

SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Lessons 40-53

Fourth Quarter

Nehemiah - Psalm 78

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FOREWORD

Dr. Peter Eldersveld once asked a simple but vitally important question on radio broadcast. "Why is it," he asked, "that so many refuse to take the **WHOLE BIBLE JUST AS IT IS**, and simply believe it?"

Men will end up hopelessly in hell unless they believe the Word of God. One such man "in hell" began to plead for his brothers who were still on earth and were making the same mistake of not believing God's Word as he had made. The rich man wanted someone to go down from heaven to warn his brothers - the Word of God was not enough. Note the answer he got: "**IF THEY HEAR NOT MOSES AND THE PROPHETS (that is, the OLD TESTAMENT, which was the WHOLE BIBLE OF THAT DAY), NEITHER WILL THEY BE PERSUADED THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD**" (Luke 16:31).

Some think the Bible is a cafeteria. They pick out a Psalm, the Sermon on the Mount, a parable or two, a snatch of Genesis. We have chosen to take the Whole Bible and we invite you to study it with us. Begin today our chapter by chapter, Genesis through Revelation, study of God's Word.

You can read the 929 chapters of the Old Testament and the 260 chapters of the New Testament in less than one year! How? By reading **THREE (3)** chapters in the Old and **ONE (1)** chapter in the New Testament every day.

Bible Reading A Good Tonic

Some years ago, a lady went to consult a famous physician about her health. She was a woman of temperament. She gave the doctor a list of her symptoms, and answered his questions only to be astonished at his brief prescription after the consultation. "Go home and read your Bible an hour a day, and then come back to see me a month from today." He bowed her out before she could protest.

At first, she was inclined to be angry; then she reflected that at least the prescription was not an expensive one. She went home determined to read conscientiously her neglected Bible. In one month, she went back to the doctor's office. She was an entirely different person, and then she asked the doctor how he knew what she needed.

In answer, the doctor turned to his desk and there worn and marked, lay an open Bible. "Madam," said the doctor, "If I were to omit my daily reading of this Book, I would lose my greatest force of strength and skill."

We suggest that each family set aside a certain time each day for reading the Bible and for prayer. We are certain that the whole family will find a great blessing. **TRY IT AND SEE.**

---"The Christian Challenge" of Russellville Christian Church.

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 40

Page 1

Nehemiah 1-3

Memory Verse: Jeremiah 33:3

Memory Verse:

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jeremiah 33:3).

Public Reading: Nehemiah 1:1-11.

GOD'S CALL TO NEHEMIAH

In the book of Ezra we saw a remnant people gathered back to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:1-20) in 457 B. C. Ezra was a priest, teaching religion to the people.

Nehemiah's mission was to restore Jerusalem as a fortified city. He rebuilt the walls in 444 B. C., thirteen years after Ezra had restored the law and the ritual of the Temple worship. Nehemiah came as a civil governor, with authority from the king of Persia to re-build the wall, and restore Jerusalem as a fortified city.

The Jews had first returned to Jerusalem from Babylon in 536 B. C. and for nearly 100 years had made little progress beyond building the Temple, a very insignificant Temple, compared to Solomon's. Whenever they would start work on the wall, their more powerful neighbors would either bluff them off by force or by intrigue get orders from the Persian court for the work to stop (Ezra 4:17-24, 1-6).

Nehemiah is the last book of Old Testament history.

I. Nehemiah Is Distressed About the Conditions of the City and the People (Nehemiah 1:1-11)

"Nehemiah. . . son of Hachaliah" (Neh. 1:1): With a fine touch of unconscious humility, Nehemiah tells us he was the "king's cupbearer" (Neh. 1:11). He was an eminent, pious Jew to be distinguished from the Nehemiah who helped Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7 in 536 B. C., or the Nehemiah who helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:16) in B. C. 444. His genealogy is unknown except that he is the son of Hachaliah, and brother of Hanani (Neh. 7:2; compare 1:2). All we know of him is found in this book. Nehemiah means, "Comfort of Jehovah." He was a prosperous servant of Artaxerxes Longimanus (Neh. 2:1) about 446 B. C., who dwelt in the royal palace and was a trusted favorite of the king, who reigned 465-425 B. C., a step-son of Esther who doubtless encouraged the king in his kindly feeling toward the Jews.

"In the month Chisleu . . ." (Neh. 1:1): The name of the third civil or ninth ecclesiastical month adopted from the Babylonians after the captivity. See "Calendar, Time," in UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY, pages 163-166. It corresponds to our December.

"I was in Shushan . . ." (Neh. 1:1): The Hebrew word means "Lily," and the Greek form is Susa. It took its name from the great abundance of lilies that grew in its neighborhood. It was the capital of ancient Persia, east of the Tigris River. From the time of Cyrus (538-529 B. C.) it was the favorite winter residence of Persian kings.

The Code of Hammurabi was uncovered at Shushan by Jacques de Morgan, 1901.

"Hanani, one of my brethren" (Neh. 1:2): He is called Nehemiah's brother in Neh. 7:2. He came from Jerusalem to Shushan, sent probably by Ezra, to bring information concerning the condition of the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem and Judah. The picture he brought was a dark one of the desolation of Jerusalem

and the people (Neh. 1:3).

"I . . . wept . . . fasted . . . prayed" (Neh. 1:4): His brother's unhappy report caused Nehemiah much searching of heart. Like Paul, he knew how to weep over the failures of God's people (Acts 20:28-31). He was a man of prayer, patriotism, action, courage, and perseverance. His first impulse always was to pray (Neh. 2:4; 4:4, 9; 6:9, 14). He prayed four months before he made his request to the king (Neh. 1:1; 2:1)!

"Prayer before the God of heaven" (Neh. 1:4): A title so often found in Ezra. This indicated the removal of God's throne from earth to heaven. Nehemiah turned in prayer to God who had given up his people to their own sin and its consequences---the Babylonian captivity (586 B. C.). Think of praying from December to April for one thing!

"Prayer is the burden on a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The up-ward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

"We have sinned . . ." (Neh. 1:6): In deepest humiliation, Nehemiah joins with Ezra and Isaiah in confessing his sin and the sin of his people (Ezra 9:6, 7; Isa. 6:5). This prayer is full of beauty; it opens with confession of sin, pleads the promises God made to them, ends with a definite and personal petition.

"I will scatter . . . gather" (Neh. 1:8, 9): This man of faith and prayer proceeds to remind God of His own word-that even if His people did sin and go into captivity, yet IF THEY WOULD TURN TO HIM, God would bring them back to Jerusalem (Lev. 26:40-45; Deut. 4:23; 30:1-3). This is importunate praying (Luke 18:1-8). It was specifically for the removal of the affliction and reproach resting on those who were now at Jerusalem.

"Grant . . . mercy . . . of this man" (Neh. 1:11): This personal and definite petition was that God would give him favor in the eyes of Artaxerxes, the king, for whom he was cupbearer. In the sight of God, the king was just a man. Nehemiah prayed that God would move the king's heart to grant his request. As the "king's cupbearer," he had direct access to the king.

II. Nehemiah's Request Is Granted (Nehemiah 2:1-8)

"In the month Nisan . . ." (Neh. 2:1): This is our month of April. In the Hebrew calendar, Nisan is the first month of the year. Artaxerxes was king of Persia 465-425 B. V., son of Xerxes, and so the stepson of Queen Esther the Jewess. "Wine before the king" alludes to some banquet at which the king and queen were present.

"Countenance sad . . . sorrow of heart" (Neh. 2:2): God directs the king's attention to the grief-stricken face of Nehemiah and kindly inquiries into the cause of it.

"City . . . lieth waste . . ." (Neh. 2:3): Nehemiah had cause to be sad. He could not be indifferent when Jerusalem and his beloved people were in such distressed condition. God used his plea to touch the king's heart.

"Make request? So I prayed . . ." (Neh. 2:4): When Artaxerxes asked what Nehemiah desired of him, note that Nehemiah "prayed" before he answered the monarch. What an atmosphere of prayer surrounded this man. The king granted him permission to rebuild the gates and walls of the city (verses 7, 8) and the power to acquire whatever was needed for the work and a definite leave of absence to carry out his heart's desire! God answered, and answers, prayer!

III. Nehemiah's Journey and a Secret Examination of the Ruins (Nehemiah 2:9-16)

"I came to the governors . . ." (Neh. 2:9): Burning patriotic and religious love urged Nehemiah quickly to cross the Euphrates River to Judah. There he presented the king's letters to the governors of the mixed Samaritan people who had been there since the days of Esar-haddon (681-688 B.C.) successor of Sennacherib (706-681) who was defeated by an angel of God before Jerusalem (II Chron. 32).

"Sanballat the Horonite. . ." (Neh. 1:10): A native of Horonaim, a city of Moab (Neh. 13:1; Deut. 23:3-6). "Tobiah the servant": An Ammonite. Moab and Ammon were the sons of Lot by his own daughters (Gen. 19:33-38). They sought by every means, foul or fair, to frustrate the efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah for the internal and external security of Judah.

"I went . . . by night" (Neh. 2:13): Nehemiah made a secret survey of the ruins. The "gate of the valley" is probably the Joppa gate. His private investigation of the ruined walls convinces him they can be restored (verses 14-16).

IV. Nehemiah Makes Known His Purpose: His First Opposition (Nehemiah 2:17-20)

"Let us rise up and build" (Neh. 2:18): Gathering the elders together, Nehemiah urges them to arise and build the walls of Jerusalem and put an end to the miserable condition which gave their adversaries occasion to reproach the Jews (verse 17). They all were encouraged by Nehemiah's exhortation and greed to build the walls.

"They laughed us to scorn . . ." (Neh. 2:19): The adversaries of the Jews derided their resolution. Geshem the Arabian is also named as an adversary. See Ezra 4:4.

"The God of heaven . . . prosper us" (Neh. 2:20): Asserting that power to build the walls will come from God Nehemiah makes it clear that no cooperation will be permitted with those who derided the effort.

V. The Work Is Distributed in Forty-two Sections (Nehemiah 3:1-32)

"They builded the sheep gate . . ." (Neh. 3:1): The priests and all great families were assigned a portion of the wall to be built, or repaired. The burden was born by all the people. Divided into forty-two sections, the work went on simultaneously with great energy. Where "build" occurs it means entirely replacing.

"Repaired . . ." (Neh. 3:4): This suggests that some trace or the gate of wall was found; it was completely restored by the workers. The chapter shows the value of distributing the work, and the beauty of the unity of brethren!

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QUESTIONS

1. What evidence do we find that Nehemiah wrote this book (Neh. 1:1), and where was the writer?
2. Which month is called Chisleu (Neh. 1:1)? Nisan (Neh. 2:1)?
3. How many years had passed after the return of the second group under Ezra before the third group arrived in Jerusalem (Ezra 7:6-8; Neh. 1:1; 2:1)?
4. Who was the leader of this group (Neh. 1:1; 2:9, 10)?
5. Why did Nehemiah indicate an interest in the Jews of Jerusalem (Neh. 1:2), and how did he prove he had a God-given love for the Jews rather than a fleshly curiosity regarding their condition Neh. 1:3,4)?
6. What do we discover in Nehemiah's prayer (Neh. 1:5-11) showing his knowledge of God's word (Deut. 30:1-5; 4:23; Lev. 26:40-45), and his absolute faith in that word?
7. Why did Nehemiah say "we" have sinned (Neh. 1:6; Luke 18:10-13; Ezra 9:6, 7; Isa. 6:5), what specific promise did he claim (Neh. 1:8-10), and how long did he pray this one prayer (Neh. 1:1, 6; 2:1)?
8. What royal position did Nehemiah occupy which gave him direct access to the king (Neh. 1:11)?
9. How did the king discover Nehemiah's burden for the Jews at Jerusalem (Neh. 2:7-3), and why was Nehemiah "sore afraid" (Neh. 2:2)?
10. What did Nehemiah do before he answered the king's question Neh. 2:4, 5)? When speaking of God, by what common term did he refer to Artaxerxes (Neh. 1:11)?
11. Why did the king grant all the desires of Nehemiah (Neh. 2:6-8), and why the military escort (Neh. 2:9; Ezra 8:22)?
12. Name two enemies of Nehemiah's work (Neh. 2:10; 4:1, 2; Ezra 4:1-24)?
13. Why was Nehemiah so secret in his movements (Neh. 2:11-16)?
14. What part of the city did he plan to repair (Neh. 2:15-17)?
15. How did Nehemiah display remarkable tact in securing the cooperation of the people (Neh. 2:17, 18)?
16. What method of opposition did the adversaries first use (Neh. 2:19), and why Nehemiah's courage (Neh. 2:20)?
17. How many gates are listed in chapter 3 (Neh. 3:1, 3, 6, 13, 14, 15, 26, 28, 29, 31), which gate was built first (Neh. 3:1), and why did the priests build it (Heb. 5:1; John 1:29; 10:1-18)?
18. Why was the work distributed, and into how many divisions (Neh. 3:1ff)?
19. Why say "builded" (Neh. 3:1, 2) and "repaired" (Neh. 3:4, 6, 7, etc.) for the rest?
20. What practical value does this chapter show (Neh. 3:1, 3; I Cor. 3:9)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 41

Page 1

Nehemiah 4-7

Memory Verse: Nehemiah 4:6

Memory Verse:

"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work" (Nehemiah 4:6).

