation 1:5-6—"unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father." (2) There is neither command nor precedent for a special order of priests under the Covenant of Grace. Matthew 23:9—"Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in

heaven."

136. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

A. It is our privilege and joy to offer up to God our spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, devotion, and service.

1 Peter 2:5—"to offer up spiritual sacrifices." Romans 12:1—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." Hebrews 13:15—"through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-EIGHT

123. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the priestly office and work of Christ foretold?

124. Q. What book of the New Testament treats especially of the Priesthood of Christ?

125. Q. What was one reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

126. Q. What was a second reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

127. Q. What was a third reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

128. Q. What is a priest, in the scriptural sense of the term?

129. Q. What are the three essential qualities which a priest must possess?

130. Q. To what extent do these qualities inhere in Christ?

131. Q. What are the two essential functions of a priest, according to the Scriptures?

132. Q. What sacrifice for sin did Christ offer up, acting in His capacity of High Priest?

133. Q. Why was His Sacrifice a Perfect Sin-offering?

134. Q. What other work does Christ do for His people, in His capacity as their High Priest?

135. Q. Since Christ exercises the function of High Priest, who, then, are His subordinate priests under the New Covenant?

136. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

01.056. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST

Lesson Forty-Nine THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7; Ephesians 2:15-22; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Php 2:9-11), “Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:14-15). “For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death” (1 Corinthians 15:25-26).

137. Q. What, according to scripture, is the order of Christ’s priesthood?

A. The Scriptures teach that Christ’s Priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek.

(1) Psalms 110:4—“Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Cf. Hebrews 5:10; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:17, etc. Hebrews 7:1-3, “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all (being first, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God), abideth a priest continually.” (2) For the story of Abraham and Melchizedek, see Genesis 14:18-20.

138. Q. In what sense is the Priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek?

A. In the twofold sense that it is (l) an eternal Priesthood, and (2) a royal Priesthood.

(1) Hebrews 7:15-16—“after the likeness of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment” (as the Levitical priesthood was), “but after the power of an endless life.” Hebrews 6:20—“having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” The Priesthood of Christ is eternal, because Christ Himself is eternal. (2) Again, Melchizedek was both “King of Salem” and “Priest of God Most High.” So Christ, the antitype of Melchizedek, is both King and Priest of His people. He exercises the functions of both offices; His Priesthood is, therefore, a royal Priesthood.

139. Q. In what Old Testament scriptures is the kingly office and work of Christ foretold?

A. In numerous Old Testament scriptures, as, for example, Psalms 110:1; Psalms 2:6; Psalms 45:6; Isaiah 9:6-7, etc.

140. Q. What do we mean by the Kingship of Christ?

A.By the Kingship of Christ, we mean His Sovereignty as the Divine-Human Redeemer. Not His sovereignty as the eternal Word, but His sovereignty as The Anointed One of God.

141. Q. Did Christ exercise His sovereignty while He was in the flesh?

A. He manifested it quite frequently, both in the natural and in the spiritual realms.

(1) He had but to speak and the natural world obeyed Him. E. g., the stilling of the tempest, the multiplying of a few loaves and fishes into sufficient food for a multitude, the cursing of the fig tree, the healing of the bodies of men, etc. Matthew 8:27—"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (2) He also, while in the flesh, frequently exercised His right to forgive sins. Matthew 9:6—"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins," etc. To the penitent thief on the cross, He said: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Cf. Matthew 9:2, Luke 7:48, etc.

142. Q. By what special miracle did God prove the sovereignty of Christ to the world?

A. He proved it by raising Him up from the dead.

Romans 1:3-4—"Concerning his Son . . . who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ."

143. Q. When did Christ begin to exercise fully the powers and prerogatives of His kingly office?

A. He did so when He entered upon His state of exaltation.

(1) While He was in the flesh—i.e., in His state of humiliation—He was, so to speak, "the uncrowned King." It was not until after His resurrection and ascension that He was vested with the scepter of the Kingdom and crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. (2) Ephesians 1:19-22, "according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church," etc. Acts 2:32-33—"This Jesus did God raise up . . . being therefore by the right hand of God exalted," etc. Romans 14:9—"For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living."

144. Q. Why is it impossible for sinners to be saved today in the same manner that the penitent thief on the cross was saved?

A. For the simple reason that, since the death of Christ, sinners are to receive pardon according to the provisions and terms of His Last Will and Testament.

Christ was here in person when He spoke pardon to the penitent thief. While He was in the flesh, He had the authority, and frequently exercised it, to forgive sins as He saw fit. While a man still lives, he has the right to dispense his possessions as he chooses; but after his death his property must be distributed according to the provisions of his will or testament. So, while Jesus was on earth in person, acting as the representative of the Godhead in executing the scheme of redemption, as God in the flesh He had the authority to forgive sins by a spoken word. But when

He became obedient unto death and then returned to the Father in glory, He made provisions for the blessings and benefits of Divine grace to be dispensed according to the terms of His Last Will and Testament. See Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Romans 10:9-10, etc.

145. Q. What is the essential nature of Christ's Kingdom?

A. It is essentially spiritual in its nature.

(1) It is not geographical, political, economic, etc. Nor is it essentially social. John 18:36—"My kingdom is not of this world." Romans 14:17—"The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (2) It is essentially spiritual. It is the kingdom of the truth (John 18:37); and its location is in the human heart. Luke 17:20-21—"the kingdom of God cometh not with observation . . . the kingdom of God is within you."

146. Q. What is Christ's Kingdom, in its temporal aspect?

A. In its temporal aspect it is the Kingdom of Grace.

147. Q. What is Christ's Kingdom, in its eternal aspect?

A. In its eternal aspect, it is the Kingdom of Glory.

2 Peter 1:11—"the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Timothy 4:18—"the Lord will . . . save me unto his heavenly kingdom."

148. Q. What are the essential characteristics of Christ's rule?

A. Christ's rule is (l) spiritual, and (2) absolute.

(1) His Kingship is spiritual, in the sense that it is in the human heart. (2) His Kingship is absolute, in the sense that His will is the law from which there is no appeal. His Kingdom is an absolute monarchy. Matthew 28:18—"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth," "All" here means, not part, but all.

149. Q. In what respect is the Kingdom broader in scope than the Church?

A. In the respect that it takes in the innocent and irresponsible who, in the very nature of the case cannot belong to the Church.

E. g., infants, who cannot belong to the Church because of their inability to believe and obey, can and do belong to the Kingdom, by virtue of the fact that when Christ died on the Cross, He atoned for the innocent and irresponsible, unconditionally. Luke 18:16—"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God."

150. Q. What office does Christ hold in relation to the Church, in consequence of His Kingship.

A. He is the Head of the Church, which is His body.

Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:15; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18, etc.

151. Q. Does the Church have any other Head than Christ?

A. The true Church has only one Head—Christ Himself.

Christ the Head, and the Church the Body, together make up the total Mystic Personality, in and through whom human redemption is effected. The Body with two Heads would be as great a monstrosity as the Head with some two hundred bodies (denominations?). The Church has no need of any other Head than Christ Himself. Obviously, therefore, the self-styled "Visible Head of the Church" who occupies "St. Peter's Chair" is a creation of human authority pure and simple. The Papacy is a man-originated institution without any Scripture warrant whatever. (Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 1 Timothy 4:1-5, etc.). Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," etc.

152. Q. How long shall Christ continue in His capacity of Acting Sovereign?

A. The Scriptures teach that He shall reign until every enemy of God and man, including death itself, shall have been conquered.

1 Corinthians 15:25-26—"For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

153. Q. What will Christ ultimately do with His Sovereignty?

A. The Scriptures teach that He will ultimately transfer His Sovereignty back to the Father, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:28—"Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power . . . And when all things have been subjected under him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-NINE

137. Q. What, according to scripture, is the order of Christ's priesthood?

138. Q. In what sense is the Priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek?

139. Q. In what Old Testament scriptures is the kingly office and work of Christ foretold?

140. Q. What do we mean by the Kingship of Christ?

141. Q. Did Christ exercise His sovereignty while He was in the flesh?

142. Q. By what special miracle did God prove the sovereignty of Christ to the world?

143. Q. When did Christ begin to exercise fully the powers and prerogatives of His kingly office?

144. Q. Why is it impossible for sinners to be saved today in the same manner that the penitent thief on the cross was saved?

145. Q. What is the essential nature of Christ's Kingdom?

146. Q. What is Christ's Kingdom, in its temporal aspect?

147. Q. What is Christ's Kingdom, in its eternal aspect?

148. Q. What are the essential characteristics of Christ's rule?

149. Q. In what respect is the Kingdom broader in scope than the Church?

150. Q. What office does Christ hold in relation to the Church, in consequence of His Kingship.

151. Q. Does the Church have any other Head than Christ?

152. Q. How long shall Christ continue in His capacity of Acting Sovereign?

153. Q. What will Christ ultimately do with His Sovereignty?

Chapter 58

01.057. THE END OF OUR AGE

Lesson Fifty THE END OF OUR AGE Scripture Reading: Acts 1:1-10; Matthew 24:3-14; Hebrews 9:23-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: “This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven” (Acts 1:11). “So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28). “He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

154. Q. What do we mean by “the end of our age”?

A. By “the end of our age,” we mean the end of the present or Christian Dispensation.

155. Q. When will the Christian Dispensation end?

A. The Christian Dispensation will end when Christ comes again.

Matthew 24:14, Matthew 24:37-39, Acts 1:11, Hebrews 9:28, etc.

156. Q. Is the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ prominent in the Scriptures?

A. It is one of the most outstanding doctrines of the New Testament Scriptures.

(1) The Second Coming is said to be “the blessed hope” of every true Christian (Titus 2:11-14). (2) Those who study what the Scriptures teach with reference to this subject are said to be “blessed” (Revelation 1:3). (3) One verse in every twenty-five in the New ‘Testament, mentions or alludes to the Second Coming. (4) Jesus Himself had much to say about His return. See Matthew 25:1-30; Matthew 24:3-51; Mark 13:3-8; Mark 13:14-37; Luke 17:22-37; Luke 21:10-36; Luke 12:35-48, etc. (5) The closing words of the New Testament anticipate the Lord’s return. Revelation 22:20—“Come, Lord Jesus.”

157. Q. What do the Scriptures teach with respect to the nature of the Second Coming?

A. The Scriptures teach that the Second Coming of Christ will be (1) personal, (2) outward and visible, and (3) glorious.

(1) Personal, i.e., not merely in political, social, reformatory or religious movements. The Lord will come Himself. 1 Thessalonians 4:16—“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven”; cf. Acts 1:11. (2) Outward and visible. Revelation 1:7—“he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him.” John 5:28—“all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice.” “We do not know how all men at one time can see a bodily Christ; but we also do not know the nature of Christ’s body . . . The telephone has made it possible for men widely separated to hear the same voice; it is equally possible that all men may see the same Christ coming in the clouds” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 1005). May we not reasonably conclude that such inventions as the radio and

television are but preparatory for this glorious event? (3) Glorious. Luke 21:27—“Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” He will come in Majesty: not as the suffering Savior, but as the reigning Sovereign. See 2 Thessalonians 1:7, Mark 8:38, Luke 9:26, Titus 2:13, etc.

158. Q. What do the Scriptures teach with regard to the time of the Second Coming?

A. The Scriptures teach that the exact time of Christ’s Second Coming is not revealed to man.

(1) Matthew 24:36—“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only.” Acts 1:7—“It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.” (2) The exact time of the Second Coming has been purposely concealed from us, for three reasons: (a) to prevent irreligiousness followed by last-minute reformation; (b) to stimulate in the hearts of His people the blessed hope of His appearing; and (c) to heighten their anticipation of the glorious event. See Mark 13:33-37 : “Take ye heed, watch and pray . . . and what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!”

159. Q. What are to be the purposes of the Second Coming?

A. The Scriptures teach that Christ will come to complete His conquest of evil in all its forms, and to complete the salvation of His people.

(1) He comes to expose sin in all its forms (1 Corinthians 4:5).

(2) He comes to judge the nations (Isaiah 2:4, Acts 17:31).

(3) He comes to destroy the Anti-christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

(4) He comes to receive His Bride, the True Church, unto Himself (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:7-8).

(5) He comes to glorify His saints (1 Corinthians 15:22-23).

(6) He comes to reign until Satan shall have been subjugated and his evil works abolished (1 Corinthians 15:25-26, Revelation 20:1-3).

(7) He comes to gloriously consummate God’s eternal purpose and plan (Acts 3:20-21), Cf. 1 John 3:8, Revelation 22:12, etc.

160. Q. What conditions are to prevail throughout the world immediately prior to the Second Coming of Christ?

A. The Scriptures teach that sensualism, irreligiousness and lawlessness are to prevail generally throughout the world in the age immediately preceding our Lord’s return.

(1) Conditions will be the same as in the age before the Flood, says Jesus. Matthew 24:37-39. (2) The characteristics of the antediluvian age may be summarized as follows: (a) religious apostasy; (b) moral degeneracy; (c) evil thinking; (d) lawlessness; (e) sensualism; (f) preoccupation, such that when the Flood come, it came upon an unbelieving, unsuspecting and unprepared race; (g) vain striving of the Holy Spirit with men. Genesis 6:1-13. (3) These conditions are to prevail likewise in the age immediately preceding our Lord’s return. See Luke 17:26-32; 1 Timothy 4:1-3;

2 Timothy 3:1-5, etc.

161. Q. What are to be the precursors of the Second Coming of Christ?

A. The following conditions and happenings: (l) world-wide irreligiousness and apostasy; (2) world-wide social and political unrest; (3) the return of the Jews to Palestine; (4) the rise of the Antichrist.

(1) World-wide irreligiousness and apostasy; i.e., a general falling away from the faith (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Peter 3:1-4), a corresponding moral degeneracy (2 Timothy 3:1-14, Matthew 24:37-39), and the rise of the spirit of the antichrist (1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7). (2) Worldwide social and political unrest. Luke 21:25-28, Matthew 24:5-8. (3) The return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Jeremiah 32:36-42, Ezekiel 11:16-20. Luke 21:24—"until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." See Romans 11:1-36. Note, in this connection, the achievements and possibilities of the present-day Zionist Movement. (4) The rise of the Antichrist himself ; a great world ruler or dictator, who will embody in his person and plans, intense hatred of, and opposition to, the Christian religion. See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10. He will be the very embodiment of Satan in the flesh, and will be Satan's agent in a last desperate effort to defeat the execution of God's purpose and plan for the human race. (5) In addition to all this there will be the completion of the Gospel proclamation, so far as the present-day church order is concerned. Matthew 24:14.

162. Q. What great events are to occur in close connection with the Second Coming of Christ?

A. Apparently, the following: (l) The First Resurrection, (2) The Translation of the Church, (3) The Great Tribulation, (4) The Second Coming, (5) The Conversion of the Jews, and (6) The Millenial Reign of Christ.

(1) The First Resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Revelation 20:4-6, "they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection." In this connection, note the clear distinction running throughout the New Testament, between the "resurrection from the dead," and the "resurrection of the dead" (cf. Php 3:11). The former phrase, many believe, alludes to the First Resurrection (cf. John 5:29—"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life"); and the latter phrase, to the final resurrection of all humanity, particularly the wicked and lost (cf. John 5:29—"they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment"), which will evidently follow the Millenium. Note: "the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished" (Revelation 20:5). (2) The Translation of the Church, i.e., the true Bride of Christ. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. As the Jewish Dispensation came to its close with the Ascension of the Son of God; so the Christian Dispensation will end with the Ascension of the Holy Spirit and the Bride of Christ. (3) The Great Tribulation. Naturally the Translation of the Church will bring to an end all Gospel testimony on the earth, and as a result the Antichrist will reign supreme and unchallenged for the time being. A period of great tribulation will ensue, Matthew 24:21. This period of tribulation will culminate in world conflict, and in the last great battle of Armageddon (i.e., Megiddo, at the foot of Mount Carmel). Revelation 16:12-16, (4) The Second Coming will, many believe, occur in connection with this great battle. Christ will come, not for His saints, but with them, to abolish all human government and to inaugurate His millenial reign. Cf. Revelation 20:6. (5) The Conversion of the

Jews. Christ's appearing will be so definite and undeniable, and will be accompanied by such signal manifestations of the Spirit, that the Jews will no longer reject Him. The conversion of the Jewish nation, in the main, will be the result. See Romans 11:1-36. From that time on, through the united proclamation of the primitive Gospel by both Jews and Gentiles, the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. (6) The Millenial Reign of Christ. It is held by many that the Second Coming will precede and usher in the Millenium. The numerous injunctions of Christ to His people, to watch for His Second Coming, and to be ready for it at any moment, would be meaningless if that event were always a thousand years in the future, i.e., after the Millenium. It is held, too, that Christ will reign personally; that He will sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem (Psalms 132:11, Isaiah 9:7); and that from His throne in Jerusalem He will rule and judge the nations in righteousness. Thus the dream of the old Hebrew prophets of a Golden Age of righteousness, peace and plenty, will be realized. See Isaiah 11:1-9; Isaiah 35:5-10; Isaiah 55:6-13; Isaiah 65:17-25, etc.

163. Q. What, then, should be the attitude of all Christians with respect to the Second Coming of Christ?

A. They should desire, anticipate, pray for, watch for, and be ready at any moment for the glorious appearing of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Mark 13:33—"Take ye heed, watch and pray. 2 Peter 3:12—"looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God." How unfortunate that the modern Church should have allowed this precious and great doctrine to become lost in the rubbish of materialism and religious indifference! May the Lord hasten the day of His glorious appearing! "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY 154.Q.What do we mean by "the end of our age"?

155. Q. When will the Christian Dispensation end?

156. Q. Is the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ prominent in the Scriptures?

157. Q. What do the Scriptures teach with respect to the nature of the Second Coming?

158. Q. What do the Scriptures teach with regard to the time of the Second Coming?

159. Q. What are to be the purposes of the Second Coming?

160. Q. What conditions are to prevail throughout the world immediately prior to the Second Coming of Christ?

161. Q. What are to be the precursors of the Second Coming of Christ?

162. Q. What great events are to occur in close connection with the Second Coming of Christ?

163. Q. What, then, should be the attitude of all Christians with respect to the Second Coming of Christ?

01.058. IMMORTALITY

Lesson Fifty-One

IMMORTALITY Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, 1 Corinthians 15:35-58.

Scriptures to Memorize: “For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1). “But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:54).

164. Q. Can we determine exactly the sequence of the events that are to occur in the last days?

A.No; because the order of their happening is not clearly revealed in the Scriptures. The events themselves, as outlined in these last three lessons, are quite clearly described in the Scriptures. We cannot, however, determine the exact order of their occurrence. To be able to do so would require that we be prophets ourselves, and would thus presuppose an inspiration we do not claim to possess. The best we can do therefore, is to present what appears to be their order of occurrence, in the light of Scripture teaching.

165. Q. What events are to occur in connection with the close of Christ’s millenial reign?

A. The following, evidently: (l) The Post-millenial Apostasy; (2) The General Resurrection; (3) The Last Judgment; (4) The Renovation of Our Earth; (5) The New Heavens and New Earth; (6) The Consummation of All Things.

(1) The Post-millenial Apostasy, Revelation 20:7-10; a final rebellion, incited by Satan, against the sovereignty and rule of Christ. (2) The General Resurrection, i.e., the resurrection of the dead. Revelation 20:5—“the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished.” Revelation 20:12—“I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne.” (3) The Last Judgment, Acts 17:31; Matthew 12:41-42; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; Revelation 20:11-15. (4) The Renovation of Our Earth, 2 Peter 3:1-13. (5) The New Heavens and New Earth, Isaiah 66:22-24, 2 Peter 3:13. (6) The Consummation of All Things, Acts 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:25-28, Revelation 21:1-8 (note well: “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God;” also, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men”); Revelation 22:1-5.

166. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term “resurrection”?

A. The term “resurrection” means that our bodies will be raised, and reunited with our spirits.

(1) That is, their constituent elements will be reassembled, at least those necessary to the construction of our celestial bodies, and will be again united with the spirit that formerly inhabited them. John 14:2—“in my Father’s house are many mansions,” i.e., literally, dwelling-places,

tabernacles. Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:1—“a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.” Cf. also Romans 8:11. (2) We see nothing incredible in this teaching. We must remember that spirit determines, unifies, vitalizes, and controls the body; not the body, the spirit. We know that in this life the spirit assembles and unifies the constituent elements of our physical bodies; therefore, we may reasonably conclude that the same spirit will have power to attract unto itself, and unify, the elements necessary to the construction of an ethereal body. 1 Corinthians 15:44; 1 Corinthians 15:49—“if there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body, . . . and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (It should be made clear at this point, that the various scriptures quoted here have reference only to the redeemed. Cf. Hebrews 12:23—“the spirits of just men made perfect.”).

167. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that the bodies of all people, of all time, are to be raised up in the last day?

A. The Scriptures teach that all humanity will be raised up, to appear in the Judgment.

(1) John 5:28-29—“all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth,” etc. Revelation 20:13—“and the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.” “Hades” is, in scripture, the unseen. (2) All must of necessity be raised up, in order that all may appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Matthew 25:31-32—“he shall sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations.” 2 Corinthians 5:10—“we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ.” Cf. Matthew 12:41-42; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16; Hebrews 9:27-28; Revelation 20:12.

168. Q. What do the Scriptures teach regarding the resurrection of the saints?

A. The Scriptures teach that the bodies of the saints are to be resurrected and glorified.

(1) They are to be raised at Christ’s coming. 1 Corinthians 15:22-23—“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ’s at his coming.” See also 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 20:4-6. (2) They are to be glorified. Php 3:20-21—“the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.” Daniel 12:3—“they that turn many to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars for ever and ever.”

169. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term “glorification”?

A. The term “glorification” describes the process by which the bodies of the saints shall be transformed by the working of Christ’s mighty power, from mortal bodies into radiant immortal bodies.

(1) John 17:5—“Father, glorify thou me . . . with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” John 7:39—“for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.” Romans 8:21—“the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.” Romans 2:7—“glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life.” (2) Note, in this connection, that the body in which Jesus came forth from the tomb was the body of “flesh and bones” (i.e., evidently lacking the blood, which is the seat of animal life). It was a body in which He could pass through closed doors, i.e., it was essentially ethereal (Mark 16:14, Luke

24:31, John 20:19-20; John 20:24-25). This was evidently His resurrection body. But the body in which He appeared to Saul of Tarsus, like that in which He was manifested on the occasion of His Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-2), was of such radiant beauty and glory, that its brilliance outshone that of the noon-day sun (Acts 9:3-8; Acts 22:6-9; Acts 26:12-13). This was obviously His heavenly (celestial, spiritual, immortal, etc.) body. (3) 1 Corinthians 15:40-44, “There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.” Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:49—“and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (4) Emphasize the fact here, that through all these changes and transformations, as in the case of Jesus, who was recognized by His disciples, the individual persists. Hence, John Smith will still be John Smith in the resurrection morning, and John Jones will still be John Jones, etc. In the processes of resurrection and glorification, no loss of individual identity will occur.

170. Q. By what phrase is this entire process of resurrection and glorification described in the Scriptures?

A. It is described as the putting on of immortality.

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:53—“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (2) By mortality is meant corruption, i.e., liability to dissolution. By immortality is meant incorruption, the antithesis of corruption. Romans 2:7—“glory and honor and incorruption.” (3) The body of man, as we have learned, was created mortal; but, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, it shall be made immortal, i.e., incapable of death, dissolution, disintegration, etc. (4) In the light of these truths, it is obvious that to speak of “the immortality of the soul” is to speak unscripturally. Immortality is a term which pertains only to the body.

171. Q. What, then, is the scripture doctrine of immortality?

A. Immortality is the term used in scripture to describe the glory and honor and incorruption of our heavenly bodies.

Hence it is said of Christ, the firstborn from the dead, that He “only hath immortality” (1 Timothy 6:16). The resurrection, ascension and glorification of Christ are God’s evidences, likewise His solemn pledges, to all mankind, that His saints shall all, in like manner, ultimately be raised up and clothed in the same glory and honor and incorruption. See 1 John 3:2, 1 Peter 1:3-5.

172. Q. But: How are those saints who may be living on the earth when Christ comes again, to come into possession of their immortal bodies?

A. The Scriptures teach that they are to put on immortality by transfiguration and glorification.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52—“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” (i.e., we who are living upon the earth when Jesus comes again); “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (i.e., we who are still in the flesh shall be transfigured). 1

Thessalonians 4:16-17—“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:53-54—“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible (the saints whose bodies are in the grave) shall have put on incorruption (by resurrection and glorification), and this mortal (the saints who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord) shall have put on immortality (by transfiguration and glorification) ; then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory!” This entire section of the Scriptures is descriptive of the Translation of the Church.

173. Q. What, then, are the two phases of Christ’s redemptive work?

A. They are: (l) the present redemption of our spirits from the guilt of sin; and (2) the final redemption of our bodies from the consequences of sin.

(1) Galatians 3:13—“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law,” i.e., from the guilt and penalty of sin, Ephesians 1:7—“in whom we have our redemption through his blood,” (2) Romans 8:23—“waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Thus the redemption that is in Christ Jesus includes, ultimately, our redemption from mortality itself, as well as redemption from suffering, disease, and death. 2 Corinthians 5:4—“that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.” (3) No cripples in heaven, then; no deformity, disease, suffering, death, etc. Revelation 21:4—“God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away.” Romans 8:21—“the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.” (4) Our race started out on this earth innocent and mortal; the redeemed race, in the new heavens and new earth, will be holy and immortal.

174. Q. In what is the superlative excellence of the Christian Religion manifested?

A.It is manifested in this blessed promise and glorious hope of the redemption of our bodies. No other system of either philosophy or religion holds out such a precious promise, such a glorious hope, such a powerful incentive to righteousness and holiness on our part! In view of all these great truths, “what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God!” (2 Peter 3:11-12).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-ONE

164. Q. Can we determine exactly the sequence of the events that are to occur in the last days?

165. Q. What events are to occur in connection with the close of Christ’s millenial reign?

166. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term “resurrection”?

167. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that the bodies of all people, of all time, are to be raised up in the last day?

168. Q. What do the Scriptures teach regarding the resurrection of the saints?

169. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term “glorification”?

170. Q. By what phrase is this entire process of resurrection and glorification described in the Scriptures?

171. Q. What, then, is the scripture doctrine of immortality?

172. Q. But: How are those saints who may be living on the earth when Christ comes again, to come into possession of their immortal bodies?

173. Q. What, then, are the two phases of Christ’s redemptive work?

174. Q. In what is the superlative excellence of the Christian Religion manifested?

01.059. THE GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION

Lesson Fifty-Two THE GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 2 Peter 3:1-13, Revelation 21:1-8; Revelation 22:1-5.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power” (1 Corinthians 15:24). “But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13).

175. Q. What, according to the Scriptures, is to be the disposition of the bodies of all those who are lost?

A. The Scriptures teach that the bodies of the lost are to be raised up and reunited with their spirits, but not glorified.

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:22—“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” John 5:28-29—“all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.” Revelation 20:13—“And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades (the grave) gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.” (2) This general resurrection of the dead is obviously to occur at the close of Christ’s millenial reign. Revelation 20:5—“the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished.”

176. Q. For what event is this general resurrection of the dead to be a preparation?

A.It is to be a preparation for the Last Judgment. The Scriptures teach that the Last Judgment is (1) something to be expected in the future (Acts 24:25, Hebrews 10:27); (2) something that is to follow death (Hebrews 9:27); (3) something that is to be attended by all humanity (Matthew 12:41-42, Acts 17:31, Matthew 16:27, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 25:31-32); (4) something for which those who are evil are “reserved” (2 Peter 2:4; 2 Peter 2:9; Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:36-43); (5) something for which the resurrection of the dead is a preparation (John 5:29, Revelation 20:11-15).

177. Q. What is the Last Judgment?

A. It is to be that event in which all humanity will, with all the angels, be assembled before God in the person of Christ, for a final reckoning.

See Acts 17:31, Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15.

178. Q. Who will be the Judge in the Last Judgment?

A. The Scriptures teach that Christ will be the Judge.

(1) Though God is the Judge of all (Hebrews 12:23), yet His judicial activity is exercised through Christ, both in the present state and at the last day. John 5:22—"for neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son." Cf. Matthew 19:28; Matthew 25:31-32; Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 3:21. (2) Christ will appear in the Judgment in His threefold official capacity. As Prophet, He will reveal the Father to His saints in glory (John 16:25; John 17:24-26). As Priest, He will present His saints before the Throne as an elect race, a redeemed people, a purchased possession (1 Peter 2:9). As King, He will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31).

179. Q. Who are to be the subjects of the Last Judgment?

A. Two classes: (l) the entire human race, and (2) the evil angels.

(1) All humanity, each person possessed of body reunited with spirit, the dead having been raised, and the living having been changed. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Matthew 25:31-33; Revelation 20:12-13. (2) The evil angels (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 1:6) ; the good angels appearing only as attendants and ministers of the righteous Judge (Matthew 13:39-42; Matthew 24:31; Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

180. Q. What will be the grounds of the final judgment?

A. They will be two in number: (l) the grace of Christ, and (2) the law of God.

(1) Revelation 20:12. Those whose names are "written in the book of life" are to be found approved on the ground of their union with Christ and participation in His righteousness. They will be presented in the Judgment clothed in glory and honor and immortality. (2) Those whose names are not "written in the book of life" will be judged by the law of God, as it was revealed in the particular dispensation under which they lived. For instance, those who lived under the law of Moses, will be judged by that law; and those who live under the Gospel, the law of the Spirit, are to be judged by the law of the Spirit, etc. Heathen nations that had no revealed law on earth, are to be judged by their respective moral codes (i.e., existing in the form of tradition). Romans 2:12-16.

181. Q. What is to be the nature of the Last Judgment?

A. It will be "the revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

(1) Not the ascertainment of the moral character of those appearing for judgment, but the revelation of God's righteousness, justice, and holiness. The idea that God will line all men up in a row and look them over, to ascertain their moral standing, is absurd. Our moral standing is known to God fully every moment of our lives. (2) Judgment will be, rather, the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Romans 2:5-6), to all intelligent creatures, both angels and men. (3) Thus the saints will be presented in the Judgment clad in the fine linen of righteousness (Revelation 19:8; Revelation 19:14), their sins having been covered by the atoning blood of Christ, forgiven and forgotten, put away from them forever; and clothed also in glory and honor and immortality, the habiliments of eternal redemption. In their manifestation, the greatness of God's love, mercy and salvation will be fully disclosed to all His creatures. (4) The wicked will be presented in the Judgment as they really are, i.e., in all the realism of their rebelliousness, neglect and iniquity. Even their secret sins will be brought to light and revealed to the whole intelligent creation. For the first time perhaps, they will thus be made to realise the enormity of their sin, and the corresponding

awfulness of their loss of God and heaven; and the result indeed will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth (i.e., not of hate, but of remorse and despair). (5) This final demonstration will be sufficient to prove to all intelligent creatures that Satan's charges against God have, from the beginning, been false and malicious. The result will be the complete vindication of God Almighty, which is, in itself, the primary design of the Last Judgment. Cf. 1 Corinthians 6:2-3—"know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? . . . know ye not that we shall judge angels?" This final demonstration of God's matchless love, in the salvation of His saints, will be sufficient of itself to condemn Satan and his rebel hosts forever. (6) This demonstration will also be sufficient to deter the saints from ever lapsing a second time into apostasy and sin; and thus the possibility of sin in the future state will have been entirely eradicated.

182. Q. What is to follow the Last Judgment?

A. The Scriptures teach that, following the Judgment, both the saved and the lost will enter upon their respective eternal states of being.

Matthew 26:34; Matthew 26:41—"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." John 5:29—"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (literally, condemnation).

183. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the righteous?

A. It is to be essentially a state of personal union and communion with God.

It is also described as eternal life (Matthew 25:46); rest (Hebrews 4:9), i.e., release from earthly afflictions and trials; spiritual society (Hebrews 12:23); communion with God (Revelation 21:3); worship (Revelation 19:1); glory and honor and incorruption (Romans 2:7); and perfect holiness (Revelation 21:27).

184. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the lost?

A. It is to be essentially a state of separation from God and from the society of the redeemed.

It is described under such phrases and terms as: eternal fire (Matthew 25:41); the outer darkness (Matthew 8:12); weeping and the gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12); the pit of the abyss (Revelation 9:2; Revelation 9:11); eternal punishment (Matthew 25:46); torment (Revelation 14:10-11); wrath of God (Romans 2:5); eternal sin (Mark 3:29); second death (Revelation 21:8) ; and "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thessalonians 1:9). Obviously its essential characteristics are to be remorse, despair, and hopelessness.

185. Q. What, then, is hell, according to the teaching of the Scriptures?

A. Hell is the penitentiary of the moral universe in which all the wicked will, with the devil and his angels, be segregated forever.

(1) For the Scripture doctrine of hell (literally, Gehenna), see Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:9; Matthew 23:33; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6; Revelation

20:14-15; Revelation 21:8, etc. (2) Hell has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). Wicked men will eventually go to hell, not because God will cast them into it, but because their own consciences will drive them, instinctively, to their proper place, as in the case of Judas (Acts 2:25). As water seeks its own level, they who in this present life fit themselves only for the society of the rebellious, wicked and unbelieving, will instinctively seek that type of society in the next world. For, without doubt, the devil and all his kind would be miserable in heaven. (3) “Sin is self-isolating, unsocial, selfish. By virtue of natural laws the sinner reaps as he has sown, and sooner or later is repaid by desertion or contempt. Then the selfishness of one sinner is punished by the selfishness of another, the ambition of one by the ambition of another, the cruelty of one by the cruelty of another. The misery of the wicked hereafter will doubtless be due in part to the spirit of their companions. They dislike the good, whose presence and example is a continual reproof and reminder of the height from which they have fallen, and they shut themselves out of their company. The Judgment will bring about a complete cessation of intercourse between the good and the bad” (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 1035). Cf. Revelation 22:11-12. A truly asinine notion is explicit in the claim one hears so often in our day that New Testament passages alluding to hell (and to heaven, as well) are “merely figurative.” This claim ignores the evident fact that a figure, in order to be a figure, must be a figure of something (just as a symbol is a symbol of something, a proposition is an affirmation or denial about something, a sentence is a predication about something, etc.): in short, without the genuine, the counterfeit is impossible. (Indeed, in the Platonic dialogues, the mythos is poetic imagery to which men must resort, because of the inadequacy of language, to reveal profound truth which cannot be set forth in propositional terms. It is the device, according to Plato, which men are compelled to use to communicate the ineffable. Cf. Romans 8:26-27). Hence, if Scripture passages which describe hell as “eternal fire,” “the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone,” “outer darkness,” “the bottomless pit” (“abyss”), etc., are figurative, I shudder to think what the reality (the separation of the soul from all Good) is. To try to pass off these expressions as “figurative” is not to “explain them away,”—it is to multiply the problem a hundredfold. Need we be reminded of the awful internal pain of mental anguish. Perhaps conscience will turn out to be the fire that is never quenched and memory the worm that never dies. See Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 6:15-17; Hebrews 10:31, 2 Corinthians 5:11, Genesis 28:16-17, Mark 9:43-48, etc.

186. Q. What is to be “the consummation of all things”?

A. The “consummation of all things” evidently will include: (l) the renovation of our earth by fire; (2) the establishment of new heavens and a new earth; and (3) the return of Christ’s authority to the Father, that God may be all in all.

See Acts 3:20-21, 2 Peter 3:1-13, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Revelation 21:1-8, Revelation 22:1-5.

187. Q. By what criterion will the success of God’s Plan of the Universe be evaluated, in the finality of things?

A.It will be evaluated, not by the number who are saved, but by the greatness of the salvation that God will ultimately reveal in His saints. A holy redeemed race! The consummation and realisation of His eternal purpose and plan! “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!” Praise His holy name forever!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-TWO

175. Q. What, according to the Scriptures, is to be the disposition of the bodies of all those who are lost?

176. Q. For what event is this general resurrection of the dead to be a preparation?

177. Q. What is the Last Judgment?

178. Q. Who will be the Judge in the Last Judgment?

179. Q. Who are to be the subjects of the Last Judgment?

180. Q. What will be the grounds of the final judgment?

181. Q. What is to be the nature of the Last Judgment?

182. Q. What is to follow the Last Judgment?

183. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the righteous?

184. Q. What is to be the essential characteristic of the eternal state of the lost?

185. Q. What, then, is hell, according to the teaching of the Scriptures?

186. Q. What is to be “the consummation of all things”?

187. Q. By what criterion will the success of God’s Plan of the Universe be evaluated, in the finality of things?

Chapter 61

01.060. SPECIAL STUDY: ON CONVERSION, AS SHOWN BY REPRESENTATIVE CASES IN ACTS

SPECIAL STUDY: ON CONVERSION, AS SHOWN BY REPRESENTATIVE CASES IN ACTS S.M.-special mention. N.I.—necessary inference.

F.I.-fair inference

It should be noted that special mention is made of preaching or hearing as the beginning, and of baptism as the end of the process.

Preaching and/or Hearing

Faith

Repentance

Confession

Baptism

Rejoicing

Acts II Pentecost—Three Thousand

S.M.

Acts 2:4, Acts 2:14-37

N.I.

Acts 2:37; Acts 2:41

SM.

Acts 2:38

F.I.

(cf. Matt. Acts 10:32-33)

S.M.

Acts 2:38

S.M.

Acts 2:46-47

Acts VIII Samaritans

S.M.

Acts 8:5-6

S.M.

Acts 8:12

F.I.

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 8:12-13

SM.

Acts 8:8

Acts VIII The Eunuch

S.M.

Acts 8:35

S.M.

Acts 8:37? (A.V.)

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 8:37? (A.V.)

S.M.

Acts 8:36-39

S.M.

Acts 8:39

Acts IX, XXII, XXVI Saul of Tarsus

S.M.

Acts 9:5-6; Acts 9:17-18

Acts 22:12-15 Acts 26:12-18

N.I.

Acts 9:6 Acts 22:10 Acts 26:19

N.I.

Acts 9:8-11

N.I.

Acts 9:5 Acts 22:10

SM.

Acts 9:18 Acts 22:16 Rom. Acts 6:3-5

N.I.

Acts 9:18 Acts 26:19

Acts X,

XI, XV Cornelius

S.M.

Acts 10:6; Acts 10:34-43 Acts 11:13-15 Acts 15:7-9

N.I.

Acts 10:46 Acts 15:7-9

F.I.

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 10:47-48

S.M. Acts 10:46-48

Acts XVI Lydia

S.M.

Acts 16:13

S.M.

Acts 16:14

F.I.

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 16:15

S.M.

Acts 16:15; Acts 16:40

Acts XVI

The Jailor

S.M.

Acts 16:32

N.I.

Acts 16:31; Acts 16:34

F.I.

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 16:33

S.M.

Acts 16:34

Acts XVIII

Corinthians

S.M.

Acts 18:4-5

S.M.

Acts 18:8

F.I.

F.I.

S.M.

Acts 18:8

F.I.

*This material follows partially the diagram which may be found in the book, Pulpit Diagrams, by the late Z.T. Eweeney. In summarizing the content of the accompanying diagram, the following matters of fact should be noted especially:

1. That there are eight specific cases of conversion to Christ reported in the book of Acts. Of course, there are cases of non-conversion also: notably, the Jewish ecclesiastics who rejected Stephen’s testimony; the Athenian philosophers on Mars Hill; Felix, Festus, and Agrippa (Acts 7:1-60, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32). The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation only to those who believe (John 1:12-13, Luke 8:14-15, Romans 1:16); to those who reject it, it becomes the power of God unto damnation (2 Corinthians 2:15-16, John 3:17-18; John

5:28-29, Romans 2:4-11, etc.).

2. That in every case of conversion reported, specific mention is made of preaching and/or heating as the initial step, and of baptism as the consummating act of the process.

3. That in all cases, sinners who asked what to do, were told what to do, and did what they were told to do, without delay, and then the Lord added them to His Body (Acts 2:47). There was no praying, agonising, or waiting for a "special experience" (the visitation of an angel, a voice "from heaven," the singing of a choir invisible, a portent in the sky, an unexplainable ecstasy, or what not) as evidence of a miraculous "call"; the "mourners' bench" had not yet been built by theological carpentry. All this came in later with human "theology." There was no catechism, no "confirmation," no voting on the fitness of sinners for admission into the local church. On the contrary, everything was extreme simplicity. Moreover, all who were added to the church, came into covenant relationship with God through Christ in precisely the same way on precisely the same terms.

4. That in the instances in which rejoicing is mentioned, the rejoicing is reported as following baptism. The only (partial) exception to this principle may be found in Acts 8:8; here the healings wrought by Philip the evangelist contributed to the general rejoicing when the Gospel was first brought to the Samaritans.

5. That in some of these cases reported, no mention is made of repentance. Repentance is, of course, a turning to God in disposition and will, a turning that will manifest itself in a new life (Luke 3:7-14). It seems obvious that such a change was not needed in such cases as those of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), Cornelius and his house (Acts 10:1-22), Lydia and her helpers (Acts 16:11; Acts 16:15). (See, in this connection, Luke 15:7 especially.) These persons were already turned to God in will and life, to the extent of their knowledge; hence, what they needed was additional light, sufficient to make them Christians, and when that light was shed upon them, they proceeded to obey the Gospel at once (Acts 8:36; Acts 10:33; Acts 16:14). In the case of the Philippian jailor, his every act, after hearing the Word, evinced a complete change of heart and of directionality of life, that is to say, a genuine repentance (Acts 16:27-34).

6. What must one do to be saved?—in the light of this clear New Testament teaching? The answers may be cited as follows: (1) to the non-believer, like the Philippian jailor, only a general command could be given, awaiting further necessary edification (Acts 16:31-34); (2) to the believer, like the three thousand on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38); (3) to the penitent believer, as Saul of Tarsus was (Acts 22:16, cf. Acts 9:9); (4) to the baptized penitent believer, the Christian (Php 2:12, 1 Peter 1:5-11, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 15:58, etc.); (5) to the backslider, as was Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:22; cf. 1 John 1:9). Thus it will be seen that the answer was tailored, so to speak, to the inquirer's spiritual status—the point to which he had already advanced in the process of conversion—at the time he propounded the question. Romans 10:10—"with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." 2 Corinthians 7:10—"godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation." Romans 10:10—"with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Galatians 3:27—"for as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

01.061. SPECIAL STUDY: ON “MILLENIALISM”

SPECIAL STUDY: ON “MILLENIALISM”

I should like to add a word of caution here on the general subject of “Millenialism.”

1. That our Lord is coming again is emphasized on page after page of the New Testament. In fact, there are as many Scriptures in the New Testament writings pointing forward to the Lord’s second advent as there are Scriptures in the Old Testament pointing forward to the facts of His first coming and His ministry in the flesh. And it is significant, I think, that the passages alluding to the Second Coming are as generally ignored by professing Christians of our time as those of the Old Testament alluding to His first coming were ignored—and ultimately repudiated—by His people of the Old Covenant.

2. The notion that the Second Coming will take place, not as a personal manifestation of Messiah, but through the gradual world-wide acceptance of the Gospel, has not an iota of Scripture evidence to support it. In fact, Scripture teaching is all to the contrary. Jesus Himself tells us that the Gospel can bring forth the fruit of the Spirit only when it is received into honest and good hearts (Luke 8:4-15, the Parable of the Soils, not the “Parable of the Sower”); and the Apostle declares it to be the power of God unto salvation to one class only, namely, to those who believe, that is, to those who accept, obey, and live it (Romans 1:16). “Post-millenialism” of this kind is absurd, on the face of it.

3. “Millenial” theories are at best more or less speculative, and can hardly be otherwise. The concept is based on the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation. The word “millenium” is derived from the Latin indeclinable adjective, mille, meaning “a thousand” (Greek, chilia). The fact that the time element apparently is never rigid in the Plan of God (nor in the operations of the Spirit of God) should cause us to refrain from dogmatism with respect to the sequence of events connected in Scripture teaching with the Second Coming: “a thousand years” may simply designate a period of indefinite duration: cf. 2 Peter 3:8. “Time-setting” has been discredited uniformly throughout the history of Christianity; hence, to indulge in such an absurd practice, especially since Jesus Himself has stated expressly that no one but the Heavenly Father knows when the Second Advent will occur (Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32-37, Acts 1:7), surely is a mark either of ignorance or of sheer presumption.

4. Of course, as stated above, Christ’s numerous injunctions to His disciples, to watch for His Second Coming, and to be ready for it at any moment, would be meaningless if that event were always a thousand years in the future, that is, after the Millenium (post-millenial). Cf. Mark 13:33-37, Matthew 24:42-44, 2 Peter 3:12, 1 Corinthians 1:7, Romans 8:19-23, etc.

5. Any theory that would have us believe that Jesus will not set up His Kingdom until He comes the second time is disproved (1) by the numerous passages in the New Testament which clearly indicate that the Kingdom—Messiah’s Reign—was ushered in on the Day of Pentecost with the first proclamation of the facts of the Gospel as facts (Acts 2:1-47) and the subsequent

incorporation of the Body of Christ (Acts 2:41; Acts 2:47), and (2) by those passages which explicitly identify obedient believers in the apostolic age as being both members of the Church and citizens of the Kingdom. The Son of God assumed the Kingship (Sovereignty after His conquest of death (on earth He had been the Uncrowned King); the ten days between His Ascension and the Advent of the Spirit on Pentecost obviously were the days of His Coronation in Heaven (Psalms 24:7-10).