Public Reading: Nehemiah 4:1-6.

REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

Nehemiah ("Comforted of Jehovah") returned to Jerusalem to fortify the city in 444 B. C. We have no record of his birth, and no account of his youth. The Author of the book which bears his name, he introduces himself to us as "the king's cupbearer" (Nehemiah 1:11), a very influential and lucrative position. Hence, we have recorded the middle section of a great man's life.

World History

This was a great period of world history.

In Greece: Athens was in her glory; it was the age of Socrates and Pericles; Aeschylus was writing his tragedies, Herodotus and Thucydides their histories. "Forty men in Greece were making for themselves immortal names." No mediocre man could have survived such a galaxy of the world's great.

In India: Buddha, 557-447 B. C.

In China: Confucius, 551-478 B. C.

The fact that Nehemiah was used of God to fortify the city of Jerusalem has made this leader of God known the world around (Nehemiah 1:11).

I. The Walls Rebuilt (Nehemiah 4:1-23)

1. The enemies mock, and Nehemiah prays (Neh. 4:1-6).

"We builded the wall . . ." (Neh. 4:1): The work of rebuilding the walls and gates of Jerusalem was distributed into forty-two sections (Neh. 3:1-32). "To every man his work" is the motto that might well describe that busy scene. Only ten gates are mentioned in Nehemiah 3. The new Jerusalem will have twelve gates (Rev. 21:12), each one of a single pearl. Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day seems to have had twelve gates, ten mentioned in chapter three, plus "the gate of Ephraim" (Neh. 8:16) and in Neh. 12:39 "the prison gate."

"Sanballat . . . wroth . . . mocked the Jews" (Neh. 4:1): Sanballat and his cronies tried to laugh Nehemiah out of building the walls and gates (Neh. 3:19). It takes more than laughing at him to stop a man who fears God (Neh. 3:20; 4:2)!

"Fox . . . break down their stone wall" (Neh. 4:3): This contemptuous sneer that the walls were so weak that the stealthy step of a fox would knock them down did not stop the work.

"Hear, O our God . . ." (Neh. 4:4): Nehemiah committed the matter to God, a sufficient answer to opposition by mockery and scorn. Sanballat was a willful enemy of God, and of God's people. God will deal

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with him (Prov. 29:1). Nehemiah's prayer does not come out of a heart of hate, but from a heart that desires above all else that God's work will be accomplished (verse 5).

"The people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6): When men realize they "are laborers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9), they "Expect great things from God, they attempt great things for God." Since the "people had a mind to work," the walls were "joined together" in fifty-two days (Neh. 6:1.5). Can you realize what this church could do for and with God in spreading the Gospel if EACH MEMBER OF THE CHURCH had a "mind to work"? Try to visualize it. Then work (John 9:4)!

2. A plot of the enemy defeated (Nehemiah 4:7-15).

"Sanballat . . . conspired" (Neh. 4:8): The adversaries of Judah determined upon a sudden onslaught on the remnant. When the man who makes fun of you finds his laughter ineffective, and your success assured, he comes to hate and wants to hurt you. It is first mockery, then murder!

"Made our prayer . . . set a watch" (Neh. 4:9): This is the right combination. Our Lord commended it to his sleeping disciples (Matt 26:40, 41).

"The strength of the bearers . . . is decayed" (Neh. 4:10): This is the first note of discouragement from within. Constant toil and watching have worn down the spirits of the Jews; they are made to feel that they cannot continue the work. To these disheartening words, Nehemiah makes no reply, save to labor on.

"Ten times . . . they will be upon you" (Neh. 4:12): Scattered Jews living among the Samaritans came ten times with warnings of impending assault by Sanballat's United Nations against God's people in Jerusalem. Nehemiah arms the people and gave them a battle cry, "Remember the Lord" (Neh. 4:14). This stirred the people into united action --and victory in the building program. Love of God and of our family make a two-fold appeal to all of us to fight evil (Rom. 8:31; II Tim. 2:8).

3. Precaution against an attack (Neh. 4:16-23).

"Work . . . weapon" (Neh. 4:17): God defeated the counsel of the adversaries, but this deliverance did not cause them to be any the less careful. Nehemiah divided his own servants into two companies, one of which wrought in the work and the other stood guard heavily armed. The builders and burden-bearers labored, each with his sword girded by his side, or with a trowel in one hand and a weapon in the other (verse 18). The trumpeter stood by Nehemiah ready to warn of the enemy's approach (verses 19, 20). "So we labored in the work" (Neh. 4:21ff).

II. Oppression of the Poor Broken Up (Nehemiah 5:1-19)

1. Complaints of suffering and usury (Neh. 5:1-5).

"Great cry . . . mortgaged our lands" (Neh. 5:1-3): They did not sell their lands outright; they wanted to remain in the land. However, they and their families had to eat. Their richer brethren were oppressing them with high usury, or interest. See Deut. 15:8; Lev. 25:39-41; Ex. 22:2ff.

2. The evil corrected (Nehemiah 5:6-13).

"I consulted . . . I rebuked" (Neh. 5:7): Nowhere in the story does the nobility of Nehemiah's character more clearly show itself than here. His consultation with himself resulted in his determination to set

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an example of self-denial. He took no usury; he even gave up the things that his Persian governor gave him to lighten the load of the people. He set a "great assembly against" the rich oppressors. Outside foes may rage, but they cannot really injure the people of God if peace, love, and harmony are within. If the sheep of the Lord's flock stay close to the Shepherd, they will be close to each other (Phil. 1:27, 28; James 3:16; Gal. 5:15; Heb. 13:1).

"We will restore them . . ." (Neh. 5:12): The deserved rebuke of the rich oppressors by Nehemiah produced good results. They pledged to restore all that they had taken. When the creditors had given the consent required, Nehemiah made them swear before the priests to keep their agreement (Neh. 5:12), and gave a solemn symbol of their rejection by God if they did not keep their promise (verse 13). All the congregation said, "Amen, and praised the Lord. "

3. Nehemiah's own example (Neh. 5:14-19).

"But so did not I . . ." (Neh. 5:15): Nehemiah as governor had (he right to accept taxes of money and produce from the Jews, but for twelve years he had paid his own expenses and those who ate with him (verses 16-18). His people might forget his generosity; God would not (verse 19).

III. The Plottings of the Enemy (Nehemiah 6:1-7:4)

1. A conference requested (Neh. 6:1-4).

"Let us meet together . . . plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:2): Four times the invitation of Sanballat to have companionship and compromise with him is rejected by Nehemiah. When infidel forces within our brotherhood would pervert a faithful preacher of the Word they put him on some "planning committee" stacked with slick-tongued rebels who soon "convert" him.

2. A false charge presented (Neh. 6:5-9).

"An open letter . . ." (Neh. 6:5): This was an insult. Courtesy demanded that it be enclosed. Nehemiah refutes the evil charge (verses 6-9) with prayer.

3. Treacherous counsel within the city (Neh. 6:10-14).

"My God, think thou . . ." (Neh. 6:14): The attempt to get Nehemiah to show distrust of God and his people failed. Note Nehemiah's practice of prayer in every crisis.

4. Treacherous correspondence with Tobiah (Neh. 6:15-19).

"Wall was finished . . . fifty and two days" (Neh. 6:15): Persistent prayer and work caused the wall to be finished in fifty-two days in the month Elul, or September. The enemies "were much cast down in their eyes" (verse 16) --both within and without the city. (verses 17-19).

5. The city carefully guarded (Neh. 7:1-4).

IV. The Genealogy of Zerubbabel's Caravan (Nehemiah 7:5-73; Ezra 2:1-70)

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QUESTIONS

1. What was the attitude of Sanballat when he heard that the wall was being rebuilt (Neh. 4:1, 2)?
2. Was the appraisal of Tobiah a compliment (Neh. 4:3)?
3. What was Nehemiah's reaction to the ridicule of the adversaries (Neh. 4:4, 5), and is it a good example for us to follow today (Matthew 5:43-48)?
4. How did the people succeed in joining the wall together (Neh. 4:6)? Will this succeed today (I Cor. 3:9)?
5. What was the next method of attack of the adversaries (Neh. 4:7-8)?
6. How did Nehemiah meet that opposition (Neh. 4:9)?
7. From whom did the next opposition arise (Neh. 4:10-12; Acts 20:29, 30)?
8. What two-fold appeal did Nehemiah make to the discouraged people (Neh. 4:13, 14)?
9. What was the equipment of the builder then (Neh. 4:18)? For the Christian (Eph. 6:17; I Pet. 2:2-5)?
10. What further difficulty arose among the Jews (Neh. 5:1-5; Psa. 15:5)? Who was responsible (Neh. 5:7)?
11. Whom did Nehemiah set before the rulers as an argument for unselfishness (Neh. 5:9; Titus 2:8; I Peter 2:12)? As an example of unselfishness (Neh. 5:10-19; Titus 2:7; I Tim. 4:12)?
12. Can you point out seven different kinds of opposition used against Nehemiah (4:1, 8, 10; 5:5; 6:2, 13)? Can you cite an example of such methods today?
13. How long did it take to finish the wall (Neh. 6:15)? To whom did the enemies give credit for the successful completion of the wall (Neh. 6:15, 16)?
14. After the completion of the walls, what provision did Nehemiah make for the protection of Jerusalem (Neh. 7:1-3)?
15. Is Neh. 7:5-73 the record of a new census taken by Nehemiah or the official record kept of Zerubbabel's company (Neh. 7:5-7; Ezra 2:1-65)?
16. What happened to those who could not find "their register" in the genealogy (Neh. 7:63-65)?
17. Should the church today tolerate the openly polluted member who refuses to clean up his life (I Cor. 5:11; II John 10, 11)?
18. In the light of this lesson, are you one who complains, slanders, or tries to hinder the work of the Lord in His church? Do you admire the worker, or the shirker?
19. If you withhold the Lord's holy tithe (Lev. 27:30-32), how are you going to face God in the judgment (Rom. 14:12; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8:8, 24)?
20. Do you think the prayer life of Nehemiah should be followed by the Christian today (Neh. 1:5ff; 4:4, 9; 6:14; Luke 18:1; I Thess. 5:17)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 42

Page 1

Nehemiah 8-13

Memory Verse: Psalm 119:130

Memory Verse:

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalm 119:130).

Public Reading: Nehemiah 8:1-8.

GOD'S WORD AND THE LAW RESTORED

In every genuine revival among the people of God, the revealed Word of the Lord has had a large place. It was so in Josiah's day, (II Kings 22), in the awakening under Hezekiah (II Chron. 29:3-30:22). The recovery of the Bible brought about the Reformation under Martin Luther.

The whole foundation of the Restoration Plea under the Campbells was a return to the authority of Jesus Christ as revealed in His Word. The pioneers of our movement had to have a "Thus saith the Lord" for everything. Thomas Campbell stated a great truth: "Where the Scriptures Speak, we Speak; Where the Scriptures are Silent, We are Silent." We have no book of authority but the Bible!

Nehemiah 8 is a continuation of chapter 7:1-5, which was interrupted by the incorporation of an old register of those who had returned to Jerusalem nearly 100 years before.

I. The Reading of the Law (Nehemiah 8:1-18)

1. The time, the place, and the reading (Neh. 8:1-3).

"The people gathered . . ." (Neh. 8:1): The people assembled themselves; this was a unity of desire, purpose, and place. See Acts 2:1. The second clause of Neh. 7:73 belongs to Nehemiah 8. This is the second section of the book, which gives account of the special reading of the Law, and the reform that followed.

"Together as one man . . . water gate" (Neh. 8:1): The people met for the due solemnization of the seventh month (tabernacles), the festal month of the year. The water gate is to the south-cast of the temple space.

"Bring the book . . . the Law of Moses" (Neh. 8:1): The people demanded the book. This was the Law of Moses, the Bible of that day as far as it had been written. We have the complete revelation of God today (II Tim. 3:16, 17; 2:15; II Peter 1:15-21). What would happen if EACH MEMBER OF THE CHURCH WOULD DEMAND THE BOOK AT ALL TIMES? The motive of this desire of the people was to keep the new moon of the seventh month as a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious help of God they received during the building of the wall. They wanted to make His law their rule of life! Ezra brought the law before the people (verse 2).

"He read . . . from morning until midday" (Neh. 8:3): Ezra read 'from the light' or early morning until mid-day, or about six hours.

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2. The method of procedure (Nehemiah 8:4-8).

"Ezra . . .pulpit of wood . . .beside him" (Neh. 8:4): Ezra stood upon a raised stage of wood made for the purpose. Beside him stood six persons, probably priests, on his right, and seven on his left hand.

"Opened the book . . . people stood up" (Neh. 8:5): They honored the book. The Bible is the Word of God. All men should reverence honor and obey the Bible. If we honor the Word of God, the God of the Word will honor us! The men who stood with him showed their agreement with Ezra, and they shared in reading and explaining the Law. "Ezra blessed the Lord . . . all the people answered, Amen (verse 6).

"Caused the people to understand the law . . . (Neh. 8:8): Ezra probably read a portion of the law; the Levites expounded or explained to the people the section just read. Did the Levites expound in succession, or did they all at the same time teach different groups of people? This was a real Bible school!

3. The people comforted (Neh. 8:9-12).

"Nehemiah . . . Tirshatha . . ." (Neh. 8:9): When the people knew the message of God, they wept. "They confessed their sins" (Neh. 9:2). After confession, joy came; they worshipped God (Neh. 9:3) and sought to obey his teaching (Neh. 8:16). Today people everywhere need to find, read, explain, honor, heed and spread the Word of God (John 14:15; II Tim. 3:14-17). The feast was kept joyously (verses 10-12).

4. The feast of tabernacles observed (Neh. 8:13-18).

"Lord commanded by Moses . . . Israel . . . booths" (Neh. 8:14): The heads of the family met the second day (verse 13) to "understand the words of the law." They would in turn instruct their families. Daily the reading was followed (See Deut. 31:10ff). The Word of God is all-sufficient for every experience of life (verse 18). It contains the spiritual food and daily guidance (Psa. 119:11). It comforted the people then (verses 9-12) and showed them how to do God's will for them in that day (verses 13-18). The New Testament is our all-sufficient guide until Jesus comes (Matt. 24:36; II Tim. 3:16, 17).

II. A Confession of Sins and a Covenant (Nehemiah 9:1-10:39)

1. A penitent assembly (Neh. 9:1-3).

"Separated themselves . . ." (Neh. 9:2): On the second day after the close of the feast of the tabernacles (Leviticus 23), Israel separated from their unlawful wives. The reading of the law had brought a confession of sins and worship of the Lord (verse 1, 3). A parent wrote in his son's Bible: "My son, this Book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book."

2. A prayer of the Levites (Neh. 9:4-38).

1) The prayer sets forth God's praise (Neh. 9:5-15).

"Levites . . . Stand up and bless the Lord . . ." (Neh. 9:5): The Levites first cried to God, or addressed to Him their confessions and supplications, and after having done so, called upon the congregation to worship God.

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"Blessed be thy glorious name..." God is praised for what He is in Himself in majesty (verses 5b, 6).

"Thou . . . didst choose Abram" (Neh. 9:7, 8): This is praise to God, the Founder of the nation through the calling of Abraham.

"See the affliction of our fathers in Egypt" (Neh. 9:9-11): God is praised as the One who had guided as well as delivered Israel.

2) The prayer sets forth God's grace in contrast to the repeated failure of His people (Neh. 9:16-29).

"Our fathers . . . hearkened not" (Neh. 9:16): This section is a frank confession of repeated sin, and yet the burden of it is rather His being a God ready to pardon.

3) A definite seeking for God's continued goodness and help (Neh. 9:30-38).

"We are servants . . ." (Neh. 9:36): They confessed that God was "just in all that is brought upon us" (verse 33) and that "we have done wickedly." They were now subject to the Persian monarch Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) 465-425 B. C., who had authorized Nehemiah, his cupbearer, to rebuild Jerusalem. Why was the nation in bondage? SIN. A rereading of this long prayer will detail the sins of the people that brought on the captivity.

"Covenant . . . seal" (Neh. 9:38): They vowed and signed the vow to keep the law of God.

3. The parties who sealed the Covenant (Neh. 10:1-28).

"Nehemiah, the Tirshatha" (Neh. 10:1): The Governor. He is the leader with authority from the Persian king. He heads the list. All classes were represented in the list. Following their humiliation, the people entered a new covenant with God. This covenant was sealed representatively by the priests (verses 3-8), Levites (verses 9-13), rulers (verses 14-27). To its terms, all the people agreed (verse 28).

4. Laws that they agreed to keep (Nehemiah 10:29-39).

"Walk in God's law . . . observe and do all the commandments" (Neh. 10:29): The terms of the covenant were set forth in general phrases, and in particular application. They agreed to:

- 1) "walk in God's law;"
- 2) not intermarry with pagans (verse 30);
- 3) honor the Sabbath day (verse 31);
- 4) pay the annual poll-tax of one third shekel (verse 32; Ex. 30:13; Matt. 17:24);
- 5) let the land lie fallow every seventh year --for which disobedience they had been carried to Babylon (verse 31b) and;
- 6) deal graciously with their brethren (verse 31c), and to tithe all their possessions (verses 35-39).

III. A Repopulating of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1-36)

1. The plan adopted (Neh. 11:1-2).

"One of ten. . ." (Neh. 11:1): The people tithed all their possessions to the Lord (see Neh. 10:35-39), now they TITHE THE PERSONS to repopulate Jerusalem. The eleventh chapter is God's honor roll of WILLING PERSONS (see II Cor. 8:3-5; 9:7). This is the third and final division of Nehemiah.

Arrangements are made for settlement of the cities. It is the last piece of history that the Old Testament contains. Some revelation of later conditions is obtained from the study of the prophets, but nothing more is

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directly written until after a lapse of 400 years, the history is resumed in the New Testament.

Jerusalem was particularly difficult of settlement. It was the center of danger, and of possible attack. The title of the people, and some who voluntarily came forward to dwell in the place of danger, met the need (verse 2).

2. A register of the chiefs in the city (Neh. 11:3-24).
3. The cities of Judah and Benjamin at this time (Neh. 11:25-36).

IV. The Dedication of the Walls (Nehemiah 12:1-47)

1. A register of the priests and Levites (Neh. 12:1-26). The register of priests and Levites is given unto the reign of Darius the Persian, Darius III (Codomanus).

2. The walls are dedicated (Neh. 12:27-43).

"The dedication of the wall of Jerusalem . . ." (Neh. 12:27): The dedication of the wall had been postponed for some considerable time probably twelve years after Nehemiah's first coming. The dedication ceremony was in three stages: First, the two processions of singers who chanted the praises of God; second, the reading of the Law; and, finally, the separation of the mixed multitude from the people of God. The reformers perpetually sought to bring these people back in every way to recognition of the basis of true national life---its RIGHT RELATION to God!

3. Restoration of the temple order (Neh. 12:44-47).

V. The Reforms of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 13:1-31)

1. Separation from Moabites and Ammonites (Neh. 13:1-3; Deut. 23:3-5).
2. An unlawful privilege of Tobiah broken up (Neh. 13:4-9).
3. Neglected tithes restored (Neh. 13:10-14).
4. Sabbath-breaking broken up (Neh. 13:15-22).
5. Heathen marriages broken up (Neh. 13:23-31).

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QUESTIONS

1. At what place did the people assemble for the reading of the Scripture (Neh. 8:1)?
2. Who was the scribe, reappearing in our record (Neh. 8:1), who led that great Bible conference (v. 2, 3)?
3. How did the people show their reverence for the law of the Lord (Neh.8:3-6)?
4. What three things characterized Ezra's reading of the Scripture (Neh.8:8)?
5. Why did the people weep (Neh.8:9), and why was the day holy (Neh.8:2)?
6. How did the people show their faith in the authority of the Scripture (Neh.8:14-18)?
7. What practical effect upon the spiritual condition of the people did the reading of the Scripture have (Neh. 9:1-3; Rom. 3:20; 5:20; 7:7; Gal.5:16-26)?
8. How did the prayer of the Levites (Neh.9:4-38) reveal their knowledge of the Scripture?
9. In what sense were they "servants this day" (Neh. 9:36, 37)?
10. What covenant and sealings (Neh. 9:38) and had they any doubt as to the origin of the law (Neh. 9:29, 13, 14)?
11. What did the covenant signed by the representative men include (Neh. 10:29-39)?
12. Why was the city of Jerusalem undesirable for dwelling (Neh. 11:1, 2; II Chron 36:19), and what special group was honored in this chapter?
13. What great event is described in Nehemiah 12:27-47?
14. From whom did the people separate themselves (Neh. 13:1-3)?
15. How did Eliashib the high priest show his disregard for the Law of Moses (Neh. 13:4-7; 4:3; Deut. 23:3)?
16. Was the lack of provision for the priests (Neh. 13:10) due to their own unfaithfulness or by a back-slidden condition among the people (Neh. 13:11, 12; see I Cor. 9:14)?
17. How did Nehemiah deal with those who were breaking the Sabbath (Neh. 13:15-22)?
18. Why was the sin of intermarriage with other races so grievous to God (Neh. 13:23-28; Ex. 34:12-16; Deut. 7:3-6; I Kings 11:1-8; I Cor. 7:39; II Cor. 6:14)?
19. How did Nehemiah's method of dealing with the sins of the Jews differ from that used by Ezra (Neh. 13:17-28; 5:6-11; Ezra 10:1-11)?
20. When will God fully answer Nehemiah's closing prayer (Neh. 13:31; Rev. 22:12)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 43

Page 1

Esther 1-5

Memory Verse: Esther 4:14

Memory Verse:

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

Public Reading: Esther 2:1-8, 15-17.

ESTHER MADE QUEEN TO A PERSIAN MONARCH

The distinguishing characteristic of the book of Esther: the name of God is not found in it. There is no divine title whatever, no pronoun referring to God in its ten chapters.

In our Bible, the book of Esther comes after Nehemiah. Chronologically, Esther comes between the time when the first company returned to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and the time when Ezra and his company went up to the Holy City. The events recorded in Esther cover about thirteen years (483-470 B.C.), and are in the reign of Xerxes, here called Ashasuerus (485-465 B. C.)

Esther's marriage to the Persian monarch gave the Jews enough prestige at court to enable Nehemiah to refortify Jerusalem. It is impossible to guess what might have happened to the Hebrew nation had there been no Esther. The Hebrew Nation escaped annihilation nearly 500 years before Christ through one woman, guided of God! In Esther, we see how the nation we re-established in its own land; for, had there been no Hebrew Nation, there would have been no Messiah!

I. Esther Becomes Queen of Persia (Esther 1:1-2:23)

1. The king holds a council and gives a feast (Esther 1:1-9).

"In the days of Ahasuerus . . ." (Esther 1:1): Ahasuerus is another name for Xerxes, a famous Persian monarch who ruled 485-465 B. C.

"Throne . . . In Shushan" (Esther 1:2): Or Susa, 200 miles east of Babylon, capital of Elam, the winter residence of Persian kings. This place was the residence of Darius who authorized the rebuilding of the Temple; of Xerxes, the husband of Esther; and of Artaxerxes I who authorized Nehemiah to restore Jerusalem. Its site was identified by Loftus, 1852. A Frenchman, named Dieulafoy, continued the excavations, 1884-86, and definitely located in the ruins the "king's gate" (Esther 4:2); the "inner court" (Esther 5:1); the "outer court" (Esther 6:4); the "palace garden" (Esther 7:7); and even found one of the dice, "Pur" (Esther 3:7).