It was at this time that God the Father, through the agency of the Spirit, raised Him from the dead (Romans 8:11), seated Him at His (the Father's) own right hand in the heavenly places, and vested Him with the scepter of the Kingdom, crowned Him King of kings and Lord of lords (John 17:5, Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:20-23; Ephesians 4:8; Hebrews 1:1-4; Php 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Acts 7:56; 1 Timothy 6:13-16; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Revelation 1:17-18, etc.). Note especially the following passages which affirm, either implicitly or explicitly, the concurrent existence of the Kingdom with that of the present (Christian) Dispensation: Matthew 3:2—"the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke 10:9—"the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke 17:21—"the kingdom of God is within you." Matthew 6:33—"Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness," etc. Acts 8:12—"but when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ," etc. Colossians 1:13—"the Father . . . who delivered us out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of his love," etc. See also Revelation 1:9; Acts 1:1-3; Acts 19:8; Acts 28:23; Acts 28:31; especially 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Daniel 7:13-14; Daniel 7:27; Hebrews 12:28; Matthew 24:14; Luke 19:12; also the many scriptures in which the rise and spread of the Kingdom is described, usually in parable, e.g., Matthew 13:18-52, Mark 4:26-32, Luke 13:18-21, etc. See also Matthew 16:15-20 (in this passage, "my church" and "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" are clearly correlative); 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Peter 1:11, 2 Timothy 4:1, etc. This Kingdom is eternal, of course, by virtue of the fact that its locale is the interior life of the redeemed; hence it is said that their citizenship is in heaven (Php 3:20), that is, their names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 21:27; Revelation 3:5).

Incidentally, those who reject the petition, "Thy kingdom come," as included in what is commonly designated the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:10), on the ground that the Kingdom did come on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47), have missed the intent of this petition. The Lord means for us to pray—so it seems to me—not just "Thy kingdom come," but, literally, "let come thy kingdom, let be done thy will, as in heaven, so also upon the earth." This is a prayer that the Kingdom may be extended throughout the whole wide world, and is a reminder to all Christians that the fulfilment of this petition is dependent on the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel (Matthew 24:14). To be sure, the Kingdom "came" in heaven fully, with the expulsion of Satan and his rebel hosts (Luke 10:18, 2 Peter 2:4. Jude 1:6), and as the Reign of the Messiah it "came" on earth with the first proclamation of the Gospel. But its full "coming" on earth will depend on the fidelity of the Church to its two fold mission, that of preserving the truth of God and proclaiming it "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:45-49, Acts 1:8). The Kingdom may be more comprehensive than the Church in that it may—and surely does—include the innocent and the irresponsible (babies and small children, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16) and probably the elect of former Dispensations (Ephesians 4:8, Hebrews 9:23-28). Nevertheless to be in the Church is to be in the Kingdom according to New Testament teaching.

It could turn out, I should think, that a personal reign of Christ upon earth, if such is indicated by the “millenial” passages in Revelation, would be, first of all, for the purpose of destroying all civil governments and instituting in their stead a universal theocracy; that this would be preparatory to the ultimate “time of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by he mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old” (Acts 3:21; cf. Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22-24; Hebrews 12:26-27; 2 Peter 3:13. Revelation 21:1). Under this view the personal reign of Christ would become simply the climactic phase of the history of the Kingdom on earth (Isaiah 45:5-7; Isaiah 45:18-19; Isaiah 45:22-25; Isaiah 46:9-11). Of course, there are many eminent loyal Biblical scholars who reject in toto the concept of a personal reign of Christ on earth. In a booklet written and published by A. C. Williams and J. H. Dykes (which may be procured from Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas), I find the following:

SEVEN OBJECTIONS TO PROMILLENIALISM’S EARTHLY REIGN: 1. The everlasting kingdom rules out the temporal world (Isaiah 9:6-7). 2. Jesus’ refusal of an earthly kingdom once proves he would not want one now or later (John 6:15). 3. Simultaneous kingship and priesthood are not possible on earth (Hebrews 8:4). 4. Heavenly citizenship precludes any idea of an earthly kingdom (Php 3:20). 5. A heavenly message excludes an earthly law (Hebrews 12:25). 6. Kings do not sit on footstools, but on thrones (Isaiah 66:1). 7. It would: A. “Bring Christ down” (Romans 10:6). B. Bring the law back and substitute it for the gospel (Jude 1:3, Galatians 5:4). C. Substitute animal sacrifice for Christ’s blood (1 Peter 1:19). D. Substitute force for free will (Revelation 22:17). E. Substitute carnal weapons for spiritual weapons (2 Corinthians 10:4). F. Substitute a perishing, reeling, rocking earth for the immovable, heavenly, eternal home. G. Substitute sight for faith (2 Corinthians 5:7).

PREMILLENIALISM’S NULLIFICATION ORDINANCE: 1. It nullifies the plan God made to save men. 2. It nullifies the sacrifice Jesus made for man, 3. It nullifies the gospel given to teach men. 4. It nullifies finality of God’s offer to men. 5. It nullifies Jesus’ present power over men. 6. It nullifies “the eternal purpose” that the church should rescue men. 7. It nullifies the great commission offered to all men.

SEVEN MISTAKES OF PREMILLENIALISTS: 1. They separate the church and the kingdom (Matthew 16:18. 2. They confuse the coming of an angel with the return of Christ (Revelation 20:1). 3. They literalize Bible symbols and thus destroy symbolic beauty and significance. 4. They offer a fleshly, earthly program and reign for fleshly-minded people (John 18:36). 5. They set their affections on things of earth instead of heaven (Colossians 3:2). 6. They aspire to rule over their fellows. 7. They divide the church over their wild speculations,

I must confess to being unable to convince myself that the inferences which are drawn, in the foregoing excerpt, from the corresponding Scriptures cited, are, as a rule, necessary inferences. For example, the statement, “the everlasting kingdom rules out the temporal world.” This is not necessarily true, any more than it is not true that, at any time, the fact that part of God’s family is in heaven rules out the possibility that another part is on earth (cf. Ephesians 3:15, Php 3:20, Hebrews 12:22, etc.). Again, we are told that “simultaneous kingship and priesthood are not possible on earth,” and the Scripture warrant cited for this view is Hebrews 8:4. But the passage cited has reference solely to the Levitical priesthood which Jesus could not exercise because He hailed from the tribe of Judah. We know, as a matter of fact, that while He was in the flesh, He

frequently exercised the prerogatives of both king (though an uncrowned king, to be sure) and priest by granting forgiveness of sins (Matthew 9:1-7, Mark 2:1-11, Luke 7:44-50, etc.). As a matter of fact, too, His kingship and priesthood have existed from eternity in God's eternal purpose (Psalms 110); hence His priesthood is said to be after the order of Melchizedek, that is, not by the authority of a carnal commandment (fleshly descent) but by the power of an endless life (Hebrews 7:1-17), As far as this writer is concerned, a dogmatic anti-premillenialism is just as repugnant as a dogmatic pro-premillenialism. This is an area of Biblical exegesis in which dogmatism is not warranted, especially not to the extent of making any particular theory of the sequence of "final things," either overtly or sub rosa a test of fellowship in a church of the New Testament order. To be sure, there are many eminent Bible scholars who reject in toto the concept of a future personal Messianic reign on earth, largely on the following grounds: 1. That the passages in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse on which the "millenial" doctrines are based, do not necessarily indicate that this will be an earthly reign; that, on the contrary, it probably indicates a mystical reign of the Christian martyrs with Christ in heaven. (Some say that these passages point to a reign of Christ in the hearts and lives of His saints on earth, a reign in which the spirit of the martyrs will be revived and will reanimate the Church on earth.) 2. That the doctrine of the "first resurrection" is being fulfilled in the conversion of sinners to Christ throughout the present Dispensation, or will be fulfilled in the envisioned great moral and spiritual resurrection that will, it is held, usher in the Millenium, that is, as the final reign of Christ in the lives of His saints on earth. (I find it difficult to harmonize this view with the Apostle's teaching in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, 1 Corinthians 15:50-55, etc.) 3. That the term "millenium," from "mille," as stated above, is to be understood as indicating "a round period of great duration." (Probably true; cf. 2 Peter 3:8.) 4. That statements regarding the ultimate restoration of the Jews have reference not to their re-establishment of an earthly (quasitheocratic) order in Palestine, but to their conversion to Christ and induction, on the same terms as Gentiles, into the New Covenant. Hence, the phrase, "all Israel," in Paul's affirmation that eventually, after "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, all Israel shall be saved," is said to designate "spiritual Israel," that is, the Body of Christ made up of both Gentiles and Jews (Romans 11:25-32; cf. Ephesians 2:11-18, Galatians 3:27-29, 1 Corinthians 12:13, etc.). (The "all," as used here, means, says Lard, Commentary on Romans, p. 370, "a very great number.")

Milligan, on the other hand, Scheme of Redemption, pp. 536–577, takes the position that the beginning of the end of the present Dispensation will occur with the return of the Jews to their geographical homeland, under the guardianship of the archangel Michael (Exodus 23:20-25; Exodus 32:34; Numbers 20:16; Joshua 5:13-15; Isaiah 43:9; Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:21; Daniel 12:1-3). He lists what he believes to be the sequence of events leading to the Consummation of all things, as follows: 1. Fall of the Turkish or Ottoman Empire. 2. Real-lotment of Palestine. 3. Return of the Israelites to Palestine from all parts of the world. That this return is the "restoration" that is to take place in fulfillment of Daniel 12:2-3, Milligan contends, because in the final and literal resurrection the bodies of all will be raised (John 5:28-29), whereas in the case to which the angel refers here only many of them "that sleep in the dust" shall awake. He bases his case also on other passages, such as a comparison of Daniel 10:14; Daniel 12:3 (here we are told that some of these Israelites will, after their own "resurrection," turn many to righteousness, whereas after the literal resurrection of the dead, there will be no more preaching, hence no more conversions); also 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, Ezek. chs. 36, 37, 39; Isaiah 11:10-12, Jeremiah 23:3-8, etc. 4. The purpose of many nations to dispossess the restored Israelites

(Revelation 16:13-14; cf. Ezekiel 36:1-138 and Ezekiel 37:1-28). 5. The utter overthrow of these hostile powers in the battle of Harmageddon (Revelation 16:16), resulting in the general conversion of the Israelites (cf. Ezekiel 39:22, Joel 3:1-21, Zechariah 12:1-14, also Romans 11:11-32). 6. Destruction of all anti-Christian powers and combinations. (Milligan names "Popery, Mahometanism, and other anti-Christian powers and combinations." Present-day conditions, it seems to me, would point to Atheistic Leninism, Oriental paganism, and Mohammedanism, as corresponding, respectively to the Beast, the Dragon, and the False Prophet. The totalitarian godless state is the very essence of diabolism.) 7. Conversion of the world by the Israelites. (Daniel 10:14; Daniel 12:3; Romans 11:12-15). This will be the great age of Gospel preaching, Milligan thinks, in which Jew and Gentile will unite to proclaim primitive Christianity throughout the whole world, and hence will bring in 8. The Millenial reign of the saints, toward the end of which there will be 9. A post-millenial apostasy, and 10. The second personal coming of Christ, and the Last Judgment. So much for Milligan's theory. Moses E. Lard (Commentary on Romans, p. 359) states the theory by which "restored Israel" is identified with "spiritual Israel," as follows, commenting on Paul's language in the eleventh chapter of Romans:

. . . the future reception of the Jews will not consist in restoring them, as Jews, to their former national prosperity, but in receiving them into the divine favor in virtue of their obedience to Christ. Their condition and state will then be precisely the same as the present condition and state of Christian Gentiles. Between the two peoples, no distinctions can exist. . . . the Gentiles are now in countless numbers dead in sin, dead to righteousness, dead to Christ. Their more general regeneration will certainly be life from the dead. Besides, when the Jews accept Christ and devote themselves wholly to preaching the gospel, I look for the scenes of the primitive Pentecost to be re-enacted. Such an ingathering into the church, I expect then to occur as has never yet taken place. Christian Israel and the Christian Gentiles will then be one. Their united energies will be turned against sin; and the result will be that their victories for Christ will have no parallel . . . The world will then be ripe for the coming of Christ; and at his coming the holy dead will be raised, the righteous living will be changed, and the millenium will have set in.

It seems to me that contemporary conditions are more favorable to the former presentation (that of Milligan) than to the latter. Is the stage now being set for the coalition of the Beast, the Dragon, and the False Prophet?

CONCLUSION: In the foregoing Lessons 50 and 51, I have presented the theory, held by the great majority of "evangelicals," of the sequence of events that will usher in the Second Coming and the end of the present Dispensation, I should like to state here that I myself, am not committed dogmatically to any particular form of millenialism. I feel that it is an unwise and unjustifiable method of Scripture interpretation to appear in the role of "a prophet on prophecy." I prefer to let the Lord take care of all these matters—I have never yet presumed to transact His business for Him. Any theory of the sequence of "final things" must be to some extent speculative and hence cannot be made a test of fellowship in a church of the New Testament order. As far as my own views are concerned, I must say that I find no evidence in Scripture to support the notion of a general or world-wide acceptance of the Gospel, by either Gentiles or Jews, in the last days of the present Dispensation. On the contrary, the evidence is explicit that these last days will be characterized by a world-wide spread of wickedness, lawlessness, violence, and especially human preoccupation with secular interests, a condition generally paralleling the state of affairs that

prevailed in the days before the Flood (Genesis 6:5-13; Matthew 24:29-44; Luke 17:27-32; Luke 18:8; Luke 21:25-28; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 2 Peter 3:1-7, etc.). Again, I find no evidence in Scripture and certainly little in contemporary world affairs to warrant the notion of a general turning of the Jews to full acceptance of the facts of the Gospel of Christ. I am convinced that proof of the Messiahship of Jesus will have to be far more convincing—probably nothing short of the Lord's own appearance at Harmageddon—to convince the Jewish nation as a whole, than is offered simply by the Gospel proclamation. In the third place, the doctrine of the first resurrection" accords, in my humble opinion, with the apostolic description of the ultimate translation of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) than with any other theory of "final things" that has as yet been presented by Biblical commentators. That is to say, that as the old Jewish Dispensation terminated with the ascent of the Son to the Father, so the present Christian Dispensation will terminate with the ascent of the Spirit and the Bride. For this is, in fact, the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

However, let it be stated emphatically that there are certain matters in connection with the Great Consummation that are not matters of opinion. Among these are (1) the fact that the Lord Jesus is coming again, (2) that His appearing will be both personal and visible (Acts 1:6-11, Luke 21:27); (3) that His Second Coming definitely will be connected with the Last Judgment and the Consummation of all things (Acts 17:30-31; Acts 3:20-21; Php 2:5-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, etc.). The first time He came as the suffering Lamb of God to make atonement for the sins of mankind (John 1:36, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Peter 1:19, Isaiah 53:7, Revelation 13:8, etc.); the second time He will come as the reigning Judge to execute the final destiny of both nations and individuals (Matthew 25:31-46). Then indeed mortality itself will be swallowed up of life—even death itself shall die (2 Corinthians 5:1-5), and the saints will appear in the Judgment clothed in "glory and honor and incorruption" (Romans 2:7), ready to enter upon the inheritance prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Acts 20:32, Colossians 1:12, Hebrews 9:15, 1 Peter 1:4, etc.). Then indeed will Satan and his wicked cohorts, of both angels and men, be segregated in hell for ever (Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15).

Chapter 63

01.062. SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION

SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation of the Risen Christ—Not of John. Apocalypse—An unveiling. Signified—Communicated by signs or Symbols.

INTRODUCTION Inscription, Revelation 1:1-3. Prologue, Revelation 1:4-8

Revelation 1:3—“Time is at hand”

Revelation 1:1—“Things which must shortly come to pass”

Preterist Continuous or Historical Futurist

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Views

Revelation 4:1—“Things which must come to pass hereafter”

A.D. 96—PART I

Vision of the Seven

Candlesticks

Revelation 1:9-20

Seven Letters:

Revelation 1:1-20, Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22

A.D. 96—PART II

The Kingdom Vision

of a Door Opened in

Heaven; the Book

with Seven Seals Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-18

A.D. 96—PART III

The Church Vision

of the Open Temple

of God in Heaven

Revelation 11:19, Revelation 12:1-17, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21

The Church at Ephesus Period, Revelation 2:17

Post-Apostolic Age

Opening of the First

Six Seals

Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17

The Woman and

the Dragon

Revelation 12:1-17

The Church at

Smyrna Period,

Revelation 2:8-11

Age of Persecution

The Four Horsemen

of the Apocalypse

Revelation 6:1-8

History of the

Beasts

Revelation 13:1-18

The Church at

Pergamum Period,

Revelation 2:12-17, Union

of Church State

The Opening of the

Seventh Seal

Revelation 8:1-2

The Seven Vials

of Wrath

Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21

The Church at

Thyatira Period,

Revelation 2:18-29

Period of Apostasy

The Sounding of the

Seven Trumpets

Revelation 8:3-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-19

The Mother of Harlots

an Abomination

of the Earth

Revelation 17:1-18

The Church at

Sardis Period, Revelation 3:1-6

Reformation Age

The Angel with the

Open Book

Revelation 10:1-11

Fall of Babylon

the Great

Revelation 18:1-24

The Church at

Philadelphia

Period, Revelation 3:7-13

Restoration Age

The Measurement

of the Temple

Revelation 11:1-14

Zion’s Glad

Morning

Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-6

The Church at

Laodicea Period,

Revelation 3:14-22, Period

of Lukewarmness

Christ Comes,

Revelation 11:15-18

Christ Comes,

Revelation 19:11-21, Revelation 20:1-5

Christ Comes

Revelation 3:20

Closing Prayer—

“Comes, Lord Jeasus!”

Conclusion Revelation 20:7-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-5

Epilogue, Revelation 22:6-20

The accompanying diagram of the content of the New Testament book of Revelation follows in part the presentation that appeared in a book by H. C. Williams, a Christian preacher of a century ago. Unfortunately, this book, entitled The Revelation of Jesus Christ, first published in 1917, is now out of print. I consider it one of the sanest treatments of the Apocalypse that has ever been published (exclusive, of course, of the time-setting sections in it).

Much as I dislike the overworked word, “interpretation,” with reference to the Bible, still and all this book of Revelation is a book which must be interpreted, and interpreted in terms of prophetic symbolism. The content, a series of visions vouchsafed the Apostle John, while the latter was an exile on the barren Aegean island of Patmos, is explicitly said to have been “signified” to the Apostle (Revelation 1:1). This means, of course, that the Unveiling was couched in symbols. John himself introduces the record of the series of visions with the statement “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” (Revelation 1:10). The book is generally supposed to have been written toward the end of the first century of our era. (Incidentally, there is a growing conviction among archaeologists in our day that all the books of the New Testament canon were in existence by the seventies or eighties of this first century.)

Three interpretations of the book of Revelation have been suggested by different scholars, namely, (1) the preteristic, according to which the events (described by symbols) were fulfilled prior to, and ending with, the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70; (2) the continuous or historical, according to which the book is a record of the trials and triumphs of Christianity throughout the present or Christian Dispensation; and (3) the futuristic, according to which the events recorded will have their actualization in connection with the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the present Dispensation. For obvious reasons it is the historical view which is accepted and presented here.

Based on the evident fact that Biblical prophecy runs in parallels, it seems clear that we have in the Apocalypse three streams of prophetic utterance presenting the same general history, but from three different points of view as follows: (1) Part One (Revelation 1:9-20, Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22): here we have in the seven letters addressed to the seven churches a kind of prophetic survey of the moral and spiritual changes that were to occur within the visible church; (2) Part Two (chs. Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-15, Revelation 8:1-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:18): in this section we have the record of the Messiah's Kingdom (Reign), of the conflicts between earthly governments and the divine government, until "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ" (Revelation 11:18); (3) Part Three (Revelation 11:19, Revelation 12:1-27, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-5): here we find portrayed the struggles to take place between the true Church, the Bride of the Redeemer, and Satan, the Adversary (working through heresy and apostasy), continuing until the Church, the New Jerusalem, triumphs as the Lamb's wife, and Satan and his rebel hosts are cast into the lake of fire (forever segregated in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe). (Cf. Ephesians 6:12, Luke 10:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4, 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 1:6.) Each of these Parts is introduced by a distinct vision: Part One, by the Vision of the Seven Golden Candlesticks; Part Two, by the Vision of the Door Opened in Heaven; Part Three, by the Vision of the Open Temple of God in Heaven. Moreover, each Part comes to an end with the announcement of the Second Coming of Christ. In its very symbolism, the entire book is a work of exquisite literary beauty: indeed it is unrivaled in its imagery by anything in either secular or sacred literature. For all who might be interested, the following sequence of sermon subjects covering the content of the book of Revelation is suggested:

(1) "The Things to Come" (Introductory).

(2) "The Seven Churches of Asia" (Are we now living in the Laodicean Period, the age of lukewarmness and irreligiousness? Is this truly the age of "good-natured accommodation" to anything that anyone believes? The age of what has rightly been called "convictionless religiosity"?)

(3) "Heaven Through an Open Door" (The Great White Throne and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah)

(4) "The Opening of the Seven Seals" (The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and the Sealing of God's Servants)

(5)“The Sounding of the Trumpets” (The Three Winds—The Angels of Woe—the Barbarian Invasions—The Rise of the Papacy and of Mohammedanism) (6)“The Angel with the Open Book” (Martin Luther and the Reformation)

(7) “The Measurement of the Temple” (The Restoration of Primitive Christianity, its Laws, its Ordinances, and its Fruits)

(8) “The Woman and the Dragon” (The Great Falling Away and the Rise of the Medieval Semi-paganized Church)

(9) “The Wild Beasts of the Apocalypse” (The Roman Empire—Constantine and the “Christian” Roman Empire—The Papacy)

(10) “The Mother of Harlots and the Abomination of the Earth” (The Dark Ages —the Rise and Decline of Papal Dominion)

(11) “The Fall of Babylon the Great” (The Image of the Beast—the Union of Church and State—the Rise of Antichrist—Atheistic Leninism—the Zionist Movement and Establishment of the State of Israeli)

What meaneth these things? Are we now witnessing the gradual development of the coalition of the Beast (atheistic totalitarian civil power, misnamed “Communism”), and the Dragon (Oriental paganism), and the False Prophet (Mohammedanism) for the purpose of driving the Jews from Palestine? Will freedom-loving powers of the earth whether nominally or actually Christian, both Catholic and Protestant, unite in a common defense against this coalition, against the powers that would destroy Christianity (and monotheism) by force? Is this going to be ARMAGEDDON? Is God’s D-Day close upon us?

(12) “Zion’s Glad Morning” (The Great Judgment Day—the New Heavens and New Earth. “Come, Lord Jesus!”)

(13)“The City of God” (The Tabernacle of God is with Men—The City Foursquare—the Great Consummation) The foregoing subjects may also be used as topics for study by Bible classes. For additional information, see The Campbell-Purcell Debate, and The History of Apostasies (by Rowe, Hudson, et al). These books may be purchased from DeHoff Publications, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, or from the Old Paths Book Club, Rosemead, California.

Chapter 64

01.063. SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE ALLEGED “PRIMACY OF PETER”

SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE ALLEGED “PRIMACY OF PETER” The entire Roman Catholic system (hierarchy and theology) is based on one. claim, and one only, namely, that Peter was the first occupant of the Roman bishopric, and hence that all subsequent occupants of this office were, and are, the divinely authorized successors to the Apostle, clothed with the special authority which, it is held, was vested in him by the Head of the Church Himself, Christ Jesus. The scripture cited for this alleged divine authorization is Matthew 16:13-20. Here we read that, following Peter’s voicing of the Good Confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16), Jesus said to him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:17-19). In the Greek text, in the words, “Thou art Peter,” the masculine gender (Petros) is used, whereas in the phrase that follows, “upon this rock,” the feminine form (petra) is used. Obviously, since the feminine gender could hardly refer to Peter himself, it must refer to something else, which surely could be nothing other than the truth just voiced by the Apostle, the fundamental truth of Christianity, the truth that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.” In a word, Christ’s Church was to be built on the rock of the revealed truth of the Messiahship of Jesus. And the “keys” mentioned by Jesus referred not to Peter’s faith, but to the privilege promised him as a reward for it, the “keys” themselves being the terms of admission to the privileges of the New Covenant, that is, to membership in the church of Christ or citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. The following New Testament facts are sufficient to negate completely any claim that might be made for Peter’s primacy or for the absurd notion that Peter himself was the rock on which Christ founded His Church: (1) The promise of “binding and loosing,” a well-known Hebraism (implying of course the use of the “keys”), as made to Peter, Matthew 16:19, was repeated later, substantially in the same terms, to the entire Eleven (John 20:21-23). As stated above, the promise to Peter recorded in Matthew 16:19 indicated simply that to him was given the privilege of opening the door of the Church (stating the terms of pardon under the New Covenant) to both Jews and Gentiles (as related in the second and tenth chapters of Acts respectively); certainly, however, it did not indicate any special delegation of authority to Peter alone. (2) That the Apostles were of equal rank is further indicated by the language of Jesus in Matthew 19:28, in Luke 22:29-30, in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of John, and in Acts 1:1-8. (Cf. also Acts 1:26; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:43; Acts 10:39-42): In all these instances the divine promises are represented as having been addressed to the entire apostolic group, or their fulfillment is pictured as having been enjoyed by the entire apostolic group. (3) The Cornerstone of the spiritual temple of God, the church of Christ, we are told expressly, is the risen Christ Himself, and the true foundation of this divine Temple is that of the apostolic and prophetic revelation of the Word of truth (Psalms 118:22-24; Acts 4:10-12; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 1:10-12). (4) The promise of the advent of the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth was made to all the Apostles, and the Holy Spirit was

conferred upon all of them alike (John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26-27; John 16:7-15; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:1-8; Acts 2:1-4, etc.). Paul tells us that he received his knowledge of the Word "through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12), that is, special revelation to him, as "to the child untimely born," to qualify him to be in a special sense the Apostle to the Gentile world (Acts 26:16-17, 1 Corinthians 15:8). (5) There is no evidence from the Gospel narratives that any special revelations were made to Peter that were not made to the other Apostles, with the single exception of the visions on the housetop at Joppa designed to overcome his prejudice against preaching to Gentiles (Acts 10:9-48; Acts 11:1-18; Acts 15:6-11); the evidence is, in fact, to the contrary, namely, that Jesus Himself taught the equality of all the Apostles (Luke 22:24-30, John 13:12-20). (6) In filling the vacancy caused by the fall of Judas from the apostleship, Peter did not arrogate unto himself the authority to appoint Judas' successor; rather, at his own suggestion, the appointment was made by a vote of the entire assembly (Acts 1:15-26). (7) The same democratic method was employed in the choice of "deacons" in the Jerusalem congregation (Acts 6:1-6): indeed it is most significant that the Apostles did not take it upon themselves to appoint these seven men but referred the matter to the entire congregation for a congregational selection. (8) James, not Peter, presided over the first council of Apostles and elders at Jerusalem about A.D. 48. Indeed, it seems that the entire Jerusalem congregation consented to the decrees which were formulated and sent out to the outlying local churches (Acts 15:4-22). (9) Peter himself received a commission (together with John) to go down from Jerusalem to Samaria to qualify the newly-made Samaritan converts with the evidential gifts of the Holy Spirit: this he did at the decision and direction of the entire apostolic group (Acts 8:14). (11) Peter himself was taken to task by his Jewish brethren for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles (in the persons of Cornelius and the members of his household), and was called on the carpet to make explanations (Acts 11:1-18). (1.1) Peter was rebuked by Paul, on one occasion at least (Galatians 2:11-21): as someone has facetiously remarked, in this instance the "pope" was rebuked by one of his "cardinals." (12) Peter himself made no claim to primacy among the Apostles or to any special authority over them. He modestly speaks of himself as being only "a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ" (1 Peter 5:1; cf. Acts 10:39-41). Surely all this evidence is sufficient to show conclusively that the dogmas of Pettine primacy and of "apostolic succession" in general are figments of the ecclesiastical imagination, and perhaps I should add, "working tools," so to speak, of clerical ambition. And clerical ambition has been the curse of the Church from the time of the Apostles themselves (Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:7). To summarize: Authority is of two kinds, namely, primary and delegated. The primary Authority in Christianity is, of course, God Himself: He is Perfect Wisdom, Perfect Justice, and Perfect Love (that is to say, He is Wholeness or Holiness). However, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has seldom chosen to govern men by the exercise of His primary authority. That would be equivalent—would it not?—to government by coercion, that is to say, government by what is commonly designated "miracle." Rather, God has chosen to exercise His authority through His Word as revealed and executed by faithful men: in the Patriarchal and Jewish Dispensations, through the patriarchs, the "judges," the kings, and the prophets, and in the present Christian Dispensation, through apostles, prophets, evangelists, elders and deacons (Hebrews 1:1; Hebrews 11:1-40; 1 Peter 1:21; John 1:17; Galatians 3:19; Ephesians 4:8-16). The first delegation of authority in Christianity was from the Father to the Son (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 15:28; Colossians 2:9; Colossians 1:19; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3; John 1:1-3; John 1:14; John 1:18; Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5; 2 Peter 1:16-18,

etc.). While the Son, Christ Jesus, was on earth, He exercised His authority (as Uncrowned King, so to speak) personally, as, for example when He forgave sins and when He pardoned the penitent thief on the cross (Matthew 9:6; Luke 23:43; Mark 2:5; Mark 2:9; Luke 5:20; Luke 5:23; Luke 7:48). It was not until after His conquest of death, however, that the risen Lord could make the stupendous claim which He did make in prefacing the Great Commission “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18; cf. Php 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28).

Now when the Son returned to the Father, after completing the work which the Father had given Him to do (John 17:1-5), another delegation of divine authority became necessary: this was the delegation of authority from Christ the Son to the Apostles whom He had chosen (Acts 1:1-4). Obviously, in the delegation of this authority from the Father to the Son, no danger of error was involved, because the Son was as divine as the Father. (Cf. John 14:6; John 14:9; John 10:30). But the Apostles were human beings, subject to the frailties of body and mind to which all men are subject; hence there was danger that in this second transfer of authority, error might obtrude itself into the Plan of Salvation as a result of the mishandling by the Apostles, of the revelation which Jesus had vouchsafed them while sojourning with them in the flesh. It became necessary, therefore, to qualify the Apostles with divine power and guidance, to clothe them with infallibility in communicating the Christian revelation to mankind. Hence, we read that at different times, Christ promised them the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth, this endowment to take place upon His leaving them and returning to the Father. This promise was fulfilled, as we all know, on the great Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles in baptismal (overwhelming) measure and they all began to speak “as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (See John 20:21-23; Matthew 10:18-20; John 17:17-18; John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26-27; John 16:7-14;, Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:1-8; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:32-33; Acts 10:19; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 15:28; Acts 16:6-10, etc.). The mission of the Comforter (Paraclete) specifically was that of clothing the, Apostles with authority and infallibility in their task of completing the record of God’s revelation to mankind (1 Peter 1:3; Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

I am now ready to affirm, without fear of successful contradiction, that following the first delegation of authority in Christianity from the Father to the Son, and the second delegation from the Son to the Spirit guided Apostles, there was no further delegation of such divine authority. There is not one iota of evidence anywhere in the New Testament that the Apostles ever delegated divine authority to any other man or group of men. The transfer of divine authority ended with the Apostles: they are still exercising this authority through the instrumentality of the Word. The New Testament is the final Word of truth; divine authority for the guidance of the Church is embodied in it. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Hence, we repeat that the dogmas of Petrine primacy and apostolic succession are entirely without Scripture warrant.

Divine authority today is in the apostolic testimony, the Word of truth, the New Testament Scriptures (1 Corinthians 2:11-16, 1 Thessalonians 2:13). The specious claim that it was the Church which determined the Canon, and therefore ultimate authority is in the Church, not in the Scriptures, is absurd. The fact is that the Word was at first proclaimed orally by apostles and evangelists; this proclamation had to occur first, because by the acceptance of it and obedience to its terms, beginning with the three thousand converts on the Day of Pentecost, the Church came into existence. (The incorporation of the Body is described in Acts 2:37-47.) Although the Canon

was determined later, the Word was the instrumentality through which the Church was established and by means of which it was extended over the Mediterranean world in the lifetime of the Apostles (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:1-8; Acts 8:4; Romans 10:6-15). Therefore divine authority is in the apostolic testimony as permanently embodied in the New Testament writings, and not in the hierarchical church and its fallible human councils.

ANCHOR IN HEAVEN

. . . by two utterly immutable things, the Word of God and the Oath of God, Who cannot lie, we who are refugees from this dying world might have a source of strength, and might grasp the hope that He holds out to us. This hope we hold is the utterly reliable anchor for our souls, fixed in the very certainty of God Himself in Heaven. . .”

—Hebrews 6:18-19 (Phillips Trs.)

01.064. Volume 3

BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK

SURVEY COURSE IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Volume III by C. C. Crawford, Ph.D. LL.D College Press, Joplin, Missouri

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College Press LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

art., article

intro., introduction

cf., compare

l., line

ch., chapter

ll., lines

chs., chapters

p., page

edit., edition

pp., pages

e.g., for example

par., paragraph

ff., following

sect., section

fn., footnote

sv., under the word

ibid., the same

trans., translated

i.e., that is

v., verse

in loc., in this place

w., verses

or connection

vol., volume

FOREWORD The fifty-two lessons presented in this Series are designed to be, in their collective capacity, an Apologetic. The thesis is, that the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth, is the Christ, The Son of the living God,—THE FIRST AND THE LAST. The argument is presented and developed step by step as follows:

1. By showing, in the first place, that the Christian Documents in which the testimony about Jesus of Nazareth is presented, are genuine.

2. By showing, in the second place, that the testimony presented about Jesus of Nazareth in the Christian Documents, is credible.

3. By showing, in the third place, that Jesus of Nazareth is an actual historical character.

4. By showing, in the fourth place, that the Jesus of history was more than man. This is proved by:

(1) the nobility of His teaching;

(2) the faultlessness of His character and life;

(3) the supernaturalness of His claims;

(4) the fulfilment of Hebrew prophecy in Him;

(5) the greatness and variety of His miracles;

(6) the historic certainty of His resurrection;

(7) the grandeur of the names ascribed to Him;

(8) the place assigned Him in human history.

5. By showing, in the fifth place, that the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth, is the God-Man, the Divine human Redeemer. This is proved by the evidence respecting:

(1) His pre-existence;

(2) His condescension and humiliation;

(3) His exaltation and coronation;

(4)His present universal sovereignty. The conclusion is, then, from the evidence presented, that the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth is, in truth, THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD; the Sovereign over all created things; The Anointed One of God; the Absolute Monarch of the Kingdom of Heaven; the Head over all things to the Church; the Savior of His people; the Judge of the living and the dead; the Eternal Interpreter of the nature of God; the Heavenly Executor of God’s eternal purpose and plan; in short, THE FIRST AND THE LAST, and THE LIVING ONE. The above outline should be consulted frequently by teachers in presenting the subject-matter offered in this entire series of lessons. THE AUTHOR.

EXPLANATORY This is the second two-volume series of a Survey Course in Christian Doctrine. These two volumes may properly be designated a Survey Course in Christology; in their content they deal with the Mystery of the Person of Christ, the Mystery of Godliness. (1 Timothy 3:16)

Like the first sequence (published in 1962), the subject-matter of this entire work is arranged in four series of thirteen lessons each, thus providing an entire year of Bible study. The sub-caption of the first volume is “The Apostolic Witness”; that of the second volume, “Jesus the First and the Last.” This Course is prepared for use in Bible Colleges, and in Bible study classes in local church and church school groups. Incidentally, these lessons were first prepared and used locally some thirty years ago. They are now re-issued (with but little revision) for general distribution. In order to achieve the greatest possible measure of simplicity, the material in these lessons is printed in question-and-answer form. Of course, this material is not intended to be a catechism, nor is it intended to be used by anyone as such. It will be noted also that many of the answers presented herein are in themselves brief sermon outlines. This homiletic touch should add to the usableness of the work. As a rule, I have quoted in full, and with some repetitiousness, the Scripture passages cited herein. I have done this deliberately, in order to make sure they will be read. Readers frequently do not make the effort required to look up these passages in the Bible itself when only the references are given.

Brief excerpts from the writings of competent authorities will be found interspersed throughout the matter presented in this Course. In most instances, for the sake of brevity, I have not indicated the sources. But I vouch personally for the reliability of these sources. I am especially indebted to the following works: The Christian System, by Alexander Campbell The Scheme of Redemption, by Robert Milligan Systematic Theology, by A. H. Strong Evidences of Christianity, by J. W. McGarvey How the Bible Came to Us, by H. G. G. Herklots How to be Saved, by M. M. Davis

I should like to recommend the book by Canon Herklots (published by Oxford University Press, 1954) as the best of its kind that has come to my desk. I recommend for reading also the two books by Daniel-Rops, Jesus and His Times, translated from the French by Millar (published by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York, 1954), and Daily Life in the Time of Jesus, translated by O’Brian (published by Hawthorn Books, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York, 1962).

I want to make it clear, too, that any book written by me that may be found worthy of publication is written and published for use by all who are devoted to the Bible and especially to the spread of New Testament Christianity. I hope that any preacher or teacher who finds it practicable to do so will make use of any of the lesson titles or subject-matter presented herein, without feeling any obligation to give special credit to the author. This policy of always having to give “credit” for the use of anything put in print is being carried to ridiculous extremes today. Besides, no one has any copyright on divine truth, and “there is no new thing under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) anyway. The only thing I desire is that everything presented herein—and in any other book which I may write—may be used to the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.

C. C. Crawford

01.065. THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS

Lesson Fifty-three THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS Scripture Reading: 2 Timothy 3:10-17.

Scripture to Memorize: “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

1. Q. What is Christianity?

A. Christianity is that system of religious teaching and practice promulgated and established by Jesus of Nazareth and His Apostles.

2. Q. What are the two component parts of Christianity?

A. The two parts or phases of Christianity are: 1. The Person; 2. The System.

3. Q. Whom do we mean by The Person?

A. By The Person, we mean Jesus of Nazareth.

Matthew 1:21—“Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.” The name Jesus means Savior, or literally, Jehovah saves. Because He was reared in Nazareth, He became generally known as Jesus of Nazareth. Acts 2:22—“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you,” etc. Acts 10:38—“Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power,” etc.

4. Q. What do we mean by The System?

A.By The System, we mean the principles, laws and institutions which Jesus revealed and established through His Apostles, commonly called in their collective sense, the Christian System. In the apostolic writings, the Christian System is designated “the faith.” 1 Timothy 4:1—“in later times some shall fall away from the faith.” Jude 1:3—“contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.” Luke 18:8—“When the Son of man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?”

5. Q. To what primary sources must we go for information respecting Christ and Christianity?

A. For information respecting Christ and Christianity, we must go to the Christian Documents.

6. Q. What do we mean by the Christian Documents?

A.By the Christian Documents, we mean the books of the New Testament Scriptures. The system of religious faith and practice revealed in the books of the Old Testament Scriptures, is what is known today as Judaism, which came from God through the mediation of Moses; and which was designed to lead up to, and prepare the world for, Christ and Christianity. The laws, principles and institutions of Christianity, which came from God through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and which

Christ in turn revealed and established through His Apostles, are recorded in the books of the New Testament Scriptures.

7. Q. What is the name usually given to the Christian Documents as a whole?

A.The name given to the Christian Documents as a whole, is: the New Testament Canon. The word canon means literally, measuring-reed; hence, a rule, a standard, etc. The books of the New Testament as a unit or whole are therefore usually designated the New Testament Canon.

8. Q. How many books are there in the New Testament Canon?

A. There are twenty-seven books in the New Testament Canon.

9. Q. Into what four classifications do the books of the New Testament Canon divide as to subject-matter and design?

A. The books of the New Testament Canon, as to subject-matter and design, divide naturally into four classifications, viz., (1) Biography, (2) History, (3) Discipline, and (4) Prophecy.

Or, as frequently given: (1) the Gospels, (2) Acts of Apostles, (3) the Epistles, and (4) the Revelation, or Apocalypse. The word apocalypse means literally, an uncovering; hence, a revelation.

10. Q. How many books of Biography are there in the New Testament Canon?

A. There are four books of Biography in the New Testament Canon.

11. Q. Name these four books of Biography.

A. They are: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

12. Q. By whom were these four books of Biography written?

A. They are written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John respectively.

Matthew and John were of the original group of Twelve Apostles. Mark was a traveling companion of Barnabas, of Paul, and later of Peter (1 Peter 5:13). Luke, a physician and man of science, was an intimate companion of the Apostle Paul.

13. Q. What are these four books of Biography commonly called?

A. They are commonly called The Gospels.

Not, literally, four Gospels, but rather four accounts of the beginning of the one Gospel,—the Gospel, or good news, respecting Jesus Christ and salvation through His name.

14. Q. What is the essential nature of these four books of Biography?

A. They are four biographies of the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth.

15. Q. What is the design of these four books of Biography.

A.They are designed to give us the evidence to convince us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. By design, is meant the purpose for which they were written. This purpose is expressly

stated by John as follows: “Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his thew, Mark, Luke, and John, are not only biographies, name” (John 20:30-31). Hence the four books by Mat-but testimonies as well.

16. Q. How many books of History do we find in the New Testament Canon?

A. We find only one book of History in the New Testament Canon.

17. Q. What is the name of this one book of History?

A.It is named: Acts of Apostles. That is, not all the Acts of all the Apostles, but some of the more important acts of some of the Apostles, which have been thus recorded for the guidance of the Church and the Christian ministry. Hence, literally Acts of Apostles.

18. Q. By whom was the book of Acts of Apostles written?

A. The book of Acts of Apostles was written by Luke.

19. Q. What is the essential nature of the hook of Acts of Apostles?

A. It is essentially a record of the labors and accomplishments of the Apostles and their evangelistic coworkers.

20. Q. What is the design of the book of Acts of Apostles?

A. It is designed primarily to tell sinners what to do to receive remission of sins.

(1) That is, what to do to be saved (Acts 2:37; Acts 16:30), pardoned, justified, adopted, etc. (cf. Luke 24:25-49; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:43); what to do to become Christians, citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, members of the church of Christ, etc. (2) In the book of Acts, we have the authentic record of what the Apostles preached, what they told sinners to do to be saved, how those things were done, and what the results were in each case. (3) In Acts, we have also concise accounts of several important cases of conversion under apostolic preaching, which have been set down as a pattern of evangelistic procedure for the Church and her ministry to follow throughout the Christian Dispensation. (4) Finally, we have in Acts of Apostles an historical account of the beginning and spread of Christianity throughout the then known world.

21. Q. How many books of Discipline are there in the New Testament Canon?

A. There are twenty-one hooks of Discipline in the New Testament Canon.

22. Q. Name these twenty-one books of Discipline.

A. They are: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude.

23. Q. Who wrote these twenty-one books of Discipline?

A.They were all, with possibly one exception, written by Apostles. The first thirteen in the order named, were written by Paul. One was written by James (as to which James this was, there is some difference of opinion). Two were written by Peter, three by John, and one by Jude. The authorship of Hebrews is undetermined.

24. Q. What is the essential nature of these books of Discipline?

A. They are letters which were written by the Apostles and addressed to the churches and Christians of their day and age.

25. Q. What are these twenty-one books of Discipline commonly called?

A. They are commonly called The Epistles.

26. Q. What is the general design of these twenty-one books of Discipline?

A. They are designed to serve as books of instruction for all Christians in the essential principles of Christian worship and conduct.

It should be emphasized at this point that the Epistles were written to Christians, not to unconverted people. They especially contain the apostles' teaching. They are intended to serve as a rule of faith and practice (hence the term discipline, which means guidebook, book of principles and rules, etc.) for Christians in all ages of the present Dispensation. Cf. 2 Timothy 3:16—"profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness," etc. Acts 2:42 : here we read that the church at Jerusalem "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching."

27. Q. How many books of Prophecy do we find in the New Testament Canon?

A. We find only one book of Prophecy in the New Testament Canon.

28. Q. What is the name of this one book of Prophecy?

A. It is named The Revelation, or The Apocalypse.

29. Q. Who wrote this book of Prophecy?

A. It was written by the Apostle John.

30. Q. What is the essential nature of this book of Prophecy?

A. It is the inspired record of a series of panoramic visions which were communicated to the Apostle John on the isle of Palmos.

31. Q. What is the design of the book of Revelation?

A. It is obviously designed to portray, by means of prophetic symbolism, the trials and triumphs of the Church, and especially the final joys and blessings of the redeemed in the eternal state.

32. Q. What, then, is the design of the New Testament Canon in its entirety?

A. It is obviously designed to give us all the essential facts with regard to our eternal salvation.

It first presents to us Jesus, together with the evidence to induce us to forsake the world and to accept Him as our personal Savior. It then informs us what we must do to be saved, to receive and enjoy the salvation that God offers in Jesus' precious name. It then gives us the necessary instruction as to how to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18), and in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17). Finally, it holds up before us, in glowing imagery, the joys and blessings and glories of our eternal home, thus nurturing in our hearts the living hope which serves as an anchor of the soul (1 Peter 1:3, Hebrews 6:18-19). It will thus be seen that the New Testament Canon, in its various parts, progressively meets every need of the spiritual man.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-THREE 1.What is Christianity?