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"He made a feast . . ." (Esther 1:3): Ahasuerus had been victorious over Egypt. With the leaders from the 127 provinces over which he ruled, the king now plans with them his Grecian campaign. The extent of the Persian Empire and its riches (verses 4-7) dazzles the imagination. 180 days were spent in planning, and in revelry (verse 4). This feast was in the "third year of his reign" or in 482 B. C. The battles of Thermopylae and Salamis were fought in 480 B. C. The Persians never recovered from this disastrous campaign. Herodotus (484-425 B. C.) says there were 1,700,000 fighting men, and that it took seven days to cross the Hellespont on a bridge of boats!

"Feast . . . in . . . the garden" (Esther 1:5): The large gardens would accommodate a large number. Tables could easily be erected for such a "banquet of wine" (Esther 5:6; 7:2, 7, 8). The revelry lasted seven days.

"Law; none did compel . . ." (Esther 1:8): No one was compelled to drink. Men (or women, or youth) are not now compelled to drink. Men choose to drink! "The man takes a drink; the drink, takes a drink; drink takes the man"! Total abstinence always pays, I believe!

"Vashti . . . made a feast for the women" (Esther 1:9): This feast was in the royal apartments of the palace placed at her disposal for this great feast.

2. The queen degraded (Esther 1:10-22).

"Vashti refused to come . . ." (Esther 1:12): "On the seventh day" (verse 10), the drunken king commanded his beautiful wife to be brought "before the king with the crown royal" (verse 11). She refused to expose herself to the drunken, lustful eyes of the revelers. The Persian queen was secluded from public gaze. Her honor and the king's honor were at stake. However, drink stole his honor, and he wanted to sacrifice hers. In America where more and more women and girls are drinking alcohol, we need an "Order of Vashti" with members in every household in the land to stem the tide of drink and lust!

"What shall we do unto the queen . . ." (Esther 1:15): The king asks his counselors, who "knew the times" (verse 13) as astrologers who gave counsel according to celestial phenomena, what should be done to the queen for disobeying the king. Woman then was the plaything and the slave of man. Such action could not be tolerated in a "man's world" (verse 16-18)! Other wives might imitate her.

"Give her royal estate unto another . . ." (Esther 1:19): Vashti was divorced and put away from being queen. In the history of Esther's life, the only regrettable thing is to be found in the fact that she should supplant such an honorable woman. For this, she was not responsible, since the king's will was the law of the realm, and his right to a second wife or many of them was unquestioned. "The king's decree" was published in every province (verses 20-22).

3. A device for obtaining another queen (Esther 2:1-4).

"Ahasuerus . . . remembered Vashti" (Esther 2:1): After his terrible defeat by the Greeks at Salamis (480 B. C.), Xerxes returned to Susa and plunged into all kinds of excesses to drive from his mind his bitter defeats. He remembers the honorable action of his former wife. He knew that he could not revoke his own

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decree because of the law. His courtiers proposed that fair young virgins should be brought from all parts of his realm to the house of the women in Susa, that a new queen might be chosen from among them (2-4).

4. Mordecai and Esther (Esther 2:5-11).

"Jew . . . Mordecai . . . Benjamite" (Esther 2:5: The name means "Little man."

"Hadassah . . . Esther" (Esther 2:7): Hadassah is the Hebrew name, meaning "Myrtle." It was changed to Esther when she was received into the group being prepared for the queenhood. Esther means "A Star," indicating beauty and good fortune. She was adopted as the daughter of Mordecai (verses 6, 7), taken as a possible successor to Vashti (verse 8) where she found favor with the keeper of the women (verses 9-10). Mordecai was kept informed of the daily developments (verse 11).

5. Esther is chosen (Esther 2:12-20).

"The king loved Esther . . ." (Esther 2:17): This was in 478 B. C. It should be understood that the king's word was law. He set the "royal crown" on Esther: a purple ribbon, streaked with white, bound on the forehead. Esther's presence in the palace was part of the process by which the overruling God preserves His people and frustrates the foe.

6. Mordecai saves the king's life (Esther 2:21.-23).

"Mordecai sat in the king's gate . . ." (Esther 2:21): This was the outer court, a place where all state officers were required to wait until summoned by the king. Here Mordecai heard a plot against the king's life. Through the eunuchs, he communicated the plot to Esther. The rebels were hanged, and Mordecai's deed was "written in the book of the chronicles before the king" (Esther 2:23).

II. Haman Makes a Plot to Exterminate the Jews (Esther 3:1-5:14)

1. His promotion and his purpose formed (Esther 3:1-6).

"Haman . . . the Agagite" (Esther 3:1): He was a descendant of Agag, king of the Amalakites, descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12; Ex. 17:8-15; I Sam. 15:2-8). He was raised to the rank of prime confidential minister. He was proud and cruel.

"Mordecai bowed not . . ." (Esther 3:2): He gave such reverence to God only (Isa. 45:22, 23). He aroused the enmity of Haman (verses 3-5).

"Haman sought to destroy all the Jews . . ." (Esther 3:6): This ancient version of Adolph Hitler determines in cruel hatred of one man to destroy his entire race!

2. A day selected, and the decree issued (Esther 3:7-15).

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"First month . . . cast Pur" (Esther 3:7): One of the dice by which the lot was cast before Haman, was found by a Frenchman, Dieulafoy, in the 1884-86 excavations of Shushan. The delay in carrying out the cruel

intention was to make thorough preparation for the extermination. He told the king part of the truth (verse 8), and the plans to exterminate the Jews and confiscate their property is approved by the king (verses 9-12). Esther had been queen five years.

"Letters . . . by posts" (Esther 3:13): The cruel extermination decree is sent by mail or letter carrier into every province (verses 14, 15; 8:8, 10). The day of extermination is the "thirteenth day of the twelfth month . . . Adar," our March. The king and his favorite sat "down to drink"; the righteous and peace-loving hearts in Shushan were "perplexed" (verse 15).

3. Mordecai mourns, and informs Esther (Esther 4:1-9).

"Mordecai rent his clothes . . . copy . . . Esther" (Esther 4:1, 8): The news of the intended slaughter reached Esther in the royal palace. He went to make inquiries. Thus between the extreme need of her people and the king she became a direct link.

4. Esther is persuaded to petition the king (Esther 4:10-17).

"Whosoever . . . shall come" (Esther 4:11); Custom forbade that even the queen approach the king save at his command. Mordecai warned her that she as a Jewess could not escape the king's death edict, and suggests that God had raised her up "for such a time as this"!

"If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16): Conscious of her need, she asks that her people fast and pray with her three days. She determines with splendid heroism to venture. She believes that God will care for His people, and that perhaps He will use her as a natural means to deliver them.

5. Esther is accepted and invites the King and Haman to a banquet (Esther 5:1-8).

"The king held out . . . golden sceptre" (Esther 5:2): After three days of fasting and prayer (See Neh. 1:4), Esther appeared before the king in violation of the law of the palace. God disposed the king to be gracious. He held "out to Esther the golden sceptre."

"What wilt thou, queen Esther?" (Esther 5:3): Esther had been the queen for five years. She had more sense than to fumble the ball. She showed high respect for the king's favorite, thus insinuating herself in the royal affections and gaining a more suitable opportunity of making known her request (verses 4-8). She simply requests that the king and Haman come "this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him" (verse 4). The request is granted, the banquet of wine attended (verses 5-7), and a request that her husband and Haman attend "the banquet" tomorrow is joyfully accepted (verse 8).

6. A plot against Mordecai (Esther 5:9-14).

"Mordecai. . . stood not up" (Esther 5:9): Haman admits that nothing satisfies him while Mordecai stands in his way. A gallows is erected for Mordecai (verses 10-14).

QUESTIONS

1. In what country, described in Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther were the Jews dwelling?
2. Does the name of God appear in the book of Esther (See II Kings 21:4)?
3. Who was Ahasuerus (Esther 1:1), and what was the extent of his kingdom, and where did he now sit on his throne (Esther 1:1, 2)?
4. What was the purpose of the feast for "all his princes" (verses 3-7), and for whom did Vashti make a feast (Esther 1:9)?
5. What demand did the king make of Queen Vashti (Esther 1:10, 11), what was the queen's answer (vs 12), what results did Memucan anticipate from Vashti's rebellion (verses 16-18), and what happened to Vashti (verses 19-22)?
6. What was the rule about drinking (Esther 1:8)?
7. Can you give the plan for securing a new queen (Esther 2:1-4)?
8. What was the relationship between Mordecai and Esther by birth and by adoption (Esther 2:5-7), and of what nation were they and why were they in Babylon (Esther 2:5, 6; II Kings 24:14, 15; II Chron.36:10, 20; Jer. 24:1)?
9. When Esther appeared before the king, what was the result (Esther 2:15-18)?
10. How much time was there between Vashti's rebellion, and the crowning of Esther (Esther 1:3; 2:16)?
11. What was the official position of Mordecai in the city (Esther 2:21), and was the loyalty of Esther and Mordecai proved (Esther 2:21-23)?
12. From what nation, blood-kin enemies of Israel, did Haman descend (Esther 3:1; Gen. 36:12; Ex. 17:8-16; I Sam. 15:2-8)?
13. How did Mordecai show faith in Jehovah (Esther 3:2; Isa. 45:22, 23; Dan. 6:7-11)?
14. By what methods did Haman secure and publish the murderous decree against the Jews (Esther 3:6-15; Psa. 83:4; Gen. 12:3; 17:19; Isa. 9:6; 11:1-16)?
15. Why this public outcry (Esther 4:1), why was the decree not already known to Esther (verse 5), and why send her a copy of the decree (verse 8)?
16. Why did Esther hesitate to appear before the king (Esther 4:11), and of what danger did Mordecai remind her (verse 13)?
17. With what question did Mordecai show his faith in God (Esther 4:14), and what serious proposal did Esther make (Esther 4:15, 16)?
18. How did the king receive Esther, and what request did she make (Esther 5:1-9)?
19. Why did Haman hate Mordecai so that all honors mean nothing to him so long as Mordecai "stood not up" (Esther 5:9-13)?
20. By what means did Haman determine to destroy Mordecai (Esther 5:14)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 44

Page 1

Esther 6-10

Memory Verse: Psalms 9:9

Memory Verse:

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (Psalm 9:9).

Public Reading: Esther 7:1-10.

GOD'S BOOMERANG, OR A SELF-MADE DEATH TRAP

Hate, soon or later, will kill the hater unless he repents of his hate. Since every soul can hate, every man has in him the making of a Haman.

A doctor was baffled over the cause of sickness in a baby. One day in visiting the child he came into the house while the parents were quarreling, and saw the mother suckling the baby meanwhile. The doctor threw up his hands and said, "Now I know what is the matter with your baby-- you are poisoning it by this ill will." The poison was in the mother's mind, the result of anger. In two days, the child was dead! Hate kills in one way or another (Eph. 4:26).

Haman was one of the chief ministers and satraps of Ahasuerus, king of Persia (485-465 B. C.) Because Mordecai would not bow down to him Haman determined to destroy the entire Jewish nation within the bounds of the Persian Empire (Esther 3:2, 6-15). Although the name of God does not occur in the Book of Esther, even the casual reader cannot fail to see the Providence of God strikingly presented in the narrative. The downfall of Haman and the deliverance of the Jews is told in 6:1-10:3.

I. Mordecai Is Honored, and Haman Is Distressed (Esther 6:1-14)

1. An unexpected turn of affairs (Esther 6:1-11).

"Could not . . . sleep" (Esther 6:1): It is not unusual for an Eastern monarch to be unable to sleep, nor for him to call for the court annals to be read to him. But when Ahasuerus (Xerxes of profane history) was unable to sleep at this particular time, and had his attention directed to the important but unrewarded services of Mordecai whom Haman hated-well, even the most prejudiced must see the Providence of the Covenant-keeping God of Israel keeping watch above His own! This sleepless night was not a trivial thing. It was a way by which God moved to preserve His people.

"Found written, that Mordecai . . ." (Esther 6:2): A deed of Mordecai, which had passed from the king's memory, was read to help the king while away the hours. This was the conspiracy related in Esther 2:21-23.

"What honor . . . hath been done to Mordecai" (Esther 6:3): The king was amazed that nothing had been done to honor the man who had saved his life.

"Now Haman was came . . . to hang Mordecai" (Esther 6:4): Haman had come early to "the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him" (Esther 5:14). The king desiring to honor the man who had saved his life, asked, "Who is in the court?" On being informed that Haman "standeth in the court" (verse 5), the king said, "Let him come in."

"What shall be done unto the man . . ." (Esther 6:6): Haman was asked what is to be done to the man whom the king delights to honor? Thinking the king referred to himself, Haman gave his answer and votes, he

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thinks, for himself the greatest possible mark of honor (verses 7-9).

"Do even so to Mordecai the Jew . . ." (Esther 6:10): The boomerang of hate is coming toward the hater! Imagine the humiliation of Haman as he led Mordecai through the city in triumph, proclaiming before him, "Thus shall it be done unto the man who the king delighteth to honor" (verse 11). Haman's enemy was suddenly lifted from obscurity to the most conspicuous position in the kingdom.

2. A mission that ended in mourning (Esther 6:12-14).

"Haman hastened to his house . . ." (Esther 6:12): Haman, in "mourning, and having his head covered" hastened to his house. He related to his wife and friends all that had befallen him (verse 13). His wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him: "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou has begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him." The revival of the Jewish people since the times of Cyrus was sufficient to induce in the minds of the heathen, who were attentive to the signs of the times, the persuasion that the Jewish nation enjoyed divine protection.

"Chamberlains . . . hastened to bring Haman . . . banquet" (Esther 6:14): Haman would prefer to remain at home to regain his accustomed poise and self-confidence, but the king's command must be obeyed. Yesterday he would have needed no chamberlains to summon him. Today all is changed. Already he has been humbled. Haman built a gallows for Mordecai; hate was working in free will to destroy a Jew. God in divine righteousness allowed Haman to exercise his free will. Now justice is about to be done.

II. Haman Exposed and Hanged (Esther 7:1-10)

1. The queen pleads for herself and her people (Esther 7:1-4).

"The king and Haman came to the banquet . . . ' (Esther 7:1): Esther had maneuvered her plot to defeat Haman in a masterful way. The king inquired of her, "What is thy petition queen Esther?" The king promises that her petition shall be granted "even to the half of the kingdom."

"Let my life be given me . . . and my people" (Esther 7:3): Esther appealed to the love of the king for her. She and "my people" had been "sold . . . to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish" (verse 4). The king must have been surprised to hear her so speak.

2. Haman exposed (Esther 7:5, 6).

"Who . . . where . . . durst presume to do so?" (Esther 7:5): The king's indignation was excited by what he heard. At once, her enemy becomes the king's enemy, and he demands the name of the wretch who would hatch such a plot.

"The adversary and enemy . . . wicked Haman" (Esther 7:6): The boomerang is coming near, too near to be comfortable, to this heartless wretch who thought he could stamp out God's people. It reminds us of Voltaire's boast: "It took twelve men to start Christianity. I'll show the world how one man can stop it." Within a few years of his death, the British Bible Society was printing Bibles on the very press which a few years before had been attacking the Word of God!

3. Haman hanged (Esther 7:7-10).

"The king . . . in his wrath . . . garden" (Esther 7:7): Ahasuerus is dazed for the moment as he begins to see that Haman had obtained his royal consent. He, too, had been a party to the destruction. His anger burns as he walks in his garden.

YEAR 2 - LESSON 44 - PAGE 3

"Haman stood up . . . fallen upon the bed" (Esther 7:7, 8): This man-- who could devote, without a twinge of conscience, a nation to destruction -- now stands to plead for his life. In his desperation, Haman throws himself upon the divan of the queen to plead for mercy, thus overstepping the bounds both of court etiquette and ordinary decency. The king coming in at this moment credits Haman with the worst designs and without waiting for an explanation, the king passes sentence of death upon Haman. "They covered Haman's face": The token of his condemnation to death. Now hope is gone for Haman. Harbonah suggests the mode of execution (verse 9).

"They hanged Haman . . . ' (Esther 7:10): The boomerang struck the hater and lifted him upon the very gallows he had designed for Mordecai. The man who said: "The world is not big enough for Mordecai and me. I'll get rid of him" now found himself destroyed by his own hate!

"Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne-
Yet that scaffold sways the future and, behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."
-James Russell Lowell.

III. Mordecai in Haman's Place and Another Petition Granted (Esther 8:1-17)

1. Mordecai is made Prime Minister (Esther 8:1, 2).

"Mordecai came before the king . . . (Esther 8:1): The king bestowed the house of Haman on Esther, and advanced Mordecai to Haman's place as Prime Minister "for Esther had told what he (Mordecai) was to her." He was her foster father (Esther 2:7). Mordecai was given the seal ring that the king had taken from Haman (verse 3) and made manager of Haman's large estate.

2. A new decree is issued (Esther 8:3-14).

"Esther . . . besought him with tears" (Esther 8:3): The humble tears of Esther gained the king's mercy (verse 4). She besought the king for the abolition of the edict published by Haman against the Jews. Then, the king permitted her and Mordecai to send letters in the king's name to all the Jews in his kingdom, commanding them to stand for their life, and to slay their enemies on the day appointed for their own extermination (verses 3-14). The edict was posted over the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire. The first edict according to Persian law "may no man reverse" (verse 8) BUT the Jews could be commanded "to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay . . . all . . . that would assault them" (verse 11). Esther's desire was achieved.

3. A good day for the Jews (Esther 8:15-17).

"The city of Shushan rejoined . . . " (Esther 8:15): When right and justice prevail all right-thinking people will rejoice. "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoiced: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn" (Prov. 29:2; Esther 3:15). "In every province" where the new decree came, "the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day." "Many . . . became Jews" (verse 17), or proselytes to the Jewish faith.

IV. The Jews Destroy Their Enemies (Esther 9:1-19))

1. A great defeat of the enemies of the Jews (Esther 9:1-10).

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"The Jews smote all their enemies . . . ' (Esther 9:5): On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar, corresponding to our March, the Jews assembled in the towns and provinces of the kingdom to slay all who sought their hurt (verses 1-4). They "smote their enemies with the stroke of the sword." Men who had persecuted the Jews and were looking for the opportunity of wreaking their vengeance by royal decree found themselves filling the places that they had intended their foes to occupy. Five hundred men in Shushan were destroyed (verse 6), and the ten sons of Haman slain (verses 7-10), "but on the spoil laid they not their hand."

2. A second day of self-defense granted (Esther 9:11-15).

Now what is thy petition?" (Esther 9:12): At the request of the queen, the king granted permission to the Jews in Shushan to fight against their enemies on the following day also. In the other towns and districts of the kingdom the Jews fought for their lives on the thirteenth of Adar, and rested on the fourteenth day. But in Shushan the Jews on the fourteenth day further avenged themselves by slaying 300 men, and hanging the ten sons of Haman on gallows (verses 14, 15).

3. A day of feasting and rejoicing (Esther 9:16-19).

4. The feast of Purim instituted (Esther 9:20-32).

"Called these days Purim . . ." (Esther 9:26): Letters from Mordecai and Esther instituted the feast of Purim. The fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar were appointed as the days to rejoice at their deliverance from their enemies (verses 20-25). "Purim--" meaning "lots"-- was the name given to the festival because of the casting of lots by Haman for the extermination of the Jews (verse 24). A second letter (verses 29-32) from Mordecai and Esther appointed fasting and lamentation of the days of Purim.

V. The Power of Ahasuerus, and the Glory of Mordecai (Esther 10:1-3)

"The greatness of Mordecai . . ." (Esther 10:2): Here we have the last picture of the man Mordecai. He was evidently of fine character. He was next to the king. This did not alienate him from his own people. He sought their good, and spoke peace to them (verse 3). Ahasuerus was assassinated by the captain of his guard in B. C. 465.

QUESTIONS

1. Why could not the king sleep (Esther 6:1; Prov. 21:1), and why resort to reading (Esther 6:2)?
2. How was Haman compelled to honor Mordecai (Esther 6:3-11)?
3. Was Zeresh, Haman's wife, familiar with God's promises to Israel (Esther 5:14; 6:13)?
4. For whom does Esther plead at the second banquet (Esther 7:1-4)?
5. Why did the king take a walk (Esther 7:5-7)?
6. Why does a Haman ask for mercy when they showed no mercy; should mercy be given (Esther 7:7,8; Matt. 5:7)?
7. Why was Haman's face covered, and why so quickly (Esther 7:8)?
8. What prompted Harbonah's remark, and why so prompt an execution (Esther 7:9, 10)?
9. Why was Mordecai promoted (Esther 8:1), and what sign of authority was given him (verse 2)?
10. Did the hanging of Haman revoke the death sentence resting upon the Jews (Esther 8:4-6), and what prevented the king from changing the awful decree (Esther 8:8; Dan. 6:8, 12)?
11. What was the king's new decree (Esther 8:10, 11) which superseded the first decree (Esther 3:12, 13)? How was this second decree of Ahasuerus dispatched to the people (Esther 8:9-14)? Why not use the same speed in spreading the gospel to all nations (Mark 16:15, 16; Prov. 24:11, 12)?
12. Whom were the Jews authorized to slay (Esther 8:11)?
13. Why was Shushan so well pleased (Esther 8:15), and how could many become Jews (Esther 8:17)?
14. How many were slain in Shushan on the thirteenth of Adar (Esther 9:1, 12), on the fourteenth of Adar in Shushan (Esther 9:15), and what was done to the ten sons of Haman (Esther 9:14)?
15. What were the results of those two days of fighting throughout all the provinces (Esther 9:16)?
16. What part of the king's decree did the people fail to observe, and why (Esther 8:11; 9:10, 15, 16; cf. I Sam. 15:3, 19-21)?
17. Why mention the two days (Esther 9:21, 17, 18)?
18. Why was the feast called Purim (Esther 9:26)?
19. How long were the Jews to observe Purim (Esther 9:27-31)?
20. What other record of the career of Mordecai do we have (Esther 10:2)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 45

Page 1

Job 1-3

Memory Verse: James 5:11

Memory Verse:

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11).

Public Reading: Job 2:1-10.

THE TRIALS OF JOB, OR A MAN WITH BOILS

Job was a real person. He is the hero of the book that bears his name. Job is the first of the so-called Poetical, or Wisdom, group of Old Testament books, the others being Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Many of the Wisdom sections are written in poetry. For the most part, this group of books belongs to the golden age of Hebrew history-- the era of David and Solomon. However, Job is generally assigned to an earlier date, and some of the Psalms are later.

The Nature of the Book

Hebrew poetry does not have meter or rhyme, like the poetry of our language. Rhythm is not achieved by repetition of similar sounds, as in rhymed verse; not by rhythmic accent as in blank verse, but by repetition of ideas. This is called parallelism; for example, "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble" (Psa. 9:9).

Parallelism is called synonymous when the thought is identical, as in the above example. It is antithetic when the primary and the secondary ideas are in contrast, as in "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: But the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psa. 1:6). It is synthetic when the thought is developed or enriched by the parallel; as in "And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; Yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety" (Job. 11:18).

Has the Book Library Merit?

Victor Hugo said: "The Book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind."

Thomas Carlyle said: "I call this book, apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written. Our first oldest statement of the never-ending problem: Man's Destiny, and God's Ways with him in the earth. There is nothing written, I think, of equal literary merit."

Philip Schaff, church historian: "The Book of Job rises like a pyramid in the history of literature, without a predecessor and without a rival."

Notable verses of this study: Job 1:21; 4:17; 19:25. Chapters 4-31 should be read to connect lessons 45 and 46.

I. Job's Piety and Prosperity (Job 1:1-5)

"A man in the land of Uz . . ." (Job 1:1): "The land of Uz" is thought to have been along the border between Palestine and Arabia, extending from Edom northerly and easterly toward the Euphrates River, skirting the caravan route between Babylon and Egypt.

The section of the land of Uz which tradition has called the home of Job was Hauran, the "hollow" or "black land of basaltic rock," a mound-dotted extinct volcanic plateau East of the Lake of Galilee and South of Damascus and Mt. Hermon. It is noted for its fertile soil and its grain. It was once thickly populated; it is now dotted with the ruins of 300 cities.

"A man . . . Job" (Job 1:1): Job is not an imaginary man. He is real. He was an Arab prince, a patriarchal chieftain or king in those days. The name comes from an Arab word meaning to return, that is, to God: or, from the Hebrew the word means "one greatly tried." Job has been identified with Jobab, the second king of Edom (Gen. 36:33).