2. What are the two component parts of Christianity?

3. Whom do we mean by The Person?

4. What do we mean by The System?

5. To what primary sources must we go for information respecting Christ and Christianity?

6. What do we mean by the Christian Documents?

7. What is the name usually given to the Christian Documents as a whole?

8. How many books are there in the New Testament Canon?

9. Into what four classifications do the books of the New Testament Canon divide as to subject-matter and design?

10. How many books of Biography are there in the New Testament Canon?

11. Name these four books of Biography.

12. By whom were these four books of Biography written?

13. What are these four books of Biography commonly called?

14. What is the essential nature of these four books of Biography?

15. What is the design of these four books of Biography?

16. How many books of History do we find in the New Testament Canon?

17. What is the name of this one book of History?

18. By whom was the book of Acts of Apostles written?

19. What is the essential nature of the book of Acts of Apostles?

20. What is the design of the book of Acts of Apostles?

21. How many books of Discipline are there in the New Testament Canon?

22. Name these twenty-one books of Discipline?

23. Who wrote these twenty-one books of Discipline?
24. What is the essential nature of these books of Discipline?
25. What are these twenty-one books of Discipline commonly called?
26. What is the general design of these twenty-one books of Discipline?
27. How many books of Prophecy do we find in the New Testament Canon?
28. What is the name of this one book of Prophecy?
29. Who wrote this book of Prophecy?
30. What is the essential nature of this book of Prophecy?
31. What is the design of the book of Revelation?
32. What, then, is the design of the New Testament Canon in its entirety?

Chapter 67

01.066. THE GENUINENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS

Lesson Fifty-four THE GENUINENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS Scripture Reading: John 20:30-31; Luke 1:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

Scripture to Memorize: “Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name” (John 20:30-31).

33. Q. What did Jesus Himself say with respect to His teaching?

A. He said: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, hut my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

34. Q. In what set of books is the teaching of Jesus recorded?

A.The leaching of Jesus is recorded in the hooks of the New Testament Canon. By the teaching of Jesus, we mean not only what He Himself taught while in the flesh, but what He taught through His Apostles as well. We must never overlook the fact that the teaching of the Apostles is just as truly the teaching of Jesus, as if He had Himself written the words which they wrote. John 16:13-14—“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth . . . for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.” Cf. Acts 1:1-8, John 17:18, John 20:21-23, Galatians 1:12, etc.

35. Q. What, then, necessarily becomes the first matter for us to investigate at his point?

A.The first matter for us to investigate is, necessarily, the Genuineness of the Christian Documents. By the Christian Documents, as it has already been explained, is meant the books of the New Testament, which purport to have come down to us from apostolic times. Have we sufficient grounds for accepting them as apostolic?

36. Q. What do we mean by the Genuineness of the Christian Documents?

A. By the Genuineness of the Christian Documents, we mean the certainty that they were written at the age to which they are assigned, and by the men or class of men to whom they are ascribed, and that they have thus come down to us unimpaired in their essential contents.

37. Q. In what age of the world’s history do the Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written?

A. The Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written in the last half of the first century of the Christian era, i.e., about A.D. 50-100.

38. Q. By what class of men do the Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written?

A.The Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written by the Apostles or by men intimately associated with the Apostles. The apostolic writers were Matthew, John, James, Jude, Peter and Paul. Mark was a companion of Barnabas and Paul, and later of the Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:13, Acts 12:12). The Epistle to the Hebrews, in case it was not written—as tradition has it—by the Apostle Paul, must have been indited by a member of the apostolic company.

39. Q. On what form of writing material were the Christian Documents originally inscribed?

A. They were inscribed on parchment, vellum, or paper,

Parchment was writing material made from the skins of sheep and goats. Vellum, which was more costly and more durable, was made from the skins of young calves or antelopes. The paper (from the Egyptian papyrus) used in apostolic times was made from the inner bark of reeds, and was very brittle and perishable. Parchment was evidently used by Paul (2 Timothy 4:13); while it seems that John, at least for his shorter epistles, used paper (2 John 1:12).

40. Q. In what language and style were the Christian Documents written?

A. They were written in the Greek language, and entirely in capital letters.

These were known as uncial (inch-high) letters, an exaggeration of their size, of course. In the ninth and tenth centuries, a new style of handwriting was adopted called the cursive (running hand).

41. Q. On what ground are we justified in accepting the Christian Documents as genuine?

A. We are justified in accepting the Christian Documents as genuine, on the ground of corroborative historical evidence.

42. Q. Of what does this corroborative historical evidence consist?

A. It consists of the following: (1) ancient uncial manuscripts; (2) ancient versions; (3) ancient catalogs; and (4) quotations in the ancient writings.

43. Q. What is meant by the Ancient Manuscripts?

A. By the Ancient Manuscripts, is meant the four great uncial Manuscripts of the Bible, now reposing in museums or libraries in London, Cambridge, Paris and Rome.

It should be kept in mind that by a manuscript is meant a hand-written (not printed) document. These four great Ancient Manuscripts are hand-written copies of the Sacred Writings in canonical form, in uncial style, and in the Greek language. Their antiquity is so great and their value so pre-eminent that every student of the Bible should know about them.

44. Q. What are the five great Ancient Manuscripts?

A. They are: (1) the Sinaitic Manuscript; (2) the Alexandrian Manuscript; (3) the Vatican Manuscript; (4) the Ephraemic Manuscript; and (5) the Codex Bezae.

1. The Codex Sinaiticus, or Sinaitic Manuscript, is the only one of the four which contains our present New Testament Canon in its entirety. It also contains a large portion of the Greek Version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), and has appended to it two post-apostolic works, The

Epistle of Barnabas and The Shepherd of Hermas. It is written on vellum. It was found by Dr. Tischendorf, a German scholar, in the Convent of St. Catherine, at the foot of Mount Sinai, in the year 1859; and was made the property of the Czar of Russia, who financed Tischendorf's researches, and for a long time reposed in the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg. In 1934 it was sold by the Soviet authorities to the British Government, and is now kept in the British Museum in London. Biblical critics are unanimous in ascribing it to the first half of the fourth century (between 300 and 350). It is the oldest and most valuable of all known manuscripts.

2. The Codex Alexandrinus, or Alexandrian Manuscript, is in four volumes. The first three contain the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament Scriptures almost complete. (The Septuagint is the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, made by seventy Greek scholars, in Alexandria, about 285 B.C.). The fourth volume contains the New Testament Canon, with certain portions missing (part of Matthew, two leaves of John's Gospel, and three leaves from 1 Corinthians); and appended to the New Testament are the First Epistle of Clement, and a portion of his second Epistle, It was sent as a present to Charles I of England, in 1628, by the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, who had previously brought it from Alexandria. It is also kept in the British Museum, where the open volume of the New Testament can be seen under a glass by every visitor. It is generally conceded that this Manuscript dates from about the beginning of the fifth century (about 400).

3. The Codex Vaticanus, or Vatican Manuscript, originally designed for a complete Greek Bible, now lacks the first forty-six chapters of Genesis, and thirty-two of the Psalms; and the New Testament portion terminates at Hebrews 9:14. The remainder of the New Testament has been appended by a later writer. It was placed in the Vatican Library in Rome shortly after the establishment of that institution in 1448, and is still well preserved. Nothing is known of its history prior to that date. The open volume is kept on exhibition under a glass in a magnificent hall filled with the rich treasures of the Vatican. In point of antiquity, this work is the rival of the Sinaitic Manuscript, obviously dating from the fourth century, or from between A.D. 350 and 400.

4. The Codex Ephraemi, or Ephraemic Manuscript, a "palimpsest" (another work having been written over the first on the same vellum), contains a small portion of the Old Testament in Greek, and fragments of every book of the New Testament, except 2 Thessalonians and 2 John. It was brought from some unknown library in the East, to Florence, Italy, in 1535; and was later. transferred to Paris, France, where it is now kept in the National Library. It dates from about the same period as the Alexandrian Manuscript (A.D. 400).

5. The Codex Bezae, of the sixth century, once belonged to the eminent reformer, Beza. It is now in the University of Cambridge, England. It contains only the Gospels and Acts in Greek and Latin and a few verses of the Third Epistle of John in Latin.

6. The whole number of Uncial Manuscripts known to the critical world is estimated at something over 120; and of Cursive Manuscripts, at from 2,400 to 2,500. In addition to these, Lectionaries, or copies of the Gospels, or of the Acts and Epistles, arranged for reading in the churches, are very numerous, and often contain fragments of the very earliest texts.

7. Facsimiles of the pages of these Manuscripts have been made and circulated among scholars, and have been used in preparing the various versions now extant. It will thus be seen that the

world is in actual possession of authentic Manuscripts of the New Testament Canon, which are from fourteen hundred to sixteen hundred years old; or which, in other words, were written from some two hundred to three hundred years after the death of the Apostle John, which took place about A.D. 100. Their genuineness and accuracy can scarcely be called in question.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-FOUR 33.What did Jesus Himself say with respect to His teaching?

34. In what set of books is the teaching of Jesus recorded?

35. What, then, necessarily becomes the first matter for us to investigate at this point?

36. What do we mean by the Genuineness of the Christian Documents?

37. In what age of the world's history do the Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written?

38. By what class of men do the Christian Documents represent themselves as having been written?

39. On what form of writing material were the Christian Documents originally inscribed?

40. In what language and style were the Christian Documents originally written?

41. On what ground are we justified in accepting the Christian Documents as genuine?

42. Of what does this corroborative historical evidence consist?

43. What is meant by the Ancient Manuscripts?

44. What are the five great Ancient Manuscripts?

Chapter 68

01.067. THE GENUINENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS (Concluded)

Lesson Fifty-five THE GENUINENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS (Concluded) Scripture Reading: John 20:30-31; John 21:24-25; Luke 1:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name” (John 20:30-31). “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

45. Q. What is meant by the Ancient Versions?

A. By the Ancient Versions is meant Translations of the Sacred Writings, from the original Greek into other ancient languages; four of which Versions are older than the four Ancient Manuscripts.

46. Q. What are the most important of the Ancient Versions?

A. They are: (1) The Peshito Syriac; (2) The Old Latin; (3) The Egyptian or Coptic Versions; (4) The Latin Vulgate; (5) The Ethiopic Version; (6) The Gothic Version; and (7) The Armenian Version.

(1) The Peshito Syriac (literally, simple Syriac) Version, is a translation of both Testaments into Syriac or Ara-mean, the language of Northern Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. It was made from a Greek text in the second century. From its date to the present time it has been the common Bible of the Syrian people who use it in their public worship. It lacks four of the smaller epistles (2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude) and the Revelation. It is the most valuable of all ancient versions. (2) The Old Latin Version was a translation of the Bible into Latin, made in the second century, and frequently quoted by Tertullian (150-230). Thirty-eight fragments of this Version are yet in existence. (3) The Egyptian or Coptic Versions, the early Egyptian Christians having been named Copts by their Arab conquerors, contain all the books of the New Testament, and date from the first establishment of Christianity in Egypt. It will thus be seen that the Peshito Syriac, the Old Latin, the Egyptian and the Coptic Versions are some two hundred years older than the Sinaitic Manuscript. (4) The Latin Vulgate, a revision of the Old Latin Version, made by Jerome, in 382-385, was “canonized” by the Council of Trent in 1546. All Roman Catholic translations are made from it. Jerome testifies that in preparing it he made use of “the ancient Greek manuscripts” extant in his day; hence it is most valuable as an aid to criticism. It contains all the books of both the Old and the New Testaments. (5) The Ethiopic Version is a translation into the Ethiopic language which is closely related to the Arabic, It includes all the books of the New Testament, and dates from the introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia in the fourth century. (6) The Gothic Version, is a translation of both testaments into the Gothic tongue, made by Ulphilas, a Cappadocian, between the years 345 and 388. There is extant an uncial manuscript of this Version, which is kept in the library of the University of Upsala, Sweden. (7) The Armenian

Version, a translation of the Peshito Syriac Version, into the Armenian tongue, by Miesrob, the inventor of the Armenian language, in the fifth century.

47. Q. What is meant by the Ancient Catalogs?

A. By the Ancient Catalogs, is meant lists of canonical books drawn up by the ancient church authorities.

(1) The earliest writer to have mentioned the books accepted as “the apostolic writings” by the Christians of his day, was M arcion, who came from Pontus to Rome about A.D. 140, and who became the founder of a heretical sect called the Marcionites. Although Marcion was led by his extreme anti-Jewish prejudices to reject the teaching of all the books of the New Testament not written by Luke or Paul, nevertheless his writings show that the four Gospels, Acts, and the Epistles were generally known and accepted as genuine at that early date.

(2) The earliest formal catalog of the New Testament books now extant, is that of a document found in 1740 in an old library in Milan, by an Italian named Muratori, whence its name, The Muratorian Canon. This document dates from the seventh or eighth century, and is a Latin translation of a Greek original which claims to have been written by a contemporary of Pius, Bishop of Rome (died, A.D. 157). The Muratorian Canon in the West and the Peshito Syriac Version in the East, both dating from about 160, in their listing of the New Testament books mutually complement each other’s deficiencies, and together witness to the fact that at that early date, only some fifty or sixty years after the death of the Apostle John, every book of our present New Testament, with the exception of 2 Peter, was accepted as genuine.

(3) Tertullian, the well-known Latin scholar of North Africa, who lived about 150-240, left no formal catalog, but his extant writings contain statements regarding the Gospels and Paul’s Epistles that are equivalent to a catalog. He mentions all the other books of the New Testament Canon except 2 Peter, James, 2 John, and 3 John. He names our four Gospels, and expressly states that Matthew and John were written by apostles, and Mark and Luke by “apostolic men.” In his great work against the heresies of Marcion, he names all of Paul’s Epistles in their established order. He frequently quotes from Acts, which he ascribes to Luke; quotes by name 1 Peter and Jude; and quotes frequently from 1 John and Revelation, expressly ascribing the latter to John. He also insists that the Gospels had come down “from the very beginning” and “from the apostles.”

(4) Clement of Alexandria (lived about 165-220) is quoted by Eusebius in the latter’s Ecclesiastical History, as having given explanations, more or less elaborate, of all the books of our present New Testament. Clement was a voluminous and scholarly writer. His writings fill two volumes of the Ante-Nicene Library.

(5) A catalog promulgated by Origen, a pupil of Clement of Alexandria, lists all the books of the New Testament as we now have them. Origen (lived about 185-254) was made the teacher of the Catechumens in Alexandria when eighteen years old, and became the outstanding scholar of his day. He traveled extensively over the entire Biblical world, wrote voluminously, and lived a life of extreme self-denial. His testimony regarding the New Testament books is that of “a competent and unimpeachable witness” (McGarvey).

(6) Another catalog has come down to us from Eusebius (about 270-340), who was Bishop of the Church at Caesarea, in Palestine, and who is known as “the Father of Ecclesiastical History.” He does not leave us in doubt as to the books which made up the Sacred Writings in his day. He mentions all the books of our present New Testament and in the order in which they appear therein.

(7) Another catalog is that promulgated by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (lived 315-386). In one of his Catechetical Lectures, as given by his biographer, Jerome, he lists the books which are to be regarded as canonical, and the list agrees precisely with ours, with the exception of Revelation which is omitted.

(8) Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria from 326 to 373, one of the most noted Greek writers of the fourth century, lists the canonical books as they now appear in our English Version, in a letter addressed to the Christians of his day. He declares also that these books had been “delivered to the fathers” by those who were “eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.” He appends to the list the following warning: “These are the fountains of salvation; in these alone the doctrine of religion is taught; let no one add to them or take anything from them.”

(9) A formal catalog of the canonical books was promulgated by the Council of Carthage, in 397. It names all the books of the Old Testament now included in our Bible, and then gives the books of the New Testament in the following order: “Four books of the Gospels, one book of Acts of Apostles, thirteen epistles of the Apostle Paul, one of the same to the Hebrews, two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Judas, one book of the Apocalypse of John.” It concludes: “We have received from our fathers that these are to be read in the churches.” “This document,” says McGarvey, “shows not only that all of the books of our present New Testament were in existence and in use as ‘divine Scriptures’ at the close of the fourth century, but that they had been held in the same esteem by the ‘fathers’ of the venerable men who composed this assembly” (Evidences of Christianity, Part I., p. 61).

(10) This array of evidence, it will be seen, dates back to within fewer than one hundred years of the actual writing of the Christian Documents. It has come down to us in an unbroken succession, we might say, from men who were not far removed from the apostolic class. Moreover, the evidence is mutually confirmatory and complementary, i.e., what is overlooked by some of these men is supplied by others. As a matter of fact, Marcion, the writer of the Muratorian Canon, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen—these five men themselves unitedly mention by name all the books of our New Testament Canon. We may therefore safely conclude that our New Testament Canon had its origin in the latter half of the first century (A.D. 55-90).

48. Q. What is meant by Quotations found in the Ancient Writings?

A. By Quotations found in the Ancient Writings, is meant actual scripture passages which are quoted in the writings of the early Christian scholars.

(1) The writers whom we have already cited—Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Cyril, Athanasius, etc.—quote freely and copiously from the books of the New Testament Canon. (2) Irenaeus (120-202), a disciple and friend of Polycarp, who was in turn a personal acquaintance of the Apostle John, quotes in his writings from all books of the New Testament except Philemon, Jude and 3 John. (3) Justin, a native of the ancient city of Shechem in Palestine, who suffered

martyrdom at Rome, from which circumstance he is known as Justin Martyr, in his two Apologies and his Dialogue (written about 146), quotes freely from the four Gospels, which he calls “the Memoirs” of Jesus Christ “which were drawn up by His Apostles and those who followed them.” He quotes by name from Revelation. He also quotes from several of the Pauline Epistles and from 2 Peter, (4) Papias (about 80-164), an overseer of the church at Hierapolis (cf. Colossians 4:13), was the author of a work entitled An Exposition of the Lord’s Sayings. He testifies that Matthew “wrote the sacred oracles in the Hebrew dialect”; and that “Mark, the interpreter of Peter” (cf. 1 Peter 5:13), wrote, under Peter’s direction, an unsystematic yet accurate account of the same discourses and events. (5) Clement of Rome (died 101), Ignatius of Antioch (martyred 115), and Polycarp of Smyrna (80-156), all of whom were friends and companions of the Apostles themselves, have left us in their writings over one hundred quotations from, or allusions to, the books of the New Testament, and among these every book, except four minor epistles (2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude) is represented. (6) Finally, the genuineness of John’s Gospel is confirmed by the fact that Tatian (155-170), an Assyrian, and a disciple of Justin Martyr, repeatedly quotes from it.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-FIVE 45.What is meant by the Ancient Versions?

46. What are the most important of the Ancient Versions?

47. What is meant by the Ancient Catalogs?

48. What is meant by Quotations found in the Ancient Writings?

Chapter 69

01.068. HOW THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES HAVE COME DOWN TO US

Lesson Fifty-six HOW THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES HAVE COME DOWN TO US Scripture Reading: Acts 1:1-8.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35).

49. Q. From what primary sources have the Christian Documents come clown to us?

A. The Christian Documents have come clown to us from four primary sources, viz., (1) the Ancient Manuscripts, and (2) the Ancient Versions; substantiated by (3) the Ancient Catalogs, and (4) Quotations from the Post-apostolic Writings.

50. Q. What were the earliest translations of the Bible into the English language?

A. The earliest translations of the Bible into the English language were those made by John Wyclif, William Tyndale, and Miles Coverdale.

(1) The first translation of the whole Bible into the English language (medieval) was made by John Wyclif and Nicholas Hereford, in manuscript form, about the year 1381. It is commonly known as Wyclif’s Translation and was made from the Latin Vulgate. Wyclif himself suffered martyrdom for it, at the hands of the Papists. (2) Tyndale’s Translation of the New Testament, the first printed version of any portion of the Bible in the English language, was printed at Worms, in 1525. It was made by William Tyndale (who was burned at the stake in 1536) from the original text as published by Erasmus. Of the Old Testament, Tyndale translated only the five books of Moses. (3) Miles Coverdale’s Translation of the whole Bible made from Tyndale’s Translation, the Latin Vulgate, and the German Version, was published in 1535. It was the first version of the whole Bible in modern English. (4) Thomas Matthew’s Bible was published in 1537, by John Rogers (under an assumed name), and Rogers became the first martyr under Queen Mary. This version was made from the translations by Wyclif, Tyndale, and Coverdale. (5) Other versions followed, based largely upon the text of Thomas Matthew’s Bible. Among these were Taverner’s Bible, in 1539; Cranmer’s Bible, in 1539; the Geneva Bible, in 1560, the favorite of the Puritans; and the Bishops’ Bible, which was issued in three parts in 1568-72. The Geneva Bible, a joint work of Calvin, Beza, Knox, Coverdale, and others, at Geneva, Switzerland, was the first English Bible divided into verses and the first to print in italics the words not in the original text.

51. Q. What are the four modern Versions of the English Bible?

A. They are: (1) The Douai Version; (2) The King James (Authorized) Version; (3) The Revised Version; and (4) The American Standard Edition of the Revised Version.

(1) The Douai Version, or the Rheims Version as it is sometimes called, was made from the Latin Vulgate, by a group of English Catholic divines who were at first connected with the college at Rheims, and later with that at Douai, a town in France. The Douai Version of the New Testament was first published in 1582; and of the Old Testament, in 1609-10. The Douai Version is the English Version authorized by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. However, it differs very little from the Authorized and Revised Versions used by Protestants, with the exception that it does contain the so-called Apocryphal books which usually are not included in the Protestant Versions. These books, however, are purely historical and classical, and of questionable origin; and their rejection or inclusion means little or nothing so far as the fundamental teaching of the Bible is concerned. They contribute no additional information whatever with respect to the Plan of Salvation, or the Christian System. (2) The King James Version, or as it is commonly called, the Authorized Version, was begun in 1604, by forty-seven Biblical scholars, who, at the invitation of King James, assembled, formed themselves into six groups, and went to work to produce an authentic translation. Seven years were spent on the work. The finished product was published in 1611, and has been since its publication the mainstay of the Christian religion throughout the English-speaking world. Beautiful in its rhetoric, forceful in style, and delightful in its intonation, it has been rightly called “a sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed and controversy never soiled.” Its influence has made the English language what it is, and has practically created our literature. (3) The Revised Version is an up-to-date revision of the Authorized Version. It was made by an English and American Revision Committee, of all evangelical denominations, working together, in the years 1870-85; and for the purpose of bringing the Authorized Version into perfect harmony with more modern English, and with the results of the latest researches in textual criticism, history, archaeology, etc. The revisers did not confine themselves to two or three of the older versions, but consulted all of them, and all other original sources as well—in the form of manuscripts, versions, catalogs, quotations, etc. Their objectives were accuracy and authenticity. The Revised Version of the New Testament was published by the university presses of Oxford and Cambridge, in 1881; and that of the Old Testament, in 1885. The Revised Version is the finished product of the combined Christian scholarship of all ages of the Christian era. (4) The American Standard Edition of the Revised Version, otherwise known as the American Revised Version, is the outcome of about thirty years’ work on the part of the American Revision Committee, which continued its organization after the English Revision Committee had disbanded in 1885. It contains the changes recommended by the American company of revisers, but not accepted by the English company; and such other changes as appeared to the American Committee to be needed after twenty years’ experience with the Revised Version. The American Revised Version was published by Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, in 1901. The Revised Standard Version, issued in 1952, is in many passages more of a paraphrase than a translation. The same is true of The New English Bible: New Testament, issued in 1961. (Some wag has remarked recently that in reading the Gospel narratives, as they appear in those two most recent versions, he fully expected on turning a page to find Jesus saying, ‘O.K.,” and was indeed amazed that Paul’s “carnal mind” or “mind of the flesh” (Romans 8:7) was not rendered eros or libido. Attempts of the translators of these two productions to “modernize” the original text have surely vitiated the forcefulness of Scripture teaching in many passages. The Old Testament section of the New English Bible is due to appear soon, and pre-publication reports indicate that it will truly have the Menckenitic flavor.) Among the better paraphrases of the Bible, or of the New Testament alone, are those of Moffatt,

Goodspeed, and Phillips.

52. Q. What must be our conclusion with respect to the Christian Documents as they appear in our English Version?

A. Our conclusion must he, in view of the array of evidence presented, that the Christian Documents as they appear in our English versions are trustworthy.

(1) The very fact alone, that in the New Testament writings as we have them there is no reference except in certain prophetic statements, to the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place A.D. 70, is almost positive proof that the books themselves (with the exception probably of the Apocalypse) were written prior to that date. It is inconceivable that such an important event in the history of the Jewish nation, such an obvious fulfilment of the prophecies of Jesus, would have been allowed to go unnoticed in the New Testament writings, had that event occurred prior to the actual writing of the documents which constitute the New Testament Canon. (2) Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary of Princeton, New Jersey, 1887-1921, in his book entitled Revelation and Inspiration, published by the Oxford University Press in 1927, summarizes as follows (p. 408): “We risk nothing in declaring that modern biblical criticism has not disproved the authenticity of a single book of our New Testament. It is a most assured result of biblical criticism that every one of the twenty-seven books which now constitute our New Testament is assuredly genuine and authentic.”

53. Q. For what purposes were the hooks of the New Testament Canon written?

A.The books of the New Testament Canon were written originally for four purposes: (1) to give us the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God; (2) to inform us as to what to do to be saved, or to be received into covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ; (3) to instruct us in the laws and principles of Christian worship and conduct; (4) to give us a final picture of the trials and triumphs of the Church and of the future state of the redeemed in the new heavens and new earth. In the four Gospels, we have the evidence respecting Jesus of Nazareth, sufficient to prove that He is the Christ, the Son of God. In Acts of Apostles, we have the terms of remission, adoption, justification, etc., under the New Covenant. In the twenty-one Epistles, we find the instruction we need as Christians in the laws, principles, and institutions of Christian worship and living. In Revelation, we have the portrayal, in prophetic symbolism, of the trials and triumphs of the true church of Christ.

54. Q. In what four books especially, do we find the story of the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth?

A. We find the story of the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth in the four hooks, commonly called the Gospels, written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

55. Q. For what purpose were these four hooks, commonly called the Gospels, written?

A. They were written to give us the evidence sufficient to convince us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

See again John 20:30-31. Let us therefore, as did the Bereans of old, “receive the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so” (Acts 17:10-11).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-SIX 49.From what primary sources have the Christian Documents come down to us?

50. What were the earliest translations of the Bible into the English language?

51. What are the four modern Versions of the English Bible?

52. What must be our conclusion with respect to the Christian Documents as they appear in our English version?

53. For what purposes were the books of the New Testament Canon written?

54. In what four books especially, do we find the story of the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth?

55. For what purpose were these four books, commonly called the Gospels, written?

Chapter 70

01.069. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS

Lesson Fifty-seven THE CREDIBILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS Scripture Reading: Luke 1:1-4, Acts 1:1-8, Galatians 1:11-20, 2 Peter 1:12-21.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “Am I not free? am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?” (1 Corinthians 9:1). “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:16).

56. Q. What did Jesus Himself say to His Apostles with regard to their witnessing for Him?

A. He said: “Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

57. Q. How are the Apostles witnessing for Jesus unto the uttermost part of the earth?

A. The Apostles are witnessing for Jesus among all nations in and through the New Testament writings.

(1) As it has been frequently pointed out, the Apostles were essentially witnesses; and not priests, philosophers, reformers, clergymen, or theologians. (2) Their testimony as set down in the books of the New Testament pertains to what they saw with their eyes; in other words, matters of their own personal experience. 1 John 1:1—“that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled,” etc. (3) To the extent that the apostolic testimony is proclaimed everywhere by faithful ministers and evangelists, just to that extent do the Apostles witness for Christ unto the nations. Matthew 28:19—“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.” Mark 16:15—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.” 2 Timothy 2:2—“the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Matthew 24:14—“this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.”

58. Q. What claims do the New Testament writers make for themselves in their writings?

A. The New Testament writers claim for themselves: (1) actual personal knowledge of the matters related; (2) accuracy in assembling and relating the matters presented; (3) possession and inspiration by the Holy Spirit; and (4) divine authentication through the miracles which they performed.

(1) Those who were Apostles claim actual personal knowledge of the matters related. Luke 24:45-48, “Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things.” Acts 2:32—“This Jesus did God

raise up, whereof we all are witnesses." Acts 10:39-41, "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem: whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead." John 1:14—"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." 1 John 1:1-4, "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full." 2 Peter 1:16—"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty." Cf. also Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 1:10-20, etc. (2) Paul, in numerous scriptures, relates how Jesus appeared to him in His resurrection body, to call him to the apostleship. See Acts 22:3-21, Acts 26:2-23, etc. 1 Corinthians 9:1—"am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" 1 Corinthians 15:8—"and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also." Galatians 1:11-12—"For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." (3) Luke, who was not an Apostle, nevertheless claims for himself accuracy in assembling and relating the matters presented in his books. Luke 1:1-4, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed." Cf. Acts 1:1-8 : here Luke continues his narrative from the point where he terminates it in his Gospel. (4) The New Testament writers claim for themselves possession, guidance and inspiration by the Holy Spirit. John 16:13—"when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." Acts 2:4—"they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 15:28—"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us," etc. Acts 16:6—"having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia," etc. 1 Corinthians 2:12-13—"But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God: that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words." 1 Peter 1:12—"these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven." (5) They also claim for themselves divine authentication through the miracles which they performed. Mark 16:20—"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." Hebrews 2:4—"God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." Acts 19:11—"and God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul." 1 Corinthians 2:4—"and my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but

in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

59. Q. What do we mean by the Credibility of the New Testament writers?

A.By the Credibility of the New Testament writers, we mean their reliability as witnesses of Jesus Christ. That is, were they competent witnesses? Were they in a position to know with regard to what they wrote? Are we justified in accepting their claims as valid? Were they honest and sincere witnesses? And, is their testimony trustworthy? etc., etc.

60. Q. What is the first valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

A. The first valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses, is their obvious competency.

(1) They had opportunities of personal observation and inquiry. The Apostles were men who had been intimately associated with Jesus throughout His ministry (cf. Acts 1:21). Mark was a close companion of Barnabas and Paul (2 Timothy 4:11), and later of Peter (1 Peter 5:13); and, according to Papias, was instructed in the writing of his Gospel by Peter himself. Luke was long and intimately associated with Paul (Acts 16:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 1:24). And Paul himself declares that he received his knowledge by special revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). These men, in other words, possessed actual knowledge with respect to the matters related in the documents which they wrote. (2) They were men of sobriety, respect for the truth, and moral discernment; and therefore could not have themselves been deceived. Matthew was originally a tax collector; Peter, James, and John, humble peasant fisherman; Luke, a physician, man of science, an educated man, as his writings show; and Paul was the most brilliant scholar of his time. It is illogical to assume that these men were overwrought religious enthusiasts, controlled by their emotions, and guided by visions and hallucinations. There is too much evidence to the contrary: viz. that they were sober-minded, reverent men, who recorded in their writings their own actual experiences, as trustworthy witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ.

61. Q. What is the second valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

A. The second valid ground on which we accept the New Testament winters as reliable witnesses, is their obvious honesty.

(1) "The moral elevation of their writings, and their manifest reverence for the truth and constant inculcation of it, show that they were not wilful deceivers, but good men" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 172). If they were not all that they claimed to have been, obviously then they must have been impostors, liars or fools. (2) Their honesty is further evident from the fact that their testimony imperiled all their worldly interests. (3) Their honesty is positively substantiated by the fact that they not only suffered hardships and persecutions, but actually gave their lives in martyrdom for their testimony. No greater evidence of sincerity is available in any human being!

62. Q. What is the third valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

A.The third valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses, is the complementary nature of their writings. That is, though separate and independent witnesses, their writings mutually support one another; and their collective testimony, so far as doctrine is concerned, is a unit. Hence it is never spoken of in scripture as the teachings, but always as the teaching, of Christ. We read in the New Testament Scriptures of “strange teachings” or doctrines (Hebrews 13:9); of “doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1); and of “doctrines of men” (Colossians 2:22); but not once of the doctrines of Christ or of the Apostles’ doctrines. The teaching of Jesus and His Apostles, as presented in collective form in the New Testament writings, is always given in the singular (the doctrine, the teaching), simply because it is a unit (Mark 4:2, John 7:16-17, Acts 2:42, Titus 2:10, Hebrews 6:1, 2 John 1:9, etc.). As a matter of fact, this internal unity is the outstanding characteristic of the Sacred Writings as a whole and is consequently the most convincing evidence of their inspiration that can be adduced. “While one witness to the facts of Christianity might establish its truth, the combined evidence of four witnesses gives us a warrant for faith in the facts of the gospel such as we possess for no other facts in ancient history whatsoever” (Strong, ibid., p. 173).

63. Q. What is the fourth valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

A. The fourth valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses, is the correspondence of their testimony in its details, with collateral facts and circumstances.

(1) For instance, the correspondence between the New Testament writings and contemporary profane history, in respect to the names of civil rulers, the periods in which they ruled, and the countries over which they ruled, etc., as, e. g., Augustus Caesar (Luke 2:1), Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1), Quirinius, the Herods, Felix, Festus, Pontius Pilate, etc. (2) Secondly, the numberless correspondences between the New Testament writings and contemporary profane history, in respect to names of coins, methods of taxation, types of wearing apparel, different kinds of public assemblies and places where they were held, manners and customs of the people described, etc. (3) Thirdly, the correspondence between the New Testament writings and the known geography of the ancient world, in respect to cities named, also rivers, mountains, lakes, seas, travel routes, etc. (4) Finally, the absence of discrepancies between the New Testament writings themselves. The few discrepancies which do, at least apparently, exist, “are none of them irreconcilable with the truth of the recorded facts, but only present those facts in new lights or with additional detail” (Strong, ibid., p. 173). How, in view of all this evidence, can any intelligent and honest person doubt for one moment the reliability of the New Testament writers, or the trustworthiness of their writings?

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-SEVEN 56.What did Jesus Himself say to His Apostles with regard to their witnessing for Him?

57. How are the Apostles witnessing for Jesus unto the uttermost part of the earth?

58. What claims do the New Testament writers make for themselves in their writings?

59. What do we mean by the Credibility of the New Testament writers?

60. What is the first valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

61. What is the second valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

62. What is the third valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

63. What is the fourth valid ground on which we accept the New Testament writers as reliable witnesses?

Chapter 71

01.070. MATTHEW'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Fifty-eight MATTHEW'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Matthew 9:9; Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 5:27-32.

Scripture to Memorize: "And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him" (Luke 5:27-28).

64. Q. In taking up the study of Christianity itself, what is the first matter to he considered?

A. In taking up the study of Christianity, the first matter to be considered is the Person, Jesus of Nazareth, who appears historically as its Founder.

(1) Christianity, as we have already learned, consists of: (a) The Person, and (b) The System. The Person is Jesus of Nazareth; The System is the aggregate of the principles, institutions and laws which He revealed and established through His Apostles. (2) Of these two matters, The Person must be considered first, because The System stands or falls with Him. If He, Jesus of Nazareth, is all that He claims to be, then we are justified in accepting the Christian System as God's final and complete revelation of truth to mankind. "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he?" (Matthew 22:42); "Who say ye that I am?" (Matthew 16:15). These questions must be answered first. If the story of Christ is true, then Christianity is true; for, in the words of Dr. Daniel A. Poling, "Christ is Christianity, and Christianity is Christ."

65. Q. How, then, shall we begin our study of Jesus of Nazareth?

A.We shall begin our study of Jesus of Nazareth by viewing Him first as a historical character. That is, in the same manner that we view Christopher Columbus, or Martin Luther, or George Washington, or Abraham Lincoln, or any other outstanding figure of human history.

66. Q. To what primary sources shall we go for information respecting the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth?

A. For information respecting the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth, we shall go to the New Testament writings, especially the first four books of the New Testament Canon.

67. Q. By whom were the first four books of the New Testament Canon written?

A. The first four books of the New Testament Canon were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, in order.

68. Q. What are the first four books of the New Testament Scriptures commonly called?

A. The first four books of the New Testament Scriptures are commonly called The Gospels, or the Gospel Narratives.

69. Q. For what purpose were these four Gospel Narratives originally written?

A. The four Gospel Narratives were written to give us the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. John 20:30-31.

70. Q. What is the subject-matter of the books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?

A. They are four biographies of Jesus of Nazareth written from as many different points of view.

71. Q. What are the four books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as to design?

A. As to design, they are four testimonies respecting Jesus of Nazareth, presented from as many different points of view.

They are biographies in the sense that they present the facts about the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth. They are testimonies, in the sense that they witness to His life, His teaching, His miracles, His character, and His death and resurrection.

72. Q. Who was Matthew?

A. Matthew was one of the original group of Twelve Apostles.

Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:14-19, Luke 6:13-16, Acts 1:13. We must be careful not to confuse Matthew with the Matthias who was later selected to take the place of Judas. Cf. Acts 1:26.

73. Q. Of what nationality was Matthew?

A. Matthew was a Jew.

He was the son of a certain Alpheus. He also bore the name of Levi: probably his full name was Matthew Levi. See Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:27.

74. Q. What was Matthew's occupation originally?

A. Matthew was originally a publican, i.e., a tax collector.

(1) The alien government, which ruled Palestine, whether of Rome, or of its deputy-princes, the Herods, collected its taxes and customs through speculators, who bought up the right of collecting the revenue (publicum) for their own advantage. They were allowed to retain in the form of commissions whatever sums they were able to collect over and above the assessments levied by the government. Naturally this gave rise to much graft; however it was the system itself that was at fault, rather than its officials. (2) These men who acted as collectors of the revenue were called publicani by the Romans, whence our English word publican. They were often native Jews, and were classed by their own people, not only with the social outcasts of the day (Matthew 9:10-13; Matthew 21:31), but even with the heathen, as if entirely outside the pale of the Jewish commonwealth (Matthew 18:17). (3) Matthew was obviously not a chief publican, like Zaccheus, i. ■., one who had supervision over a considerable territory and farmed out the business of actual collection to deputies. Matthew's business, it seems, was purely local. His place of toll was near Capernaum, on the road to and from Damascus, where he apparently collected taxes for Herod the tetrarch. His special duty, it would seem, was that of collecting revenues from the fishermen on the Lake of Galilee, and probably from merchants traveling southward from Damascus. (4) It seems, too, that Matthew was a man of considerable means. At any rate, immediately after his call to the apostleship, he gave a great feast at which Jesus of Nazareth was the honored guest (Mark

2:13-17, Luke 5:29-32). Matthew is, then, the typical business man who has given up his business to enter the ministry. This alone is sufficient evidence of his strength of character.

75. Q. What information do we gather from the New Testament writings with regard to Matthew's character?

A. We gather that he was a man of conviction, of modesty, and of steadfastness.

(1) He was a man of conviction, without doubt. When Jesus, passing by his place of toll, said, "Follow me," Matthew "forsook all, and rose up and followed him" (Luke 5:28). This one terse statement is an eloquent commentary on Matthew's character. (2) He seems to have been modest and retiring in disposition. He kept himself in the background, it would seem. He does not stand out in the apostolic group, like Peter, for instance, or John; yet he was faithful, even unto death, for tradition has it that he died a martyr. (3) He was steadfast. We are not surprised, therefore, to find his name included in the list of the faithful, as given by Luke in enumerating the members of the apostolic group who were gathered in an upper room somewhere in Jerusalem, after the resurrection of Jesus, waiting for the coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:13). He was faithful unto death and no doubt received the "crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4:8).

76. Q. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of Matthew's call to the apostleship?

A.We find the account of Matthew's call to the apostleship in Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, and Luke 5:27-28. The account is given by Matthew himself, and by Mark and Luke also, in almost the same words. "And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him" (Luke 5:27-28).

77. Q. From what viewpoint did Matthew write his testimony respecting Jesus?

A. Matthew wrote from the Jewish viewpoint, and especially for the Jews.

(1) That Matthew wrote as a Jew, and for the Jews especially, is evident from the following characteristics of his writing: (a) His tracing of the genealogy of Jesus from Abraham and David; (b) his numerous appeals to Hebrew prophecy as having been fulfilled in Jesus; (c) his strong denunciations of the Jews and their rulers; (d) his rare explanations of Jewish names and customs; (e) his lengthy presentation of the Sermon on the Mount and with particular references to the Law; (f) his omission of Latin words from his text; (g) his omission of the account of the sending out of the Seventy (cf. Luke 10:1-20); (h) and especially his repeated use of the term "kingdom of heaven," by which he tried to turn the attention of the Jewish people away from their expectation of an earthly kingdom and Messiah, to that of a spiritual reign of Heaven upon earth under a heavenly Messiah. (2) "No one can read Matthew's Gospel without perceiving that he was no Hellenist, but a Hebrew of the Hebrews, deeply learned in the history and prophecies of his race, and eagerly looking forward to their realization. When the plan and teaching of Jesus were unfolded to his mind stored with national memories, he instantly recognized the truth and beauty and completeness of that ideal, and gave himself up heart and soul to the cause of the Son of David. For that cause and for the kingdom of God he resigned all his hopes of advancement in Herod's kingdom, his lucrative calling, and the friends he had made" (Cambridge Bible).

78. Q. What is the general theme of Matthew's Gospel?

A.The general theme of Matthew's Gospel is: The Messiahship of Jesus. The Jews of the time of Jesus and before, believed that in the writings of Moses and the Prophets there were many predictions concerning a great ruler and deliverer to come, called in their language Messiah, and in Greek Christos (meaning The Anointed One). They expected him to be a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the royal lineage of David; and to restore the kingdom of David and Solomon in all its pristine glory. In brief, they gave to the Messianic prophecies a purely temporal and earthly interpretation, as they do even to this day. Cf. Luke 3:15; John 1:19-20; John 4:25-26; John 5:39; John 5:45; Luke 24:27; Luke 24:44; Acts 3:18; Acts 3:24; Acts 28:23, etc.

79. Q. What main purpose did Matthew have in mind in writing his Testimony?

A. It is obvious that he wrote his Testimony to present Jesus as the fulfilment of Hebrew Messianic expectation.

(1) That is, to present Jesus as the One in whom the Abrahamic Promise is fulfilled. (2) Also, to present Jesus as the One in whom the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew Prophets are realized. (3) Finally, to present Jesus as the Messiah in an infinitely nobler sense than the Jews had ever anticipated, viz., as the Ruler of the Kingdom of Heaven, the truly Anointed One of God, the Prophet and Priest and King of His Church.

80. Q. How does Matthew prove the Messiahship of Jesus?

A. He proves the Messiahship of Jesus, by presenting Him as the Person in whose life and work the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew Prophets were all fulfilled.

Matthew quotes some sixty prophecies from the Old Testament Scriptures, as having been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

81. Q. What is Matthew's favorite expression?

A. Matthew's favorite expression is: "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," etc.

See Matthew 1:22; Matthew 2:5; Matthew 2:17; Matthew 3:3; Matthew 4:14; Matthew 11:10; Matthew 12:17; Matthew 13:14; Matthew 13:35, etc., etc.

82. Q. When was Matthew's Gospel probably written?

A. Matthew's Gospel was probably written about A.D. 67.

McGarvey holds that it was not written before the year 60, and probably about A.D. 67. Its contents show that it was written a number of years after the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:8; Matthew 28:15); and prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70 (Matthew 24:1-28).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-EIGHT 64.In taking up the study of Christianity itself, what is the first matter to be considered?

65. How, then, shall we begin our study of Jesus of Nazareth?

66. To what primary sources shall we go for information respecting the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth?

67. By whom were the first four books of the New Testament Canon written?

68. What are the first four books of the New Testament Scriptures commonly called?

69. For what purpose were these four Gospel Narratives originally written?

70. What is the subject-matter of the books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?

71. What are the four books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as to design?

72. Who was Matthew?

73. Of what nationality was Matthew?

74. What was Matthew's occupation originally?

75. What information do we gather from the New Testament writings with regard to Matthew's character?

76. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of Matthew's call to the apostleship?

77. From what viewpoint did Matthew write his testimony respecting Jesus?

78. What is the general theme of Matthew's Gospel?

79. What main purpose did Matthew have in mind in writing his Testimony?

80. How does Matthew prove the Messiahship of Jesus?

81. What is Matthew's favorite expression?

82. When was Matthew's Gospel probably written?

Chapter 72

01.071. MARK'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Fifty-nine MARK'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 12:1-18; Acts 15:36-41.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him)" etc. (Colossians 4:10). "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is useful to me for ministering" (2 Timothy 4:11). "She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark, my son" (1 Peter 5:13).

83. Q. Who was Mark, the writer of the second Gospel narrative?

A.Mark, though not one of the Twelve Apostles, was a member of the apostolic company. By the apostolic company or class, we mean the Apostles and their evangelistic co-workers. Mark was closely associated with the Apostles throughout his entire life, especially with the Apostles Paul and Peter.

84. Q. Of what nationality was Mark?

A. Mark was a Jew.

(1) His Jewish name was John. But, like Paul, he also had a Roman name, Marcus, or Mark (from the Latin marcus, meaning a hammer). Hence his full name was John Mark. Cf. Acts 12:12—"Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark." (2) Mark was the son of a certain Mary, at whose house in Jerusalem the disciples met from time to time (Acts 12:1-18). (3) He was also a cousin of Barnabas, another well-known and faithful member of the apostolic company. See Acts 4:36-37; Acts 11:22-30; Acts 12:25; also Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41 in full.

85. Q. What do we learn about Mark from the New Testament writings?

A. We learn that Mark throughout his entire life was intimately associated with the Apostles, and especially with the Apostles Peter and Paul.

(1) Mark grew up in Jerusalem, where his mother was prominent among the disciples and at whose house they were accustomed to hold meetings from time to time (Acts 12:1-18). He was no doubt well acquainted with all the Apostles. (2) It is quite possible that he knew Jesus personally. In this connection, see Mark 14:51-52. Here we read that on the occasion of Jesus' betrayal and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, near the midnight hour, "a certain young man followed with him, having a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked body; and they laid hold on him; but he left the linen cloth, and fled naked." May we not reasonably conclude that Mark is here modestly alluding to himself and describing his own experience? So argues Mr. Frank Morison, the English writer; who also quite plausibly argues the theory that Mark was the "young man arrayed in a white robe," whom the three women discovered sitting in the empty tomb on the resurrection morning (Mark 16:5-8). (See Morison, Who Moved the Stone? pp. 219-294). There is very little doubt in fact

that John Mark was well informed, through personal experience, with respect to the stirring events which marked the culmination of the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth and the establishment of the Christian religion. (3) Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria on their first evangelistic tour (Acts 12:25), but for some unexplained reason he left them at Perga, in Pamphylia, and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). (4) Whatever may have been the reason for Mark's conduct on that trip, Paul disapproved of it severely, so much so that he refused to take Mark along when a second missionary journey was proposed. He and Barnabas disagreed so sharply about the matter that they finally separated. Barnabas took Mark, and sailed for Cyprus, while Paul accompanied by Silas set out in another direction (Acts 15:36-40). (5) For a decade following this incident, we lose sight of Mark altogether. It seems, however, that he made good in the interim and reestablished himself in Paul's esteem. Hence we next find him with Paul in Rome (Colossians 4:10). (6) During Paul's second imprisonment in Rome the Apostle wrote his valedictory epistle, to Timothy, in which he requested the latter to bring Mark back to Rome. 2 Timothy 4:11—"Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is useful to me in ministering." (7) Mark was also intimately associated with the Apostle Peter at different periods of his life. In 1 Peter 5:13, Peter speaks of Mark as his son in the Gospel, i.e., as one of his converts. The fact that Peter, when he was miraculously delivered from prison in Jerusalem, a few days after Pentecost, went directly to the house of Mary the mother of John Mark, indicates that the Apostle knew the family quite well (Acts 12:1-18). Cf. 1 Peter 5:13—"She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark, my son." If the term "Babylon" as used here alludes to Rome (a matter of long-continued controversy), it follows that Peter and Mark were both in Rome at the time Peter's First Epistle was written, and that in all likelihood Mark's Gospel was also written in Rome. At any rate we know that Mark spent many of the later years of his life in that city.

86. Q. From what sources then did Mark obtain his information respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

A. Mark obtained his information respecting Jesus of Nazareth from the Apostles themselves.

He may have obtained some of the information presented, from his own personal experiences as a young man in Jerusalem; and this was in turn confirmed and increased by additional information which he received from the Apostles. Early tradition has it that Mark was Peter's "interpreter," whatever that word may signify. Papias (about 80-164) testifies that Mark was Peter's "interpreter," and that he wrote his Gospel narrative under Peter's personal direction. Mark's Gospel itself bears such evidences of Peter's influence that it has often been called "The Petrine Gospel."

87. Q. What is the general theme of Mark's Gospel?

A. The general theme of Mark's Gospel is: The Works of Jesus.

Mark's narrative is brief, swiftly-moving, and to the point. It covers only the actual ministry of Jesus, beginning with His baptism by John in the Jordan River. Mark presents Jesus as the Man of action, authority, and power. "While Matthew emphasizes Him as a teacher, Mark says that He came to do something as well as to say something. This accounts for the fact that Matthew enlarges upon the words of Christ, while Mark enlarges upon His works; Matthew lays emphasis upon His parables, and Mark upon His miracles" (Moninger, Studies in the Gospels and Acts, p. 41).

88. Q. For whom was Mark's Gospel obviously written?

A.Mark’s Gospel was obviously written especially for the Romans. That it was written for Gentiles rather than Jews, is evident from its contents. In view of the fact that Mark had a Roman name, and that much of his life was spent in Rome, it is apparent that he wrote his Testimony respecting Jesus with the Romans especially in mind; in fact he may have been in Rome when he wrote it (Colossians 4:10, Philemon 1:24, 2 Timothy 4:11, 1 Peter 5:13). Hence Mark presents Jesus as the Worker of Miracles, as the Man of action and authority, as the One who has all power over both nature and men. This mode of presentation was obviously designed to appeal especially to the Roman type of mind, which had great respect for power and authority.

89. Q. What is Mark’s favorite word?

A. Mark’s favorite word is “straightway.”

Mark 1:10; Mark 1:12; Mark 1:21; Mark 1:29; Mark 1:42; Mark 2:8; Mark 2:12; Mark 3:6; Mark 5:2; Mark 5:29, etc. etc.

90. Q. When was Mark’s Gospel probably written?

A.Mark’s Gospel was probably written about A.D. 50. The Marcan narrative is generally conceded to have been among the first of the New Testament writings. As both Paul and Peter are believed to have suffered martyrdom in the reign of Nero, who died about A.D. 68, it follows that Mark must have written his Gospel prior to that date. Moreover, as Mark, like Matthew, treats of the destruction of Jerusalem as a predicted event (ch. 13) rather than an actual and fulfilled happening, it follows that his Gospel must have been written prior to A.D. 70. Hence, we are safe in assigning it to a date somewhere near the middle of the first century, REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FIFTY-NINE 83.Who was Mark, the writer of the second Gospel narrative?

84. Of what nationality was Mark?

85. What do we learn about Mark from the New Testament writings?

86. From what sources then did Mark obtain his information respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

87. What is the general theme of Mark’s Gospel?

88. For whom was Mark’s Gospel obviously written?

89. What is Mark’s favorite word?

90. When was Mark’s Gospel probably written?

01.072. LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Sixty LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 16:1-17; Acts 20:1-12; Acts 28:11-16; Luke 1:1-2.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you" (Colossians 4:14). "Only Luke is with me" (2 Timothy 4:11). "Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, saluteth thee; and so does Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers" (Philemon 1:23-24).

91. Q. Who was Luke, the writer of the third Gospel narrative?

A. Luke, like Mark, was a member of the apostolic company, though not himself an Apostle.

92. Q. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Luke?

A. The two books of the New Testament Canon written by Luke are: the third Gospel, and Acts of Apostles.

Luke was the inspired historian of the origins of Christianity. In his Gospel, he gives us an account of the things which Jesus Himself did and taught (Acts 1:1-2). In Acts of Apostles, he gives us a history of the labors and accomplishments of the Apostles and their evangelistic co-workers in the execution of the Great Commission. In Acts, he merely continues the history from the point at which he terminated it in his Gospel. Cf. Acts 1:1—"The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen," etc.

93. Q. Of what nationality was Luke?

A. Evidently Luke was a Gentile.

(1) From the distinction drawn between Epaphras, Demas and Luke, and "those of the circumcision," in Colossians 4:10-14, it is evident that Luke was not a Jew. In all probability he was of Greek extraction, as is indicated by his Greek name, and by the obvious love of beauty which characterizes his writings. (2) "It may be inferred," writes Dr. J. A. McClymont, "that he was of Gentile extraction, and this inference is confirmed by his Greek name and the character of his style, which—except when he is drawing from the older documents or reporting speeches conveyed to him by others—is more classical than that of the other Gospels, alike as regards the structure of the sentences and the choice of words, as well as in his use of an opening dedication, a feature quite foreign to the Hebrew style" (quoted by Moninger, Studies in the Gospels and Acts, p. 46). (3) Early tradition has it that Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria. Eusebius writes: "Luke, who was born at Antioch, and by profession a physician, being for the most part connected with Paul, and familiarly acquainted with the rest of the apostles, has left us two important books." Origen is quoted by Eusebius as saying that Luke's Gospel "was written for converts from the Gentiles." (4) Luke's familiarity with the church at Antioch is indicated by the following scriptures:

Acts 6:5; Acts 11:19-27; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 14:26-28; Acts 15:1-2; Acts 15:30-40; Acts 18:22-23, etc.

94. Q. What was Luke by profession?

A. Luke was a physician.

Colossians 4:14—"Luke, the beloved physician." Some traits of Luke's profession are to be found in the frequency with which he refers to the work of Christ and His Apostles as the ministry of healing (Luke 4:18; Luke 4:23; Luke 9:1-6; Luke 10:9); and in his occasional use of terms which a physician would be most likely to employ (Luke 4:38; Luke 5:12; Luke 6:19; Luke 22:44). It has been suggested by some that Luke traveled with Paul because the Apostle was frequently in need of medical attendance (2 Corinthians 12:7). This, however, is merely an opinion, and one not necessarily derived from the scripture records.

95. Q. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's character and ability?

A. We learn from the New Testament writings that Luke was a man of refined character, of great culture, of broad sympathies, and of rare devotion.

"The surpassing beauty" of the third Gospel, writes Dr. Charles R. Erdman, "betokens the personal attractiveness of its author and the dignity and importance of its theme. . . . The phrase which describes the writer as 'the physician, the beloved one,' is full of significance. It was penned by Paul, when a prisoner in Rome, to his friends in distant Colossae. It indicates that Luke was a man of culture and scientific training, and that the charm of his character was so conspicuous as to be recognized by the Christian churches of Europe and Asia. . . . He was a man of such modesty that he never mentioned his own name even when recording the stirring events in which he played so prominent a part. Nevertheless he revealed himself in every page of his writings and was evidently a man of broad sympathies, an acute observer, a careful historian, and a loyal friend" (Intro. to The Gospel of Luke, p. 7). Luke's rare devotion to his friends, and to the cause for which he gave his life in service, is indicated by the fact that he remained in constant attendance upon Paul to the very end of the Apostle's ministry. Cf. 2 Timothy 4:11—"only Luke is with me."

96. Q. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's career?

A. We learn from the New Testament writings that Luke was the evangelistic co-worker and traveling companion of the Apostle Paul.

Note, in this connection, the many passages in Acts in which Luke indicates his presence with Paul by using the pronouns "we" and "us." (See Acts 16:1-40, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-40, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 18:1-31). It appears from these scriptures that Luke joined Paul, in the course of the latter's second evangelistic tour, at Troas, a seacoast city of Asia Minor, whence they embarked on the memorable voyage across the Aegean Sea that resulted in the establishing of Christianity on the European continent. The two friends, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, landed at Neapolis and thence journeyed to Philippi, where their labors resulted in the founding of a strong church (Acts 16:1-40). Then, while Paul, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, continued his travels through Macedonia and Greece, Luke remained behind, possibly to nurture the new converts (Acts 17:1-34). Seven years later, when Paul was on his third missionary tour, he seems to have joined Luke at Philippi, and to have been accompanied by him on his journey back to Jerusalem

(Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-40). When Paul was arrested and confined for two years in prison at Caesarea, Luke continued as his companion; and, when the Apostle was taken prisoner to Rome, Luke accompanied him. They shared together the perils of that voyage and the shipwreck which occurred off the island of Melita (the ancient name for Malta), and the subsequent imprisonment in the imperial city (Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31). It seems that Paul was later released from prison and allowed to preach the Gospel in Rome, which he did effectively, with the help of certain "fellow-workers," viz., Demas, Aristarchus, Mark, and Luke (Colossians 4:14, Philemon 1:23-24). Finally, the Apostle was imprisoned a second time, and in the shadow of impending martyrdom he indited his valedictory epistle, the second epistle addressed to Timothy, in terminating which the Apostle said, after describing the apostasy of Demas, "Only Luke is with me" (2 Timothy 4:11).

97. Q. From what sources did Luke obtain the information which he recorded in his writings?

A. Luke himself testifies that the information which he has recorded in his writings was obtained from the most reliable sources.

(1) Luke 1:1-80, Luke 2:1-52, Luke 3:1-38, Luke 4:1-44, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed." Note well Luke's emphatic assertion here of his own reliability as a historian of the things that Jesus did and taught (cf. Acts 1:1). (2) "While in Caesarea, Luke seems to have gathered the material for his Gospel, and probably wrote it there or soon after arriving in Rome. He had ample leisure during the two years and more in Palestine to make the extensive researches of which he speaks in Luke 1:1-4. In Rome, he was with Paul, and had his help also in the Acts, and during much of the period covered by it he had been with Paul. . . . Luke enjoys the unique distinction of being the first historian of the origins of Christianity. He carried the Christian movement on in his two volumes from the birth of John the Baptist to the arrival of Paul in Rome, when the gospel had spread to most of the Roman Empire. Luke is thus the great historian who undertook such a task, and he is in many ways the greatest of all ancient historians in his breadth of view, his research, accuracy, versatility, and sympathy. He was a man of literary taste, but of democratic instincts, who understood women and children and the poor and the outcast and the Gentiles, as well as Jews. He was a cosmopolitan and a loyal Christian, a scientist who was a devoted worshiper of Jesus as Lord and Savior. He accepted the miracles of Jesus; and narrated the Virgin Birth of Christ, after prolonged investigation" (Dr. A. T. Robertson, System Bible, p. 26). The assertion is often found in the writings of the Biblical "critics" that Paul's alleged silence about the Virgin Birth is evidence that he did not accept the belief. In answer, we say (1) that Paul repeatedly affirms the pre-existence of Christ (Php 2:5-7, Colossians 1:15-17, Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Galatians 4:4, etc.), and (2) that Luke, Paul's traveling companion, is the one who gives us the story of the Virgin Birth in all its simplicity and beauty (Luke 1:26-38); hence, if Paul did not believe that the Virgin Birth occurred as Luke gives it, why in the name of reason did he not set Luke right on the matter?

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY 91.Who was Luke, the writer of the third Gospel narrative?

92. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Luke?
93. Of what nationality was Luke?
94. What was Luke by profession?
95. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's character and ability?
96. What do we learn from the New Testament writings about Luke's career?
97. From what sources did Luke obtain the information which he recorded in his writings?

Chapter 74

01.073. LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Sixty-one LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: Luke 10:25-37; Luke 15:11-32; Luke 16:19-31.

Scriptures to Memorize: "But he charged them, and commanded them to tell this to no man; saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Luke 9:22). "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). "And I say unto you, Everyone who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8). "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) 98.Q.What are the outstanding characteristics of Luke's Gospel?

A. The outstanding characteristics of Luke's Gospel are: (1) its unusual literary beauty, (2) its absorbing human interest, and (3) its universal outlook.

(1) Its unusual literary beauty. "It is plainly a product of Greek culture. The divine Spirit chose and equipped a rare instrument in the poetic and refined personality of Luke and through him gave to the world that version of the gospel story which is most exquisite in style and most finished in form" (Erdman, ibid., p. 8). (2) Its absorbing human interest. "It is a story of real life; it is suffused with emotion; it is full of gladness and sorrow, of songs and of tears; it is vocal with praise and with prayer" (Erdman). It is the Gospel of childhood, of womanhood, and of the home, the Gospel of the poor and lowly; the Gospel of sympathy, neighborliness and forgiveness. It is the only one of the four Gospels in which are recorded the matchless narratives of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and Lazarus and the Rich Man: three of the most absorbing human interest stories in all the literature of the world. (3) Its universal outlook. Not one trace can be found in Luke's Gospel of the religious prejudice, the dogmatic legalism, or the narrow nationalism of the Jewish people. It rises above all such trifles and boldly proclaims the universality of God's love and of Christ's redemption. "Here no narrow prejudice divides race from race: a despised Samaritan stands as the supreme example of a neighbor, the angels sing of peace among men, and the aged Simeon declares that Jesus is to be a 'light for revelation to the Gentiles' as well as the glory of Israel. Luke alone gives the data which link the sacred story to the secular history of the world" (Erdman, ibid., p. 9).

99. Q. What is the general theme of Luke's Gospel?

A. The general theme of Luke's Gospel is: The Humanity of Jesus.

Luke portrays Jesus as the Ideal Man, the Head of the New Creation, and our Perfect Exemplar. In the person and character of the Jesus whom he presents, all the essential elements of perfect manhood—matchless courage, tender sympathy, unwavering faith, and abiding fellowship with

God—are inherent. “The character of Jesus is so subtle and complex as to defy exact analysis, and yet it is evident that certain of its features, common to all, are emphasized successively by each one of the Gospel writers. Matthew depicts its majesty, Mark its strength, and John its sublimity; but Luke reveals its beauty, and paints a picture of the Ideal Man, the Savior of the world” (Erdman, ibid., p. 9).

100. Q. For whom was Luke’s Gospel obviously written?

A.Luke’s Gospel was obviously written for the Gentiles, and for the Greeks especially. The Greeks were an esthetic people. Love of the beautiful was the prime characteristic of their art, their literature, their philosophy, in fact their very nature. Hence Luke presents Jesus of Nazareth as The One Altogether Lovely, the one Ideal Man in whom all goodness, truth and beauty are perfectly and fully blended.

101. Q. What is Luke’s favorite expression?

A. Luke’s favorite expression is: “Son of man.”

Luke 9:22—“The Son of man must suffer many things.” Luke 12:8—“him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.” Luke 18:8—“when the Son of man cometh,” etc. Luke 19:10—“The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” Cf. Luke 6:22; Luke 9:58; Luke 17:22; Luke 21:36; Luke 22:48, etc.

102. Q. When was Luke’s Gospel probably written?

A.Luke’s Gospel was probably written about A.D. 57-59. As Luke, like both Matthew and Mark, treats of the destruction of Jerusalem as an event yet in the future, it follows that his Gospel must have been written prior to A.D. 70. (See Luke 21:1-38). “Luke wrote his Gospel before he wrote the Acts, and after Mark wrote his Gospel. The Acts was probably written in Rome before A.D. 64. Hence, Luke’s Gospel must come in between A.D. 50 and 64.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-ONE 98.What are the outstanding characteristics of Luke’s Gospel?

99. What is the general theme of Luke’s Gospel?

100. For whom was Luke’s Gospel obviously written?

101. What is Luke’s favorite expression?

102. When was Luke’s Gospel probably written?

01.074. JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Sixty-two JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:21-22, Mark 1:19-20, Luke 5:1-11, John 21:20-25.

Scriptures to Memorize: "And on going from thence he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him" (Matthew 4:21-22).

103. Q. Who was John, the writer of the fourth Gospel Narrative?

A. John, the writer of the fourth Gospel Narrative, was one of the original group of Twelve Apostles.

See Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16.

104. Q. How many books of the New Testament Canon were written by the Apostle John, and what are they?

A. The Apostle John wrote five books of the New Testament Canon, viz., the fourth Gospel, three Epistles (1 John, 2 John, 3 John), and the Revelation.

105. Q. Of what nationality was the Apostle John?

A. The Apostle John was a Jew.

John and his brother James were the sons of a certain Zebedee. Matthew 10:2—"James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother." Matthew 20:20—"Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her two sons," etc. There are three men by the name of John frequently mentioned in the New Testament writings: (1) John, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth (Luke 1:6-23; Luke 1:57-80), who, when he began preaching the approach of the Kingdom, and baptizing converts in the Jordan River, came to be known as John the Baptizer (Matthew 3). (2) John Mark, the son of a certain Mary at whose house in Jerusalem the disciples met from time to time (Acts 12:12). This was the John Mark who traveled extensively with Barnabas, Paul and Peter, and who wrote the second Gospel. (3) John the Apostle, brother of James and son of Zebedee, the intimate friend of Jesus, and the writer of the fourth Gospel. This is the John whom we are studying in this lesson.

106. Q. What occupation did John follow, prior to his call to the apostleship?

A. John was a fisherman, prior to his call to the apostleship.

Zebedee and his two sons were all three fishermen on the Lake of Galilee. See Matthew 4:21-22, Mark 1:19-20, Luke 5:1-11.

107. Q. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of John's call to the apostleship?

A. We find the account of John's call to the apostleship in Matthew 4:21-22, in Mark 1:19-20, and in Luke 5:1-11.

Matthew 4:21-22—"And on going from thence he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him." Cf. Mark 1:19-20, Luke 5:1-11. According to Luke's testimony, Zebedee and his two sons were in partnership with Simon Peter in the fishing industry. It is obvious from these accounts that James and John were quite young men when they received their call to the apostleship.

108. Q. By what particular designation does John frequently allude to himself in his own writings?

A. John frequently alludes to himself in his own writings as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

(1) John 13:23—"There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples whom Jesus loved." John 19:26—"when Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved," etc. John 20:2—"She runneth therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved," etc. John 21:7—"That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter," etc. (2) John 21:20-23, "Peter, turning about seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrayeth thee? Peter therefore seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. This saying therefore went forth among the brethren, that that disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not unto him, that he should not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" That John thus alludes to himself, is obvious from the connection between the above verses, and John 21:24, which follows: "This is the disciple that beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true." That is, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and of whom Jesus said, "If I will that he tarry till I come," etc., is, "the disciple that beareth witness of these things" (the things written in his, the fourth Gospel). Jesus' promise that John should tarry till He came, was evidently fulfilled when Jesus in His capacity of The Living One and the Sovereign of all things (Revelation 1:9-20), appeared to John on the isle of Patmos and communicated to him the series of visions recorded in the book of Revelation. (3) It will be noted, therefore, that John, with the becoming modesty that forbade his mentioning his own name outright, thus, in alluding to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," testifies to his own loving intimacy with the Master throughout the period of their earthly labors.

109. Q. With what special group of the Apostles was John identified?

A.John was one of the apostolic trio commonly designated as the "inner circle." This "inner circle" consisted of Simon Peter and the two brothers, James and John. These three were specially privileged to have been eyewitnesses of the most sublime incidents in the life of Jesus: (1) His Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13, 2 Peter 1:16-18); (2) His raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:35-43, Luke 8:49-56); and (3) His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42).

110. Q. What special designation did Jesus Himself give to James and John?

A. He gave them the designation “Boanerges,” which means “Sons of Thunder.”

Mark 3:17—“and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James . . . them he surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder.” This designation was obviously bestowed upon them in allusion to their fieriness of temperament and intensity of zeal. We see these traits exemplified. in John: (a) in his confession of having forbidden a man to cast out demons in the name of Christ because the man followed not with the Apostles (Mark 9:38-40); (b) in his joining with James in demanding that Jesus call down fire from heaven upon the natives of a certain Samaritan village in retaliation for their refusal to extend hospitality to Jesus and His companions (Luke 9:51-56). Yet the Apostle John, despite his fieriness and intensity, lived to become known throughout all ages as the “Apostle of love.” Cf. John 3:16; 1 John 3:13-24; 1 John 4:7-21, etc.

111. Q. What additional facts are given us in the New Testament writings about the Apostle John?

A. The additional facts given us in the New Testament writings about the Apostle John are as follows

1. That he reclined upon the bosom of Jesus, on the occasion of the Last Supper (John 13:23-25). 2. That, on the occasion of the betrayal, he, with Peter, followed Jesus, while the other Apostles sought safety in flight (Mark 14:50, John 18:15). 3. That he went on with Jesus into the council-chamber of the high priest, while Peter remained outside (John 18:15-27). 4. That he alone of the Twelve remained with Jesus until the latter had expired on the Cross (John 19:26-37). 5. That before Jesus yielded up His life, He committed unto John the safekeeping of Mary His mother (John 19:25-27; cf. Acts 1:14). 6. That he was one of the first to investigate the empty tomb and to believe that Jesus had risen (John 20:1-10). 7. That he shared with the other Apostles the stirring experiences of the fifty days that followed (Acts 1:1-14; Acts 2:1-4). 8. That he figured prominently in the history of the beginnings of Christianity, as related in the first eight chapters of the book of Acts (Acts 3:1; Acts 3:11; Acts 4:13; Acts 8:14; Acts 12:2, etc.).

A. We are reliably informed that John spent the last years of his life at Ephesus where he labored long and diligently in the Gospel.

Well-authenticated tradition supplies the information that John outlived the rest of the Apostles by a considerable number of years (cf. John 21:21-23); that he lived in fact to the end of the first century; that he spent the closing period of his life at Ephesus, where he labored long and faithfully; that he was at last exiled to Patmos, where he was allowed to see Christ’s glory in heaven (Revelation 1:9-20), and to receive the visions which he recorded in the book of Revelation; and that finally, at an extreme age, he died the death of a martyr.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-TWO 103.Who was John, the writer of the fourth Gospel Narrative?

104. How many books of the New Testament Canon were written by the Apostle John, and what are they?

105. Of what nationality was the Apostle John?

106. What occupation did John follow, prior to his call to the apostleship?

107. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of John’s call to the apostleship?

108. By what particular designation does John frequently allude to himself in his own writings?

109. With what special group of the Apostles was John identified?

110. What special designation did Jesus Himself give to James and John?

111. What additional facts are given us in the New Testament writings about the Apostle John?

112. What additional information do we have regarding the last years of John’s life and ministry?

Chapter 76

01.075. JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Sixty-three JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: John 1:1-18; 1 John 1:1-4.

Scriptures to Memorize: "This is the disciple that beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true" (John 21:24). "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full" (1 John 1:1-4).

113. Q. What do we learn about John from his own writings?

A. We learn from John's writings that he was by temperament a mystic.

(1) By a mystic is meant a person capable of discerning through meditation and submission deep spiritual truths and of rightly interpreting profound spiritual experiences. That this trait was inherent in John is obvious from his writings, and the possession of it may have been the prime reason why he was divinely called to the apostleship. (2) This faculty was no doubt intensified, too, by his intimate association with Jesus. It enabled him at all times to correctly interpret the Master's inmost thoughts (cf. John 1:50-51; John 2:11; John 2:17; John 2:22; John 4:13-14; John 6:5-6; John 6:51; John 7:37-39, etc.). (3) It was this faculty, too, which made John the outstanding interpreter of the mysteries of our faith (cf. Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:4; Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 2:2; 1 Timothy 3:9). "He rivals, even surpasses some would say, Paul as the greatest interpreter of Christ. His Gospel is the greatest book of all time in its profundity and spiritual elevation" (A. T. Robertson, System Bible, Historical Digest, p. 24).

114. Q. What does John himself say with regard to the trustworthiness of his own writings?

A. He expressly declares that his testimony is that of an eyewitness and therefore trustworthy.

1 John 1:1-4, "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also," etc. John 21:24—"This is the disciple that beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true." Revelation 1:2—"his servant John, who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw" (this last scripture alludes of course to what is written in the book of Revelation). Thus John leaves us with no uncertainty as to his trustworthiness as a witness of

Jesus Christ.

115. Q. What is the general theme of John's Gospel?

A. The general theme of John's Gospel is: The Deity of Jesus.

John portrays the God side of the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth (in striking contrast, by the way, with Luke's portrayal of His human side). John pictures Jesus as a Person infinitely more and greater than an ordinary human being. He discloses the identity of the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth, and describes His person and work, under such meaningful designations as the following: (1) The Word of God, who was before all things and through whom all things were created; The Word who became flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:1-14). (2) The Only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:18). (3) The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29; John 1:36). (4) The Only Begotten Son of God (John 1:18; John 3:16). (5) The Fountain of Living Water (John 4:13-14). (6) The Bread of Life which came down out of heaven (John 6:51). (7) The Light of the World (John 8:12), the true Light which lighteth every man (John 1:9). (8) The I am (John 8:58-59; cf. Exodus 3:14). (9) The Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:7-16). (10) The Resurrection and The Life (John 11:25-26). (11) The Way, The Truth, and The Life (John 14:6). (12) The True Vine (John 15:1-7). (13) The Christ, The Son of God (John 20:30-31; cf. Matthew 16:16). Note also the following names as used by John, in the book of Revelation, to describe the glory of Christ in Heaven: (1) Jesus Christ . . . The Faithful Witness, The Firstborn of the Dead, and The Ruler of the Kings of the Earth (Revelation 1:5). (2) The Alpha and the Omega, saith The Lord God . . . The Almighty (Revelation 1:8). (3) The First and the Last . . . The Living One (Revelation 1:17-18). (4) Holy, Holy, Holy . . . The Lord God, The Almighty (Revelation 4:8). (5) The Lion that is of the Tribe of Judah, The Root of David (Revelation 5:5). (6) The Word of God (Revelation 19:13). (7) King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). (8) The Root and The Offspring of David; The Bright, The Morning Star (Revelation 22:16). It is impossible for the human intellect to grasp the full significance and sublimity of these Names. Suffice it to say that John, in all his writings, portrays the Person known historically as Jesus of Nazareth, in terms of Incarnate Deity.

116. Q. What are the outstanding characteristics of John's Gospel?

A. The outstanding characteristics of John's Gospel are: (1) its eternal outlook, (2) its spiritual elevation, (3) its profundity, and (4) its sublimity.

(1) Its eternal outlook. John presents the Person whom we know as Jesus, not with special reference to the past (as Matthew), nor with special reference to the present (as Mark), nor yet with special reference to the future (as Luke); but with general reference to eternity, which includes all past and present and future. He pictures the Redeemer as The Word who was with God from eternity, who became incarnate for a time, and who, no matter what His state may be, is always "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). John is the only New Testament writer who has preserved for us the words of the Intercessory Prayer, in which Jesus said: "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). In brief, John presents Jesus in His eternal and pre-existent and spiritual relations with God and the universe. (2) Its spiritual elevation. Whereas Matthew, Mark and Luke have much to say about what Jesus

did, where He went, and how He acted, John puts the emphasis almost entirely on His spiritual teaching. John gives us Jesus' own definition of God and of true worship (John 4:24); His sublimely spiritual Farewell Discourses in the upper room, including His teaching with regard to the advent and work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26); His discourses on such subjects as The Bread of Life (John 6:1-71), The Light of the World (John 8:1-59), The True Children of Abraham (John 8:1-59), The Shepherd and the Sheepfold (John 10:1-42), The Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-27), etc. His is 'the spiritual Gospel, abounding in symbolism," replete with references to the Hebrew Scriptures, and stern in its condemnation of those who reject Jesus as the Divine-human Redeemer and the Only Begotten Son of God. (3) Its profundity. While Matthew, Mark, and Luke exhibit the teaching of Jesus as simple, and for the most part moral, illustrated by frequent parables and narratives; John exhibits it as doctrinal and spiritual, and for the most part without illustration except by an occasional metaphor. The depth of these metaphors, however, cannot be plumbed by the human intelligence. In the teaching of Jesus as recorded by John, the most commonplace things, such as bread, light, a vine and its branches, a shepherd and his flock, etc. are used to illustrate and enforce the most profound spiritual truths. (4) Its sublimity. Whereas the Gospel by Matthew is essentially historical, and that by Mark eminently practical, and that by Luke exquisitely beautiful; it is universally conceded that John's Gospel is ineffably sublime. As the Gospels surpass all other books, so the first three Gospels are surpassed by John's Gospel. It has been rightly called "the most influential book in all literature" and "the greatest book of all time in its profundity and spiritual elevation."

117. Q. For what purpose was John's Gospel obviously written?

A. John's Gospel was obviously written to present and to preserve the true doctrine of The Person of Jesus Christ.

(1) That this is the design of John's Gospel is clearly indicated in the prologue (John 1:1-18), in which the One whom we know historically as Jesus is set forth as a pre-existent and divine Person. The Word of God, the Creator of the universe, the eternal Interpreter of the nature of God, and the Fountain of light and life. The Word, as the prologue reads, became flesh and dwelt among us (in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth of course, who, in consequence of this mystery of Incarnation, is the only begotten Son of God); and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. The Apostle then, throughout the book, unfolds the Ministry of Jesus as that of the Incarnate Son and His Heavenly Father to mankind. (2) The Apostle's design in giving this presentation of Jesus to the world was obviously to set forth the true doctrine of the Person of Christ (as preached by all of the Apostles), as the Divine-human Redeemer, The Christ the Son of the Living God (cf. Matthew 16:16), and to refute all heresies which seek to reduce Him to the level of an ordinary human being; also to establish the truth once for all time that the Christian religion is infinitely more than a system of law, ethics, sociology, or philosophy, that it is in fact The Way and The Truth and The Life (John 14:6). (3) This design is expressly confirmed by the Apostle toward the close of His Testimony. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples," he says, "which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31). Language could not be more explicit.

118. Q. For whom was John's Gospel obviously written?

A.John's Gospel was obviously written for all subsequent ages, and especially for the visible Church. This we conclude from its nature and design. It was written evidently to provide the visible Church in all ages with a testimony sufficient to oppose and refute all heresies respecting the identity, person and work of the Redeemer; and to supply orthodox Christianity with a means of defense against unbelief in all its forms. Tradition has it that John wrote his Gospel at the request of his fellow disciples and elders of the church at Ephesus.

119. Q. What are John's favorite terms?

A. John's favorite terms are: "Son of God," "light," "life," and "love."

(These terms occur so frequently in John's writings that we need not take the space here to give the numerous Scripture references).

120. Q. When was John's Gospel probably written?

A.John's Gospel was probably written from Ephesus about A.D. 90, or earlier. By this time Christianity had come into conflict with certain cults and heresies which threatened the purity of the Gospel: (1) the Nazarenes, who accepted Christ's supernatural birth but denied His pre-existence; (2) the Ebionites, who denied outright the reality of Christ's divine nature and held Him to have been merely man; (3) Docetic Gnosticism, which denied the reality of Christ's human body, and held Him to have been an "eon," or sort of angelic spirit between God and man; and (4) Cerinthian Gnosticism, which assumed a distinction between the human Jesus (purely human) and the "eon" Christ, which was assumed to have come upon Him at His baptism and to have left Him at the Cross. John evidently wrote his Gospel in refutation of these heresies, and to present the true doctrine of the Person of Christ (i.e., as the God-Man, the Divine-human Redeemer). The same general design is manifest in his Epistles. Cf. 1 John 2:22-23—"Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also." 1 John 4:2-3—"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God," etc. Cf. also 1 John 1:5-10; 1 John 2:4; 1 John 2:18-29; 1 John 5:1-17; 2 John 1:9; 3 John 1:9-12, etc.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-THREE 113.What do we learn about John from his own writings?

114. What does John himself say with regard to the trustworthiness of his own writings?

115. What is the general theme of John's Gospel?

116. What are the outstanding characteristics of John's Gospel?

117. For what purpose was John's Gospel obviously written?

118. For whom was John's Gospel obviously written?

119. What are John's favorite terms?

120.When was John’s Gospel probably written? For a thorough review of the four Gospel Narratives, at this point in our study, use the following chart. Bible students should be able to reproduce this chart from memory—the Author.

Chapter 77

01.076. THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL TESTIMONY: A REVIEW

Lesson Sixty-four THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL TESTIMONY: A REVIEW (Scripture Reading: John 20:30-31; John 21:24-25).

Author

Date of writing

Written especially for

General Theme

Phase of the nature and character of Jesus portrayed

Favorite word or Expression

Matthew Levi, a Jew, and one of the Twelve Apostles.

Probably about A.D. 65

the Jews

The Messiah-ship of Jesus

His inherent majesty

“that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,” etc.

John Mark, a Jew, with also a Roman name, evangelistic helper of the Apostles Paul and Peter.

Probably about A.D. 50

the Romans

The Works of Jesus

His inherent strength

“straightway”

Luke, a Gentile physician and man of science, traveling companion of Paul, and historian of the origins of Christianity.

Probably about A.D. 57-59

the Greeks

Humanity of Jesus

His inherent beauty

“Son of man”

John, “the beloved disciple,” one of the Twelve Apostles.

Probably about A.D. 90 or Earlier

the visible Church

The Deity of Jesus

His inherent sublimity

“Son of God” “The Only Begotten” “light,” “life,” “love”

01.077. PETER'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Sixty-five PETER'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36; Acts 10:34-43.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Ye men of Israel, hear these you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:22-24).

121. Q. Who was Peter?

A. Peter was one of the original group of the Twelve Apostles.

See Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16. Perhaps we should add that Peter was more than just one of the Twelve Apostles: he was by temperament a leader of the entire group. Though not possessing authority above the rest, yet he was always in the forefront of things. Consequently we find him taking a prominent role in the story of the historic origins of Christianity.

122. Q. Of what nationality was Peter?

A. Peter was a Jew.

He was the son of a certain Joanes (called in Matthew 16:17, Jonah; cf. John 1:42; John 21:15-17). His original name was Simon, but Jesus Himself conferred upon him the name of Cephas, "which is by interpretation, Peter" (John 1:42; cf. 1 Corinthians 1:12), (Peter is, in the original, Petros, meaning Rock or Stone). Hence his full name is usually given as Simon Peter.

123. Q. What was Peter's occupation prior to his call to the apostleship?

A. Peter was a fisherman, prior to his call to the apostleship.

Simon Peter, and Andrew his brother, were both fishermen. See Matthew 4:18-20, Mark 1:16-18. According to the account in Luke 5:1-11, Peter and Andrew were in partnership with Zebedee and his two sons, James and John, in the fishing industry on the Lake of Galilee.

124. Q. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of Peter's call to the apostleship?

A. We find the account of Peter's call to the apostleship in Matthew 4:18-20, in Mark 1:16-18, and in Luke 5:1-11.

Matthew 4:18-20, "And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left the nets,

and followed him." It is apparent from the account in John 1:35-42, that Peter and Andrew, and James and John, were all four originally John the Baptizer's converts; and that they all became disciples of Jesus immediately after His baptism by John in the Jordan River (cf. Acts 1:21-22). It was probably not long afterward that Jesus encountered the four men plying their trade on the Lake of Galilee and called them to the apostleship. Cf. Mark 1:16-17, and Luke 5:1-11.

125. Q. What do we learn from the Gospel Narratives about Peter's temperament and character?

A. We learn that Peter was at first a very impulsive and weak man, but one who grew throughout the three years of his personal association with Jesus, into a veritable "rock."

There is a human and appealing touch about this man Simon from the start. He is pictured in the Gospels as a man of volatile temperament, hasty in speech, impulsive in action; yet withal very human, very lovable, and intensely loyal at heart. It is apparent from the accounts given, that Jesus was attracted to Simon Peter from the moment of their first meeting. The Master of men saw the possibilities in this man, and predicted that he would become a "rock" (John 1:42); and from that moment His confidence in Peter's ultimate attainments never wavered. Nor did it turn out that this confidence was misplaced. Jesus no doubt found it trying at times, this task of making a "rock of Peter, who was more like shifting sand by nature; but sand, we should remember, is the stuff of which granite is made. And, though Peter often acted foolishly, on the impulse of the moment, and thus made it necessary for Jesus to rebuke him, at times scathingly, yet he invariably profited from the chastening; and over the three years of personal association with the Master, this peasant fisherman grew in grace and knowledge and strength, into the veritable 'rock' that his name suggests." For sidelights on Peter's character, see the following scriptures: Matthew 14:27-32; Matthew 16:21-24; Matthew 18:21-22; Matthew 26:31-41; Luke 9:28-36; Luke 22:54-62; John 13:1-17; John 13:36-38; John 18:10-12; Acts 5:26-32; Acts 10:9-16; Acts 10:34-38; Acts 11:1-18; Acts 15:6-11; Galatians 2:11-16, 2 Peter 3:14-18, etc.

126. Q. What are the most important facts related in the New Testament writings about the Apostle Peter?

A. The most important facts related in the New Testament writings about the Apostle Peter are as follows:

1. That he was the first to voice the Christian Confession of Faith (Matthew 16:15-16); in consequence of which, Jesus then and there bestowed upon him His personal blessing, and also the special privilege of stating the terms of pardon under the new covenant and opening the door of the church to receive the first converts to the Christian faith (Matthew 16:17-19). 2. That he was one of the "inner circle" of Apostles, and consequently was privileged to be an eyewitness of Christ's Transfiguration and of His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 14:32-42). 3. That, when Jesus was on trial before Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest, Peter lingered outside the council-chamber; and on being accused by those present of having been with Jesus, he denied the Master three times in succession (John 18:15-27); and that afterward he repented bitterly and was forgiven (Luke 22:54-62). 4. That he and John were among the first, on the Resurrection morning, to hear about and to investigate the empty tomb (Luke 24:12, John 20:1-10). 5. That Christ appeared to Peter personally, after His resurrection from the dead (Luke

24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:5). 6. That he shared with the Apostles, as their leader in most instances, the stirring scenes of the fifty days that followed (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:13-53; John 20:19-29; John 21:1-23; Acts 1:1-26; Acts 2:1-4). 7. That on the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem, he served as the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit (the other Apostles were also preaching) in presenting the first Gospel sermon ever heard on earth, and opened the door of the church to receive the first Jewish converts to the Christian faith (Acts 2:14-40). 8. That some ten years later, at Caesarea, he again acted as the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit in preaching the first Gospel sermon ever addressed to Gentiles, and opened the door of the church to receive the first Gentile converts to Christianity (Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-18; Acts 15:1-11). 9. That he figured prominently in the history of the origins of Christianity, in Jerusalem, and throughout all Judea and Samaria, as related in the opening chapters of the book of Acts (Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-25). It has been rightly said, in fact, that Acts of Apostles might have been as appropriately named “Acts of Peter and Paul.” 10. That he labored long and diligently in the Gospel, traveling extensively throughout the then known world, visiting the churches and confirming them in the most holy faith (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:12). Peter was the outstanding leader among the Jewish Christians of his day, as Paul was among the Gentile Christians. Unconfirmed tradition has it that he finally suffered martyrdom in Rome, in the reign of Nero (cf. 1 Peter 4:12; 1 Peter 5:13).

127. Q. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Peter?

A. The two Epistles which bear his name: 1 Peter, and 2 Peter.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-FIVE 121.Who was Peter?

122. Of what nationality was Peter?

123. What was Peter’s occupation prior to his call to the apostleship?

124. Where in the apostolic writings do we find the account of Peter’s call to the apostleship?

125. What do we learn from the Gospel Narratives about Peter’s temperament and character?

126. What are the most important facts related in the New Testament writings about the Apostle Peter?

127. What two books of the New Testament Canon were written by Peter?

Chapter 79

01.078. PETER'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Sixty-six PETER'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36; Acts 10:34-43.

Scriptures to Memorize: "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he sayeth himself, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (Acts 2:32-36).

1. Q. Where especially, in the New Testament writings, do we find Peter's testimony respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

A. We find Peter's testimony respecting Jesus of Nazareth, especially in the first. Gospel sermon addressed to Jews, and in the first Gospel sermon addressed to Gentiles; both of which are recorded by Luke in the book of Acts.

2. Q. What was the first Gospel sermon addressed to Jews?

A. It was the sermon delivered by the Apostle Peter, to a great multitude of Jews, in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 30.

(1) This sermon is recorded by Luke, in Acts 2:14-40. (2) It was not only the first Gospel sermon ever addressed to Jews—it was the first Gospel sermon ever preached to men, and it resulted in the conversion of some three thousand souls (Acts 2:37-42). (3) Moreover, it was not Peter's sermon, literally speaking, except in the sense that Peter was the human instrumentality through whom it was delivered. It was, rather, a sermon of the Holy Spirit, delivered through the Apostle Peter; for, as the scriptures expressly assert, all the Apostles were "filled with the Holy Spirit" on that memorable occasion, and "spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). Cf. the words of Jesus in John 15:26-27, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me; and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." The witness of the Apostles is, therefore, the witness of the Holy Spirit.

3. Q. In what form did the Apostle Peter present the essential facts about Jesus, in the first Gospel sermon addressed to Jews?

A. In the following form: 1. that Jesus lived; 2. that Jesus died; 3. that God raised Him from the dead; 4. that God made Him both Lord and Christ.

(1) That Jesus lived. Acts 2:22—"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves

know." (2) That Jesus died. Acts 2:23—"him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." (3) That God raised Him from the dead. Acts 2:24—"whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death" (i.e., the bonds which hold the victim of death in confinement until loosed); "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (i.e., literally impossible that such a being as He, the Son of the living God, should have been confined permanently in the grave). (4) That God made Him both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:33—"Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted," etc. Acts 2:36—"Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." That is, after raising Him from the dead, God made Him both Lord and Christ.

4. Q. What is the signification of the titles "Lord" and "Christ," ascribed to Jesus in this first Gospel sermon?

A. This: The title "Lord" is ascribed to Him by virtue of His elevation to God's throne, which is The Throne of the universe; the title "Christ" is ascribed to Him by virtue of His elevation to David's throne, which is now the throne of the Kingdom of Heaven.