The writer uses four synonyms together to describe Job. He was "perfect": Complete, rounded out, a well-balanced character, with the whole heart disposed toward God and what is good, and well-disposed toward mankind. "Upright": In his relationship to others. "Feared God": "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:8; 8:13). "Eschewed evil": His heart, lips, and life squared. He kept aloof from evil, which is opposed to God!

"Born . . . seven sons and three daughters" (Job 1:2): Job is seen in the midst of his home life. It was a large princely household. His substance was great (verse 3), and he is described as "the greatest of all the men of the east."

"His sons . . . feasted . . . every one his day" (Job 1:4): The text speaks of a weekly round of feasting, with the brothers inviting their sisters to feast with them. Here is a picture of family peace and union. The birthday anniversary also may be indicated by "his day" (Job. 3:1).

"Burnt offerings . . . continually" (Job 1:5): This shows knowledge of the only way of approach to God from the days of Abel until the law of Moses, hence Job lived before the law was given on Mt. Sinai. He offered sacrifices for his ten children, that they might obtain forgiveness for any sins of frivolity into which they might have fallen in the mirth of their family gatherings.

II. Job Is Delivered to Satan (Job 1:6-22)

1. Satan accuses Job (Job 1:6-12).

"Sons of God . . . before the Lord" (Job 1:6): The sons of God were the angels (Job 38:7; I Kings 22:19). God is the "Father of Spirits," heavenly beings. A startling situation confronts us: Heaven is seen in argument with hell about earth! Satan is God's adversary in both the Old and New Testaments (See I Kings 22:19-22; Zechariah 3:1-2). It is assembly day in heaven. "Satan came" like a Judas among the apostles. Satan was once the "covering cherub" that shadowed the throne of God, but he fell (Ezek. 28:14-17). Not his evil work of trying to entice men to do evil (Job 1:7; I Pet. 5:8, 9).

"Touch all that he hath. . . he will curse thee" (Job 1:11): God challenges Satan as to Job's character (verses 7, 8). Satan makes a false estimate of Job, and falsely accuses Job of serving God for what he gets out of God (verse 9-11). On earth, Satan tries to destroy us; in heaven, he accuses the saints of all evil. We have an Advocate, a Pleader with the Father (I John 2:1; I Cor. 10:13; Rom. 8:34)!

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"Only upon himself . . ." (Job 1:12): God gives permission to the Adversary of man, Satan, to deal with the possessions of Job. Satan could not touch the person of Job without God's permission. God delivers Job into Satan's hands to silence Satan and wicked men, and to test Job. Satan retires. He hopes to conquer

Job. He has experienced the unlimited power of evil over himself; he has lost all faith in the power of good, and is the self-deceived father of lies (John 8:44).

2. The first issue decided (Job 1:13-22).

"There came a messenger unto Job . . ." (Job 1:14): Four strokes fell upon Job in quick succession (verses 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). Job is stripped of his wealth, and of his children.

"Sabeans . . . took them" (Job 1:15): They were from the land of Sheba, in S. W. Arabia, descendants of Shem (Gen. 10:28). They took the oxen and asses and slew the servants.

"The fire of God . . ." (Job 1:16): Some think it was the burning wind of Arabia. The Turks call it the "wind of poison." Was it lightning? Was it a mighty rain of fire or brimstone, as with Sodom and Gomorrha, and as I Kings 18:38; II Kings 1:12? Satan is permitted to control such destructive forces to the uttermost bound of his permission to test Job. His limitation is plain; Satan cannot go beyond his bound. He is not going to be the ultimate victor! Read I Cor. 15:57 --the Saint, not Satan, is the ultimate victor!

"The Chaldeans . . . camels" (Job 1:17): The Chaldeans were from the East, the land of Abraham. They took the camels, and slew the servants.

"A great wind . . . they are dead" (Job 1:19): A tornado came and destroyed the house and the sons and daughters of Job. How soon all our material things, even our loved ones, can vanish away and die. Job was stripped of his wealth, and his children. Satan had summoned the elements and men for the destruction of Job's possessions by repeated strokes.

"The Lord gave . . . taken . . . blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21): The first three messengers Job has heard, sitting, in silence. The news of the death of his children caused him to arise in grief, his heart torn as he tears his mantle. He is not in despair, but humbles himself under the mighty hand of God, his face touches the earth as he prostrates himself before God.

"Blessed be the name of the Lord" is Job's answer to Satan's slander against him. Job did not allow himself to commit folly against God by foolishly charging God with wickedness. See I Tim. 6:7. Satan had tried to drive Job from God; he had driven Job to God. Job's faith in God was real. It did not depend upon financial prosperity, thus Job destroyed Satan's slander that he was serving God for the sake of His gifts, not for His own sake. Read Phil. 4:10-13, 19. Job recognizes the dignity of his own personality. He is MORE than all He possessed.

III. Job Is Placed Under Full Trial (Job 2:1-13)

1. Satan shifts his ground (Job 2:1-6).

"Skin for skin . . ." (Job 2:4): Unwilling to quit by his failure to move Job, Satan appears before God and makes fresh demands (verses 1-3). Satan again denies what God affirms of Job. Satan charges that to save part of his skin a man will give us another part of his body; to save his life man will (Satan charges falsely) give up everything he has, including his faith in God. To prove that this is false, God delivers Job into Satan's hand, but says, "Save his life" (Job 2:6), do anything to him except to kill him.

2. The second result (Job 2:7-10).

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"Smote Job with sore boils . . . ' (Job 2:7): "Sore boils" should be translated " a burning sore." Job was completely covered with one universal inflammation. This is thought to have been elephantiasis, because the limbs become jointless lumps like elephants' legs. Job sought to relieve the intolerable itching by scraping himself with a potsherd, and "sat down among the ashes" (verse 8). Satan does not appear again throughout

the whole book. Evil has not only a personal existence in the invisible world, but also its agents and instruments in this world. By these instruments evil is henceforth manifested.

"Wife . . . curse God, and die" (Job 2:9): Now Job is stripped of the partner of his love in faith. She is only mentioned in one other passage (Job 19:17) where Job complains that his breath is offensive to her. She urges him to "Call on God for the last time, and then die!" She was the first to break in the test; her advice was evil; her husband's rebuke was justified (Job 2:10).

3. Job's three friends come to comfort him (Job 2:11-13).

"Friends . . . Eliphaz the Temanite . . . ' (Job 2:11): He was a descendant of Esau (Gen. 36:11), an Edomite. "Bildad the Shuhite . . .": A descendant of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2), who lived in a district of Arabia not very far from Idumaea. "Zophar the Naamathite . . .": He is of unknown origin or locality. All three were Nomad princes. While Job suffered at their hands, the three are to be admired because (1) They came, (2) They sat in silence seven days and nights (verses 12, 13), and (3) What they thought they dared say to Job, and not to others about him!

IV. Job's Complaint (Job 3:1-26)

1. Job curses the day of his birth (Job 3:1-10).

"Job . . . curse his day" (Job 3:1): Silent sympathy always creates an opportunity for grief to express itself. Have you not sat in the house of sorrow in silence? You did not know what to say. Then say nothing. Listen. The deluge will come. It came from Job.

2. Job laments his preservation (Job 3:11-19).

3. Job laments his existence because of his great pain and sorrow (Job 3:20-26).

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QUESTIONS

1. What scriptural evidences do you have that Job was an actual historical person (Job 1:1, 2; Ezek. 14:14; James 5:11)? Where was Uz?
2. What was Job's moral condition (Job. 1:1)? His financial condition (Job 1:3)? His deep spiritual concern for his family (Job 1:5)?
3. How many sons and daughters did he have (Job 1:2)?
4. Where was this gathering of the "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 38:7)?
5. To what did Satan attribute Job's loyalty to God (Job 1:9-11)?
6. Was Satan free to act entirely as he chose (Job 1:11, 12; John 19:11)? What comfort does this give to the Christian (I Cor. 10:13; I John 2:1; Rom. 8:34; I Cor. 15:57)?
7. What four calamities did Satan bring upon Job by using natural means (Job 1:13-19)?
8. Did Satan accomplish his sinister purpose and prove his point (Job 1:20-22)?
9. Did Job attribute his affliction to Satan or to the Lord (Job 1:21; Heb. 12:5-11; Luke 22:31-34)?
10. Was Satan's charge (Job 2:4) true, then or now (John 11:16; Acts 21:13; Rev. 5:7; 12:11)?
11. Who determines the time when death shall take one of God's people (Job 2:6)?
12. What was Satan's last awful stroke at Job's faith (Job 2:7, 8)?
13. Who was Satan's last instrument of attack (Job 2:9), and with what success was she used (Job 2:10)?
14. How does the final disappearance of Satan from this scene represent his future destiny (Rev. 12:7-12; 20:1-3, 20)?
15. Give the names of the three friends of Job (Job 2:11)? Their nationalities?
16. How did Job's suffering affect them (Job 2:11-13)?
17. What three things are admirable about them?
18. What did Job curse (Job 3:1-16), and why lament that he had not died in infancy (Job 3:11-16)?
19. How did he describe the grave (Job 3:17-19), and where does the spirit of man go when the physical body dies (II Cor. 5:6-8)?
20. For what does Job long, and why had he feared the affliction which Satan had brought upon him (Job 3:20-26; 2:5)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 46
Job 32-42

Page 1
Memory Verse: Job 42:5-6

Memory Verse:

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6).

Public Reading: Job 42:1-17

JOB'S DELIVERANCE AND VINDICATION

In the conversations of chapters 3-41 Job speaks nine times; Eliphaz, three times; Bildad, three times; Zophar, twice; Elihu, once; God, once.

Sometimes the discussions were with great feeling. It is not always easy to see the point, as in some passages the only thing aimed at is fine rhetoric. On many things, they are in harmony. Job's three friends seemed to think all suffering is sent upon men as a punishment for their sins; that if we are great sufferers, that is proof we have been great sinners; and if our sins have been secret, then suffering is proof of our hypocrisy.

Grand lesson of the book: Job out of the patient endurance of his sufferings, in the end comes to see God and is abundantly rewarded.

"Not now, but in the coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And there, sometime, we'll understand."

I. The Speech of Elihu (Job 32:1-37:24)

1. Elihu's first speech: The PURPOSE of affliction (Job 32:1-33:33).

"Elihu. . ." (Job 32:2): The name means "My God is he." He is described as "the son of Barachel, a Buzite, of the kindred of Ram." This is usually understood to imply that he was descended from Buz, the son of Abraham's brother Nahor (Gen. 22:21).

The last voice in the earthly controversy is now heard. Elihu's is a new voice; opportunity never comes to Job to answer. God in the final movements takes no notice other than that of interruption, and in the epilogue Elihu has no place.

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Elihu is introduced in Job 32:1-5. His three friends were silent, because they were unable to bring conviction of guilt to Job. Elihu who evidently had heard the whole argument, was angry with his three friends (Job 32:3), and with Job "because he justified himself rather than God" (Job 32:2).

"I am young . . . " (Job 32:6): Elihu makes an apology. He had been silent because of his youth. While he had been listening, he had concluded that age is not proof of wisdom (Job 32:6-9).

"The spirit . . . constraineth me" (Job 32:18): The spirit of his inner nature moves Elihu to speak. He has a rich store of words for replying. He will flatter no man (verses 19-22).

"God is greater than man" (Job 33:12): Elihu felt that Job had "justified himself rather than God" (Job 32:2). He has a high conception of God (Job 35:1, 7; 36:5; 37:5, 23). He mars his discourse with self-assertiveness (Job 32:8, 9; 33:3). His chief wisdom was in the use of words that concealed rather than made plain his meaning. He merely muddied the water. His main contention seems to have been that suffering is INTENDED OF GOD TO BE CORRECTIVE RATHER THAN PUNITIVE (Job 37:23).

2. His second speech: God is vindicated (Job 34:1-37).

3. His third speech: The advantages of piety (Job 35:1-16).

4. His fourth speech: God's greatness and Job's ignorance (Job 36:1-37:24).

II. The Speeches of God (Job 38:1-42:6)

1. The infinite contrast between the knowledge and power of God, and those of man (Job 38:1-39:30).

"The Lord answered Job . . . " (Job 38:1): Jehovah appears unexpectedly in a whirlwind. Had its approach been noted in Job 37:1, 2? The whirlwind is a symbol of judgment. Out of the midst of the whirlwind, God "answered" the challenge of Job. In this section God shows that IF MAN CAN NOT EXPLAIN EVERYTHING IN GOD'S NATURAL GOVERNMENT, HOW CAN MAN, THEN, HOPE TO EXPLAIN EVERYTHING ABOUT GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.