(1) As Lord, He is the Sovereign of the universe, of all created things. As Christ (i.e., The Anointed One), He is Absolute Monarch of the Kingdom of Heaven. (2) God "made Him Lord by causing Him to sit on God's throne, to rule over angels and men; and He made Him Christ by causing Him to sit on the throne of David according to the promise. It was God's throne, because it was the throne of universal dominion; and it was David's throne, because it was the lineal descent from David which made Jesus the rightful king. From this conclusion the Jewish hearers of Peter learned, that, contrary to their previous conception, the promised Christ was to sit, not on an earthly throne, however glorious, but on the throne of the universe" (McGarvey, Commentary on Acts, p. 36). (3) Further, it is manifest that the One whom we know as Jesus, came into these sovereign offices, titles, powers and prerogatives, when God raised Him from the dead. Acts 2:32-33—"This Jesus did God raise up . . . being therefore by the right hand of God exalted," etc. Cf. Ephesians 1:19-23, "what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (4) Having been raised from the dead, exalted to the right hand of the Father, and been crowned King of kings and Lord of lords in heaven (1 Timothy 6:15); He was now for the first time proclaimed Lord and Christ upon the earth, and sinners were called upon to yield themselves in loving obedience to His will (Acts 2:37-42). It will thus be noted that the climax of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, was reached in his proclamation of the resurrection, exaltation and sovereignty of Jesus, The Anointed One of God. "Never did mortal lips announce in so brief a space so many facts of import so terrific to the hearers. We might challenge the world to find a parallel to it in the speeches of her orators, or the songs of her poets. There is not such a thunderbolt in all the burdens of the prophets of Israel, or among the voices which echo through the Apocalypse. It is the first public announcement to the world of a risen and glorified Redeemer" (McGarvey, ibid., p. 30).

5. Q. What was the purport of this first Gospel sermon addressed to the Jews?

A. It was essentially a challenge to the whole Jewish nation to either produce the body of Jesus which had been buried in Joseph's tomb, or, failing to do so, to admit the fact of His resurrection from the dead.

Acts 2:22-23. Note the Apostles' direct mode of address, using the second person: "a man approved of God unto you . . . even as ye yourselves know," etc. That is, an actual Person whom the people, to whom these words were addressed, knew personally; the Teacher to whom many of them had listened; the Miracle-Worker who had wrought many works and wonders and signs which they had seen with their own eyes. No doubt the great majority of that vast assembly had been present at, and had participated in, the Crucifixion tragedy. Cf. Acts 2:23—"ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay,"—an indictment of the whole nation, by the way. Yet those people now had the evidence of the empty tomb before their eyes. They knew that the body of Jesus had been taken down from the Cross, anointed for burial, and interred in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea: and now that tomb was empty! How was its emptiness to be accounted for? What was there for honest men and women to do, but to accept as a fact the express declaration of the Apostle that God had raised Him from the dead! We are safe in saying that, could the enemies of Jesus have produced His body on that occasion or accounted for its disappearance from the tomb, the Christian religion would never have been born! So, Peter's challenge to the Jewish nation on that first Pentecost of the Christian era has become a challenge to the whole world, to the skeptics and unbelievers and materialists of all ages—a challenge before which infidelity remains utterly silent even to this day!

6. Q. What was the first Gospel sermon addressed to Gentiles?

A. It was the sermon delivered by the Apostle Peter, to Cornelius and his household, in Caesarea, some ten years after Pentecost.

(1) This sermon is recorded by Luke, in Acts 10:33-43.

(2) Note that the Apostle, on this occasion, also, was guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:19-20; Acts 11:12-18; Acts 15:7-11).

7. Q. In what form did the Apostle Peter present the essential facts about Jesus, in this first sermon addressed to Gentiles?

A. In the following form: 1. that Jesus lived; 2. that Jesus died; 3. that God raised Him from the dead; 4. that remission of sins is granted through His name to every true believer in Him.

(1) That Jesus lived. Acts 10:38-39—"Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem." (2) That Jesus died. Acts 10:39—"whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree." (3) That God raised Him from the dead. Acts 10:40-41—"Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead." (4) That remission of sins is granted through His name to every true believer in Him. Acts 10:42-43—"And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who was ordained of God to

be the Judge of the living and the dead. To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." It will be noted that the content of this message was substantially the same as that of the sermon delivered on Pentecost.

8. Q. What does Peter himself say with regard to the trust-worthiness of his own testimony?

A. He emphatically declares that his testimony is that of an eyewitness, and therefore trustworthy.

Acts 2:32—"This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses." Acts 10:39—"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem." ("We" and "us" in these scriptures allude, of course, to the Apostles). Acts 10:40-42—"Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead" (cf. Luke 24:36-43): "and he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who was ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead." Cf. 2 Peter 1:16—"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty." How could language be more emphatic?

9. Q. For what is the Apostle Peter especially remembered?

A. The Apostle Peter is especially remembered for having been the first person to voice the Christian Confession of Faith. See Matthew 16:16.

(Is there any Scripture evidence that Jesus conferred special authority—primacy over the Apostolic College—in his words addressed to the Apostle, in Matthew 16:16-19? None whatever. The same authority was bestowed on the entire apostolic group, according to John 20:19-23. A key is for the opening of a door; hence, the "keys of the kingdom" are the terms of admission into the New Covenant, of naturalization in the Kingdom of Heaven, of membership in the Body of Christ. The passage in Matthew means simply that the Lord granted to Peter the special privilege of "opening the door of the church," and this Peter did on Pentecost to the Jews, and in the case of Cornelius and house later to the Gentiles. (See Acts 2:22-42; Acts 10:34-48.) For a full discussion of this matter, see my Special Study "On the Primacy of Peter," at the end of Volume II of my Survey Course in Christian Doctrine.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-SIX

1. Where especially, in the New Testament writings, do we find Peter's testimony respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

2. What was the first Gospel sermon addressed to Jews?

3. In what form did the Apostle Peter present the essential facts about Jesus, in the first Gospel sermon addressed to Jews?

4. What is the signification of the titles "Lord" and "Christ," ascribed to Jesus in this first Gospel sermon?

5. What was the purport of this first Gospel sermon addressed to the Jews?

6. What was the first Gospel sermon addressed to Gentiles?

7. In what form did the Apostle Peter present the essential facts about Jesus, in this first sermon addressed to Gentiles?

8. What does Peter himself say with regard to the trustworthiness of his own testimony?

9. For what is the Apostle Peter especially remembered?

Chapter 80

01.079. SPECIAL STUDY: ON CERTAIN MATTERS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM INCLUDING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

SPECIAL STUDY: ON CERTAIN MATTERS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM INCLUDING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

I

I trust I may be indulged at this point a few comments on pertinent matters in the field of Biblical Criticism, as follows:

1. First, I call attention to the fact that the dates which appear in the first few Lessons herein, dates especially of the birth and death of the various Church Fathers, are at best only approximate. There seems to be little or no uniformity about these dates on the part of the available sources that are regarded as authoritative. However, the dates are truly approximate in the sense that they vary only a few years at most in either direction, that is, with respect to the birth or death of the person mentioned.

2. I have not entered into critical theories of the authorship and dating of the books of the New Testament canon. Neither Higher nor Lower Criticism is included in the design of this Course. As a matter of fact, reckless speculation and conjecture, so characteristic of much of modern Criticism have failed to produce any great measure of evidence that would discredit the genuineness of these books. Perhaps the two which have suffered the most from irresponsible theories are the Gospel of John and the Second Epistle of Peter. I do not consider the critical attacks on these two books as particularly convincing, however. Besides, the subject-matter which we find in all the books of the New Testament is hardly affected by critical theories of authorship and “sources.” Hence, we accept and follow the New Testament as it is, that is, as it reads, in this Course.

3. It has been my lot to live through the heydey of that phase of German Kultur known as the Higher and Lower Criticism of ancient documents. This took the trend of an utterly reckless dissection of the ancient manuscripts, in the form of hypotheses (and “hypothesis” is largely an academic term for a guess), allegedly based on “internal” evidence, but destitute of support by any external evidence whatever. The Homeric epics, the dialogues of Plato, the treatises of Aristotle, and especially the books of the Bible, were all made butts of this irresponsible methodology. The amazing fact about it all was that many of these theories were accepted in spite of the fact that the critics seldom if ever agreed among themselves. For example, one might compare the theories of the Platonic canon put forward by such German critics as Tenneman, Schleiermacher, Ast, Socher, K. F. Hermann, Munk, Teuchmueller, Ueberweg, et al; of those of the Homeric epics, advanced by Wolf, Lachmann, G. Hermann, Kirchhoff, Wilamowitz, Seeck, Bechtel, and others; or those of the Old Testament Pentateuch (in Hebrew, the Torah) advocated by Eichorn, Vater, DeWette, Hupfeld, Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and many lesser lights: each of these groups succeeded in producing only what someone has rightly called a “labyrinth of disagreement.” For a specific example, we might consider the Graf-Wellhausen theory of the

Pentateuch, or, rather of the “Hexateuch,” for one of the critical vagaries of this school was the contention that the book of Joshua should be included with Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, in any critical study of the Old Testament. This hypothesis, which rejected Mosaic authorship in toto, and insisted upon treating Deuteronomy as a kind of “pious fraud,” flourished like a green bay tree for several decades, and is still parroted in academic circles as the consensus of scholarship, when, as a matter of fact, this is only partly true. The fact is that contemporary Jewish scholarship, including no less distinguished a name than that of Dr. Nelson Glueck, pretty generally rejects the theory. The suspicion exists today that the theory was motivated to a considerable extent by anti-Semitism, that is, the desire to downgrade the Torah and in fact any and all other writings emanating from Jewish sources. In this connection, it should be noted that the name of Jerusalem does not appear in the first five books of the Old Testament (unless, of course, the “Salem” of Melchizedek was the original site of Jerusalem, Genesis 14:18, cf. Joshua 15:63). It is inconceivable to me that these five books could have been written by Jewish writers, after the time of the Davidic reign, without containing even a mention of the city which has come to be known in Biblical history, both in a physical and in a spiritual sense, as the City of the Great King. Such a silence on the part of post-Davidic authorship is utterly inconsistent with the exclusivism of the ancient Children of Israel.

It is interesting to note, also, that the distinguished Orientalist, Dr. W. F. Albright, in an article appearing some time ago in the New York Times Book Review states that the findings of recent archaeology seem no longer to support the characteristically late dating of the books of the New Testament canon; that, on the contrary, contemporary accumulating evidence indicates that these books had been written by the seventies or eighties of the first century. This line of thought prompts another conclusion by the present writer, as follows: Undoubtedly, the most tragic event in the entire history of the Jewish people was the Siege and Fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 68-70, before the onslaught of the Roman legions under Vespasian and Titus. Yet the only references to this event in the entire New Testament are the statements of Jesus forecasting the fall of the city, the destruction of the temple, and the dispersion of the nation (Matthew 21:42-45; Matthew 23:35-39; Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 12:10-11; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 19:41-44; Luke 23:28-31; Luke 20:17-18; Luke 11:48-51; Luke 13:34-35; Luke 21:5-6). Now there is no more universally accepted fact than that all the books of the New Testament (with the sole exception of those written by good Dr. Luke, namely, the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts) were written by Jews. Again, it is utterly inconceivable (1) that all these Jewish writers could have completely ignored this terrible national tragedy, or (2) that they would have failed to seize this opportunity to cite the event as a positive fulfilment of the Messiah’s predictions, had the event already occurred when they were writing the Christian documents. Such a conspiracy of silence would have been utterly contrary to the character and design of the apostolic witness. Surely the evidence thus is convincing that the books of the New Testament, as we have them, were written prior to A.D. 70. Indeed, I am inclined to think this is equally true of the Fourth Gospel, and even of the Apocalypse, as of the other New Testament writings.

Looking back over the rash of undisciplined criticism of the first half of our century, I can only conclude that the Teutonic mentality (often aped by the British) seems to have been afflicted with certain biases, such as the following: 1. The inability to see the forest for the trees. Their search invariably was for differences, discrepancies, irrelevancies, etc.; the notion that harmonies might

exist was hardly ever entertained, much less was any effort ever made to ascertain whether harmonies did or did not exist. 2. The pre-supposition that no one ever proposed, taught, or invented anything new: hence, the never-failing quest for “sources”; whether such “sources” were found to exist or not, they were conjured up by the fertile seminarian mentality. 3. The utter disregard of the claim put forth by the Bible itself, by all the writers of the sacred text (1 Peter 1:10-12, 2 Peter 1:21, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, etc.), of inspiration by the Holy Spirit. Recognition of the Spirit’s activity in the area of divine revelation was not accorded even a passing thought by these critics. Indeed, like the Ephesian disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus, they seemed not to know even that there is the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7). 4. The elevation of apriori assumptions to the status of criteria of knowledge. For example, it was presupposed that any such event as a “miracle” would lie outside the pale of history altogether. Hence, all Biblical miracles, including the miracles of Jesus, were “explained away” on “naturalistic” grounds. This procedure resulted in the fictions of the critical imagination as far-fetched in some cases as the “tall tales” of Baron Munchausen (as, for example, in Strauss’ Life of Jesus). The detailed study of these critical “hypotheses,” and of the arguments put forward to support them, reminds one of G. K. Chesterton’s punch line: “what ruins mankind is the ignorance of the experts” (Chesterton, William Blake, p. 58).

One thing is certain, namely that any or all Biblical criticism which takes off from wilful rejection of the Holy Spirit and His work in giving us the Bible, forfeits a large part of its validity at the very outset, by this arbitrary approach. From the second verse of Genesis, in which the Spirit of God is pictured as “brooding” over the empty and unorganized “deep,” and so bringing into being an ordered cosmos, to the last chapter of Revelation, in which He is portrayed, in association with the Bride of Christ, the Church, as yearning for our Lord’s return, the imprimatur of the Holy Spirit is to be found on every book of Scripture. This is the one doctrine of the Bible with which critics must deal first of all, and this, of course, enlarges into the problem of accounting for the obvious internal unity of the entire Book as the Book of Redemption.

It is fortunate—and refreshing—to note that a return to sanity in this particular field apparently has taken place in recent years.

II Among the more recent archaeological finds that are of great significance are the following:

1. The material uncovered toward the end of the last century (1897) when the geniza (the room adjoining a synagogue used as a storehouse for dilapidated copies of sacred writings, awaiting ceremonial burial) of the Old Cairo (Egypt) synagogue. Among the most important of these discoveries were: (1) a considerable portion of the Hebrew text of the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus; (2) fragments of the long lost translation of the Septuagint, about A.D. 150, by Aquila, a onetime Christian who had apostatized from the faith; and (3) a fragment of the six columns of the Hexapla (of Origen) of Psalms 22:1-31. These were pre-Massoretic by some seven or eight centuries; the Massoretes completed their work in the tenth century. These discoveries have turned out to be especially valuable in the light they throw on the development of the signs (“points”) by which vowels were indicated in the later Hebrew. (The “vowel points” in their final form were invented by the Massoretes.) According to the most reliable information, some 100,000 of these fragments were deposited in the University of Cambridge library, and probably an equal number have been distributed among other libraries.

2. Twelve manuscripts were discovered in 1930-1931, found stowed away in jars in a Coptic graveyard. Eight of these contain fragments of books of the Old Testament, three contain fragments of New Testament books, and one contains part of the Apocryphal book of Enoch plus a Christian homily. From the Old Testament, there are substantial fragments from Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and some leaves of a codex containing the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Esther. Of the New Testament fragments, three are leaves from what was originally a papyrus codex of the four Gospels and the book of Acts: of an original one hundred and ten leaves, thirty remain. A second manuscript contained some 86 leaves of an almost complete codex of the Pauline Epistles (in which the Pastoral Epistles were missing, and Hebrews appeared immediately following Romans): this may date, we are told, from as early as A.D. 200. A third New Testament manuscript contains about a third of the book of Revelation dating probably from the second half of the third century. Many of these fragments were purchased by A. Chester Beatty, an American living in England, and hence are known as the Chester Beatty Papyri; some were acquired by Princeton University and some by the University of Michigan.

3. The John Rylands Library in Manchester, England, has assembled a large collection of these papyri. In 1936 this Library published a tiny scrap of Deuteronomy, which is believed to date from the second century B.C., and hence is probably the oldest portion of the Greek Old Testament now known to scholars. In this library there is also a small fragment, acquired in Egypt by Grenfell in 1920, of some verses from the Gospel according to John: these are John 18:31-33, and John 18:37-38. There is little doubt that this is the oldest known fragment of the New Testament in the world. “It is of interest,” writes Herklots (How Our Bible Came to Us, p. 108), “that this earliest fragment of the New Testament comes from one of its later books. . . . Thus the evidence of this papyrus scrap helps to substantiate the belief, reached on quite other grounds, that the Fourth Gospel was written, not later than A.D. 100, and probably earlier. This little fragment is the nearest we possess to the actual handwriting of the authors of the New Testament. The gap here may be only thirty or forty years.”

III

Perhaps the most important archaeological discovery of recent years is that of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This has turned out to be a series of finds, beginning in the spring of 1947, when a Bedouin goatherd, grazing his herd in the rocky region immediately northwest of the Dead Sea, and some fifteen miles south of Jericho, by sheer chance—whetted by his own natural curiosity—came upon a cave near the Wadi Qumran which turned out to be a repository of long-forgotten Hebrew and Aramaic documents. These documents were in the form of leather rolls containing writing, wrapped in black cloth, and enclosed in jars of various sizes (cf. Jeremiah 32:14). This was only the beginning: other caves have been explored, and other documents brought to light: indeed, it seems that not even half the story has yet been told.

We have not the space here to devote to the details of this archaeological “romance,” but must be content with pointing up some of the essential facts. As is usually the case, book after book about the Dead Sea Scrolls has appeared, since the original discovery in 1947, setting forth theories of different “scholars”; some of these offer fairly sane conclusions, others little but conjecture and conjecture spiced frequently by absurdities. Especially has this been true in re the particular aspect of the subject with which we are primarily interested here, namely, the possible

connections between the life and literature of this Qumran Community and the historical beginnings of Christianity. However, the tendency at present is toward a general uniformity of views as regards the significant essentials of these discoveries.

(Parenthetically, I should like to recommend the little book by F. F. Bruce, Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls, published by Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1956; and especially the book by the distinguished Hebrew scholar, Theodore Gaster, entitled The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation, with an illuminating Introduction and copious Notes. This excellent book was published by Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, in 1956).

It is generally agreed, I think, that this literature was that of a monastic community which occupied this particular region from approximately 125 B.C. to A.D. 68. It seems evident that these people were members of the ascetic brotherhood of Essenes, mentioned by Philo, by Josephus, and by the Roman writer, Pliny the Elder. Evidently they believed themselves to be the remnant who had remained faithful to the traditional Covenant and hence to constitute the true Congregation of Israel; therefore, to have been divinely chosen, in the midst of the chaos which was overtaking Jerusalem at the hands of the Roman legions at this time, to re-affirm the true Covenant in their generation. It was a commonplace in Jewish circles in those days that the Old Covenant was of necessity periodically re-affirmed, because of the tendency of the people to drift from their traditional moorings from time to time, “that the Pact concluded at Sinai was itself but a re-articulation of that which God had previously made, in their several generations, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Gaster, op. cit., p. 4). Apparently the Qumran Community believed itself to have been “elected” to achieve that restoration in its own day, when the world around, one might well say, was—from the Jewish point of view—literally going to pieces. A considerable portion of the Dead Sea fragments had to do exclusively with the life, worship, and discipline of the Qumran Order. These included the Manual of Discipline, the Zadokite Document, the Book of Hymns (Psalms) of Thanksgiving, the apocalyptic War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness, a Formulary of Blessings, and miscellaneous small fragments of different kinds of subject-matter.

Ten caves thus far have been explored. “From all the Qumran caves,” writes Bruce (op. cit., p. 31), “over 400 separate books have been identified, a few of them being almost intact, but the great majority surviving only in fragments.” The following is a brief resume of the information presented (in the books by Bruce and Gaster, especially) concerning the Dead Sea “Scriptures” which have to do with the books of the Old Testament canon and accompanying non-canonical and apocryphal writings: From the first cave to be explored, in addition to those dealing specifically with the Qumran Order and Cult, fragments of Biblical books in Hebrew were recovered, namely, portions of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Judges, Isaiah “B” (of which the text from ch. 41 onward was fairly complete), Ezekiel, and Psalms. From Cave 4 (so designated by Professor Bruce) tens of thousands of fragments were brought to light which had once constituted some 330 separate books. Ninety of these books were parts of the Bible, and among these every Old Testament book except Esther is represented.

Fragments of non-Biblical works were also recovered from these caves, in the form of commentaries on parts of Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and Psalms. In addition to these fragments, the discoveries included Hebrew and Aramaic fragments of the Apocryphal Book of Tobit, and such non-canonical works as the Book of Jubilees, the Book of Enoch, and the Testament of Levi.

Another interesting find was an expanded Aramaic paraphrase of chapters 5 to 15 of the book of Genesis, in which each of the patriarchs is made to tell his part of the story personally.

However, by far the most important discoveries reported thus far were (1) a complete scroll of Isaiah (Isaiah "A"), in Hebrew, and (2) a copy of the first two chapters, with what appears to be a verse-by-verse commentary on them, of the prophetic book of Habakkuk. These were among the very first discoveries, and proved to be amazing in their critical implications. The consensus is that in these writings we have Hebrew Scriptures approximately from eight hundred to one thousand years earlier than any of those hitherto known. Of this scroll of Isaiah, Professor Bleddyn Roberts affirms that "its similarity to the Massoretic text is astounding" (quoted by Herklots, op. cit., pp. 136-137). As was to be expected, the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls precipitated a rash of conjectures and claims of alleged correspondences between their content and the historical origins of Christianity. History repeated itself in the avid quest—apparently amounting to pre-determination—to find in the Scrolls the "sources" of the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles, and of that of John the Baptizer in particular. After several intervening years, however, sanity seems to be coming into its own, and certain uniformities have come to characterize the current critical consensus, as follows:

1. It is recognized that there are several terms and phrases in the Qumran Brotherhood literature which are found in the earliest Christian documents. But, writes Gaster (op. cit., Intro., pp. 2, 20, 21), "it should be observed that just as many things in the Dead Sea Scrolls as can be paralleled from the New Testament can be paralleled equally well from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament . . . and from the earlier strata of the Talmud." He goes on to say that many of these matters are to be found also in the ancient writings of such sects as the Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran and the Samaritans, "so that even if they have not come down to us through Jewish channels, we can still recognize in them part of the common Palestinian thought and folklore of the time," and hence "to draw from the New Testament parallels any inference of special relationship is misleading." In a word, writes Gaster, the Scrolls "recover for us what may best be described as the backdrop of the stage on which the first act of the Christian drama was performed."

2. Dr. Albright finds several characteristically Johannine terms turning up in the literature of the Qumran Community. He concedes that John, and probably other New Testament writers, may have drawn "from a common reservoir of terminology and ideas which were well known to the Essenes and presumably familiar also to other Jewish sects of the period." However, he emphasizes the fact of the "wide gulf" existing between the Essenic doctrines and the fundamentals of Johannine teaching. To point up this "gulf," he lists four basic teachings characteristic of John (and of the Synoptic and Pauline teaching as well), namely, those relating to the specific mission of Messiah, the salvation of sinners, the ministry of healing, and the gospel of love (See Bruce, op. cit., pp. 133-134). These matters are not treated in the Dead Sea documents.

3. Much has been written about the term, Teacher of Righteousness, which appears frequently in the Scrolls. The idea has been strenuously labored by some that this designation pointed to a single historical personage, a kind of Messianic prototype of Jesus. However, Gaster points out the fact (ibid., Intro., p. 5) that the Hebrew word for "teacher" derives from the same verbal root as the word "Torah." ("Right-teacher," he says, is the correct rendering, not "Teacher of Righteousness.") He then explains: "The 'right-teacher' is therefore, in this context, 'the man who

expounds the Torah aright.'" Indeed, a plausible argument can be made that the so-called "Teacher of Righteousness" was the Torah itself.

4. In short, there is nothing in the Scrolls having to do, either prophetically or historically, with the basic doctrines of Christianity, namely, quoting Gaster again (ibid., Intro., p. 19), "the Christian belief that the crucified Master was God incarnate Who by His passion removed a sinfulness inherent in man through a pristine fall from grace." "Of this basic doctrine of Christianity," he concludes, "there is not a shred or trace in the Dead Sea Scrolls."

5. To what extent was John the Baptizer influenced by the Essene Cult? Or was he influenced by it at all? Some speculative minds, on the basis of what is said of John in Luke's account (cf. the angel's words to his father Zacharias, "he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb," Luke 1:15; the statement that "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel," Luke 1:80; see also the account of John's raiment and diet, in Matthew 3:4 and Mark 1:6), have conjectured that John's parents died while he was yet very young and that he was adopted and reared by the Qumran Essenes. This is fantastic, of course, and has not a shred of genuine evidence to support it. "In the present state of our knowledge," writes Professor Bruce (ibid., p. 130), "such a reconstruction belongs more to the realm of historical fiction than to that of real history." "It was a new impulse," Bruce goes on to say, "which sent John forth 'to make ready for the Lord a people prepared' (Luke 1:17)." The fact is that John preached no esoteric doctrine, no Essenic cult. If anything is practical, it was John's message. "Repent," said he, "and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8). And what were those fruits, John? "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise." What must publicans do? "Extort no more than that which is appointed you." And soldiers? "Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse anyone wrongfully; and be content with your wages" (Luke 3:7-14). Nothing ascetic or monastic about this kind of preaching! John's ministry, says Bruce rightly, "was distinctively and essentially a prophetic ministry" (ibid., p. 130); and it was recognized to be such by all the people (Mark 11:32).

6. If it is true—and surely it is—that there was no particular flavor of Qumran in John's mission and message, it is incontrovertibly true of the ministry and teaching of Jesus. At least John was, in some measure, an ascetic. Jesus, however, went to particular pains to show that He was not. One of the oft-repeated charges brought against Him by His critics was that He ate with publicans and sinners. To those who were critical alike of John's ministry and His own, He said: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a demon. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" (Matthew 11:19, Luke 7:34). The fact is that Jesus mingled freely with the people of His day, sharing their joys and sorrows as One should who loves both God and man. The temptations which He experienced, in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, were temptations to achieve His Messianic destiny in other ways than by the way of the Cross, but of course He "set His face stedfastly toward Jerusalem." And when He and His disciples retired into a mountain apart for a few hours of meditation and prayer in solitude, it was not to escape the responsibilities of life, but to gain inner strength for loving service to the people down in the valley. How unlike Oriental cults! In these cults (Brahmanism, Buddhism, Taoism, etc.), life is regarded as illusion (maya), and salvation is envisioned as deliverance from this illusion (after a round of reincarnations) by the

destruction of every vestige of individuality (Nirvana). Withdrawal, and ultimate escape from life is the characteristic goal of Oriental mysticisms. But in the Christian faith, life is man's greatest good, and the supreme virtue is service, service that flows out of love for God and man, resulting in the life that is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3). There is no escapism in the Christianity of Christ and the Apostles.

There is no doubt, of course, that Jesus performed His incarnate mission in the Jewish Dispensation and under the Mosaic Law. This Dispensation terminated when the Old Covenant was abrogated and the New Covenant ratified by the same divine act—the shedding of His precious blood on the Cross, as the Lamb of God who "taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7). (Cf. Colossians 2:13-15, 2 Corinthians 3:12-17, Hebrews 9:11-28, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:1-13, etc.) The environmental background of His earthly ministry was Palestinian, that is, Jewish. We need look no further for the milieu in which Christianity originated historically. The Qumran literature is part and parcel, no doubt, of this background, but it contributes little or nothing that is new to the understanding of it, and hence to the understanding of the historical origins of the Christian faith. As a matter of fact, this literature is as silent as the grave with respect to the body of doctrine which makes Christianity what it is: namely, the doctrine that comprises the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Miracles, and the Resurrection.

01.080. PAUL'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Sixty-seven PAUL'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:1-23.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23). "Am I not free, am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9:1).

10. Q. Who was Paul?

A. He was the man known originally as Saul of Tarsus, whom Christ specially called and qualified to he His Apostle to the Gentiles.

See Acts 9:15-16; Acts 26:16-18. Cf. Isaiah 35:5-6; Isaiah 42:6-7; Ephesians 2:11-22; Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 1:12-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 2 Peter 3:15-16.

11. Q. Of what nationality was Paul?

A. Paul was a Jew.

Acts 22:3—"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day." Php 3:5-6—"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; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." 2 Corinthians 11:22—"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I." Romans 11:1—"I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Acts 26:4-5—"My manner of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." From these scriptures, it will be seen that Paul was born in Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia in Asia Minor, of Jewish parentage, of the tribe of Benjamin, and of strict Pharisaic persuasion and training. His Hebrew name was Saul. By virtue, however, of having been born in Tarsus, a free city (i.e., one to whose inhabitants Rome had granted the privilege of Roman citizenship, evidently as a reward for distinguished service rendered by them to the Empire), Saul was also a Roman citizen, and as such bore the additional name of Paul. It will thus be seen that he was a Hellenistic, rather than a Palestinian, Jew.

12. Q. What do we know about Paul's training and scholarship?

A. We know that Paul was one of the foremost scholars of his time.

He no doubt received his elementary schooling in the synagogue at Tarsus. During those formative years he also learned a trade, as was the custom of all Jewish boys. Saul chose that of tent-making, which was of great service to him in his later years (Acts 18:1-3; Acts 20:34; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:9). In his teens he went to Jerusalem where he graduated from Gamaliel's rabbinical school (Acts 22:3; cf. Acts 5:33-40). Tradition has it that he continued his education later in the University of Tarsus. At any rate he became a brilliant scholar. He not only knew Hebrew, but Greek and Aramaic as well, and probably Latin. He was versed in Hebrew religion, in Greek literature and philosophy (cf. Acts 17:16-31), and in Roman law (cf. Acts 22:22-29; Acts 25:6-12), and combined within himself all the Hebrew traditions along with Greek culture and pride of Roman citizenship. He was thus eminently equipped for the magnificent work which he later performed for Christ and Christianity.

13. Q. Where in the New Testament writings do we find the account of Paul's call to the apostleship?

A. We find the account of Paul's call to the apostleship, in Acts 9:1-19, in Acts 22:3-21, and in Acts 26:1-23.

(1) Concerning Paul, Christ said to His servant Ananias, in a vision: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16). (2) To Paul himself, on the way to Damascus, the risen Lord said: "But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:16-18). (3) Cf. Galatians 1:15-16—"But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles," etc. 1 Corinthians 15:8—"and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also." 1 Corinthians 9:1—"Am I not free? am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" Ephesians 3:8—"unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," etc.

14. Q. Give a brief outline of the life and work of Paul.

A. The life and work of Paul may be outlined briefly as follows

1. Saul as Student: (1) early training received in the synagogue at Tarsus (Acts 22:3, Php 3:5-6, Acts 26:4-5); (2) learned the trade of tent-making (Acts 18:1-3; Acts 20:3-4); (3) graduated later from Gamaliel's rabbinical school in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3).

2. Saul as Persecutor: (1) watched over the outer garments of those who inflicted the death penalty on Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7:57-60; cf. Deuteronomy 17:1-7); (2) became bitterly hostile to Christianity and set out to destroy the church in Jerusalem by violence (Acts 8:1-8); (3) finally extended his persecution of the Christians "even unto foreign cities" (Acts 9:1-2; Acts 26:9-11).

3. Saul as Convert: (1) his destructive sweep suddenly halted by the Lord Himself, who appeared to Saul on the way to Damascus and called him to the apostleship (Acts 9:1-9; Acts 22:1-11; Acts 26:12-20); (2) the whole course of his life changed by this incident (Acts 9:10-22; Acts 22:12-16; Acts 26:19-23); (3) spent the next two or three years in Arabia, evidently in seclusion, in preparation for his apostolic ministry (Galatians 1:11-20).

4. Paul as Evangelist: (1) on his return to Jerusalem, and on being called to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26), he became the foremost protagonist of the Christian faith (Acts 9:26-31; Acts 26:19-23); (2) in the course of three great evangelistic tours, he bore the Gospel testimony over Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece; (3) and established strong churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus and many other cities (Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38.

5. Paul as Prisoner: (1) on his return to Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey, the Jews conspired against him and he was arrested (Acts 21:1-40); (2) spent the next two years in prison at Caesarea (Acts 24:27); (3) finally appealed to Caesar, and was transported to Rome (Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31); (4) was held a prisoner in Rome some two years longer, but was then set free, about A.D. 64 (Acts 28:16-31); (5) continued to labor unceasingly in the Gospel, in Rome (Acts 28:30-31).

6. Paul as Martyr: (1) according to well-established tradition, was arrested a second time in Rome, and imprisoned; (2) finally suffered martyrdom about A.D. 68, in the reign of Nero. Cf. his valedictory, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, “For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.”

(There is a theory long extant that Paul was acquitted at his first trial, and that, on being released, he realized his dream of visiting Spain (Romans 15:24), then revisited the Near East, Crete (Titus 1:5), Asia (2 Timothy 4:13), Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3), and Greece (2 Timothy 4:20). According to this theory, the Apostle was again arrested, imprisoned in Rome (where he wrote the Letters to Timothy and Titus) and finally put to death there. The book of Acts ends without giving us any definitive account of his last years.)

7. Paul as Author: (1) wrote many epistles to confirm the churches in the faith, and to instruct them in Christian worship and living; (2) “became the greatest preacher, missionary, theologian, writer and statesman of Christian history.”

15. Q. How many books of our New Testament Canon, were written by Paul, and what are they?

A. Paul wrote thirteen of the books of our New Testament Canon, viz., Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and probably Hebrews.

These books are all epistles which were originally addressed to designated congregations or individuals. They are replete with precepts and admonitions “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete,

furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-SEVEN 10.Who was Paul?

11. Of what nationality was Paul?

12. What do we know about Paul's training and scholarship?

13. Where in the New Testament writings do we find the account of Paul's call to the apostleship?

14. Give a brief outline of the life and work of Paul.

15. How many books of our New Testament Canon were written by Paul, and what are they?

Chapter 82

01.081. PAUL'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Sixty-eight PAUL'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:1-23.

Scripture to Memorize: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also" (1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

16. Q. What is Paul's testimony with regard to his own experience on the way to Damascus?

A. His testimony is that Jesus appeared to him in person on the Damascus road.

(1) In his Address to the Jewish people in Jerusalem (Acts 22:1-22), he said: "And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew 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 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" (Acts 22:6-11). (2) In his Defense before King Agrippa (Acts 26:2-23), he said: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem; and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 26:9-15). (3) Luke gives substantially the same account in Acts 9:1-9, having no doubt heard it many times from the lips of Paul himself, with whom he was long and intimately associated (cf. 2 Timothy 4:11). (4) As this incident occurred some years after the resurrection of Jesus, it follows that it must have been, and in fact was, the risen Christ who appeared to Saul on this occasion.

17. Q. What is Paul's testimony with regard to the nature of this divine manifestation to him on the way to Damascus?

A. His testimony is that Jesus manifested Himself in the midst of a "great light from heaven" which suddenly enveloped the cavalcade as it neared the city of Damascus.

(1) Acts 9:3—"and as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus; and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven." Acts 22:6; Acts 22:11—"And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. . . . 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." Acts 26:12-13—"as I journeyed to Damascus, with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me." (2) It should be noted that Jesus spoke to Saul out of the midst of this halo which was so wondrously bright that it exceeded the brilliance of the noon-day sun. The inference is that this radiance emanated from the spiritual (i.e., immortalized, glorified) body of the risen Lord. Cf. John 7:39—"for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." John 17:5—"Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory I had with thee before the world was." 1 Timothy 6:14-16, "our Lord Jesus Christ . . . the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable." 1 Corinthians 15:40—"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." 1 Corinthians 15:42-43—"So also is the resurrection of the dead. . . . it is sown in dishonor: it is raised in glory." (See especially Daniel 12:3). Similarly, concerning the City of the redeemed, we are told that "the glory of God" will lighten it, and that "the lamp thereof is the Lamb" (Revelation 21:23). No wonder that experience made such a deep and lasting impression upon the mind and heart of the man from Tarsus!

18. Q. What is Paul's testimony with regard to the design of this heavenly manifestation to him on the Damascus road?

A. His testimony is, that Jesus thus manifested Himself to him, in His glorified body, for the purpose of calling him and qualifying him for the apostleship.

(1) According to Paul's own testimony, the risen Lord said to him: "But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:16-18). Similarly, the Lord said to His servant Ananias, later, in a vision: "he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16). And Ananias said to Saul, on the occasion of their first meeting: "The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:14-15). Cf. also Galatians 1:15-16. (2) Paul testifies also, that those who accompanied him "beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me" (Acts 22:9). Luke says: "the men that journeyed with

him stood speechless, hearing the sound, but beholding no man" (Acts 9:7). The inference is that the rest of the company heard a vague, indistinguishable sound, but could not discern the nature of it, much less the exact words spoken. Why, then, was it that the only person of that group with whom the Lord conversed, was Paul? The answer is clear: because it was he, and not any of those who were with him, who was to be called to the apostleship; consequently it was he alone who received the heavenly visitation (Acts 26:19). (3) The Apostles, as we have learned, were essentially witnesses of Christ. A witness, moreover, is one who testifies regarding what he has seen with his own eyes. Therefore, in order that Paul be qualified for the apostleship, it was necessary that he see Jesus in person and after His resurrection (cf. Acts 1:22). To have sent an angel, as was done in the case of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-8); or to have dispatched a preacher, as in the case of Philip and the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-40); would not have sufficed in this instance. Here was a man divinely appointed, and about to be divinely called, to the apostleship. Hence the circumstances of this particular case required that the risen Christ appear to Paul in person, in order that the latter might be properly qualified to serve as a witness of Christ and His resurrection, on a par with the rest of the Apostles (Acts 1:8; Acts 1:22). So Jesus Himself appeared to Paul, calling him to the apostleship, and gave him his divine commission (Acts 26:15-17; Acts 9:15-16; Acts 22:14-15). (4) It should be made clear at this point that Paul became a Christian and a member of the church of Christ in the same way and on the same terms that all aliens were accepted under the preaching of the Apostles: viz., by confessing Jesus as Lord (Acts 9:5; Acts 22:8); by repenting of his sins (Acts 9:8-11; Acts 22:11-13); and by being buried with the Lord in baptism (Acts 9:18; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; cf. Acts 8:36-39).

19. Q. On what grounds does Paul himself defend his apostolicity, in his own writings?

A. He defends his apostolicity on the grounds of having had (1) the proper evidence, (2) the proper authority, (3) the proper testimony, and (4) the proper credentials.

(1) The proper evidence: he had seen the risen Lord. 1 Corinthians 9:1—"Am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" 1 Corinthians 15:8—"and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also." (2) The proper authority, i.e., he had received his commission from the risen Christ Himself. 2 Corinthians 5:20—"we are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ." Ephesians 6:19-20—"the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains." Cf. again Acts 22:14-15; Acts 26:15-18. (3) The proper testimony, i.e., the Gospel message, which he had received "by revelation of Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11-17, "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." See also 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Ephesians 3:6-12, etc. Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:12—"But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things which were freely given to us of God; which things also we speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words." Here Paul defends the inspiration and infallibility of the entire apostolic group, his own included. (4) The proper credentials, i.e., the power to perform miracles, by which the Lord authenticated his ministry. See Mark 16:19-20, Hebrews 2:3-4. Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:3-5, "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of 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." 2 Corinthians 12:11-12—"for in nothing

was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works." Acts 19:11—"God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul." Paul had the credentials of an apostle, not only in his own power to perform miracles (Acts 14:8-11; Acts 13:6-12; Acts 16:18; Acts 20:9-12; Acts 28:3-9), but also in his power to confer this "gift" upon others (Acts 19:1-7, Romans 1:11; cf. Acts 8:14-25).

20. Q. What is the testimony of the Apostle Peter with regard to Paul's testimony?

A. The Apostle Peter states expressly that Paul's testimony is that of an Apostle and therefore trustworthy.

2 Peter 3:15-16—"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Note that Peter here alludes to Paul's writings as being on a par with "the other scriptures."

21. Q. On what grounds are we fully justified in accepting Paul's testimony as trustworthy?

A. On three grounds, primarily: (1) that it is the testimony of a sane and intelligent man; (2) that it is confirmed by the marvelous change which was wrought in his attitude and life; (3) that it is further confirmed by his ministry of unwavering devotion to Christ and diligence in the Gospel.

Paul "came to the whole singular phenomenon" of the resurrection of Jesus, writes Frank Morison, "from the opposite point of the compass," i.e., opposite from the original group of twelve Apostles. "He was saturated with the priestly point of view. To him the disciples, like their Master, were deceivers, blasphemers against God, and the authors of a wicked and dangerous heresy. He was determined to stamp it out to the last man. He started for Damascus with that intent. He arrived there an utterly shaken and repentant man. Nothing that he saw or heard or experienced thereafter had the slightest effect upon this settled state of mind. He recovered from his temporary blindness; he did not recover either his skepticism or his hate. He went into Arabia for many months in solitary seclusion to think it out. He came back the same radically altered man. He was ready to preach in Damascus, and did preach, but his name spelt terror to his late enemies, and some friendly spirits let him down in a basket over the ramparts of the city. He had the courage to go to Jerusalem and face the ignominy, the contempt of his return. He spent fifteen days with Peter, who knew as much as any mortal man could know about the matter. Again he was smuggled out of the city to avoid trouble, and returned to his native Tarsus. And yet, when eleven years later the young church at Antioch, remembering his zeal, sent Barnabas to fetch him, they found a man utterly unchanged in the serenity and fixity of his belief. As we read the letters of his middle and later life we find no trace of any mental weakening, rather the coming to maturity of a fine intellect, an intensely ordered and logical mind. I have purposely stated the essential facts very soberly because the facts themselves are sober. You cannot explain a lifetime's practical devotion like this by 'atmospherics,' or providential thunderstorms or any ephemeral or hysterical experience" (Who Moved the Stone? pp. 215-216). Cf. Galatians 1:15-22; Acts 9:23-30; Acts 11:19-26; 2 Corinthians 11:22-33; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, etc. The life and ministry of the Apostle Paul is in itself sufficient evidence, for every intelligent and honest person, of the trustworthiness of his

testimony.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-EIGHT 16.What is Paul’s testimony with regard to his own experience on the way to Damascus?

17. What is Paul’s testimony with regard to the nature of this divine manifestation to him on the way to Damascus?

18. What is Paul’s testimony with regard to the design of this heavenly manifestation to him on the Damascus road?

19. On what grounds does Paul himself defend his apostolicity, in his own writings?

20. What is the testimony of the Apostle Peter with regard to Paul’s testimony?

21. On what grounds are we fully justified in accepting Paul’s testimony as trustworthy?

01.082. THE GOSPEL FACTS ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Sixty-nine THE GOSPEL FACTS ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36; Acts 10:34-43; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8.

Scripture to Memorize: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written” (John 21:25).

22. Q. What briefly are the facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

A. The facts presented in the New Testament writings about Jesus of Nazareth, may be summarized as follows:

1. That He is the Eternal Word of God, who became flesh and dwelt among men (John 1:1-18, Php 2:6-8, Hebrews 2:14-15, 1 Timothy 3:16). 2. That He was begotten by God the Father, through the agency of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-37). 3. That He was born of the Virgin Mary, in Bethlehem of Judea (Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:1-7). 4. That He was reared in Nazareth (Matthew 2:19-23, Luke 2:39-40). 5. That He was baptized when about thirty years old, by John the Baptizer, in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:1-11, Luke 3:21-23, John 1:19-34). 6. That, when He came up out of the water, the Heavenly Father vocally acknowledged Him as His beloved Son, and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17, Mark 1:10-11, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:29-34). 7. That immediately thereafter He was tempted by Satan, and withstood the Temptation (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13). 8. That, following His baptism and temptation, He entered upon His ministry of service (Matthew 4:12-17, Luke 4:14-15, etc.). 9. That He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him (Acts 10:38). 10. That He wrought many wondrous and varied miracles (John 20:30-31, Acts 2:22). 11. That he called and trained twelve men to carry on His work, to act as His witnesses and ambassadors unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16, Acts 1:1-8). 12. That He taught the people by precept and parable and narrative, as one having Authority (Matthew 7:29, Mark 1:22). 13. That the people, influenced by their ecclesiastical leaders, gradually turned against Him, especially when He began to teach the abrogation of the Mosaic System (John 6:22-71; John 8:21-59, Luke 11:37-54, Matthew 23:1-39). 14. That He was finally betrayed by one of His own disciples, and denied by another (Matthew 26:47-56; Matthew 26:69-75, etc.). 15. That His own nation rejected Him and demanded His death (John 1:11, Matthew 27:25). 16. That He was subjected to a series of so-called trials before the ecclesiastical (Jewish) and civil (Roman) authorities, all of which were characterized by gross illegalities (John 18:13-23; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:66-71; Luke 23:6-12; Matthew 26:57-67; Matthew 27:11-26). 17. That Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, though convinced of Jesus’ innocence, lacked the moral strength to act according to his conscience, and was constrained by his fear of the people’s fanaticism (Mark 15:15, Luke 23:24), and of the emperor’s disfavor (John 19:12), to deliver Him to be crucified (John 18:28-40; John 19:1-16; Matthew 27:11-26, etc.). 18. That He was crucified

between two ordinary criminals (Luke 23:33). 19. That He died on the Cross, and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich friend (Luke 23:5-56, John 19:31-42). 20. That He was raised up on the third day and presented on different occasions, in His resurrection body, to His chosen witnesses and ambassadors (Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-29, Acts 1:1-8); and later to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road, in His glorified body (Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:1-23). 21. That He spent the next forty days with His Apostles, instructing them in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:1-8). 22. That on the fortieth day He was received up into heaven, given a seat at the right hand of the Father, crowned with glory and honor and immortality, and vested with sovereignty over all created things (Acts 1:9-11; Acts 2:22-36; Ephesians 1:15-23; 1 Timothy 6:13-16). 23. That on the fiftieth day, the day of Pentecost, He set up the church of Christ on earth, beginning from Jerusalem, through the agency of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and through the instrumentality of the Apostles, His qualified witnesses and ambassadors (Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:1-8; Acts 2:1-47). 24. That He thus inaugurated His reign, the dispensation of Christian evangelism and conquest, which continues to our day and will continue to the end of the present era (Matthew 28:1-20; Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34, Mark 16:15-16, Matthew 24:14). 25. That, at the end of the present Dispensation, He will come again, to complete the redemption of His people, to consummate the conquest of Satan and his evil works, to judge the living and the dead, and to triumphantly consummate God's eternal purpose and plan (Matthew 24:29-44; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 17:22-37; Acts 1:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Acts 10:42; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Php 2:5-11; 2 Peter 3:8-13; Revelation 20:1-15; Revelation 21:1-8).

23. Q. What three fundamental facts, of all this array of facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth, have been divinely constituted the essential facts of the Gospel message?

A. The three fundamental facts respecting Jesus of Nazareth which have been divinely constituted the essential facts of the Gospel message, are: 1. that Jesus died for our sins; 2. that He was buried; and 3. that He was raised up the third day.

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." Note that the Apostle Paul here states expressly, that to preach these facts, viz., the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, is to preach the Gospel, the good news about Jesus, the glad tidings of salvation in His name. Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:2—"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (2) Note that these essential facts were proclaimed by the Apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, in the first Gospel sermon addressed to Jews (Acts 2:22-32). (3) Note also that these essential facts were pro-claimed by the Apostle Peter, to Cornelius and his household, in the first Gospel sermon addressed to Gentiles (Acts 10:39-41). (4) In short, these essential facts were proclaimed wherever the Gospel was preached in apostolic times. See Acts 3:14-21; Acts 17:29-32; Acts 26:22-23, etc. Cf. Romans 10:9-10—"because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the

mouth confession is made unto salvation." (5) Note, in the last place, the close correspondence between Peter and Paul, in fact between all the Apostles, in their presentation of the essential facts of the Gospel message; a correspondence to be expected, however, in view of the fact that they were all inspired by the same Holy Spirit.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SIXTY-NINE

22. What briefly are the facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

23. What three fundamental facts, of all this array of facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth, have been divinely constituted the essential facts of the Gospel message?

Chapter 84

01.083. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CHRISTIANITY

Lesson Seventy THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CHRISTIANITY Scripture Reading: Acts 3:11-26.

Scripture to Memorize: “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus: whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses” (Acts 3:14-16).

24. Q. What fundamental truth stands out from the array of facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

A. The fundamental truth that Christianity has an historical background.

Or, that the Christian religion is not the outgrowth of abstract speculation, philosophy, mysticism, occultism, and the like; but that, on the contrary, it has its roots in certain facts which are alleged to be historical, and which are to be studied and tested in the light of their historicity.

25. Q. What is the historical background of Christianity?

A.The historical background of Christianity is the life and work of a historical character—Jesus of Nazareth. Not only His life, work, teaching, etc., but also His death, burial, and resurrection. Had there never been a Jesus of Nazareth, there would be no Christianity. Or, as previously stated, the System stands or falls with the Person.

26. Q. What is the first great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

A. The first great fact in the historical background of Christianity is that JESUS LIVED.

(1) Matthew: “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea,” etc. (Matthew 2:1). “And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of diseases” (Matthew 4:23). (2) Mark: “And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan” (Mark 1:9). “Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God” (i.e., the good news with respect to the approach of the Kingdom, Mark 1:14-15). (3) Luke: “And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age” (Luke 3:23). “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all” (Luke 4:14). (4) John: “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). “After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples, and there they abode not many days” (John 2:12). “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written” (John 21:25). (5) Peter: “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty

works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know" (Acts 2:22). "Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem" (Acts 10:38-39). (6) Paul: "Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Php 2:6-8). "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4:4). "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: he who was manifested in the flesh," etc. (1 Timothy 3:16). (7) Epistle to the Hebrews: "God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same" (Hebrews 2:14).

27. Q. What is the second great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

A.The second great fact in the historical background of Christianity is that JESUS DIED. That Jesus died is a historical fact; that He died for our sins is a doctrinal truth. (1) Matthew: "And Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit" (Matthew 27:50). (2) Mark: "And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (Mark 15:37). (3) Luke: "And Jesus, crying with a loud voice said, Father, into thy hands 1 commend my spirit; and having said this, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46). (4) John: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). "He is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). (5) Peter: "Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay" (Acts 2:23). "But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One . . . and killed the Prince of life" (Acts 3:14-15). "Whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree" (Acts 10:39). (6) Paul: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Php 2:8). "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3). (7) Epistle to the Hebrews: "He also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). "Christ having been once offered to bear the sins of many" (Hebrews 9:28). "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself up without blemish unto God" (Hebrews 9:14).

28. Q. What is the third great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

A. The third great fact in the historical background of Christianity is that JESUS LIVES AGAIN.

Or, that He was raised up from the dead, and is alive for evermore. (1) Matthew: "He is not here: for he is risen, even as he said" (Matthew 28:6). (2) Mark: "Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, who hath been crucified: he is risen: he is not here; behold, the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6). "Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week" (Mark 16:9). (3) Luke: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" (Luke 24:5-7). "Unto the apostles whom he had chosen, to whom he showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs" (Acts 1:2-3). (4) John: "Jesus saith to her, touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but

go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God" (John 20:17). "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:26-27). "I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades" (Revelation 1:17-18). (5) Peter: "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32). "And killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:15). "Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:40-41). (6) Paul: "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:20). "That he was buried, and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4). "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). (7) Epistle to the Hebrews: "When he had made purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3). "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28).

29. Q. What was the relation between these three great facts and the rise and spread of early Christianity?

A. It was their knowledge of the historic certainty of these facts that gave such power and conviction to the ministry of the Apostles, and that consequently resulted in the marvelous sweep of Christianity over the world under their preaching.

"We cannot understand Pentecost," writes B. H. Bruner, "unless we understand some of the things which preceded it. The opening chapters of Acts give us a portrait of a group of men who had been followers of Jesus of Nazareth. At His death they had left Him. Then something happened that brought them together in Jerusalem. This something was the resurrection of their leader from the dead. These men who had seen their last hope go with the death of Jesus and who had run away for fear of the authorities, had become convinced that the same Jesus whom they had followed in the flesh had actually come forth from the tomb. They had seen Him, they had talked with Him, they had broken bread with Him, they knew Him. In Jerusalem they had seen Him for the last time, but He had left them with a promise that continued to ring in their ears and which filled their souls with a great expectancy. The Ascension was a sign to these men of a spiritual fact, of which they were absolutely convinced, that henceforth Jesus was alive with God. Three facts of tremendous importance stand out as the background of Pentecost; Jesus lived; Jesus died on the cross at the hands of His enemies; Jesus came forth from the tomb on the third day. The disciples were absolutely sure of these three facts. No one can read the records and doubt it. They had lived with Jesus for three years. They had seen Him arrested, and at least some of them had seen Him die and knew where he was buried. They had all seen Him after His resurrection. They did not debate about any of these facts; they simply stated them and staked their lives upon them" (Pentecost: A Renewal of Power, pp. 15-16).

30. Q. What is the relation between these facts and Christianity in all ages?

A. The relation is simply this: that the church of Christ stands or falls with these three great facts:

“These are the three supreme facts of the Christian religion: Jesus lived; Jesus died; Jesus lived again. These three facts had begun to turn the world upside-down before any of them were recorded in a book. They were written down in a book only because they had become the dominant and outstanding facts upon which the early Christian community was founded, and the source of its conquering power. The Christian Church stands or falls upon these three facts” (Bruner, ibid., p. 16).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY

24. What fundamental truth stands out from the array of facts presented in the New Testament writings respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

25. What is the historical background of Christianity?

26. What is the first great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

27. What is the second great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

28. What is the third great fact in the historical background of Christianity?

29. What was the relation between these three great facts and the rise and spread of early Christianity?

30. What is the relation between these facts and Christianity in all ages?

01.084. THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Seventy-one THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36.

Scripture to Memorize: “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay” (Acts 2:22-23).

31. Q. What is the next question to he considered in studying Jesus of Nazareth?

A.This question: Are we fully justified in accepting Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character? This is what we mean by the historicity of Jesus. That is, Is He really a Person who lived and wrought as a Man among men? Is He an actual and outstanding Figure of human history who lived at the time and in that part of the world indicated by the New Testament writers? Or, is He just an imaginary creation of a group of overwrought religious enthusiasts?

32. Q. What is the first valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

A. The first valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character, is the testimony of the New Testament writers.

(1) Matthew, John, Peter, and others, were intimately associated with Him for some three years. They expressly claim to have been eye-witnesses of His manifestations and works (2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1-4; Acts 2:22; Acts 3:15; Acts 10:38-42, etc.). Paul vouches for the authenticity of his testimony by repeatedly affirming the circumstances of his call to the apostleship, in which, as he relates so forcefully, Jesus appeared to him personally in His glorified body (Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:1-29; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8); and we must remember that Paul was perhaps the most keenly intelligent man of his day. Luke, the historian of the origins of Christianity, long a traveling companion of Paul, expressly states that he had diligently assembled the facts presented in his writings, from eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, and that the information given is trustworthy (Luke 1:1-4). Mark obtained his information first-hand from the Apostles themselves, particularly from Peter and Paul, with both of whom he was long and intimately associated (Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, 1 Peter 5:13). (2) These men are all competent witnesses. They had opportunities of observation and inquiry; they were men of discernment and could not have been deceived; and the circumstances were such as to impress deeply upon their minds the events concerning which they testify. (3) These men are honest witnesses, as evidenced by their manifest reverence for the truth, and by the fact that they sacrificed all worldly interests, and even their own lives, in support of the things they believed and preached. They literally “forsook all” to follow Jesus. Moreover, their testimony is mutually complementary and corroborative. Why, then, should we reject the testimony of such capable and honest men, men who lived contemporarily with Jesus; and accept the theories of modern professors, most of whom are exceedingly

irreverent in spirit, and all of whom are removed almost two thousand years from the persons and incidents upon which they seek to cast suspicion?

33. Q. What is the second valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character?

A. The second valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character, is the lives of the Apostles themselves.

They expressly claim to have been personally associated with Him, and to have been eyewitnesses of His mighty works and wonders and signs. Shall we, then, regard them as impostors, and their testimony as fraudulent? Moreover, they gave themselves utterly in devotion to the Christ whom they proclaimed. They suffered martyrdom for His cause. Are men in the habit of giving their bodies to be burned—for a mere myth?

34. Q. What is the third valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character?

A.The third valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character is the testimony of contemporary profane writers. By contemporary profane writers, we mean secular or uninspired writers who lived at or about the time Jesus lived, and who were hostile to Christianity. (1) Josephus, for instance, the most noted of all uninspired Jewish historians, who was born in Jerusalem about A.D. 31, and who died about the year 114, in his celebrated work, The Antiquities of the Jews (xx. 9:1), records that Albinus, who succeeded Festus as Procurator of Judea, “assembled the Sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus who is called Christ, whose name was James, and some others . . . and delivered them to be stoned.” (2) Tacitus, well-known Roman historian, who died about A.D. 115, in his Annals (xv. 44), after speaking of the common rumor that accused Nero of having set fire to Rome (A.D. 64), says that the Emperor, in order to put an end to these rumors “began to bring to judgment and to inflict the cruelest deaths upon those whom the people execrated . . . whom they called Christians.” “The origin of this name,” he adds, “was one Christ who, in the reign of Tiberius, was condemned to death by the Procurator Pontius Pilate.” Tacitus is generally recognized as one of the more accurate of historians. (3) Pliny the Younger, while governor of Bithynia, wrote a letter to the Emperor Trajan (about the year 111), in which he asked the emperor what to do with the Christians. In this letter, Pliny describes the customs of the Christians in his province, and the details given are strikingly confirmatory of the representations in the New Testament books regarding the meetings and practices of the early church. Concerning the worship of the Christians, Pliny says: “They sing a hymn to Christ as to a god.” (See Epistle of Pliny, x. 97.). (4) Suetonius, another Roman writer, in his Life of Claudius, says: “The Jews, incited by a certain Chrestus continually rebelled, and he drove them out of Rome.” Suetonius wrote about A.D. 120. “We know,” writes Merejkowski, “that Christians were at that time called Christiani, and therefore that the Chrest of Suetonius can be no other than Christ.” (For an excellent presentation of contemporary profane testimony respecting the historicity of Jesus, see Jesus The Unknown, pp. 17-48, by D. S. Merejkowski, published in 1933 by Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, translated from the Russian by H. Chrouschoff Matheson).

35. Q. What is the fourth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

A. The fourth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character, is the phenomenal spread of Christianity in the first two centuries of the Christian era.

Fifty years after the death of Christ there were churches in all the principal cities of the Roman Empire. Nero (37-68), says Tacitus, found a great multitude of Christians to persecute. Pliny wrote to Trajan (52-117) that they "pervaded not merely the cities but the villages and country places, so that the temples were nearly deserted." Tertullian (150-240) writes: "We are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all your places, your cities, your islands, your castles, your towns, your council-houses, even your camps, your tribes, your senate, your forum. We have left you nothing but your temples." In the time of the Emperor Valerian (253-268), the Christians, we are told, constituted half the population of Rome. The whole Empire was brought under the sway of the Gospel in the time of Constantine (272-337), only three hundred years after the death of Jesus, (See Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 191). Can this phenomenal spread of primitive Christianity be satisfactorily accounted for on the basis of devotion to a mere myth?

36. Q. What is the fifth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

A.The fifth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character, is Christianity itself. The almost twenty centuries of Christian evangelism and conquest; the development of the Christian missionary enterprise; the innumerable churches in all parts of the world; the countless martyrs to the cause of Christ; the world-wide spread of the Gospel; the consecration everywhere of life and talent and substance; the preaching, praying, hymnology and singing of all ages of the Christian era; the Christian ordinances (baptism, which portrays the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; and the Lord's Supper, which commemorates His suffering and death); the Lord's Day, the memorial of His resurrection; the Christian calendar which makes Him the central Figure of all human history and chronology: are all these things monuments to a mere myth? The notion is incredible! Are all these but manifestations of devotion to an Ideal rather than a Reality? We answer, No; because the voice of history and observation is that ideals languish and are forgotten with the passing of the years. Christianity is itself "the miracle of the ages," because it is founded upon the living, ever-living Christ.

37. Q. What is the sixth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

A. The sixth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character, is His own teaching, character and life.

John Stuart Mill writes: "Who among His disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels?" (Essays on Religion, p. 254). "Had Jesus never lived," says Rousseau, "the writers of the Gospels would themselves have been as great as He." Or, as Theodore Parker puts it, "It would take a Jesus to forge a Jesus." "Who but Jesus Himself could have 'invented,' could have created, Jesus? A group of 'unlearned and ignorant men'? (Acts 4:13). That is improbable, but still more improbable is it that the most living of human figures should have been concocted from various mythological materials in the scientific retorts of contemporary philosophers" (Merejkowski, Jesus The Unknown, p. 29). "The conception of Christ's person as presenting deity and humanity

indissolubly united, and the conception of Christ's character, with its faultlessness, and all-comprehending excellence, cannot be accounted for on any other hypothesis than that they were historical realities" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 186).

38. Q. What, then, can be our only logical conclusion respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

A. The only logical conclusion at which we can arrive, in view of the evidence presented, is that Jesus of Nazareth is a historical character.

(1) As a matter of fact, the historicity of Jesus has never been questioned by competent and honest scholars, even among educated Jews; for example, the well-known work by Dr. Joseph Klausner of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, published in 1926, entitled Jesus of Nazareth, in which Jesus is frankly treated as an historical character. Though of course ignoring, as do all Jews, the supernatural element in Jesus' person and life, Dr. Klausner does not even question His historicity. (2) The late Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, in answer to the question, "What have you to say against the theory that Jesus was a mythical creation?" writes as follows: "Simply this, that the theory itself is a mythical creation confined to a small group of intellectual eccentrics who are regarded as negligible by practically all scholars and historians. Admitting the theory, the difficulty arises as to who invented so matchless a personality as Jesus, and placed in His mouth the teachings which have revolutionized the race." This is all that needs be said on the subject.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-ONE 31.What is the next question to be considered in studying Jesus of Nazareth?

32. What is the first valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

33. What is the second valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character?

34. What is the third valid ground on which we accept Jesus as a historical character?

35. What is the fourth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

36. What is the fifth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

37. What is the sixth valid ground on which we accept Jesus of Nazareth as a historical character?

38. What, then, can be our only logical conclusion respecting Jesus of Nazareth?

01.085. THE ISSUE RESPECTING JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Seventy-two THE ISSUE RESPECTING JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: Matthew 22:41-46, 1 John 2:18-29.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he?” (Matthew 22:41-42). “Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is?” (Matthew 16:13). “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the anti-christ” (1 John 4:2-3).

39. Q. How shall we continue our study of Jesus of Nazareth from this point?

A.We shall continue our study of Jesus of Nazareth from this point by now proceeding to investigate His teaching, His character, and His claims. In other words, in the first phase of our investigation, we studied the genuineness of the Christian Documents in which the testimony respecting Jesus is recorded. In the second phase, we studied the credibility of the testimony respecting Jesus as recorded in the Christian Documents. In the third phase, we studied the historicity of Jesus. Now we shall advance to the fourth phase, in which we shall study the Jesus of history: the One who lived on earth, who died on the Cross, and who, according to the representations made in the apostolic writings, was raised up from the dead.

40. Q. What is the great Question of all questions for human consideration?

A. The great Question of all questions for human consideration is: Who is the Person known in history as Jesus of Nazareth?

Or, as Jesus Himself put it: “What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he?” (Matthew 22:42). Cf. Matthew 16:13; Matthew 16:15—“Who do men say that the Son of man is?. . . . Who say ye that I am?”

41. Q. Why is this the most important question for human consideration?

A. It is the most important question for human consideration because one’s eternal salvation depends upon one’s answer to it.

(1) Note, first, that it is a question about a Person; and not about an opinion, theory, dogma, etc. (2) Note, in the second place, that it is distinctly a personal question, in the sense that it is addressed to men as individuals, to you, to me, to every human being. (3) Note, in the third place, that it is a most direct question, put in the second person: “What think ye of the Christ?” “Who say ye that I am?” (4) Note, in the fourth place, that it is an unavoidable question, especially in a land where the Gospel is known and preached. Even though thousands of people of our day and age try to go through life ignoring the issue involved in this question, yet in effect their very disregard or neglect is their answer to it, so far as their own lives are concerned. This is what is rightly called a

forced option: indifference is rejection. Cf. the words of Jesus, in John 5:40—"Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life."

42. Q. What is the answer given by unbelievers to this question?

A. The answer usually given by unbelievers to this question is, that the Person known in history as Jesus of Nazareth was a great ethical teacher, but withal only a man.

43. Q. What are the proponents of this view of Jesus commonly called in our day and age?

A. They are commonly called "Modernists."

Modernism is the name currently given to this view of Jesus. Modernists are, however, divided into two schools, generally speaking, viz., those known as Radical Modernists, and those known as Liberal Modernists. (1) The Radical Modernists are, in the words of Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, those "intellectual eccentrics" who deny the historicity of Jesus; who hold, in other words, that the Jesus presented in the New Testament writings is an Ideal rather than an actual historical person. E.g., according to G. Stanley Hall, "historic Christianity" made its Christ out of "mind-stuff"; in other words, its Jesus is a purely imaginary creation. "Not the historical Jesus," says Drews, "but Christ as an idea, as an ideal for divine humanity, must henceforth be the ground for religion." Many of these books read in certain paragraphs like quotations from Mrs. Eddy's Science and Health, and remind us of her "non-sense" world. This "Mythomania," says Merejkowski, "is a pseudo-scientific form of religious hatred of Christ and Christianity. . . . It is only too clear that wherever there was a desire to put an end to Christianity, the 'scientific discovery' that Christ was a mere myth was rapturously received as though that was the one thing needed" (Jesus the Unknown, pp. 27-28). We have already given sufficient attention to this view in our preceding lesson. Suffice it to say here, that it must be apparent to all honest and intelligent persons that no mere human genius could have invented the matchless personality, the stainless character, and the faultless teaching presented in the Gospel Narratives. Again quoting Rousseau: "Had Jesus never lived, the writers of the Gospels would themselves have been as great as he." (2) The Liberal Modernists hold the view, generally speaking, that Jesus was a great teacher and moral philosopher, perhaps more "divinely illumined" than others of His kind, but withal only a man. According to this view, His Messianic claims were of purely human origin and impulse, originating in His own mind probably about the time He was baptized; and that in offering Himself to His people as their long-anticipated Messiah, He was motivated by an intense patriotic desire to render His nation a great unselfish service; consequently, His death was merely that of a martyr who rendered "the last full measure of devotion." For example, Dr. Charles Francis Potter, the foremost protagonist of "Humanism," writes: "As Jesus read these books [the Jewish Scriptures] and pondered their meaning, he became more than ever convinced that God was his Father. He found many references to the coming of the Messiah who should usher in a new day, the day of God's reign upon the earth, the coming of the kingdom" (Story of Religion, p. 220). The inference is, of course, that Jesus decided within Himself to be that Messiah for whom His people were looking. In similar vein, another current writer, Lewis Browne, a one-time Jewish rabbi, says: "Whether Jesus himself was convinced he was the Messiah is a problem still unsolved . . . but it is certain that many of those who followed Jesus believed him to be the Messiah" (This Believing World, p. 267). Again: "He was a great man, truly wonderful, but only a man; a bright and shining light, like John the Baptist; a sensitive, tender-hearted patriot and martyr like Jeremiah; an intrepid messenger from the courts

of heaven, like Elijah; a Palestinian Confucius or Buddha, very great, very wonderful, but still a man" (Jefferson, The Fundamentals). Another recent treatment of Jesus of this type is Emil Ludwig's Son of Man, in which the author professes to "rationalize" the Character presented in the Gospel records; to present, as he says in substance, a perfectly human man called Jesus and to avoid the technical word "Christ." Similarly Bruce Barton, in his book, The Man Nobody Knows, presents Jesus as "a Fine Advertiser." "It is true," writes A. S. Baillie, "that nobody else has ever found the kind of Christ Bruce Barton has discovered in the Gospels. He is a jolly, hail well-met fellow. Mr. Sinclair Lewis after reading such a book might conclude that Christ was the original Babbitt. A great booster, a fine advertiser, a member of the Kiwanis and Rotarians, a real manly man from top to bottom." These are fair samples of the trash with which the book markets of the world have been deluged in the last two decades. (3) Several years ago a debate was held between Dr. Charles Francis Potter, mentioned above, and Dr. John Roach Straton, now deceased, then Minister of Calvary Baptist Church, New York City. The proposition debated was this: "Resolved that Jesus Christ was Entirely Man instead of Incarnate Deity." The affirmative was taken by Potter, the negative by Straton. Dr. Potter said: "It is understood between my opponent and myself that the issue of this debate is the deity of Jesus Christ. It is admitted by both sides that he was a truly great man, but my worthy opponent takes the position that he was more than man—that he was also incarnate deity. This I deny, and this is the issue of this debate." May we be permitted to call attention to the fact that this has always been the issue between unbelief and true Christianity. Cf. 1 John 4:2-3—"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist." 1 John 2:22-23—"Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; and he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also." 2 John 1:7-11, "For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. . . . Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works." The Christian Confession of Faith is: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-TWO 39.How shall we continue our study of Jesus of Nazareth from this point?

40. What is the great Question of all questions for human consideration?

41. Why is this the most important question for human consideration?

42. What is the answer given by unbelievers to this question?

43. What are the proponents of this view of Jesus commonly called in our day and age?

Chapter 87

01.086. THE ISSUE RESPECTING JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Seventy-three THE ISSUE RESPECTING JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: 1 John 2:19-29; 1 John 4:1-6; 2 John 1:4-11.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also” (1 John 2:22-23). “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

44. Q. What is the orthodox Jewish view of Jesus?

A.The orthodox Jewish view of Jesus is the same as that of the so-called “Modernists.” That is, that Jesus was a great teacher and moral philosopher, a divinely-illumined man, but withal entirely man. (1) Despite God’s numberless efforts in his behalf and God’s longsuffering toward him, the Jew has from the earliest times persisted in his policy of rejecting spiritual light and truth. See 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Hebrews 3:1-4; Hebrews 3:13; Deuteronomy 32:15; Isaiah 63:10; Nehemiah 9:9-31; Acts 7:51-53; 2 Corinthians 3:14-15, etc. “A veil lieth upon their hearts,” explains Paul (2 Corinthians 3:15); again, “a hardness in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Romans 11:25). (2) This “hardness” and blindness persists even in our day and age. As an example, I might cite two instances from Dr. Joseph Klausner’s work, Jesus of Nazareth, published in 1926. The first pertains to the words used by Jesus in instituting the Lord’s Supper. “It is impossible to admit,” says this eminent Jewish scholar, “that Jesus would have said to his disciples that they should eat of his body and drink of his blood. . . . The drinking of blood, even if it was meant symbolically, could only have aroused horror in the minds of such simple Galilean Jews” (p. 329). This, mind you, despite the fact that the Jewish altars had dripped with the blood of sacrificial animals for many long centuries! And in the very face of the fact that this shedding of sacrificial blood was known all the time to have been essentially typical and anticipatory of the world’s Atonement! Just like the Twelve Apostles who, though associated with Jesus personally, for more than three years, failed utterly to grasp the spiritual content of His teaching with respect to the nature and scope of His covenant and kingdom, and were, even after His death and resurrection, still anticipating an earthly kingdom of the Messiah (Acts 1:6); so this modern Jewish authority fails to see beyond the literal, beyond the symbolical, to discern the profound spiritual truths expressed in the words of Jesus with respect to the Loaf and the Cup of the Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:14-20, Matthew 26:26-29). Again, in dealing with the resurrection of Jesus, Dr. Klausner dismisses the incident—the most important in the entire story of the historic origins of Christianity, and the one which if it could be disproved would result in the complete collapse of the Christian religion—with a bold statement to the effect that Joseph of Arimathea obtained the body of Jesus secretly and buried it somewhere in an unknown grave! Yet he fails to offer one iota of evidence in support of this bold statement! Thus, without a particle of testimony to give at least a semblance of

strength to his assertion, this modern Jewish scholar dismisses with a mere gesture the most fundamental fact of the whole Christian System! (3) To cap the climax, we are now being told that orthodox Jews of today would be perfectly willing to fellowship with Christians on the common ground of the acceptance of Jesus as an ethical teacher and moral philosopher! Ernest R. Trattner, a Jew, in an article which appeared recently in The Thinker, under the caption, “Jesus and the Modern Mind,” writes as follows: “The Jew would see Jesus in a Jewish framework; the churches persist in viewing him in terms of the ancient creeds. The Jew would understand the Nazarene as a product of Jewish development on Jewish soil; the churches insist that he is the work of the Holy Ghost. The Jew would look at him through the glasses of history; the churches encourage men to use the lenses of doctrine, specially prepared according to the requisites of a pre-arranged system. The intelligent Jew enjoys the Jesus of the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark and Luke); the churches adore the Christ of the Fourth Gospel. And so the grand division goes on between the brethren of Jesus and his followers. . . . What of the future? If I may venture the prophecy, I believe that the Jewish world will move toward a progressive appreciation of Jesus, in proportion as the Christian world turns its back on the whole abracadabra of medieval theology.” The issue is stated here clearly! In brief, all that Jews would ask of Christians, in order that the two groups may find a common ground of fellowship and co-operation is that the latter abandon every fundamental of the Christian faith; every conviction they hold with respect to the death, resurrection, exaltation and sovereignty of Christ; every fundamental doctrine in fact that the Apostles preached in primitive times! This is asking too much! It is asking us to repudiate Peter’s great sermon on the day of Pentecost, Paul’s discourse on Mars Hill, his defense before King Agrippa—in short, every fact, command and promise of the Gospel! (4) The deity of Jesus has been the issue between the church of Christ and the Jewish Synagogue, from the time of the Apostles down to the present moment: the issue which the Church cannot compromise without the complete surrender of her “candlestick” and the absolute certainty of complete disintegration. For the Christian Church to surrender at this crucial point, against the evidence of the apostolic writings, would be for her to turn her back on the truth, to cast aside as worthless everything that Christianity has stood for for twenty centuries, to bind anew upon the human race the yoke of the Mosaic System, and to count the blood of the covenant, wherewith she has been sanctified, an unholy thing! This the true Church cannot, and will not, do!

45. Q. What is the outstanding characteristic of so-called “Modernism?”

A. The outstanding characteristic of so-called “Modernism” is that there is very little in it that is distinctively modern.

(1) The view that Jesus was only and entirely man, is as old as His ministry upon the earth. Mark 6:3-6, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him. And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief” (cf. Matthew 13:55). (2) This view of Jesus has been the view of Jews, Unitarians, Radicals, Liberals, etc., in fact, of unbelievers of all ages of Christian history. (3) Practically all the views which today parade in the purple and fine linen of “modern scholarship” flourished in the first four centuries of the Christian era. (a) The Ebionites, for example (about A.D. 100), denied outright the reality of Christ’s divine

nature and held that He was merely man. (b) The Nazarenes (about 100) held to His supernatural birth, but rejected His inherent deity and His pre-existence as The Word. (c) Docetic Gnosticism (about 100 and following) denied the reality of Christ's human body, and held Him to have been an "eon" or sort of angelic spirit between God and man. (d) Cerinthian Gnosticism (about A.D. 100, and following) assumed a distinction between the human Jesus (purely human), and the "eon" Christ, which was assumed to have come upon Him at His baptism and to have left Him at the Cross. (e) Gnosticism (about A.D. 100 to 400) in its various forms was a forerunner of present-day Christian Science, in its denial of the reality of matter and in its assumption of the divinity of man. God did not have to become man, according to the Gnostics, because man is himself essentially divine. This sounds exactly like Mrs. Eddy. (f) The Arians (from Arius, repudiated at Nice, A.D. 325) regarded The Word who united Himself to humanity in the person of Jesus, not as possessing absolute deity, but as having been the first and highest of created beings. Arius may be rightly regarded as the father of Unitarianism in its various forms. (g) The Nestorians (from Nestorius, removed from church office for heresy, in 431) regarded Jesus Christ as a man in very close relation to God; that is, more "divinely illumined" than others, etc. (4) It will thus be seen that, in the words of Dr. A. P. Peabody, "the canon of infidelity was closed almost as soon as that of the Scriptures." "Modernism" in its various forms, is, with the addition of certain critical and evolutionary theories, but a revival, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, a continuation of these ancient heresies and cults.

46. Q. In what does the appalling insufficiency of these so called "liberal" views of Jesus consist?

A. Their insufficiency consists in the fact that they leave the world without a divine Redeemer and therefore hopelessly lost in sin.

(1) They consist entirely of negation, without affirmation; and being negative, are consequently destructive. They take the Lord away from us, but offer nothing to take His place. (2) They leave the human race without a sufficient Atonement for sin. If Jesus did not die for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3), then certainly no one else has done so. Further, if Jesus was merely a man, He did not die for our sins, because He could not have done so. If His death was only that of a martyr, it could not be the world's Atonement. They leave the human race without any certainty of "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25-26). If Jesus was not raised up from the dead, then certainly no one else has been raised; nor is there any "assurance of faith" or "certainty of hope" that any one will ever be raised. They ignore the overwhelming love and mercy of God as if His grace had never been manifested to mankind (John 3:16). (5) In short, they leave the human race back where it was two thousand years ago, floundering in the mire of natural religion and philosophy, hopelessly lost in sin, and hopelessly in bondage to death. 1 Corinthians 15:13-19, "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we [i.e., the Apostles] are found false witnesses of God: because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable." Paul's argument here is irrefutable; and is therefore urged upon the attention of all who deny or ignore the deity of Jesus Christ.

47. Q. What is the answer given by all true believers to the great question, Who is Jesus?

A. The answer given to this question by all true believers is, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(1) That is, He is the Divine-human Redeemer, the God-Man (God as well as man, and man as well as God), The Word who became incarnate, the Only Begotten from the Father, The Anointed One of God, The Son of the living God: in short, Incarnate Deity. (2) It is impossible, of course, for the human mind to fully elucidate this New Testament doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ; this great “mystery of godliness” (1 Timothy 3:16); this great mystery of Immanuel, “which is, being interpreted, God with us” (Matthew 1:23); this mystery of the indissoluble union of the divine and human natures, in the Person of the One who is known in history as Jesus of Nazareth. Nor is it necessary for us to attempt to explain this great mystery, or to define it in a series of dogmatic pronouncements. Suffice it for us that it has been embodied and expressed in the Christian Confession of Faith—I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (cf. Matthew 16:16, John 20:30-31, Romans 10:9-10, etc.). May we therefore confess Him before men, that He may confess us before our Father who is in heaven (Matthew 10:32-33, Luke 12:8).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-THREE 44.What is the orthodox Jewish view of Jesus?

45. What is the outstanding characteristic of so-called “Modernism”?

46. In what does the appalling insufficiency of these so-called “liberal” views of Jesus consist?

47. What is the answer given by all true believers to the great question, Who is Jesus?

01.087. JESUS THE GREAT TEACHER

Lesson Seventy-four JESUS THE GREAT TEACHER Scripture Reading: Matthew 22:15-46.

Scriptures to Memorize: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes” (Matthew 7:28-29). “And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?” (Matthew 13:54). “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God” (John 3:2). “The officers answered, Never man so spake” (John 7:46).

48. Q. From what point of view shall we begin our study of the Jesus of history?

A. We shall study the Jesus of history, first, as The Great Teacher.

“Teacher” was the term most commonly used by His contemporaries in addressing Him. Matthew 8:19—“And there came a scribe, and said unto him, Teacher, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest?” Matthew 9:11—the Pharisees “said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners?” Mark 5:35—“Why troublest thou the Teacher any further?” John 3:1-2—“Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God,” etc. Cf. Matthew 22:16, Luke 12:13, John 11:28, etc. Jesus frequently alluded to Himself as The Teacher. Matthew 26:18—here Jesus said to His disciples, “Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Teacher saith, My time is at hand; I keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.” Cf. Mark 14:14. Luke 22:11. John 13:13—“Ye call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.” Not only His contemporaries, but people of all subsequent ages, disciples and unbelievers alike, are unanimous in acknowledging Him to be The Great Teacher of all human history.

49. Q. In what manner did Jesus of Nazareth present His teaching?

A. He taught the people “as one having authority.”

Matthew 7:28-29—“the multitude were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes” (cf. Mark 1:22). Matthew 5:27—“Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you,” etc. (cf. Matthew 5:34; Matthew 5:39; Matthew 5:44, etc.). Note the authoritative expression, “I say unto you.” Note also the following facts with regard to His manner of presenting His teaching: (1) He invariably spoke without hesitation, even in reply to the most vexatious questions, such as that of the proper relation between church and state (Matthew 22:15-22); that of the persistence of earthly relationships in the future state (Matthew 22:23-33); that of the “greatest commandment” in the Mosaic law (Matthew 22:34-40), etc. (2) He invariably spoke without effort, without any indication of weariness, and in a quiet dignified manner that added force to His utterances. (3) He invariably spoke without meditation or consultation. He offered the correct solution to every troublesome

problem presented to Him, then and there, on the spur of the moment. He never advised with disciples, friends, scribes or priests. (4) He never expressed a doubt. (5) He spoke with such finality as to leave no room for further discussion. Matthew 22:46—"And no one was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." (6) He made no mistakes. No admission of error ever fell from His lips; and His shrewd and calculating enemies were invariably unsuccessful in their efforts to discredit His wisdom. (7) He was always master of the situation (cf. Matthew 22:15-46). (8) He always spoke in the simplest language. Fondnes for swollen language is a noticeable characteristic of human teachers and writers. The more "academic" the style of speech the more indicative of profundity it is supposed to be; however, "muddy water always looks deep." As Oliver Goldsmith said to Samuel Johnson, "You make your little fish talk like whales." "But Christ spoke of the loftiest subjects in the simplest language. Who ever needs a dictionary to study His words? His language is simple enough for a primer, and yet each word sparkles like a gem, and His sentences and sermons dazzle like a cabinet filled with diamonds. No wonder the common people heard Him gladly!" (M. M. Davis, How to Be Saved, p. 72). And the voice of all subsequent ages is that of the officers who were sent to apprehend Him, but who returned empty-handed, exclaiming: "Never man so spake!" (John 7:46).

50. Q. In what three general forms did Jesus of Nazareth present His teaching?

A. He presented His teaching in the form of (1) precept, (2) parable, and (3) narrative.

(1) A precept is ordinarily defined as a rule of moral conduct. The precepts of Jesus are, however, on such a lofty plane that we are compelled to think of them as principles rather than rules or laws. Matthew 5:28—"I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matthew 5:34—"I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king," etc. Matthew 5:39—"I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:44—"I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 6:6—"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" etc. (2) A parable is a form of narration, of something that might occur in nature, from which moral and spiritual truths are to be drawn. Much of the Master's teaching was in the form of parable, the simplest method of teaching possible for the communication of profound truth, yet the most difficult of all for the human mind to originate. In this form of teaching Jesus stands unique and inimitable. His parables cannot be duplicated, not even by the brainiest scholar of this or any other age; and though clothed in the simplest language, the human intellect is incapable of plumbing their depths. "They grow bigger and bigger the more we study them; and what at first seemed a surface truth, deepens into a fathomless sea; and the margins apparently so near together become as wide as the world" (Davis, ibid., p. 70). (3) Among the narratives of Jesus, we cite especially those of The Good Samaritan, The Prodigal Son, and Lazarus and the Rich Man. It has been rightly said that "one might as well attempt to brighten the sun or sweeten the rose" as to try to improve upon these masterpieces of narration. For sympathetic understanding of the human emotions, for absorbing human interest, for presentation of the more exalted principles of life and conduct (neighborliness, love, mercy, compassion, justice, etc.); for grasping and grouping of details in a few terse, meaningful statements (cf. Luke

15:13—“there he wasted his substance in riotous living.” Luke 15:14—“and when he had spent all,” etc. Luke 10:33—“and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion,” etc. Luke 16:22—“the rich man also died, and was buried.” Luke 16:26—“between us and you there is a great gulf fixed”); for sheer literary simplicity and beauty—these narratives exemplify perfection itself. Nothing can be found in all the literature of the world that measures up to their standards of excellence.

51. Q. What general plan did Jesus follow in the presentation of His teaching?

A. He followed the general plan of laying down comprehensive principles of life and conduct, rather than that of enacting fixed rules or laws.

(1) He reaffirmed all the essential moral principles of the Mosaic Law, but in a positive form, and in striking contrast to the negative form in which they were originally stated. Matthew 5:33-37, “Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all . . . but let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.” “Thou shalt not”—so characteristic of the Sinaitic Code—does not appear in the teaching of Jesus, except in one or two instances where He found it necessary to repeat the Decalogue verbatim (cf. Mark 10:19). At the same time, He raised almost every standard set by the Mosaic Code, and did so by laying down comprehensive principles of moral conduct which, in the very nature of the case, have their root in spiritual incentives (such as love, faith, hope, penitence, etc.). Matthew 5:21-22—“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment,” etc. Matthew 5:27-28—“Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (3) In brief, He set up the proper ideals for men to strive to attain, ideals nothing short of perfection itself (Matthew 5:48—“Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect”); at the same time never compromising with sin, and never minimizing the fundamental truth that all who fall short of attaining these ideals, by reason of their own disobedience, indifference or neglect, must inevitably suffer a just retribution for their folly. Matthew 7:17-19, “Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” Matthew 7:24-27, “Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.” True morality, then, according to the teaching of Jesus is the necessary and natural expression of true religion.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-FOUR 48.From what point of view shall we begin our study of the Jesus of history?

49. In what manner did Jesus of Nazareth present His teaching?

50. In what three general forms did Jesus of Nazareth present His teaching?

51. What general plan did Jesus follow in the presentation of His teaching?

Chapter 89

01.088. THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS UNITY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS

Lesson Seventy-five THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS UNITY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS Scripture Reading: John 16:1-15; John 12:44-50.

Scriptures to Memorize: “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness” (John 12:46). “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you” (John 16:13-15).

52. Q. What do we mean, in this connection, by the Teaching of Jesus?

A.By the Teaching of Jesus, we mean the entire New Testament Code. That is, the truth which Jesus Himself revealed and established while in the flesh; and also the truth which He revealed and established through His Apostles by inspiration of the Spirit. It is all the Teaching of Jesus. Concerning the Apostles He said, in His Intercessory Prayer: “Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world” (John 17:17-18). To the Twelve, He said, when they were together in the upper room: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, Apostles by inspiration of the Spirit, is supplementary; and the combined product is the New Testament code, in which, we are told, all things are revealed that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). The New Testament code is therefore not only a unit: it is a perfect and complete unit as well.

54. Q. What is a second outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A second outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its comprehensiveness.

1. It covers the entire field of human obligations and relationships—moral, social, spiritual, and even physical. 2. It permits no vices or insufficiencies of any kind whatsoever. (The correlation of scripture references given below and in the subsequent lesson will suffice to demonstrate: (1) the comprehensiveness of the New Testament teaching, and (2) the perfect correspondence between the truth which Jesus Himself taught while in the flesh, and that which He later revealed through His Apostles).

Chart of Human Obligations and Relationships—

Moral, Social and Spiritual—as Enjoined by the New Testament Code:

1. Those of man to God. Matthew 22:37-38—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment.” Mark 3:35—“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” 1 John 2:5—“whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected.” Cf. Matthew 6:5-15, Luke 11:1-4, 1 John 4:7-21, etc.

2. Those of man to Christ. Matthew 7:24-27; Matthew 10:37-39; John 14:21-23; John 15:1-17. John 14:15—“If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.” Cf. Romans 8:1-16, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 3:23-29, Php 3:9-11, etc. Hebrews 5:9—“he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.”

3. Those sustained between man and man, generally. Matthew 22:39—“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Luke 6:27-28—“Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.” Matthew 6:15—“If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 5:1-12; Matthew 5:21-26; Matthew 5:38-48; Matthew 20:25-28; Luke 10:25-37; John 15:13, etc. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Thessalonians 4:9. Hebrews 12:14—“Follow after peace with all men.” Romans 12:18—“If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.”

4. Those sustained between husband and wife—morally, socially, and sexually. (1) The teaching of Jesus permits divorce and remarriage only on the ground of fornication or adultery (Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 19:3-9). We also learn, from Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7:10-16, that in cases of desertion where the deserting party is an unbeliever, the marriage covenant may be considered permanently dissolved. The enforcement of these principles by all churches would do much to lessen the divorce evil so prevalent in our day. (2) See also Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:1-17, Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Timothy 5:14, Titus 2:1-8, etc. Ephesians 5:22-25, “Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it,” etc. Note the reciprocal relations enjoined here (cf. Colossians 3:18-19). (3) 1 Corinthians 7:1-17. “Because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. . . . Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency.” Here the general principle is laid down that the marriage relation may be used legitimately to meet the needs of our fallen human nature. Husband and wife are mutually enjoined to be considerate of each other’s sexual requirements, in order that neither be unduly tempted to fornication, adultery, or unrestrained sexual indulgence. For the same general reasons, in case of the death of either party to the marriage contract, the survivor is permitted to remarry (1 Corinthians 7:8-9, 1 Timothy 5:14, etc.). Note the practicalness of the New Testament code in thus dealing so frankly with the problems of everyday life. We are convinced that the general observance of these divine admonitions by husbands and wives would do much to restore the stability of the marriage covenant and to prevent indiscriminate divorce.

5. Those sustained between parents and children. Matthew 15:4—“For God said, Honor thy father and thy mother,” etc. Ephesians 6:1-4, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” See also Matthew 18:1-14, Mark 9:36-37, Colossians 3:20-21, 1 Timothy 5:4, Titus 2:1-8.

6. Those sustained between employer and employee. Luke 10:7—“the laborer is worthy of his hire.” Ephesians 4:28—“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.” Ephesians 6:5—“Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters,” etc. Colossians 3:22-25, “Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance,” etc. Colossians 4:1—“Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.” See also the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-15), and the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), etc.

7. Those of the rich to the poor. Mark 14:7—“For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good,” etc. Luke 14:13—“when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind,” etc. Galatians 2:10—“they would that we should remember the poor.” 1 Timothy 6:17-19, “Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hopes set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.” James 1:27—“Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” See also Matthew 25:34-46.

8. Those of a citizen to the state. Matthew 22:21—“Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (cf. Matthew 17:24-27). Romans 13:1-7, “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. . . . Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.” Titus 3:1—“Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work,” etc. 1 Timothy 2:1-2—“I exhort therefore . . . that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity.” 1 Peter 2:13-17, “Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake; whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well. For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

9. Those especially sustained between members of the church of Christ, and between them and their ministry. See Matthew 18:15-20; John 15:1-14; Acts 20:22-32; Romans 12:9-21; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-8; Titus 2:1-15; 1 John 4:11; 1 John 1:3-4; Hebrews 13:17, etc. Romans 12:10—"in love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another; in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 5:14—"We exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all." 2 Timothy 2:22—"Flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-FIVE 52.What do we mean, in this connection, by The Teaching of Jesus?