"Grief walks through the earth and sometimes sits at the feet of every man," says Myron Lee Pontius in WHEN SORROW COMES. Blessed is the man who accepts such sorrow and TURNS IT INTO A BRIDGE TO GOD (Job 1:20-22; 42:5, 6).

"Darkeneth counsel by words . . . " (Job 38:2): "Oh. . . that the Almighty would ANSWER ME" said Job (Job 31:35). God now answers out of the storm. Job darkens or distorts by judging falsely (Job 34:35; 42:3). All of us should watch our "idle word" (Matt. 12:36).

A preacher in South Carolina once said his audience: "I pray that God will come down right now and shake us up." God did. The Charleston, S. C., earthquake occurred just then. The preacher was the first to

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get out of the building. He jumped out of the window behind the pulpit! If God should answer some of our foolish requests, we might do worse than this.

"Where wast thou . . . ' (Job 38:4): Job is silenced. He has no answer now that he is "Face to Face" with God! No human being was present when God laid the foundation of the earth. Man was not yet created. God dwells on the ignorance, impotence, helplessness, and infinitesimal smallness of man, compared to God, and asks question after question which awed Job and drove him to his knees, as the unveiling of God's might continues in Job 39.

2. Job humbles himself; God proceeds (Job 40:1-42:6).

"Job . . . I am vile" (Job 40:3, 4): "Vile" is a mistranslation. Job meant, "I do not count, I have been answering and arguing, I will say no more." Job knows he is not equal to the task imposed. He will keep his mouth firmly closed (verse 5). A man may justify himself before man; he cannot justify himself before God, apart from Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1, 2; 4:24-25).

Note Job's former spirit of self-righteousness and his present humility (Job 13:2, 3; 34:5; 35:2). Friends, "The Great Judgment Morning" of your meeting God will surely come (read Romans 14:12). What will you say if you are not a Christian?

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

Obey Jesus Christ who alone can give you "eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9; Acts 4:12).

We cannot occupy God's place in the universe. God challenged Job to assume the reins of government of the universe, and in the moral realm. When Job can abase and humble the proud, lofty, evil, and wicked ones, then Jehovah will acknowledge that Job's own right hand can save him.

God, almost playfully, suggests that Job take "Behemoth" (Job 40:15) and "draw out Leviathan" (Job 41:1). If none dare stir up Leviathan, almost certainly the crocodile, how can we hope to compete with God in governing the universe. God's unveiling of Himself ends, not in the higher reaches of the spiritual, but in the exhibition of His glory in a beast of the river and the field. Man would not adopt this method, but it is the perfect method God chose of showing His glory.

III. Job's Repentance and Restoration (Job 42:1-17)

1. His self-judgment (Job 41:1-6).

"I abhor myself. . . repent" (Job 42:6): Where were those idle boasts of "desiring to reason with God" (Job 13:3). Francis Bacon in his essay "Of Atheism" affirms: "A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds to Deity." Much suffering and little thinking can drive one to damning doubt; but depth of thinking will always drive one to God. This surrender

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of Job is God's victory of vindication. There has been no explanation of the problem of pain, but pain is forgotten, and all the circumstances of trial, against which the spirit of the man has rebelled, are out of sight. He has found himself in relationship to God. What Eliphaz asked him to do, but could not teach him how, Job has done. Acquainted, with God, his treasure is laid in the dust; Job has found Jehovah to be his all-sufficient wealth.

2. God's decision of the question discussed (Job 42:7-9).

"The Lord said to Eliphaz . . ." (Job 42:7): The victory being won in the soul of Job, the Lord deals with his friends. His wrath is kindled against them, and yet it is mingled with mercy. Their intention was right; their words were wrong. In trying to explain God, they had not said of him "the thing that was right." Job had spoken more truly of God than they. God speaks of Job as "My servant." Job was not a hypocrite, as they charged him. He was godly; he had a faith no affliction could shake. He was lacking in self-righteousness and humility. Affliction brought Job to self-knowledge and self-judgment; it can do the same for us (I Cor. 11:31, 32; Heb. 12:7-11). They tried to restore Job by philosophy; he restores them by prayer.

3. His restoration (Job 42:10-17).

"The Lord gave Job twice as much . . ." (Job 42:10): When God doubly blessed Job, friends who ran from him in calamity ran to him in prosperity (verse 13).

"Seven sons . . . three daughters" (Job 42:13): The names are significant. "Jemima," "A pigeon, dove," on account of her dove's eyes. "Kezia," "Cassia," an aromatic herb, in contrast to his offensive breath and ulcers. "Keren-happuch," "paint-horn," i. e., "cosmetic box" in contrast to the ash-heap (Job 16:15).

Job dares to believe that God will acknowledge him after death. This is the hope that has conquered fear in Job.

"Tear up your New Testament, and fling it to the winds; crucify the Christ of God, and let there be no resurrection; and the book of Job still lives, the unanswered agony of a soul.

"Retain the New Testament, and the agony becomes an anthem and the despair merges into ultimate victory"-through our Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:54-58).

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QUESTIONS

1. Why did the three friends cease to argue with Job (Job 32:1)?
2. What was the name of the fourth friend (Job 32:2)? What was his ancestry (Gen. 22:21)? By what authority did Elihu dare speak (Job 32:6-8, 18; I Tim. 4:12)?
3. What fault did Elihu reveal to Job that cleared the way for Jehovah to speak to Job (Job 32:3; 34:5; 35:2, 9)?
4. Did Elihu desire to have Job's affliction removed immediately (Job 34:35-37; Heb. 12:11)?
5. Who was speaking to Job in Job 38:1-41:34?
6. To whom did Jehovah refer (Job 38:2; 34:35; 42:3)?
7. Concerning what part of the creation did God question Job (Job 38:4-38; Psalm 19:1)? What part of creation is referred to in Job 38:39-39:30; Luke 12:24? What was the purpose of the divine questionnaire?
8. What awful rebuke did God present to Job (Job 40:1, 2)?
9. Was Job's response (Job 40:3-5) like his former self-righteousness Job 13:2, 3; 34:5; 35:2)?
10. How did God's additional contention (Job 40:6-41:34) prove Job had not fully learned his lesson? Did this section show God's care for or control of his creatures? Would he correctly apply the lesson to his stubborn will, as did Nebuchanezzar (Dan. 4:30:37)?
11. What was Jehovah's last crowning statement which completely broke Job's pride (Job 41:34)?
12. Can you describe Job's humble confession (Job 42:1-4)?
13. What glorious experience did Job have because of his terrible affliction (Job 42:5; I Cor. 11:31, 32; Heb. 12:11)? What was his estimate of himself after his vision (Job 42:5; Isa. 6:1-5; Dan. 10:4-8; Lk. 5:8)?
14. How did God vindicate Job before his friends (Job 42:7-9)?
15. Do you see that while the philosophy of Job's friends could not restore him, that his prayer to God did restore them (Job 42:7, 8)?
16. Did God give Job as much material wealth as he formerly had (Compare Job 1:3 with 42:12)? Is God concerned today with our material needs (Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:19)?
17. Was the most precious blessing which came to Job through his affliction spiritual, financial, domestic, or physical (Job 42:5, 10-13, 16, 17)?
18. Which was more important, Job's patience or Jehovah's pity and power (James 5:11)?
19. Have you ever suffered much in this life, and what was your reaction when trouble came to you (I Peter 4:12-16)?
20. What to you are some of the important lessons of the book of Job?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 47

Page 1

Psalm 1

Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1

Memory Verse:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (Psalm 1:1).

Public Reading: Psalm 1:1-6.

THE PERFECT MAN

Jesus and the Psalms

Jesus was very fond of the Psalms. He knew them by heart. In his dying agony He quoted from them (See Psalm 22:1; 31:5; Matt. 27:46; Luke 23:46). Jesus said "all things must be fulfilled, which were written . . . in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 22:44). Of 283 New Testament quotations from the Old Testament, 116 are from the Psalms.

William E. Gladstone said of the Psalms: "All the wonders of Greek civilization heaped together are less wonderful than is this simple book of Psalms." Who Wrote the Psalms?

The Book of Psalms is not one book but five distinct collections of sacred poetry, and they contain the work of a number of authors. The hymns and spiritual songs were written during a period of about 1,000 years; if Moses wrote the 90th Psalm then this time will be greatly extended.

There are altogether 150 Psalms. 100 bear the names of persons, 16 have headings without names, and 34 have no headings.

In the titles, 73 are ascribed to David; 12 to Asaph; 11 to the sons of Korah; 2 to Solomon (Psalm 72 and Psalm 127); 1 to Moses (Psalm 90); 1 to Ethan (Psalm 89).

David was the principal author of the Psalms. The New Testament so recognizes it. We speak of the Psalms as the Psalms of David, because he is the main writer, or compiler.

The Word "Psalms" is Greek, not Hebrew. "Psalms" comes from the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament made by seventy (70) scholars for Ptolemy II about 270 B. C. in Alexandria Egypt. In departing from the old name of Tehillim, "Praises," the Septuagint changes the meaning to "Musical Exercises," or perhaps "Song Set to Music."

"The simplest description of the five books of Psalms is that they were the inspired prayer-and-praise book of Israel. They are revelations of truth, not abstractly, but in the terms of human experience. Psalms is a marvelous record of human hearts pouring themselves out from age to age in communion with God.

The Psalms Classified

The Psalms are in five books, each ending in a doxology.

Book I: Psalms 1-41. These show an alternate spiritual defeat and recovery, under distress, opposition, and disease. There are 20 Psalms of defeat, 18 of recovery, out of the 41.

Book II: Psalms 42-72. These recount experiences of the godly that are disturbed, often falling into sin. There are 15 of failure, 16 sing praises, out of the 32 Psalms of this section.

Book III: Psalms 73-89. There are 8 of failure, 9 of hope out of the 17. This book is liturgical in form and is marked by weighty and numerous historical references.

Book IV: Psalms 90-106. These show the clouds parted, light breaking clear, and confidence. There are 2 of defeat, 15 of expectation, of the 17 Psalms.

Book V: Psalms 107-150. These show the rest, presence, and joy of God within His people. There are 5 in the shadow, 39 in joy and praise, of the 44 Psalms.

Each of the five books of Psalms has, I believe, a distinctive spiritual feature. They set forth in progressive advance in a spiritual life until in Psalm 150 the pilgrim on the Border, in Beulah Land, speaks in song! He passes out of sight, like the lark in heaven, singing "Hallelujah!"

As to structure and subject matter, the Psalms fall into these categories: Messianic, historical, penitential, imprecatory, acrostic, theocratic, and praise.

The longest of all the Psalms is Psalm 119, also the longest chapter in the Bible.

Psalm 117 is the shortest Psalm, also the shortest and middle chapter of the Bible. Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse of the Bible.

The imprecatory Psalms are the cry of the oppressed in Israel for JUSTICE---a cry appropriate and right in the earthly people of God. They are based upon a distinct promise in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:18, and references). They are a cry unsuited to the church a heavenly people who have taken their place with a rejected and crucified Christ (Luke 9:52-55; Acts 8:1-4; I Pct. 4:12-16).

The Psalms Were Written to Be Sung

The Psalms were written to be sung. Moses taught the people to sing (Exodus 15; Deut. 32:33). Deborah sang (Judges 5). David sang with all his heart (Psa. 104:33). Hezekiah's singers sang loudly (Neh. 12:42). Jesus and the disciples sang at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:30). Paul and Silas sang in prison (Acts 16:26). At the dawn of creation "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). In heaven, 10,000 times 10,000 angels sang, and the entire redeemed creation joins in the chorus (Rev. 5:11-13). In heaven everybody will sing!

In our study of Psalms we can only touch certain mountain peaks, stop long enough to survey a few rich valleys, and feast beside some of the many springs that characterize the Psalter!

"The Book of Psalms is a little Bible" (Luther in Preface to the German Psalter).

"He that would be wise, let him read the Proverbs: He that would be holy, let him read the Psalms" (B. Steele).