53. What is a first outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

54. What is a second outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

Chapter 90

01.089. THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS UNITY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS (Concluded)

Lesson Seventy-six THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS UNITY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS (Concluded) Scripture Reading: John 12:44-50, Matthew 7:15-27.

Scripture to Memorize: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

NOTE WELL: We continue here our study of the comprehensiveness of the Teaching of Jesus. Note again, from the following arrangement of scripture references, the perfect correspondence between the truth which Jesus Himself taught while in the flesh, and that which He later revealed through His Apostles by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

55. Q. List the vices, sins, and deficiencies condemned by the New Testament Code.

A. They may be classified and listed as follows:

1. Adultery, fornication, lust, lasciviousness, uncleanness, etc. (How about vulgarity of thought and speech, obscene stories, etc.?). Matthew 5:27-31; Matthew 15:19-20; Mark 10:19. Cf. Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:5; 1 Timothy 6:9; Titus 2:12; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 Peter 4:2-3; Jude 1:16-18; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15.

2. Sex perversion, sodomy, prostitution, whoremongering, etc. Matthew 5:27-30; Matthew 7:17-20; John 8:1-11 (John 8:11—“henceforth sin no more”). Cf. Romans 1:26-32; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Hebrews 13:4; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15, etc.

3. Unscriptural divorce and remarriage (i.e., on any other ground than fornication or adultery). Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12. Cf. Ephesians 5:31; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Corinthians 7:10-17 (here we are told that in cases of desertion where the deserting party is an unbeliever, the marriage covenant may be considered permanently dissolved).

4. Drunkenness, revellings, etc. (How about all-night parties and carousals, the frequenting of dance halls, night clubs, “taverns,” etc.?). Luke 21:34; Luke 12:45-46; Matthew 24:48-51. Cf. Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Peter 4:3, etc.

5. Hypocrisy. Matthew 6:2-4; Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 23:1-7; Matthew 23:13-30; Luke 11:42-44, etc. Cf. Acts 5:1-11; Romans 12:9; James 3:17, etc.

6. Pride, self-exaltation, etc. Matthew 23:5-7; Matthew 23:12; Mark 7:21-22; Mark 12:38-39; Luke 14:11. Cf. Galatians 6:3, Ephesians 4:2, Php 2:1-4, James 4:6-10, etc.

7. Bigotry. Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 20:26-28; Matthew 23:12; Matthew 18:1-6, etc. Cf. Romans 3:9-18; 1 Corinthians 3:18-20; Galatians 6:14, etc.

8. Impenitence. Luke 15:1-10; cf. Acts 7:51-53; Romans 2:4-5; 2 Timothy 3:2-5; Revelation 3:3, etc.

9. Presumption (human “think-so’s”). Luke 12:18-20; cf. James 4:13-16; Jude 1:11; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; Colossians 2:8—“the tradition of men.”

10. Theft. Matthew 15:19, Mark 10:19; cf. Ephesians 4:28, Revelation 9:21.

11. Anger, hate, malice, etc. Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:43-46; Matthew 6:15; cf. Romans 12:19-20; Ephesians 4:26; Ephesians 4:31-32; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 2:1; James 1:19-21; 1 John 4:20, etc.

12. Murder. Matthew 15:19; Matthew 19:17-18; Mark 10:19; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15, etc. Cf. 1 John 3:15—“whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.” First degree murder is, of course, the killing of another person on one’s own authority and with malice aforethought. In most legal systems it is distinguished from second degree murder (the crime passional), and from both voluntary and involuntary manslaughter. Of course, there are many different acts of homicide. On the view that being exists either potentially or actually, the person begins potentially at conception; hence abortion is murder. Is the taking of life in any form murder? The Jainists of India would answer in the affirmative; this extreme view, however, would invalidate not only the eating of meat (cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-5; Colossians 2:16; Matthew 15:11; Acts 10:14-15), but the eating of herbs and plants as well (vegetarianism—for the plant lives), and even the use of bacteriophages, antibiotics, etc., to prevent or control disease, for, as Spallanzani put it, “Even microbes have parents.” This, of course, amounts to absurdity. Suicide is certainly an immoral act: it is an unnatural act, in that it violates the natural drive of all living things to resist extinction; also it is an invasion of the sovereignty of God from whom man receives his greatest good, life, as a divine gift. Generally speaking, euthanasia (“mercy killings”) belong in the same category as suicide. Are there any circumstances in which war is justifiable? Surely, if man has the right to life, he has the right to defend it against aggression, whether the life be that of the individual or that of the society as a whole. In all legal systems of any note, self-defense is recognized as legitimate. (For example, what would have been the duty of the “Good Samaritan” had he arrived at the spot where and when the traveler was being attacked by ruffians? What would have been his duty as a neighbor under such circumstances? See Luke 10:25-37.) To what extent does individual responsibility cease when the individual acts as an instrument of the state? Does the right of individual conscience take precedence over the right of society to be protected against aggression? Titus 3:1—“be in subjection to rulers.” Romans 13:1—“Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers.” Cf. the words of Jesus, Matthew 26:52—“all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (that is, individuals or nations that build their destiny on might, will surely encounter superior might: obviously, what is implicit in this saying is that sheer militarism, lust for power and glory obtained by the sword, is immoral and certainly unchristian). War is justifiable, as a social act, only on the Principle of Double Effect, namely, that the directly willed good (the preservation of a people’s freedom and national integrity) must far outweigh the probable evil concomitants (moral defections and physical suffering). I can find no support in the New Testament for absolute pacifism.

13. Enmities, strife, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, brawlings, etc. Matthew 5:38-42; Matthew 6:14-15; cf. Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-5; Romans 12:18; Php

2:3; 2 Timothy 3:1-10; Titus 3:2; James 3:13-18, etc.

14. Heresies (i.e., departures from divine truth, especially denials of the deity and Christhood of Jesus). Matthew 16:16-20; Matthew 10:32-33; cf. Romans 16:17; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 1 John 3:22-24; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 1:7-11; Revelation 2:4-7; Revelation 2:14-16, etc.

15. Anarchy, civil lawlessness, etc. Matthew 22:19-21; Matthew 17:25-27; cf. Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Jude 1:8-11, etc.

16. Envyings, jealousies, etc. Matthew 5:3-10; cf. James 3:14-16; James 5:9; 1 Peter 2:1.

17. Covetousness, usury, extortion, oppression, etc. Matthew 6:19-21; Matthew 23:2-4; Luke 12:15-21; Luke 20:47; Mark 12:38-39, etc. Cf. 1 Timothy 6:10; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Corinthians 5:10-11; 1 Corinthians 6:10, etc.

18. Idolatry, sorcery, occultism, spiritualism, etc. (i.e., consulting fortune-tellers, spirit mediums, etc.). Luke 16:27-31; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 8:1-6; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 Corinthians 10:19-23; Galatians 5:20; 1 John 5:21; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15.

19. Ingratitude. Luke 17:11-19; cf. Romans 1:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 2 Timothy 3:1.

20. Revenge, retaliation. Matthew 5:38-44; cf. Romans 12:19, 1 Thessalonians 5:15, 1 Peter 3:9, Revelation 12:7-12, etc.

21. Evil thoughts, evil eye, evil imagination. Matthew 6:23; Matthew 15:19; Matthew 20:15; Luke 11:34-36; cf. Romans 12:1-2, Php 4:8.

22. Infidelity, skepticism, blindness of heart, railings, disputings, profitless wranglings, etc. Matthew 13:13-16; Matthew 15:14; Matthew 17:20; Matthew 7:6; Luke 12:9; John 3:18-21; John 8:24; John 12:47-48; John 16:2-3, etc. Cf. Romans 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Hebrews 3:12; Hebrews 10:28-30; 2 Peter 3:3-4; 1 John 1:6-10, etc.

23. Backsliding, apostasy. Matthew 12:43-45; Matthew 13:20-22; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:62; John 15:6, etc. Cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Hebrews 3:12-19; Hebrews 6:4-8; Hebrews 10:26-31; 2 Peter 2:1-22; Jude 1:4-6; Revelation 2:4-5, etc.

24. Indifference, lukewarmness. Matthew 7:24, Luke 16:13; Luke 11:23, etc. Cf. Revelation 3:15-18.

25. Inconsistency, i.e., of practice with profession. Matthew 7:15-23; Matthew 23:3-4, etc. Cf. Romans 2:1; Romans 2:21-23; James 2:14-26.

26. Materialism, worldliness, worldly anxiety, etc. Matthew 6:19-34; Matthew 13:22; Matthew 16:4; Luke 9:60; Luke 14:16-24; Luke 16:1-13; Luke 16:19-31; Luke 17:26-29; John 6:26-27, etc. Cf. Romans 12:2; Galatians 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; 1 John 2:15-17, etc.

27. Swearing, blasphemy, profanity, irreverence, sacrilege, etc. Matthew 5:33-37; Matthew 7:6; Matthew 7:21-22; Matthew 12:31-32, etc. Cf. James 2:7; James 3:10; James 5:12, etc.

28. False witness, lying, deceit, fraud, etc. Matthew 15:19; Mark 10:19; Mark 7:21-22. Cf. Acts 5:1-9; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:6; James 5:4; 1 Peter 2:1; Revelation 21:8, etc.

29. Judging, scandalmongering, slander, etc. Matthew 7:1-5; John 8:7-11; cf. James 4:11-12, 1 Peter 3:8-11, etc.

30. Wickedness and godlessness in general. Matthew 24:37-39, Luke 17:26-30. Cf. Romans 1:18-32; Romans 8:6-8; 2 Timothy 3:1-12; Galatians 5:16-26, etc.

31. The sins of omission, resulting from indifference, neglect, procrastination, rebelliousness, etc. Luke 12:41-48; Luke 13:22-30; Luke 14:15-20; Luke 16:19-31, etc. Hebrews 2:3—"how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" James 4:17—"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

32. Summarization: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof" (Galatians 5:19-24). "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). From the scriptures cited above, it will be noted that the teaching of Jesus covers every sin in the category and condones none. (Teachers, you should take special pains to familiarize your pupils with the teaching of Jesus in respect to the vices and sins listed above, in order that they may be trained to distinguish between right and wrong as God sees right and wrong; and thus be prepared to live in harmony with God's purpose and plan for the human race, and to gain "the crown of righteousness" which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall bestow upon His people in the great Day of Judgment (2 Timothy 4:8). It is fundamental that Christian people everywhere should learn to follow the New Testament standard strictly, in distinguishing between right and wrong, and not conscience, reason, experience, etc.).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-SIX 55.List the vices, sins, and deficiencies condemned by the New Testament Code.

Chapter 91

01.090. THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS SIMPLICITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Lesson Seventy-seven THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS SIMPLICITY AND SPIRITUALITY Scripture Reading: John 6:27-65.

Scriptures to Memorize: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). “It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life” (John 6:63).

56. Q. What is a third outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A third outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its simplicity.

1. It inculcates principles of life and conduct, rather than imposes rules or laws. Jesus does not say, “Thou shalt not;” but rather, Be this or that, and thou art blessed (Matthew 5:3-10); or, Do this or that, and thou shalt live. Luke 10:27-28—“And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he [Jesus] said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.”

2. It sets up ideals for men to strive to attain, and thus appeals to them to voluntarily overcome the worst by cultivating the best that is in human character. (1) It proposes righteousness as the fundamental ideal of life and living (and not peace, as some would have it). Righteousness is doing right; and as God alone has the prerogative of defining right, and of distinguishing right from wrong, it follows that true righteousness is doing the will of the heavenly Father. Note the example of Jesus in this respect. Matthew 3:15—“Suffer it now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” John 4:34—“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” Matthew 5:6—“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” How many Christians of our day and age actually hunger and thirst to know and to do the will of God? (2) It portrays the ideal spiritual man as one who is at all times humble (Matthew 5:3—“blessed are the poor in spirit”); consciously penitent (Matthew 5:4—“blessed are they that mourn”); lacking self-pride (Matthew 5:5—“blessed are the meek”); desirous of knowing and doing God’s will (Matthew 5:6—“blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness”); kind and merciful (Matthew 5:7—“blessed are the merciful”); pure in heart (Matthew 5:8—“blessed are the pure in heart”); seeking the ways of peace (Matthew 5:9—“blessed are the peacemakers”); consecrated to God’s will and courageous in doing it (Matthew 5:10—“blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake”). The virtues enumerated here are so plain and simple that a child can understand them.

3. It furnishes a pattern for men to follow, in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, who exemplifies its ideals fully and perfectly in His life. In Him, precept and principle and example are perfectly blended. He gave not only a perfect teaching, but also a perfect example of what He taught. He is the Perfect Exemplar of the religion which He revealed and established.

4. It offers man the help of the Holy Spirit in his efforts to attain its ideals. Luke 11:13—"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Romans 5:5—"the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." Romans 14:17—"the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

5. It sums up all human obligations in the two-fold command of love to God and our fellow-men. Matthew 22:36-40, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? And he said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." Cf. Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18.

6. It makes true morality the necessary and natural expression of true religion. John 14:23—"If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:15—"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." John 8:31-32—"If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." 1 Corinthians 7:19—"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God." Matthew 5:48—"Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Let us never forget that perfection (moral, spiritual, and substantial) is the ultimate ideal and goal of the Christian religion for every believer. We enter the church here as babes in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1, 1 Peter 2:2); thereafter the Christian life is a constant growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18), and in the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). In short, we grow toward perfection in this life, constantly; we shall attain it in the next, in the redemption of our bodies, i.e., in the putting on of immortality. See Romans 7:7-25, particularly Romans 7:24-25—"Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Cf. Romans 8:18-25, particularly Romans 8:23—"Ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." 1 Corinthians 15:57—"thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

57. Q. What is a fourth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A fourth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its spirituality.

1. It reveals the fundamental and sublime truth that God is, as to nature, essentially Spirit. It follows therefore that all fellowship and intercourse with Him must be of a spiritual nature and on a spiritual plane. John 4:24—"God is a Spirit." (1) The unregenerate sinner must, in order to participate in the privileges and blessings of the New Covenant, be born anew, born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). John 3:6—"that which is born of the flesh is flesh." (i.e., fleshly); "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (i.e., spiritual, spiritually-minded, spiritually-discerning, etc.). (2) Jesus

Himself tells us that they who worship God must worship Him in “spirit and truth” (John 4:24). True worship is, in other words, the communion of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit, on the terms and appointments specified in the Word of truth. John 6:63—“It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the word that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.” Hence the folly of substituting form, ritual and ceremony (holy water, burning of incense, counting of beads, veneration of images, ceremonials, processionals, feasts, etc.) for true spiritual worship (faith, penitence, confession, baptism, prayer, mediation, Bible reading, the assembly of the saints, the Lord’s Supper, etc.).

2. It refuses to accept as sufficient, mere external conformity to right precepts and principles, but demands purity and consecration of heart. In other words, it recognizes only that obedience which flows out of faith and love in the human heart. Matthew 5:8—“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” John 14:23—“If a man love me, he will keep my word.” John 14:15—“If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.” Romans 6:17-18—“But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye become obedient from the heart to that pattern of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.” Hebrews 11:6—“without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.” Hebrews 10:22—“let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith,” etc. 2 Timothy 2:22—“but flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” “The superficiality of heathen morals is well illustrated by the treatment of the corpse of a priest in Siam: the body is covered with gold leaf, and then is left to rot and shine, Heathenism divorces religion from ethics. External and ceremonial observances take the place of purity of heart, The Sermon on the Mount on the other hand pronounces blessing only upon inward states of the soul” (Strong, Systematic Theology, pp. 177-178). The teaching of Jesus repudiates all mere externalism, form and pretense. Cf. Matthew 7:16-20, Galatians 5:22-26, etc.

3. It judges the actions of men by the motives from which they spring. See Matthew 5:27-30, John 8:1-11. Hebrews 4:12—“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Men are prone to judge one another by one another’s actions, but the Divine Judge looks beyond the outward act, to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart which shall have prompted it. 1 Samuel 16:7—“For Jehovah seeth not as a man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart.” Luke 16:15—“Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knoweth your hearts.” See the story of the rich young ruler, in Matthew 19:16-22.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-SEVEN

56. What is a third outstanding characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

57. What is a fourth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

01.091. THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS PRACTICALNESS

Lesson Seventy-eight THE TEACHING OF JESUS: ITS PRACTICALNESS Scripture Reading: John 10:7-18, Luke 16:1-31.

Scriptures to Memorize: “I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly” (John 10:10). “For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life” (John 5:40).

58. Q. What is a fifth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

A. A fifth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection, is its practicalness.

1. It deals frankly with all the problems of everyday human life and living. It covers, as we have already learned, the entire field of human obligations and relations.

2. It exemplifies its precepts and ideals in the life of Jesus, our Perfect Exemplar, that all men may see, understand, and follow. John 14:9—“he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” John 14:6—“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”

3. It frankly declares that man is alienated from God, lost in sin, and therefore in need of a Saviour. Matthew 9:12—“they that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.” Luke 19:10—“for the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” Romans 3:23—“for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.” John 3:17—“For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.”

4. It offers as the Remedy for this condition, not a set of abstract rules to be obeyed, but an altogether lovely Person to be loved and followed; and to be followed, because He is loved. John 3:14-15—“and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.” John 12:32—“and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.” Matthew 11:28—“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” John 5:40—“Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.” The life, teaching and ministry of Jesus is far more than rules and laws—it is Divine Grace manifested to fallen men. To illustrate: a tract by Dr. William Ashmore represents a Chinaman in a pit. Confucius looks into the pit and says: “If you had done as I told you, you would never have gotten in.” Buddha looks into the pit and says: “If you were up here I would show you what to do.” So both Confucius and Buddha pass on. But Jesus leaps down into the pit and helps the poor Chinaman to get out. (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 178).

5. It provides an all-sufficient Atonement for sin and forgiveness for the sinner. Matthew 20:28—“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Matthew 26:28—“this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.” 1 John 1:7—“the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Colossians 2:13—“having forgiven us all our trespasses.”

6. It furnishes proper incentives to repentance and obedience on man's part, such as: (1) the matchless demonstration of God's love for him, in the suffering and death of Jesus on the Cross (John 3:16); (2) in it's numerous overtures, invitations and calls to him to forsake sin and return to the Father's house (Matthew 11:28-30, John 7:27, Revelation 22:17); (3) in the promise and hope of eternal life which it extends to him (John 3:16; John 14:6; John 20:31; Romans 6:23). John 10:10—"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."

7. It offers man the aid of the Holy Spirit in achieving and realizing that "sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). It frankly admits that man could not possibly attain true spiritual life and eternal salvation without divine help, and therefore promises him the aid of the living Christ and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit to meet his needs. Luke 11:13, Romans 5:5, etc. 2 Corinthians 13:14—"the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." Romans 8:26—"the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us." Titus 3:5—"renewing of the Holy Spirit." Compare the words of Paul: "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me" (Php 4:13). We are safe in making the assertion that no problem of human life, pertaining to either the here or the hereafter, is left unanswered in the Teaching of Jesus. The supreme need of our day and age is for men and women everywhere to read, study, ponder, discern and understand the precepts, principles, and promises revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-EIGHT 58.What is a fifth characteristic of the Teaching of Jesus which proves its perfection?

Chapter 93

01.092. SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE HARMONY OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND THAT OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

SPECIAL STUDY: ON THE HARMONY OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND THAT OF THE APOSTLE PAUL For a long time it has been the fashion of a certain “school” of agnostics, “humanists,” “naturalists,” and “free thinkers” in general, including theologians and “clergymen” of unitarian predilection, to reject arbitrarily all evidence that would support divine inspiration, revelation, and demonstration (miracles); hence, among the claims put forward by these so-called “scholars” was the notion that the teaching of the Apostle Paul in his Epistles is, not just different from, but actually antagonistic to, the personal teaching of Jesus as given in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Hence, they contended, the Church was really given its basic doctrinal structure by the Apostle, and this doctrinal structure is in conflict with the content and spirit of the teaching of Jesus. Some of these self-appointed critics did not hesitate to launch vicious attacks on the Apostle himself and on the content of his writings. Strangely enough, this canard persists in contemporary literature, and is usually evidence of the fact that the wish is father to the thought. As a matter of fact, destructive critical theories of the Biblical text are based necessarily on the apriori disregard of, or complete repudiation of, any influence or activity of the Holy Spirit in the formation of that text. Insofar as these self-appointed critics are concerned, the Spirit of God simply does not exist.

It should be noted that this position is based necessarily on the summary—and arbitrary—rejection of the following New Testament facts:

1. The plain teaching of Jesus Himself (1) that the apostolic witness was but the extension of His own teaching, (2) that His sending of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles was to guarantee their infallibility in executing His Last Will and Testament, and thus continuing and completing His own canon of doctrine. The entire New Testament canon presents itself to us as the Word of Christ, the integrity of which is guaranteed by the revelatory work of the Holy Spirit. (See Matthew 10:16-20; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:45-49; Mark 16:15-16; John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26-27; John 16:7-15; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:1-8; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:34-43, etc.)

2. The equally plain and positive affirmations by the Apostle (1) of the Lord’s personal appearance to him on the Damascus road to commission him to the apostleship (to the Gentiles in particular, Acts 26:17; cf. Acts 9:1-18; Acts 22:3-21; Acts 26:12-23; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20); of his own qualifications for his apostolic ministry by special revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11-17; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:6-7; 2 Timothy 1:10-11); (3) of his own personal guidance in teaching and in life by the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Ephesians 3:1-12; Acts 16:6-8); (4) of his utter devotion—even unto martyrdom—to his living Lord (Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 2:2; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Php 1:21-23; Php 3:8-11; Php 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Moreover, to deny these claims is to accuse Luke the historian, Paul's traveling companion and beloved coworker in preaching the Gospel and establishing churches (Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:11), of deliberate fabrication and even of falsification (cf. Acts 13:2-4). There is no more definitely authenticated fact in Christian history than that of the long and close association of "the beloved physician" with the great Apostle to the Gentiles. (Note the well-known "we" passages in the book of Acts.)

We have not sufficient space here to discuss this subject in detail; indeed, a catena of all the correspondence of Jesus' own teaching as continued and completed by the Spirit-guided Apostles (Paul included) would fill a big book. His teaching paralleled in the Pauline Epistles alone would fill a brochure of some size. We shall be content, therefore, with presenting a few of the more significant of these correspondences, as follows:

1. On the pre-existence, incarnation, and deity of Christ. Matthew 11:27; Matthew 15:20; John 5:19-23; John 8:58; John 10:17-18; John 10:30; John 14:7-10; John 16:28; John 3:13; John 17:5. Romans 1:1-7; Galatians 4:3-6; Php 2:5-8; Colossians 1:16-17; Colossians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:16.

2. On the sovereignty of Christ. Matthew 12:5-8; Matthew 16:27-28; Matthew 22:41-45; Matthew 28:18; Mark 2:27-28; Luke 22:69; John 5:19-29; John 6:38-40; John 10:9-18. 1 Corinthians 15:22-28; 1 Corinthians 15:47; Php 2:9-11; Php 3:20-21; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Timothy 6:14-16.

3. On the Atonement (and redemption): Matthew 20:28; Matthew 26:27-28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20. Acts 20:28; Romans 3:24-26; Romans 4:25; Romans 5:1-21; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 7:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Corinthians 1:17-24; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 1:3-4; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:13-18; Ephesians 5:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Titus 2:14.

4. On the Resurrection of Christ, Matthew 16:21; Matthew 26:61; Matthew 27:40; Mark 14:58, Mark 15:59; Luke 24:4-9; John 2:19-22. 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; 2 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:10.

5. On the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14. Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:4-6, Titus 3:4-6. Matthew 6:4; Matthew 6:8; Matthew 6:18; Matthew 6:32; Matthew 7:11; Matthew 11:25-27; Matthew 16:17; Luke 10:21-22; Luke 23:46; John 4:21-24; John 14:1-13. Acts 17:22-28; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13. Matthew 5:48, Luke 6:36, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 2:4-7, etc. Matthew 12:31-32, Luke 11:13, John 6:63; John 7:37-39; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:30; 2 Timothy 1:14; Titus 3:5-6.

6. On the Kingdom, the Church. Matthew 5:20; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10:7. Luke 4:43; Luke 6:20; Luke 9:27; Luke 12:31; Luke 22:29; John 18:36-37. 1 Corinthians 4:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:50; Romans 14:17; Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:12. Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 3:11, Colossians 1:18; Colossians 1:24; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 5:22-32.

7. On regeneration, conversion, justification, etc. (including faith, repentance, confession, baptism). Matthew 7:24-25; Matthew 6:25-34; Mark 11:22; Luke 17:6; John 5:24; John 6:40; John 6:47-51; John 7:38; John 14:1; John 14:11-12; John 11:45; John 14:1; John 14:11-12; John 11:25-27; John 20:27-29. Romans 1:16-17; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 8:35-37; Galatians 2:20; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 3:15. Matthew 1:17; Matthew 21:28-32; Mark 2:17; Mark 6:12; Luke 13:3; Luke 15:4-32; Luke 24:45-49. Romans 13:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Colossians 3:2; Romans 13:11-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:9. Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10. John 3:5; Matthew 28:18-20. Acts 19:3-5; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5; Ephesians 5:26; Colossians 2:12; Titus 3:5.

8. On the essentials of Christian worship (Acts 2:42). (1) The preaching and teaching of the "apostles' doctrine" (Matthew 24:14; Luke 4:18-19; John 17:7. Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-24; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Colossians 1:23-25; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:3-13; 2 Timothy 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:2). (2) The fellowship of the contribution and distribution of tithes and offerings (Matthew 6:20; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, etc.). (3) The Lord's Supper ("the breaking of bread"); (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). (4) Prayer (Matthew 6:5-6; Matthew 11:24-25; Luke 18:1; Luke 21:36; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 2:18; Php 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18; 1 Timothy 2:8).

(We suggest here the always interesting and illuminating exercise of comparing—by using the Concordance, of course—the teaching of Jesus and that of Paul, on what are traditionally designated the "Seven Deadly Sins," namely, pride, covetousness, lust, gluttony, anger, envy, and sloth.)

9. On Pharisaic legalism (and on spiritual blindness in general): Matthew 5:20; Matthew 12:34-35; Matthew 23:13-39; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:5; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Romans 3:20; Romans 3:28; Romans 7:4-6; Romans 10:1-4; Galatians 3:11-14; Galatians 3:23-29. Matthew 6:23; Matthew 15:14; Luke 19:42; Luke 8:9-15; John 7:28; John 8:19; John 8:27; 1 Corinthians 1:18-21; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-7; 2 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 3:13.

10. On the spiritual life. Matt. chs. 5, 6, 7; Matthew 15:16-20, Mark 7:18-23, Luke 6:43-45; John 6:43-45; John 6:48-51; John 6:63; John 17:1-3. Romans 6:13-19; Romans 8:4-6; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 12:9-20; Romans 13:13; Romans 14:16-19; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Galatians 5:22-24; Ephesians 5:3-5; Php 4:8; Colossians 1:10, Colossians 1:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:19-22.

11. On the supremacy of love. Matthew 5:43-47; Matthew 10:41-42; Luke 6:27-35; John 13:35; John 14:23-24; John 15:12-13; Romans 3:8-10; Romans 12:9-10; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13; Ephesians 5:2; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:9.

12. On final things (judgment, heaven, hell, immortality). Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:31-46; Matthew 13:47-50; Luke 16:23-28; John 5:26-29; Romans 2:3-11; Acts 17:30-31. Matthew 19:21; Matthew 19:29; Matthew 25:46; Matthew 22:29-30; Luke 18:30; Luke 20:34-38; John 10:27-28; John 17:1-5; Romans 5:21; Romans 6:22-23; Galatians 6:8; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 3:7. Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:8; Luke 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. John 14:1-31; Romans 8:11; Romans 8:18-23; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Php

3:20-21. The notion that there were different “kinds” of Christianity in the apostolic age is a figment of the seminarian mentality. It is made abundantly clear in the New Testament itself that all (both Jews and Gentiles) who came into the church under the preaching of the Apostles and their co-evangelists came in precisely the same way, that is, on the same terms (see my Survey Course in Christian Doctrine, Vol. II, pp. 195-198); that the essentials of Christian worship did not change in any respect from the pattern set by the Jerusalem congregation (Acts 2:42); that the Christian virtues (the excellences of the Spiritual Life) were the same in Antioch, in Ephesus, and in Rome, as originally in the Christian community in Jerusalem (cf. Galatians 5:16-25, 1 Peter 1:5-11, etc.). Changes in these fundamentals (which constituted the New Testament pattern of the Church), made usually for the sake of convenience, and the result of clerical pretension and the imposition of human authority upon this New Testament pattern, did not begin to take place until toward the middle of the second century. Adding to, subtracting from, substituting for, the Word of Christ, created all the confusion and sectism that developed after the second century. This sectism continues in our day by virtue of the fact that it is maintained, not by Scripture warrant, but by stereotyped and fossilized tradition.

Professor C. D. Broad once wrote of behaviorism (a psychological system) as one of those theories which, said he, “are so preposterously silly that only very learned men could have thought of them” (quoted by Samuel M. Thompson, A Modern Philosophy of Religion, p. 179). This echoes a statement once made by G. K. Chesterton, that the source of much of man’s troubles in our day is the “learned ignoramus.” I cannot help thinking that these sentiments apply with special force to professional “theologians” and their pompous speculations.

01.093. Volume 4

BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK

SURVEY COURSE IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

art., article

intro., introduction

cf., compare

l., line

ch., chapter

ll., lines

chs., chapters

p., page

edit., edition

pp., pages

e.g., for example

par., paragraph

ff., following

sect., section

fn., footnote

sv., under the word

ibid., the same

trans., translated

i.e., that is

v., verse

in loc., in this place

w., verses

or connection

vol., volume

Chapter 95

01.094. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS

Lesson Seventy-nine THE UNIQUENESS OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS Scripture Reading: John 8:31-42; John 14:1-11.

Scripture to Memorize: “To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (John 18:37). “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). “If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

1. Q. What is a first unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A first unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its high evaluation of human personality.

(1) “The advent of Christianity created a new epoch both in the development and recognition of personality. Its Founder lived a life and exercised a personal attraction, but is expressly reported to have told His followers that the full meaning of that Life and its attractions would not be understood till he was gone. . . . The fact of the unique Life came first, the new Personality; and then the gradual explanation of the fact, in the doctrine of the Person of Christ” (J. R. Illingworth, Personality—Human and Divine, p. 8). (2) Jesus teaches that God is a Spirit, i.e., a personal Being (John 4:24). Therefore man, having been created in God’s image personally, needs now to be re-created in God’s image morally, in order to become a partaker of the Divine nature. 2 Corinthians 5:17—“if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.” Ephesians 2:10—“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.” 2 Peter 1:4—“that . . . ye may become partakers of the divine nature.” (3) Hence the Christian life is pictured in the New Testament writings as a continuous enhancement of the personality, as the believer grows in grace, spiritual knowledge, and holiness. 2 Peter 1:5-7, “in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control; and in your self-control, patience; and in your patience, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness, love.” 2 Peter 3:18—‘” But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (4) Jesus proposes nothing short of the complete liberation of the human personality from the love, guilt, practice, even the consequences, of sin. John 8:31-32—“If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” All that He asks of us, in order to achieve these things in us and for us, is that we yield ourselves in loving obedience to Him and “abide in His word.” Php 2:5 “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” John 15:5—“he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.” If we will but submit wholeheartedly to His leading, He will do the rest. John 6:40—“For this is the will of the Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (5) Christianity thus, by its high evaluation of personality, breaks down all religious distinctions between the sexes. Its Gospel invitations are extended to women as well as men, and its privileges and blessings are proffered to both sexes alike, and on the same terms. Galatians 3:28—“There can be neither Jew nor Greek,

there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." (6) It is this high evaluation of personality which has resulted in the outlawing of slavery, in the liberation of womankind, and in increased agitation for a just economic, political, and social order in all Christian lands. (7) Our chief objection to current materialistic theories is that they degrade the human personality. I refuse to accept—I hurl back with scorn!—the notion that I am in the world just to eat and drink and reproduce my kind, and then lie down and die and cease to be! I reject the notion that I am of no higher order than a beast of the field. It is obvious that if such a theory, which is, after all, but a revival of ancient paganism, were to be accepted and practiced universally, the result would inevitably be the complete degradation of all mankind.

2. Q. What is a second unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A second unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its distinct appeal to the individual.

(1) The teaching of Jesus makes its appeal directly to the individual. It is the individual, male or female, who must hear, believe, obey, and be born anew—not the neighborhood, community, or state. The spiritual law is analogous at this point, as at every other, to the physical law. Every birth, every form of birth, is of necessity individualistic. Thus are we born of the flesh into the kingdom of nature, one by one; thus are we born of water and the Spirit into the kingdom of grace, one by one; and thus shall we be born from the grave, into the kingdom of glory. The Church is a community of pardoned individuals; and Heaven itself will be a society of glorified, redeemed souls. This law is universal—there is no changing it. (2) Those who contemplate the "regeneration of the social order" en masse, ignore this fundamental principle. The teaching of Jesus is as silent as the grave with regard to any such thing as mass regeneration. "Social regeneration" will come only as redeemed individuals practice the teaching of Jesus with respect to neighborly responsibility, and to the degree that their social idealism shall permeate the structure of the entire social and civic body—and in no other way. Hence the first and most important business of the Church is to preach the Gospel to men and women, that they may hear, believe, yield, obey, and be born anew. John 3:5—"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

3. Q. What is a third unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A third unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its high evaluation of life.

(1) One of the very first truths revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures is that our physical life is a gift from the very essence of God. God breathed life, we are told, out of Himself into the first man when He created him (Genesis 2:7). At this point the teaching of Jesus builds upon the foundation laid by Moses: for we learn from the apostolic writings that neither spiritual life nor eternal life can be acquired by men on their own merits, but can only be accepted by them through faith in Christ, for the simple reason that both are divine gifts. John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." 1 John 5:12—"He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the son hath not the life." Romans 6:23—"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (2) Jesus had more to say about life and about how to live it, than possibly about any other subject. John 5:26—"For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." John 14:6—"I am the way, and the truth, and the life." John 11:25-26—"I am the resurrection and the life

. . . whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." John 6:35—"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John 6:51—"I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: yea and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." John 8:51—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word, he shall never see death." John 10:27-28—"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." John 17:3—"And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." Concerning His own life, He said: "I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18). He proved this claim by raising Lazarus and certain others from the dead (John 11:40-44; Luke 7:11-17; Luke 8:49-56), and by rising from the dead Himself (Acts 2:24-33). From these numerous scriptures and many others not quoted here, it will be seen that Jesus presents Himself as the mediator through whom this fulness of life is transmitted from God, the Source of all life, to believing men and women. (3) Further, this fulness of life which He offers to all who accept Him is, He affirms, of an infinitely nobler order than mere physical life. A man's real life, He affirms, "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). The real life is spiritual life—the life that is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3). In just one human being it is more valuable, He declares, than the total wealth of the whole material world. Matthew 16:26—"For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" It is designated by Jesus Himself the abundant life. John 10:10—"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (How tragic that this precious and meaningful expression should be prostituted by present-day politicians to have reference in any way to the social order!) (4) The essential principle of this fulness of life is union with God through Jesus Christ, we are told. 1 John 1:3—"our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." (5) From all these considerations it is obvious that life, no matter of what order or rank, is a divine gift, and man's most priceless possession. It is a most sacred possession, one that is not to be undervalued, not to be treated lightly, not to be taken by him at will; but, on the contrary, a possession which he should cherish and nourish, by feeding upon the Word, by imbibing of the Spirit, by dwelling in close fellowship with the Father and with the Son: thus budding, then blossoming, and finally fructifying in the life everlasting. It can readily be seen that the universal acceptance and practice of Jesus' teaching on the subject of life, would soon eliminate murder, suicide, infanticide, abortion, crime, lawlessness, and even that curse of mankind—war. In Oriental systems life is regarded as illusion (Maya) something to be escaped from; in Christianity life is considered to be man's greatest good.

4. Q. What is a fourth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A fourth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its emphasis on righteousness as the supreme ideal of life.

(1) Note well: righteousness; not peace, as so many would have us believe. In no instance does Jesus even intimate that right should ever be sacrificed for the sake of peace. To the contrary He says: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36). "The wisdom that is from above," says James, "is first pure, then

peaceable," etc. (James 3:17). In the moral conflict with Satan, in which precious souls are at stake, there can be no peace; the warfare must go on until the last enemy shall have been abolished, which is death (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). (2) Righteousness is doing the will of God. Jesus exemplified this ideal perfectly in everything that He said and did while on earth. His constant passion was to be about the Father's business, and to do the will of the Father in all things. When He came to John and asked to be baptized, and John hesitated about it, feeling his own unworthiness, Jesus said: "Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." (What better reason could any human being offer for submitting to baptism than just this: to do the will of the Father who is in heaven!). Even in the hour of great crisis, in the throes of the intense anguish of spirit which He underwent in the Garden of Gethsemane, He never wavered for one moment, but His thrice-repeated prayer was: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). Cf. John 4:34—"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." John 5:30—"I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 9:4—"We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." What human teacher ever proposed such an exalted ideal as this: one so spiritual, so noble, and yet so eminently practical!

5. Q. What is a fifth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A fifth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its emphasis on the supremacy of the law of love in all human relations.

(1) Matthew 22:36-40, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." (2) It should be noted here that love to God is the great and first commandment. The intellectuals of our day who put first emphasis on brotherly love are, so to speak, "getting the cart before the horse." Love to God naturally and necessarily comes first, for the simple reason that man's consciousness and realization of all human obligations is born of his love for God and his knowledge of God's will. The man who loves God with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind, will naturally love his neighbor as himself.

6. Q. What is a sixth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A sixth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its emphasis upon the reality and superiority of the spiritual.

(1) John 6:27—"Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed." (2) Matthew 6:19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." Matthew 6:24-25, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore, I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is

not the life more than the food, and the body more than the raiment?" Matthew 6:33—"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you." (3) Luke 9:59-60—"And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But he said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead: but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God." (4) John 6:63—"It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." Matthew 24:35—"Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away."

7. Q. What is a seventh unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A seventh unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its emphasis upon personal purity and holiness.

(1) Matthew 5:3-10, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (2) John 15:2—"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit." (3) Romans 14:17—"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Hebrews 12:14—"Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord." (4) Php 4:8—"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (5) Galatians 5:22-25, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." Holiness, from the Greek holon, is literally wholeness.

8. Q. What is an eighth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. An eighth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its emphasis on the sacredness of the home and the marriage relationship.

(1) Jesus reaffirms the divine authority for marriage, and sanctions only the monogamous relationship, i.e., pairing with a single mate through life. Matthew 19:4-6, "Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (2) He allows divorce on one ground only, viz., that of inconstancy (i.e., fornication or adultery). Matthew 19:7-9, "They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." There is no other scriptural ground for divorce, excepting possibly

unbelief, in certain instances. Paul seems to teach, in 1 Corinthians 7:10-16, that in cases of desertion, where the deserting party is an unbeliever, the marriage covenant may be considered dissolved. Indiscriminate divorce is an unfailing sign of a decadent civilization.

9. Q. What is a ninth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

A. A ninth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is its identification of belief and practice.

Matthew 7:21—“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.” Luke 6:46—“Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? James 2:26—“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVENTY-NINE 1.What is a first unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

2. What is a second unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

3. What is a third unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

4. What is a fourth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

5. What is a fifth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

6. What is a sixth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

7. What is a seventh unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

8. What is an eighth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

9. What is a ninth unique characteristic of the teaching of Jesus?

Chapter 96

01.095. JESUS THE GREAT TEACHER: A SUMMARY

Lesson Eighty JESUS THE GREAT TEACHER: A SUMMARY Scripture Reading: Matthew 7:24-27.

Scriptures to Memorize: “All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him” (Luke 10:22). “I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father” (John 16:28). “My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself” (John 7:16-17).

10. Q. What is the effect of the teaching of Jesus upon human civilization wherever it is generally accepted and applied?

A. The teaching of Jesus always builds the highest type of human civilization wherever it is generally accepted and applied.

(1) By its high evaluation of the human personality, it has banished such evils as ritual prostitution, phallic worship, homosexuality, cannibalism, suttee, slavery, social exploitation, etc. (2) Through its emphasis upon the individual as the unit of human society, it has invariably promoted democracy, which has been defined as “that form of government in which the welfare of all is the supreme concern of each.” In autocratic governments the individual exists for the state; in democratic governments the state exists for the individual. Pure Christianity, the Christianity of the New Testament, invariably makes for democracy. (3) By its high evaluation of life, it has checked abortion, infanticide, dueling, murder, and even the love of war. (4) Through its emphasis upon the supremacy of love in human relations, it teaches men to have due regard for one another’s interests and rights and to strive for a more perfectly balanced social order. It fosters the democratic principles that every human being should have the utmost opportunities of developing his faculties and talents, and that all persons should have the right to enjoy equal political and social privileges. It also encourages progress, in the arts, in the sciences, in invention and discovery, and in every field of human research and endeavor. It is always found to be an enemy of cruelty, oppression, and anarchy. (5) By its particular emphasis upon the sacredness of the marriage relationship, it serves to protect the home against the evils of easy and frequent divorce, and to restrain all classes of society from illicit sexual relations. (6) We may rightly conclude that the defects in our modern civilization are due, not to the teaching of Jesus, but to the refusal or neglect of men and women everywhere to accept and apply this teaching to human conduct and relations. We are satisfied that if the principles of Jesus’ teaching were quite generally practiced, the result would be a well-nigh perfect civilization. The great trouble with nations, as well as individuals, is, in the words of the Master Himself: “Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life” (John 5:40).

11. Q. What do we conclude, then, with respect lo the teaching of Jesus as a whole?

A. We conclude that it is unique, complete and perfect.

E. G. Robinson rightly says: “Christian ethics do not contain a particle of chaff—all is pure wheat.” No human being has ever been able to add one moral or spiritual truth to the body of teaching which Jesus left in the world.

12. Q. What claim did Jesus make with regard to His teaching?

A. He claimed that He received His teaching from God the Father.

Luke 10:22—“All things have been delivered unto me of my Father.” John 7:16—“My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me.” John 17:8—“the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them” (the words of Jesus in His intercessory prayer). John 12:49—“For I spake not from myself; but the Father that hath sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.”

13. Q. How shall we account for the perfection of the teaching of Jesus?

A. We can account for the perfection of the teaching of Jesus only on the ground that it is of divine origin.

(1) Its divine origin is attested, as we have seen, by its comprehensiveness. It covers every field of human action, obligation, and relationship. (2) Its divine origin is attested, in the second place, by its perfection. Its ideals are unapproached by any other system of which the world has knowledge. (3) Its divine origin is attested, in the third place, by its marvelous sweep and power. It furnishes an adequate solution for every problem of life and living. It covers all of man’s experiences from the cradle to the grave—and beyond. (4) Its divine origin is attested, in the fourth place, by the inspiration it has afforded men everywhere and in all ages. Its influence has been so great that numberless books, commentaries, treatises, essays, discourses, sermons, tracts, etc. have been given to the world, not to mention works of art, science, music, poetry, etc. (5) Its divine origin is attested, in the fifth place, by its smallness of volume, as compared with its power and influence. Augustine compiled his theological writings in thirty volumes; Calvin used some forty-two. But we can easily read all that Jesus said, in less than an hour. How, then, account for the influence of His teaching upon civilization on any other ground than that it is of divine origin?

11. Q. How shall we account for the perfection of Jesus Himself as The Teacher?

A. We account for His perfection as The Teacher, on the ground that He was what He claimed to be—God in the flesh.

(1) Not on the ground of a long life or rich experience. He was only thirty-three years old when He died. (2) Not on the ground of any superior advantages He may have had in the way of early training. So far as we know, He had no schooling of any consequence, and no books except possibly the Old Testament Scriptures. He had no wealth, no social standing, no books, no organization, no backing of any kind, no printing-press or any other means of disseminating propaganda. Yet, without any of these things usually considered so essential to success, He changed the whole course of human history and rebuilt civilization. (3) We can account for all this, only on the ground that He was really God in the flesh. “Without science and learning he has shed more light on things human and divine than all other scholars and philosophers combined. Without

the eloquence of the schools he has spoken such words of beauty and power as were never spoken before or since. Without writing a single line, he has set in motion more pens, furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, and sublime poems and works of art, than whole armies of great men of ancient and modern times. He has built a pyramid of knowledge to which no man has made an addition in two thousand years." He is, both in teaching and in life, the Eternal Interpreter of the nature, will, and word of Almighty God. Perhaps the most significant testimony of the people of Jesus' own time was that He taught as one having authority. Matthew 7:28-29—"And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." Luke 4:36—"And amazement came upon all, and they spake together, one with another, saying, What is this word? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out." (Cf. Matthew 8:9; Matthew 21:23; Luke 7:6-10, etc.) It should be noted here that the title Christ (Hebrew, Messiah; Greek, Christos) means "The Anointed One," and hence, is essentially authoritarian in character. In Old Testament times, prophets, priests and kings were officially inducted into their respective offices by the ceremony of anointing with the holy anointing oil (Exodus 28:41; Exodus 30:30; Exodus 29:7; Exodus 40:13; Leviticus 16:32; 1 Samuel 9:16; 1 Samuel 15:1; 1 Samuel 16:12-13; 1 Kings 19:15-16, etc.). In like manner, Jesus was officially inducted into His threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King of His New Covenant people, by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him immediately following His baptism (Matthew 3:16, Luke 3:21-22; Acts 4:26; Acts 10:38): this was His divine anointing (christing). (The holy anointing oil of the Old Testament was the type of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit under the New, Psalms 45:7, Hebrews 1:9). This is one respect in which, perhaps above all others, the Christian Faith is unique, namely, it is basically authoritarian. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, is both Acting Sovereign of the Universe and Absolute Monarch of the Kingdom of God, from whose word and will there is no appeal (Acts 2:32-36, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28). Oriental cults ("religions"), on the other hand, have no such authoritarian character. This is implicit, for example, in the title, Buddha, which means "The Enlightened One." The esoteric character of Orientalism is expressed in this title: the "salvation" it proposes is a human achievement, a mystical process terminating in "absorption" into Brahma (Unity, Tao, the One). In Christianity, the redemption of the human being—in body, soul and spirit—is conditional: the conditions are faith in Christ, obedience to His will, and the spiritual life (the life that is hid with Christ in God). (Matthew 7:24-27, John 14:6-10, 2 Corinthians 5:17-19, Galatians 3:26-29, Hebrews 5:8-9. Revelation 1:17-18, etc.) The entire Christian System rests on the authority of Jesus Christ. Said He, after His conquest of death, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:19). This is a claim which must be accepted in tolo, or accepted not at all: no middle ground is possible.

Note, in closing, the tributes paid Jesus of Nazareth by His contemporaries:

(1) The Roman centurion, sometimes called "the unknown soldier" of the New Testament records: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed" (Matthew 8:8).

(2) Judas, the betrayer: "I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4).

(3) The Temple police who were sent to apprehend Him: "Never man so spake" (John 7:46).

(4) Pilate's wife: "Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him" (Matthew 27:19).

(5) Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor: "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4). "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man" (Matthew 27:24).

(6) The Roman centurion and soldiers who executed the death penalty and witnessed His death on the Cross: "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54).

(7) John the Baptizer: "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

(8) Thomas the Apostle: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

(9) Peter the Apostle: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). "Neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

(10) John the Apostle: "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world" (John 1:9). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:18).

(11) Paul the Apostle: "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; he who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16).

(12) Even demons testified as follows: "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). "What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God?" (Matthew 8:29). "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" (Mark 5:7).

(13) The Angels of heaven: "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

(14) Our Heavenly Father Himself: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHTY

10. What is the effect of the teaching of Jesus upon human civilization wherever it is generally accepted applied?

11. What do we conclude, then, with respect to the teaching of Jesus as a whole?

12. What claim did Jesus make with regard to His teaching?

13. How shall we account for the perfection of the teaching of Jesus?

14. How shall we account for the perfection of Jesus Himself as The Teacher?

01.096. JESUS THE ALTOGETHER LOVELY

Lesson Eighty-one JESUS THE ALTOGETHER LOVELY Scripture Reading: John 8:31-46

Scriptures to Memorize: “Which of you convicteth me of sin?” (John 8:46). “For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

15. Q. What second aspect of the Jesus of history shall we now investigate?

A. The second aspect of the Jesus of history, which we shall now investigate, is His character.

Having already studied Him as The Great Teacher, we shall now study Him as the Altogether Lovely, our Perfect Exemplar.

16. Q. In what respect especially is Jesus unique among all the world’s teachers?

A.Jesus is unique among all the world’s teachers in the respect that He gave not only a Perfect Teaching but a Perfect Example as well. In Jesus of Nazareth teaching and life are perfectly blended. He not only taught the most exalted principles of life and conduct, but He lived them as well. This cannot be said of any other of the great teachers of history.

17. Q. What claim are we justified in making for Jesus of Nazareth?

A. We are justified in making the claim that His character is faultless.

“This is the high claim we make for our Christ. We assert that He is the only one who has carried the spotless purity of childhood through youth and manhood; the only one who has passed through life, touching it at every point, and then emerging from the tomb and going back to the bosom of the Father as pure as when He came. And this is the claim He makes for Himself. Speaking to those who were thirsting for His blood, He said: ‘Who of you convicteth me of sin?’ (John 8:46). And this challenge has been ringing down through the ages from that day to this, and no man has yet been able to convict him of sin” (M. M. Davis, How to Be Saved, pp. 75–76).

18. Q. What special designation is Jesus given in Scripture that indicates His faultlessness of character?

A. He is called The Holy One of God.

Mark 1:23-24—“And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit: and he cried out, saying: What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.” (Demons, like wicked men, are invariably filled with fear and trembling in the presence of true holiness). Acts 2:27—“neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption” (cf. Acts 13:35, Psalms 16:10). Cf. also Song of Solomon 5:16, “His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely” (here the allusion is to the Bridegroom of whom the Church is the Bride).

19. Q. In what first respect is the faultlessness of His character evidenced?

A. The faultlessness of His character is evidenced, first, in His complete freedom from the more ordinary and universal faults of humankind.

1. He was free from selfishness. (1) In no instance did He put His own interests first, but always those of His Father, His work, and humanity. (2) He refused even to perform a miracle to benefit Himself; as, e.g., on the Mount of Temptation, when Satan suggested that He turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger (Matthew 4:1-4). (3) He gave special emphasis in His teaching to the principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Matthew 20:26-28, "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (4) He exemplified this principle perfectly in His life, and especially in His death, in which He gave Himself in supreme sacrifice not only for His friends but for His enemies as well. John 15:13—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (5) Even when suffering the most excruciating agony on the Cross, He prayed for the forgiveness of those who were putting Him to death. Luke 23:34—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

2. He was free from worldly ambition. Although His qualities of leadership were such that, at the height of His popularity, the people sought to crown Him their king, yet He departed from them into a secluded place that He might be alone with the Father (John 6:15). His sole ambition was to reign, not on an earthly throne, but in the hearts of His people. John 18:36—"My kingdom is not of his world." "We scarcely know which to admire most, the prodigious originality of His conceptions, or His entire freedom from worldly ambition in the execution of His plans."

3. He was free from pride. "This was the first sin to enter the human heart, and it seems determined to be the last to leave it. Give man money, position and power, and he is filled with pride. When the flowers are fullest of the dews of heaven, and when the wheat is richest and ripest, they bow their heads in gratitude; but the more we are enriched of God, the higher our heads. But how different the Christ. When He preached His great sermons He acted as if there were scores about Him who could have done better. After His stupendous miracles He seemed unconscious of the fact that He was the only being on earth who could do such deeds. When He lifted the heavy heel of death from the heart of Lazarus He walked away from the grave as if he were leaving the carpenter's shop after a day of ordinary toil" (Davis, ibid., pp. 77–78).

4. He was free from couetousness. This one sin of which every human being is more or less guilty, is not to be found in the character of Jesus. He might have made millions through His miraculous powers, yet He lived and died the poorest of the poor in this world's goods. Matthew 8:20—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heavens have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." He was so poor that it was necessary for Him to perform a miracle to obtain the coin with which to pay His temple tax (Matthew 17:24-27). Even in death His body was laid at rest in a borrowed grave, through the benevolence of a friend (Matthew 26:57-60). In life and in death He exemplified perfectly what He taught with regard to dependence upon God rather than upon earthly possessions (Matthew 6:19-34, Luke 12:13-21).

5. He was free from revenge. When the natives of an obscure Samaritan village refused Him hospitality, two of the Apostles, James and John, indignantly demanded that He retaliate by bidding “fire to come down from heaven, and consume them.” But Jesus “turned and rebuked them. And they went on to another village” (Luke 9:54-56). Thus did He rise above all petty slights and grievances. “He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). Amidst His intense suffering on the Cross, He prayed for His enemies: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). And when He sent His Apostles forth to make disciples of all the nations, He sent them first to His own people and city: and by His explicit command, they preached the Gospel beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47)to a great multitude many of whom had participated in the crucifixion tragedy (Acts 2:23; Acts 2:36). 6. He was free from sectarianism. How vast the gulf between Jesus and other world leaders in this respect! They are invariably identified with some particular people and age, and partake of their peculiarities. Not so with Jesus! By no possible stretch of the imagination can He be regarded as distinctively Jewish either in His teaching or in His life. He had none of the racial pride or narrow prejudices of the Jewish people. As a matter of fact he exposed their rigid legalism in a series of denunciations without parallel for their severity. He foretold the destruction of their city and temple; also their dispersion and the calling of the Gentiles (Matthew 8:11-12). He rose above the wall that had separated Jew and Gentile for fifteen centuries or more. He became the one cosmopolitan character of the ages, and is so regarded today by all nations. “Like the sun, He cannot be monopolized by any, but shines equally for all.”

20. Q. In what second respect is the faultlessness of His character evidenced?

A. The faultlessness of His character is evidenced, secondly, by the many excellences which inhere in it.

Isaiah 33:17—“thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty.” (1) We see in Jesus the beauty of righteousness. His one consuming passion was to do the Father’s will and to accomplish the work which the Father had sent Him to do (John 4:34). His supreme interests were the Father’s house, the Father’s will, the Father’s word, and the Father’s work. (2) We see in Him the beauty of stedfastness. We are told that He set His face stedfastly toward Jerusalem. His sacrifice was a voluntary one. He went to the Cross of His own volition; and when He had set His face in that direction, there was no wavering, no turning back. (3) We see in Him the beauty of righteous indignation. How he loved publicans and sinners!—and how He hated sin. Indignation without malice, without envy, without petulance, without smallness—righteous indignation! It has been said that “spiritual beauty is first of all discerned in its reactions to evil.” The tragedy of modern Christendom is the church’s complaisance in the presence of the world’s evil! The modern pulpit seems to accept sin and vice with fatalistic calmness! But Jesus struck boldly at evil in every form. He hated sham, affectation, greed and hypocrisy. There are no denunciations in all literature quite so severe as those which he hurled against the self-righteous legalism of the Pharisees (Matthew 23:1-39). (4) We see in Him the beauty of strength. We have been accustomed to linking beauty with frailty. But real beauty is strength. “The words of Jesus were beauty, but it was the beauty of flashing angels driving back all the cohorts of sin. His deeds were beauty, but it was the beauty of the sun dispelling the mists of miasma, elbowing out the dark, scorching the roots of ancient evil, leading on the invincible soldiers of the day. His soul was beauty, yet before that beauty went

down a mechanical Judaism, went down an unspiritualized paganism, went down the Caesars and their legions" (Dr. Geo. H. Combs). Was He not the Lamb of God? Yes—and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Conqueror of Satan, sin and death. The grave could not hold Him, death had no dominion over Him, because of the beauty of His strength. (5) We see in Him the beauty of compassion. How compelling His attractiveness in the presence of that "poor painted disaster of the street" and her hypocritical accusers; when, without so much as looking into her face in order to spare her the added blush of shame, He so graciously bent down and began tracing letters in the shifting sands. Then when her accusers, lashed by conscience, had slunk away one by one, like whipped curs, He arose and said with ineffable tenderness, "Go thy way: from henceforth sin no more" (John 8:1-11). O those tears of Jesus! Tears of sympathy at the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35). Tears of anguish over the rebelliousness of the city of His love. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37). (6) We see in Him the beauty of perfect proportion. In Him, even as in the Father, "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalms 85:10). In Him we find love and justice perfectly balanced; sympathy and sinlessness perfectly correlated; sociability and piety perfectly proportioned; life and death perfectly related. Pascal has rightly said: "In Jesus Christ all contradictions are harmonized." (7) Finally, we see in Him the beauty of sacrificial love. He made the one and only Supreme Sacrifice (John 15:13). That Sacrifice is the summit, the mountain peak, the highest height of either divine or human service and attainment. In everything He was beautiful! He is the One Altogether Lovely! Viewing the immaculate beauty of His character and person, we are moved to sing:

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want; More than all in Thee I find."

21. Q. In what third respect is the perfection of the character of Jesus evidenced?

A. The perfection of the character of Jesus is evidenced, in the third place, in its blending of diverse elements.

(1) For an excellent presentation of the argument from the character of Jesus, see Bushneil, Nature and the Supernatural, pp. 276–332. Bushnell calls attention to the originality and vastness of Christ's plan, yet its simplicity and practical adaptation; his moral traits of independence, compassion, meekness, wisdom, zeal, humility, patience; the combination in Him of seemingly opposite qualities. With all His greatness, He was always humble; He was unworldly, yet not austere; He had strong feelings, yet was always self-possessed; He had indignation toward sin, yet compassion toward the sinner; He showed devotion to His work, yet calmness under opposition; universal philanthropy, yet susceptibility to private attachments; the authority of a Savior and Judge, yet the gratitude and tenderness of a son; the most elevated devotion, yet a life of unceasing activity and exertion. Quoting again Pascal's epigram: "In Jesus Christ all contradictions are harmonized." (2) "Not a single gem is absent from the tiara of moral beauty which encircles his brow. And they are not only present, but they are perfectly blended. Nothing is out of proportion: the symmetry is complete. There is no one-sidedness in Him. No one virtue towered above the rest, but each was moderated and completed by its opposite grace. His character never lost its equilibrium, and hence needed readjustment or modification. He was vivacious without levity; vigorous without violence; serious without melancholy; dignified without

pride or presumption. He combined the strength of the lion with the meekness of the lamb, and the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. Every element of character finds in Him the happiest harmony—harmony like that in the summer and winter, and in the day and night" (M. M. Davis, How to Be Saved, p. 80).

22. Q. In what fourth respect is the perfection of His character evidenced?

A. The perfection of His character is evidenced, in the fourth place, by His serenity under the most trying outward conditions and circumstances.

(1) "His unrepining attitude, maintained in the presence of judicial butchery, was nothing extraordinary for Him. It had marked the whole of His public life. When He was assailed by the vituperations of scribes and the invectives of Pharisees, no bitter or passionate syllable passed His lips. He uttered no recrimination when they blasphemed and charged that His beneficence was due to collusion with demons. He was defamed as a drunkard, a madman, or what was almost worse in Jewish eyes, a Samaritan. These malignant shafts glanced off His shining armor, leaving Him serene and victorious. Arrogant and hypercritical High Priest, cruel and imperious Herod, vacillating and cowardly Pilate, could not disturb His peace. He surrendered His body to the smiter, to the lictor who bound Him on the cross, to the soldiers whose hammers drove in the nails. One prayer and one only broke that hallowed silence: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' . . . When was there such a death as this, apart from its sacramental or its theological significance? The Kingly Christ passes through the tribulations and trials of His crucial phase uncomplainingly, without accusation against those who had robbed Him of His right to justice and of His life. There have been countless deaths of moment, of honor, and of glory: found at the martyr's stake, in the arena of the ravenous lions, and on the fields of war. But Christ's Cross towers above them all" (Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, in The Christian Herald, Apr. 10, 1925). (2) In most men poise will be disturbed by either success or disappointment, and to the degree that the success is phenomenal and the disappointment grievous. Jesus experienced both: in His early ministry, it was success; in His later ministry, it was execration. At first His popularity was unusual and inspiring—the people even sought to make Him their king; but at the last His opposition was organized, unrelenting, deadly. Yet under these widely divergent circumstances and conditions, Jesus invariably maintained His perfect poise. Serenely He stood before Pontius Pilate; calmly He heard the sentence of death pronounced; patiently He bore the agonies of the Cross; prayerfully He remembered His mocking murderers; resignedly He committed His spirit to the heavenly Father. Not once did He falter, except for the few moments of overpowering dread and loneliness in the Garden of Gethsemane! (3) "On a barren hill beyond the city walls they nailed His perfect body to the cross. Two robbers were crucified with Him. It was over. The rabble had sickened quickly of its revenge, and scattered; His friends were hiding; the soldiers were busy casting lots for His garments. There was nothing left of the external influences which fire men's imaginations, or grip their loyalty. Surely the victory of His enemies was complete; He could do no miracle there, hanging on a cross. And yet——'Jesus!' It was the voice of one of the robbers. 'Jesus,' he says painfully, 'remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!' Read that, O men, and bow your heads. You who have let yourselves picture Him as weak, as a man of sorrows, uninspiring, glad to die. There have been leaders who could call forth enthusiasm when their fortunes ran high. But He, when His enemies had done their worst, so bore Himself that a crucified felon looked into His dying eyes and saluted Him as King!" (Bruce Barton, The Man Nobody Knows, pp. 219–220).

23. Q. What is the theory advanced by certain scholars to account for the sinlessness of Jesus?

A. The theory advanced by certain scholars to account for His sinlessness is, that He was a man who was illumined by the Spirit of God perhaps to a greater extent than other world leaders, but withal just a man.

(1) This is the view of so-called Modernists generally, who hold that He was a man who possessed the gifts and powers of the Divine Spirit without measure beginning from the time of the Spirit's descent upon Him following His baptism (Matthew 3:16). This fulness of divine leading and illumination is, they contend, a sufficient explanation of His matchless character and life as a man. (2) A. Maude Royden, for example, writes: "Only once has God been perfectly received. Only once has he been able altogether to enter in and take possession. This is the Incarnation. Is Jesus God then? Can we believe in the divinity of Christ? Yes: for God, his love neither destroyed nor decreased by his world turning from him and casting him out, had never rested 'in His home in heaven,' but sought us out. This is the truth of Immanence and Incarnation, and it was inevitable that love should act so. . . . He finds us, the human race, but none of us receives him wholly, except Jesus Christ." Again: "In Jesus Christ we recognize humanity at its best. This has been the verdict upon him of His brothers and sisters, the rest of mankind. To this day men, even while they shrug their shoulders at the impossibility of it, admit that if we were all like Christ our problems would be solved. What is this but to admit that to be like him is to be in perfect harmony with the purpose of God?" (I Believe in God, pp. 103, 104, 127). (3) It will be seen that this explanation involves the unanswerable question of how and why it is that Jesus of Nazareth was the only one of the untold millions of humanity who did "receive God perfectly." It raises the problem of His uniqueness, a mystery no less profound than that of His sinlessness. (3) It should be noted, too, that the advocates of this view speak and write quite fervently of the "divinity" of Christ, but they are as silent as the grave with respect to His deity. In fact they never use the term deity in writing of Him. Let it be remembered that there is a vast difference between divinity and deity, a difference not of degree but of rank.

24. Q. On what ground, then, do we reject this "divine illumination" theory?

A. We reject it on the ground that it utterly fails to account for the uniqueness of Jesus.

(1) If the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism was the incident in which He was clothed with "divinity"—then how does it happen that other men are not made perfect by the indwelling of the Spirit? How does it happen that Jesus alone, of all humanity, possessed the Holy Spirit without measure? Moreover, the idea of the Holy Spirit dwelling without measure in an imperfect person, an ordinary human being, is an anomaly. It just doesn't happen. But the Holy Spirit could—and did—indwell Jesus without measure, because He Himself was immaculate. (2) "Between Pilate and Titus, thirty thousand Jews are said to have been crucified around the walls of Jerusalem. Many of these were young men. What makes one of them stand out on the pages of history? There are two answers: The character of Jesus was a perfect character, and He was God as well as man" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 187). As Matthew Arnold has written, in "The Better Part,"

"Was Christ a man like us?

Ah, let us see If we then too can be Such men as He!”

George Bernard Shaw, “the plumed knight” of modern literature, concedes that the Christ of Luke’s Gospel “has conquered the world.” Similarly, H. G. Wells is moved to ask: “Is it any wonder that to this day this Galilean is too much for our small hearts?” (The Outline of History, p. 505). And even the half-mad German philosopher, Neitzsche, declares that there has been only one Christian in all history and He died on the Cross. (3) Is it possible, then, to account satisfactorily for the uniqueness of Jesus, which is universally conceded, by non-believers and believers alike, on the basis of this “divine-illumination” theory? We answer, No; that this theory merely enhances the mystery of His uniqueness. (4) Finally, as a matter of fact it is evident that the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus following His baptism in the Jordan, was not for the purpose of imparting to Him a divine nature. He had that already by virtue of His incarnation. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him was for the purpose, rather, of officially launching Him upon His divine mission and work as Messiah and Redeemer of mankind. It was His official anointing (Acts 10:38); and it signified His divine authorization to enter on His public ministry.

25. Q. On what sole ground, then, can we account for the sinlessness of Jesus?

A. We can satisfactorily account for the sinlessness of Jesus only on the ground that He was God in the flesh.

(1) He not only taught as God, but He lived as God. John 14:9—“he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Matthew 27:54—“Truly this was the Son of God.” Those who would deny the supernatural element in His life and work, must account first for the sinlessness of His character. His very faultlessness is, in itself, an element quite as supernatural as His miracles. So why attack the miracles? Why not account first for the Jesus of history who is Himself the greatest mystery of all time? (2) Note carefully the following excerpt: “Here is the central miracle of Christianity: Christ. The central miracle is not the resurrection or the virgin birth or any of the other miracles: the central miracle is just this Person, for he rises in sinless grandeur above life. He is life’s Sinless Exception, therefore a miracle. Now, turn from that Central Miracle toward these lesser miracles and they become credible in the light of his Person. Being what He was, it would be amazing if he did not touch blind eyes and make the lame to walk. These miracles fit in with the central miracle of his Person. ‘Being a miracle, it would be a miracle if he did not perform miracles.’ The miracles do not carry Jesus—he carries them. The ‘whom’ carries the ‘what’—the Person carries the manifestation.” Again: “In the light of his Person I see no difficulty whatever in believing in the virgin birth. Since he rose above life in sinless grandeur, it becomes possible to believe that he rose above the ordinary processes of birth. ‘The virgin life of Jesus makes it possible to believe in the virgin birth of Jesus.’ An Arya Samajist asked me if I could produce in human history another example of the virgin birth. I replied that I could not, for I could not produce another Jesus Christ. He was the Unique, and therefore did the unique. A converted Jew was talking to an unconverted Jew when the latter asked: ‘Suppose there were a son born among us and it were claimed that he was born of a virgin, would you believe it?’ The converted Jew very thoughtfully replied: ‘I would if he were such a Son.’ That is the point. He makes it possible to believe in it. But the virgin birth does not carry Jesus: he carries it. When the emphasis is on the whom then the how becomes credible. . . . In regard to the resurrection the same things hold. Jesus rose above life. This makes it perfectly credible that he would rise above death. Two things take us all—sin and death. Jesus

conquered the first—our own inward moral consciousness being witness. Will he conquer the second? It would be surprising if he did not. I say it reverently: If Jesus did not rise from the dead, he ought to have done so. The whole thing would come out wrong if the grave held him captive. When the broken and dispirited disciples, now radiant with a wild hope, whispered to each other, 'He is risen,' they were simply echoing what his whole life had done. Throughout his life he arose. Where we sank, he arose. The resurrection fits in with that fact. There must be an empty tomb where there is such fulness of life. . . . Do not misunderstand me. The whats of Christianity are important. A body of doctrine is bound to grow up around him. We cannot do without doctrine, but I am so anxious for the purity of doctrine that I want it to be held in the white light of his Person and under the constant corrective of his living Mind. . . . But we must hold in mind that no doctrine, however true; no statement, however correct; no teaching, however pure, can save a man. 'We are saved by a Person, and only by a Person, and, as far as I know, by only one Person,' said Bishop McDowell. Only Life can lift life" (E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, pp. 169–172). (3) Note the following also: "To be brought face to face with Napoleon is to become war-conscious. To be brought face to face with Shakespeare is to become drama-conscious. To be brought face to face with George Washington is to become America-conscious. To be brought face to face with Jesus Christ is to become God-conscious. What have our psychologists and sociologists and philosophers, who have thrown the Christian Gospel aside, to tell us about God? Their God has no name. They spell ether, or the cosmos, or force, or electricity, or electrons, or energy, or evolution, with a capital and let it substitute for God. The fact is, you lose your God-consciousness when you follow their lead; but when you are in the presence of Christ you immediately become God-conscious" (Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr, Old Things New, p. 43). After all these centuries there is no clearer word than Browning's:

"What lacks then of perfection fit for God, But just the instance which this tale affords Of love without a limit? So is strength, So is intelligence, let love be so, Unlimited in self-sacrifice, Then is the tale true and God shown complete."

Note, in this connection, the following tributes from eminent men of letters, no one of whom could on any ground be regarded as an orthodox believer:

1. John Stuart Mill, British philosopher: "But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion can not be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than the endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life" (Essays on Religion).

2. Emil Ludwig, modern biographer, Jewish: "All Jesus' miracles might be shown to have been no miracles, or a hundred new miracles might be successfully ascribed to him; neither the one nor the other would diminish his greatness" (The Son of Man, Intro., p. 13).

3. Ernest Renan, French "free-thinker": "Rest now in thy glory, noble Founder! Thy work is completed; thy divinity is established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thy efforts crumble

through any fault! Henceforth beyond all frailty, thou shalt aid from the depth of thy divine peace the unending results that follow from thy deeds. At the cost of a few hours of suffering, which have not even touched thy great soul, thou hast achieved immortality the most complete. During thousands of years, the world will breathe life from thee. Around thee, as an ensign lifted above our conflicts, will be fought the hottest battle. A thousand times more living, more beloved, since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou wilt become so completely the cornerstone of humanity, that to tear thy name from the record of this world would be to disturb its very foundations. Henceforth men shall draw no boundary between thee and God. Do thou, who hast completely vanquished death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither, by the royal road thou hast pointed out, long generations of adorers shall follow thee" (Life of Jesus, Last paragraph of Ch. XXV). It will thus be seen that even the rationalists cannot look at Jesus except upon their knees.

4. H. G. Wells, in an article entitled "The Three Greatest Men of History," in Reader's Digest, May. 1935, writes: "Of course the reader and I live in countries where to millions of persons, Jesus is more than a man. But the historian must disregard that fact. He must adhere to the evidence that would pass unchallenged if his book were to be read in every nation under the sun. Now, it is interesting and significant that a historian, without any theological bias whatever, should find that he cannot portray the progress of humanity honestly without giving a foremost place to a penniless teacher from Nazareth. The old Roman historians ignored Jesus entirely; he left no impress on the historical records of his time. Yet, more than 1900 years later, a historian like myself, who does not even call himself a Christian, finds the picture centering irresistibly around the life and character of this most significant man. We still catch something of the magnetism that induced men who had seen him only once to leave their business and follow him. He filled them with love and courage. He spoke with a knowledge and authority that baffled the wise. But other teachers have done this. These talents alone would not have given him the permanent place of power which he occupies; that place is his by virtue of the new and simple and profound ideas which he released—the profound importance of the individual under the Fatherhood of God and the conception of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is one of the most revolutionary changes of outlook that has ever stirred and changed human thought. No age has even yet understood fully the tremendous challenge it carries to the established institutions and subjugations of mankind. But the world began to be a different world from the day that doctrine was preached and every step toward wider understanding and tolerance and good will is a step in the direction of that universal brotherhood Christ proclaimed. The historian's test of an individual's greatness is: 'What did he leave to grow? Did he start men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigor that persisted after him?' By this test Jesus stands first."

(I have found after several years' association with secularly educated men—college professors—that they are prone to criticize dogmas and practices of institutionalized Christianity, without realizing that their objections do not apply to the Christianity of the apostolic age (New Testament).

Chapter 98

01.097. JESUS OUR PERFECT EXEMPLAR

Lesson Eighty-two JESUS OUR PERFECT EXEMPLAR Scripture Reading: John 14:1-11; John 7:10-24.

Scriptures to Memorize: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6). “My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself” (John 7:16-17).

26. Q. If Jesus was God in the flesh, how could He have been “in all points tempted like as we are?”

A. He was tempted “in all points like as we are” by virtue of His residence in the flesh.

(1) Hebrews 2:14-15—“Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 5:8-9—“Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” (2) Rather than to accept the view that His sufferings were mere semblances of temptation and trial by virtue of His inherent divinity, it is far more reasonable to think that His sufferings and temptations were enhanced by the supreme excellence of His physical constitution and by the essential moral purity of His inner nature. “Let us beware of contradicting the express teaching of the Scriptures,” writes Farrar, “by a supposition that he was not liable to real temptation. Nay, he was liable to temptation all the sorer, because it came like agony to a nature infinitely strong yet infinitely pure. In proportion as any one has striven all his life to be, like his great Ensample, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; in that proportion will he realize the intensity of the struggle, the anguish of the antipathy, which pervades a finely-touched spirit when, either by suggestions from within or from without, it has been dragged into an even apparent proximity to the possibilities of evil” (Farrar, Life of Christ, pp. 98–99). (3) Yes, Jesus was tempted. He suffered, too, beyond our poor power to evaluate. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10), sufferings the more intensified, we believe, by the perfection of His physical body, agony the more enhanced by the purity of His moral nature and its natural antipathy to any form of evil. “Our hard impure flesh,” says Luther, “can hardly comprehend the agonizing sensitiveness of a sinless nature brought into contact with hostile wickedness and hateful antagonism.”

27. Q. What practical test of His teaching does Jesus propose to us?

A. He proposes that we shall test His teaching by practising it in our lives.

(1) John 7:17—“If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself.” Jesus was, if anything, an eminently practical Teacher, and the

method He proposes here is an eminently practical method. (2) This was His method—He lived what He taught. “Many teachers of the world have tried to explain everything—they changed little or nothing. Jesus explained little and changed everything. Many teachers have tried to diagnose the disease of humanity—Jesus cures it. Many teachers have told us why the patient is suffering and that he should bear with fortitude—Jesus tells him to take up his bed and walk. Many philosophers speculate on how evil entered the world—Jesus presents Himself as the way by which it shall leave. He did not go into long discussions about the Way to God and the possibility of finding Him—he quietly said to men, ‘I am the Way.’ Many speculate with Pilate, and ask, ‘What is truth?’ Jesus shows himself and says, ‘I am the Truth.’ Spencer defines physical life for us—Jesus defines life itself, by presenting himself and saying, ‘I am the Life.’ Anyone who truly looks upon him knows in the inmost depths of his soul that he is looking on Life itself” (E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, pp. 197–198). (3) “Merely look at Jesus, and you behold a Man. But meet Him face to face in the inwardness of comradeship and obedience, of faltering need and kingly succor, and you know yourself to be meeting the very Person, the very Self of God. I do not explain this: I simply testify” (Hogg, Redemption From This World, pp. 65–66). (4) “All religious experience is an adventure of the soul,” writes Raymond Calkins. “It is the logical advance of the whole personality into the realm of the unknown, which becomes known only as one is ready and willing to advance without knowing.” (5) “Try it out—that is the scientific method. The student of chemistry does not stand across the street looking at the laboratory and speculating about the various reactions of all those chemicals. He goes into the laboratory, takes the tubes and materials into his own hands, and begins to make experiments. Then he knows. He is on his way to becoming a chemist. Make proof of this religion of Christ! Experience is the source of religious certainty. ‘Taste and see that the Lord is good’—it is the only way that we can know the Lord” (Dr. Charles R. Brown, The Gospel For Main Street, p. 47).

28. Q. In what did the holiness of Jesus of Nazareth consist primarily?

A. The holiness of Jesus consisted primarily in His absolute devotion to the will of God the Father.

(1) Consider His attitude as a child of twelve years: Luke 2:49—“How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father’s house?” (2) Consider His attitude with regard to His own baptism. Matthew 3:15—“Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” (3) Consider His attitude of devotion throughout His public ministry. John 4:34—“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” John 5:30—“I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 6:38—“I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 9:4—“We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” (4) Consider His attitude of devotion as revealed in His intercessory prayer to the Father. John 17:4-5—“I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” (5) Consider His attitude of devotion to the Father’s will, even in His moments of intense agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Luke 22:41-42—“And he was parted from them about a stone’s cast; and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” (6) Consider His attitude of unwavering devotion, even in His death on the Cross. John 19:30—“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he

said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit." Luke 23:46—"And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost." What a glorious Ideal for us to strive to attain!

29. Q. What first great lesson, then, does Jesus teach us by His example?

A. Jesus teaches us by His example, first, to make the will of God our supreme rule of conduct.

(1) Matthew 7:21—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." Luke 6:46—"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (2) Note Paul's attitude, on receiving the heavenly vision on the way to Damascus. Acts 22:10—"And I said, What shall I do, Lord?" Acts 26:19—"Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (3) "Who can estimate the advantages and the benefits that would at once accrue to the Church and to the world, if all Christians would strictly follow the example of Christ in this one particular? If all, for instance, who are now following the popular party or the multitude to do evil, or who are led away by the sinful promptings of their own lusts, passions and appetites, would simply ask, as did Christ and Paul, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' how very soon would the Church be purified and the world saved!" (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, pp. 245–246).

30. Q. What second great lesson does Jesus teach us by His example?

A.Jesus teaches us by His example, in the second place, to resist temptation by reliance on the Word of God. This was Jesus' manner and method of meeting and resisting temptation. In all His conflicts with the Evil One, his main reliance was upon the Holy Scriptures. In every case, and under all circumstances, His principal argument was simply this: "It is written." Matthew 4:3-4—"And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he [Jesus] answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3). Matthew 4:7—"Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 6:16). Matthew 4:10—"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13). "Hence it is evident that in all cases and under all circumstances Christ attached the very highest authority to the written Word of God. It was with Him an end of all controversy. And how happy it would be for the Church, and also for the world, if today even all those who profess to receive the Bible as the Word of God would in this respect follow His example! But instead of doing so, how many, alas! exalt the authority of their own weak reason above that of the Holy Scriptures!" (Milligan, ibid., p. 248).

31. Q. What third great lesson does Jesus teach us by His example?

A.Jesus teaches us by His example, in the third place, to be wholly consecrated to God. His supreme interests in life were the Father's house, the Father's business, the Father's word, and the Father's work. Cf. Romans 12:1-2—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." "Alas! How far we all come short of this perfect standard! How very imperfectly we realize the extent of our obligations,

our privileges, and our birthrights as the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty! In many places the Church is now famishing, and the world is actually perishing for want of that help which God has enabled us to give them if we would; and yet how few, alas! how very few, are willing to come to the rescue, in the spirit of their Master! 0, that every one of us had a heart like that of our Redeemer, and that our lives corresponded in all possible respects with His life! Then, indeed, would the wilderness and solitary parts of the Earth soon be made glad, and the deserts would rejoice and blossom as the rose" (Milligan, ibid., pp. 249–250).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHTY-TWO

26. If Jesus was God in the flesh, how could He have been "in all points tempted like as we are?"

27. What practical test of His teaching does Jesus propose to us?

28. In what did the holiness of Jesus of Nazareth consist primarily?

29. What first great lesson, then, does Jesus teach us by His example?

30. What second great lesson does Jesus teach us by His example?

31. What third great lesson does Jesus teach us by His example?

01.098. THE CLAIMS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

Lesson Eighty-three THE CLAIMS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH Scripture Reading: John 8:31-59.

Scriptures to Memorize: “I am come out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father” (John 16:28). “Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?” (John 14:9).

32. Q. What third aspect of the Jesus of history shall we now investigate?

A. We shall now proceed to investigate the claims Jesus made for Himself.

33. Q. What is a first claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the first place, to have come from God the Father.

John 6:38—“For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 8:42—“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he hath sent me.” John 7:28-29—“Ye both know me, and know whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. I know him; because I am from him, and he sent me.” John 17:5—“Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

34. Q. What is a second claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A.He claimed, in the second place, to have received His teaching from God the Father. Matthew 11:27—“All things have been delivered unto me of my Father.” John 7:16—“My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me.” John 8:28—“I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me, I speak these things.” John 17:8—“For the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them.” John 12:49—“For I spake not from myself; but the Father that hath sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” John 18:37—“To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” John 6:63—“The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.”

35. Q. What is a third claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the third place, to have come to do the Father’s work.

John 5:17—“My Father worketh even until now, and I work.” John 4:34—“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” John 5:30—“I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 14:10—“the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.” John 9:4—“We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.”

36. Q. What is a fourth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the fourth place, to have come into the world for the purpose of revealing God to mankind.

Matthew 11:27—“no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.” John 12:45—“and he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me.” John 6:46—“Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is from God, he hath seen the Father.” John 14:9—“he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Cf. John 1:18—“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” Hebrews 1:3—“who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance,” etc.

37. Q. What is a fifth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the fifth place, that He would return to the Father.

John 8:14—“I know whence I came, and whither I go.” John 14:28—“If ye loved me, ye would have rejoiced, because I go unto the Father.” John 16:28—“I am come out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father.” John 16:10—“of righteousness, because I go to the Father,” etc.

38. Q. What is a sixth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the sixth place, to have authority on earth to forgive sins.

Matthew 9:6-7—“But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and departed to his house.” Cf. Luke 5:20-25. Luke 7:48, “And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.” Luke 23:43, “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise” (these words of forgiveness were addressed to the penitent thief on the cross).

39. Q. What is a seventh claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the seventh place, to have Life inherently and in its fulness in His own Person.

John 5:26—“For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself.” John 10:17-18—“Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” John 5:21—“For as the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son also giveth life to whom he will.” John 8:52—“If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death.” John 14:6—“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” John 10:10—“I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” John 11:25-26—“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.”

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHTY-THREE 32.What third aspect of the Jesus of history shall we now investigate?

33. What is a first claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

34. What is a second claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?
35. What is a third claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?
36. What is a fourth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?
37. What is a fifth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?
38. What is a sixth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?
39. What is a seventh claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

Chapter 100

01.099. THE CLAIMS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded)

Lesson Eighty-four THE CLAIMS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH (Concluded) Scripture Reading: John 9:13-41, Matthew 25:31-46.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am” (John 8:58). “And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).

40. Q. What is an eighth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the eighth place, to have oneness with God the Father.

John 10:30—“I and the Father are one.” John 8:29—“And he that sent me is with me.” John 14:11—“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.” John 17:20-21—“Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me.”

41. Q. What is a ninth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the ninth place, to be the Master of men.

Matthew 23:9-12, “And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Master, even the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.” This title “Master” describes Him as the great Teacher and Lawgiver and Exemplar, who alone has revealed the truth of God to man, and who alone is to be followed in matters of religious faith and practice.

42. Q. What is a tenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the tenth place, to have been the Messiah or Christ.

John 4:25-26—“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.” Mark 14:61-62, “Again the high priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” Cf. Peter’s confession: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

43. Q. What is an eleventh claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the eleventh place, to be the Son of God.

John 10:24-25—“The Jews therefore came round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, these bear witness of me.” Matthew

11:27—“no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.” John 9:35-37, “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and finding him, he said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee.” Luke 22:70—“And they all said, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am” (literally, Ye say it, because I am). John 10:36—“say ye of him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest: because I said, I am the Son of God?” Matthew 16:15-17, “He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.”

44. Q. What is a twelfth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the twelfth place, to be Mediator, Intercessor, Redeemer, and King.

(1) Mediator. John 14:6—“I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 10:9—“I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” John 15:5—“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing.” (2) Intercessor. John 15:16—“that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” John 16:23—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name.” (3) Redeemer. Matthew 20:28—“even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Luke 19:10—“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” John 11:25-26—“I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth on me, shall never die.” (4) King. John 18:36-37—“Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” Luke 22:29-30—“I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom,” etc. Cf. Luke 19:38—“Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

45. Q. What is a thirteenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He asserted, in the thirteenth place, His own preexistence; and in so doing assumed for Himself the great and incommunicable Name of the Deity.

John 8:58—“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am.” Cf. Exodus 3:14—“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” (No wonder the Jews, when they heard Jesus assume this Name for Himself, “took up stones therefore to cast at him,” John 8:59. It is obvious that He must have been all that He claimed to be, else He thus becomes the most notorious blasphemer of all history!) John 17:4-5—“I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with

thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." How could a mere man have made such a prayer as this? Note also His frequent use of the words, "I am," in His teaching:

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:48).

"I am the living bread which came down out of heaven" (John 6:51).

"I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

"I am the door" (John 10:9).

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11).

"I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25).

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

"I am the true vine" (John 15:1), etc.

46. Q. What is a fourteenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A.He claimed, in the fourteenth place, all authority in heaven and upon earth. This claim He made after His resurrection from the dead. Matthew 28:18—"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." This is a claim of nothing less than sovereignty over all created things. "For Confucius or Buddha, Zoroaster or Pythagoras, Socrates or Mohammed to claim all power in heaven and on earth, would show insanity or moral perversion. But this is precisely what Jesus claimed. He was either mentally or morally unsound, or his testimony is true" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 190). Cf. Ephesians 1:19-21, "according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," etc. Php 2:9—"Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name," etc. 1 Peter 3:21-22—"Jesus Christ, who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

47. Q. What is a fifteenth claim which Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. He claimed, in the fifteenth place, to be the Judge of the living and the dead.

Matthew 10:32-33—"Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 16:27—"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds." Luke 22:69—"But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." John 5:26-27—"For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself: and he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man." John 5:22—"For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son." John 12:48—"he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my saying hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." Matthew 25:31-33, "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of

his glory; and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats," etc. Cf. Acts 17:31—"inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts 10:42—"and he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead."

48. Q. What must be our conclusion in view of these many stupendous claims which Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

A. We are compelled to conclude, either that He is all He claimed to be, or that He is the most notorious impostor who ever came before the world.

Jesus obviously knew how vast His claims were, yet He staked all upon them. Though others doubted Him, He never doubted Himself. Though persecuted unto death, He never ceased His constant testimony. Had He evaded the issue when the High Priest asked Him bluntly, "Art thou then the Son of God?" (Luke 22:70), the chances are that He would have avoided the charge of blasphemy and subsequent death by crucifixion. But He answered emphatically and without hesitation, "Ye say that I am" (literally, Ye say it: I am); and for that good confession of His own Sonship He went to the Cross with all its suffering and anguish. We therefore, for many reasons, believe that His testimony is true; that He is one with God the Father; that He is the revealer of God to men; that He is, in short, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Dr. Bushnell, in his book, Nature and the Supernatural, includes a chapter on what He designates "the self-evidencing super-human character of Christ." Among the evidences of this superhumanness, he lists the following: (1) The fact that Jesus is the only character who disowns repentance. "Human piety," writes Bushnell, "begins with repentance. It is the effort of a being, implicated in wrong and writhing under the stings of guilt, to come to God. The most righteous, or even self-righteous men, blend expressions of sorrow and vows of new obedience with their exercises. But Christ, in the character given Him, never acknowledges sin. It is the grand peculiarity of His piety that He never regrets anything that He has done or been; expresses, nowhere, a single feeling of compunction, or the least sense of unworthiness. On the contrary, He boldly challenges His accusers in the question—"Which of you convicteth me of sin?" (John 8:46) and even declares, at the close of His life, in a solemn appeal to God, that He has given to men, unsullied, the glory divine that was deposited in Him." (2) The fact of the superhuman balance of Jesus' character. "Men undertake to be spiritual, and they become ascetic; or, endeavoring to hold a liberal view of the comforts and pleasures of society, they are soon buried in the world, and slaves to its. fashions; or, holding a scrupulous watch to keep out every particular sin, they become legal, and fall out of liberty; or, charmed with the noble and heavenly liberty, they run to negligence and irresponsible living; so the earnest become violent, the fervent fanatical and censoring, the gentle waver, the firm turn bigots, the benevolent ostentatious. Poor human infirmity can hold nothing steady. . . . And yet the character of Christ is never modified, even by a shade of ratification. It is one and the same throughout. He makes no improvements, prunes no extravagances, returns from no eccentricities. The balance of His character is never disturbed, or readjusted." (3) Especially the fact of Christ's "astonishing pretensions." Writes Bushnell: "Imagine a human creature saying to the world—'I came forth from the Father'—'ye are from beneath, I am

from above'; facing all the intelligence and even philosophy of the world, and saying in bold assurance—'behold a greater than Solomon is here'—'I am the light of the world'—'the way, the truth, and the life'; publishing to all peoples and religions—'No man cometh to the Father, but by me'; addressing the Infinite Majesty, and testifying—'I have glorified Thee on the earth'—calling to the human race—'come unto me'—'follow me'; laying His hand upon all the dearest and most intimate affections of life, and demanding a precedent love—'he that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me.' Was there ever displayed an example of effrontery and spiritual conceit so preposterous? But no one is offended with Jesus on this account. . . . For eighteen hundred years, these prodigious assumptions have been published and preached to a world that is quick to lay hold of conceit, and bring down the lofty airs of pretenders, and yet, during all this time, whole nations of people, composing as well the learned and powerful as the ignorant and humble, have paid their homage to the name of Jesus, detecting never any disagreement between His merits and His pretensions, offended never by any thought of His extravagance. In which we have absolute proof that He practically maintains His amazing assumptions!" (4) And finally, the circumstances of our Lord's death. Here Bushneil remarks: "He dies not as a man, but rather as someone might, who is mysteriously more and higher. So thought aloud the hard-faced soldier—'Truly this was the Son of God.' As if he had said, 'I have seen men die—this is not a man. They call Him the Son of God—He cannot be less.' Can He be less to us?"

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON EIGHTY-FOUR 40.What is an eighth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

41. What is a ninth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

42. What is a tenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

43. What is an eleventh claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

44. What is a twelfth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

45. What is a thirteenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

46. What is a fourteenth claim that Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

47. What is a fifteenth claim which Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

48. What must be our conclusion in view of these many stupendous claims which Jesus of Nazareth made for Himself?

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