I. The Righteous Man (Psalm 1:1, 2, 3, 6a)

"Blessed . . ." (Psalm 1:1): The first Psalm is a sort of prologue or preface to the whole book. The Psalm begins with a benediction on the individual soul who bears the character of the verses that follow. "Blessed" means literally, "Oh, the happiness"---an exclamation of strong emotion resulting from reflection on the subject.

Some of David's beatitudes: "Blessed is the man . . . (whose) delight is in the law of the Lord" (Psalm 1:1, 2). "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Psa. 2:12). "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven" (Psa. 32:1). "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psa. 33:12). "Blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psa. 34:8). "Blessed is he that considereth the poor" (Psa. 41:1). "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee" (Psa. 84:5). "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house" (Psa. 84:4). "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord" (Psa. 94:12). "Blessed is the man that fears the Lord" (Psa. 112:1). "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies" (Psa. 119:2). See also Isa. 30:18; Matt. 5:4ff; Luke 11:28; John 20:29; Rom. 4:6, 7; Rev. 19:9; 22:14.

The master thought of this Psalm as the law of the Lord. The obedient and disobedient are placed in sharp contrast. See this contrast by bringing together the first and last words of the psalm-"Blessed," "perish." The former word describes the issue of obedience; the latter, the result of disobedience.

Note the five-fold condition of the blessed or perfect man (not one sinlessly perfect" but one who does God's will. See Eph. 4:12, 13).

1. Separation: From the walk and way of the ungodly (Psa. 1:1).

". . . walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psa. 1:1a): The man who is characterized as blessed is first described according to the things he does not do. He does not walk in the state of mind that the ungodly cherish. He does not company, confer, or accept counsel from them. "Evil communication corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33; see Eph. 4:29; Jas. 3:2-18).

". . . nor standeth in the way of sinners" (Psa. 1:1b): The blessed man will not associate with the vicious life of sinners. He shuns the path and company of willfully evil people.

". . . nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (Psa. 1:1c): The scoffer is on the lowest possible state in a sinner's life. He is a Spirit-deserted man. Note the graduation in description: "walketh," "standeth," "sitteth"; "counsel"; "way"; "seat" "wicked"; "sinners"; "scornful."

Read Psa. 26:4-5; Jer. 15:17.

There is an old report that the scoffers of the apostle Peter's time (Acts 2:13) were never converted. Read Jude 18, 19; II Pt. 3:3-5; Matt. 21:31.

2. Meditation: In the law of the Lord (Psa. 1:2).

"His delight . . . law of the Lord . . . meditate" (Psa. 1:2): He meditates profoundly by day and night in the teaching of the Lord. This is all of God's Word then written, especially the books of Moses (Psa. 119:1, 55, 97).

Genuine Christians feast on the Word of God, and don't have to be coaxed to come to study the Bible (Psa. 19:9, 10; II Tim. 2:15).

"Being a Christian may not save one from sinning, but it will take the joy out of it." Psa. 19:13, 14.

John Foster tells us that in the Royal Gallery at Dresden might be seen a group of connoisseurs who stood for hours before a single painting. They came one day, returned the next, and for weeks they stood

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before that masterpiece of Raphael's! Does a person hungry for physical food have to be coaxed to come to the table to eat? Read John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Psa. 119:11, 105; Matt. 7:21-23. Why not write to some friend of yours, right now, and send him a copy of the Whole Bible Study Course and urge him to urge his minister and elders and teachers to start this glorious method of studying the Bible from Genesis through Revelation.

3. Position: Planted by the rivers; boundless supply (Psa. 1:3).

"Like a tree planted . . ." (Psa. 1:3): The blessed man in consequence of his separation and meditation becomes like a tree planted beside the watercourses, bearing fruit, with evergreen leaf. "The green foliage is an emblem of faith, which converts the water of life of the divine word into sap and strength, and the fruit, an emblem of works, which gradually ripen and scatter their blessings around; a tree that has lost its leaves does not bring its fruit to maturity." We are to be "rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:17) for trouble or anything which confronts us daily. Such a one stays put "to the end" (Mt. 10:22). Mark the growth of the godly. His path leads upward and onward; his circle of influence increases, the fruits of his life multiply (Sec Matt. 7:20; Gal. 5:22, 23; John 15:2, 5, 8).

4. Reproduction: Faith in God, then fruit for God (Psa. 1:3b).

5. Instruction: Loved and led all the way (Psa. 1:6a).

II. The Ruined Man (Psalm 1:4: 5, 6b)

"The ungodly . . . like the chaff" (Psa. 1:4): The ungodly are the opposite of a tree planted by the watercourses. They are like chaff which the wind drives away, without root below, without fruit above, devoid of all the vigor and freshness of life, lying loose upon the threshing-floor, a prey of the slightest breeze-utterly worthless and unstable.

"The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment . . ." (Psa. 1:5a): Such men are unable to stand in the judgment. This is the judgment of just recompense to which God brings each individual man (Rom. 14:12; Eccl. 12:14). They shall be driven from among the good (Matt. 25:45, 56) of "the congregation of the righteous" (Psa. 1:5b). God's congregation will be all wheat; no chaff will be permitted then.

"The way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psa. 1:6b): The way, that is the life's course, of the righteous has God as its goal. God knows this way, and those who walk in it unfailingly reach their goal. The way of the ungodly perishes, because left to itself it loses itself, without reaching the goal set before it-in darkest night (Read Psa. 37:13; 146:9; Prov. 29:1).

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QUESTIONS

1. What authority do you have for designating this portion of Scripture, "The Book of Psalms" (Acts 1:20)?
2. Do we know that Jesus knew and loved the Psalms (Psa. 22:1; 31:5; Matt. 27:46; Lk. 23:36)?
3. What did William E. Gladstone say of the Psalms?
4. Who wrote the Psalms, and does the word "Psalm" come from the Greek or the Hebrew?
5. What separates the entire collection of Psalms into five books (Psa. 41:13; 72:19; 89:52; 106:48)?
6. As to structure and subject matter, how are the Psalms classified?
7. Which is the longest Psalm? The shortest? The middle chapter of the Bible? The middle verse of the Bible?
8. Would the imprecatory Psalms be suitable for us to pray as Christians (Lk. 9:52-55; Acts 8:1-4; I Pet. 4:12-16 vs. Psa. 139:21)?
9. What New Testament authority do we have for using the Psalms (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 5:13)?
10. For what purpose were the Psalms probably written?
11. Can you cite instances of God's people who have sung in all ages?
12. What did Martin Luther call the book of Psalms?
13. What two kinds of men are contrasted in Psalm 1?
14. With what word does Psalm 1 begin and end?
15. Can you give some of David's beatitudes? Which one is your favorite?
16. What five conditions result from being God's "Blessed" man?
17. Should godly men separate themselves from the way and walk of the ungodly (Psa. 1:1; I Cor. 5:9-13; 15:33; Eph. 4:29; James 3:2-18)?
18. Since a person hungry for physical food does not have to be driven to the table to eat, what do you think of a professed Christian who claims to love God and His Word and makes himself conspicuous by his absence from the Bible school and church where the Bible is studied faithfully each week (See Psa. 1:2; 19:7, 8; Jno. 5:39; Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15; Psa. 119:9, 105; Matt. 7:21-23)?
19. Will you read the 150 Psalms during the rest of this quarter's study?
20. What personal blessings have you received from the study of Psalm 1?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 48

Page 1

Psalm 8

Memory Verse: Psalm 8:4, 5

Memory Verse:

"What is man, that thou are mindful of him and the son of man, that thou visiteth him? For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor" (Psalm 8:4, 5).

THE DIGNITY OF MAN

This little poem is entitled "Jehovah's Glory and Man's Dignity." It presents a picture of man's dignity framed in the glory of the Lord. Like a jewel in its setting, man is encased in the greatness and goodness

of his Creator and Keeper.

Psalm 8 is a great song of worship. It opens and closes with the same words (Psalm 8:1, 9).

"Upon Gittith" 'is the title to Psalm 8. It probably means that the musical performance was from a tune of that nature. "Gath," a winepress, denotes a tune of a joyous nature. It was used about the gathering of the vintage; a thanksgiving song at harvest time.

Every trusting soul knows the infinite source of his strength---God! One cannot know God, and long remain "down in the dumps."

Three great truths in this Psalm have to do with David's adoration for his Lord (Psalm 5:11).

I. His Name is Excellent (Psalm 8:1, 2)

"How excellent is thy name . . ." (Psalm 8:1): All nature speaks eloquently of its great First Cause. The wayside flower, the mountainous waves of the sea, the wonderful star-spangled sky, all unite in speaking forth the might and majesty of Him who gave being to it all.

"Thy name . . ." A study of the names of God as found in Scripture is an interesting and profitable study. Nathan J. Stone has written a book "Names of God in the Old Testament." It shows not only the "significance of the names of God in the Old Testament, but that they find their complement and fulfillment in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ in the New--He who is the effulgence of the glory and the image of the substance of Jehovah, and in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

The word here translated "Lord" in the King James is Jehovah, the Self-existent One, the eternal "I Am" (Ex. 3:13, 14; John 8:58). Other descriptive words show the infinite wealth and extent of the work of Jehovah. Creator: Jehovah-Elohim; The Lord who Provides, Jehovah-Jirah; the Lord that Healeth, Jehovah-Rapha; The Lord our Banner, Jehovah-Nissi; The Lord our Peace, Jehovah-Shalom; The Lord My Shepherd, Jehovah-Raah; The Lord our Righteousness, Jehovah-Tsidkenu; The Lord is Present, Jehovah-Shamman.

How marvelous is a Name! How excellent, how worthy of adoration, how rich in promise.

"There is a Name I love to hear. I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in mine ear, The sweetest name on earth.
"This Name shall shed its fragrance still, Along this thorny road;
Shall sweetly smooth the rugged hill, That leads me up to God."

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"Who hast set thy glory above the heavens" (Psa. 8:1b): The earth seems too small a place to display the perfections of God's work. In beauty, the heavens are unexcelled. The Psalmist saw them by night. This explains why the sun is not mentioned--the sunlight conceals them; the darkness reveals them. What is more beautiful than the vaulted skies studded with shining stars!

"Out of the mouth of babes . . ." (Psalm 8:2): God's work is of such a nature that by very weak instruments such as "babes and sucklings" has God founded, prepared and perfected praise. Hebrew women were accustomed to suckle their children for a long period. "Babes" here means a child who is able to lisp and speak. See I Sam. 22-24; Mark 7:27. God creates for Himself out of the mouths of children that confess Him the power to put to silence such as are enraged against God. It is by obscure and naturally feeble instruments that God makes His name glorious here below, and overcomes whatsoever is opposed to this glorifying (I Cor. 1:27).

"Still the enemy . . ." (Psa. 8:2b): God uses "babes and sucklings" to silence men who rail against Him. In Matthew 21:15, 16 the children in the temple gave praise to Christ as the Son of God. The chief priests and scribes were "sore displeased" at the children's "Hosanna to the son of David." The praise of the children to Jesus' ear was "perfected praise!" Those who quarrel against God's government are "shut up" as in the Master's triumphal entry into Jerusalem!

II. His Work Is Infinite (Psalm 8:3-5)

"When I consider thy heavens . . ." (Psa. 8:3): There now follows in this verse the confirmation of verse 2a. All over the earth, despite its distance from the heavens, Jehovah's name is glorious. For even children who have been designated "little majesties" glorify Him here with their mouth.

The Psalmist marvels that One who could make the infinite heavens would descend to concern Himself about finite man. This is an evening Psalm; hence, the sun is not mentioned. The writer is beneath the stars. He feels, as he writes, overwhelmed at the beauty, the majesty, and the splendor of an Eastern Eve.

The earth is larger than the moon. It is larger than Mercury and Mars, but about the size of Venus. The other bodies of the solar system are much larger than the earth. Uranus is eighty and one-half times larger, Neptune is eighty-five times larger, Saturn is 995 times larger, Jupiter is 1281 times larger, and the sun is 1,384,462 times larger than the earth. The earth is 8,000 miles in diameter; the diameter of the sun is more than 100 times greater than that of earth. The remote star, Aldebatan, is thirty times the diameter of the sun; Betelgeuse is 210 to 300 times the diameter, and Antares is 450 times the diameter of the sun.

The space between the planets is inconceivable. In our solar system, the sun and the planets revolve around the sun. Traveling from the earth in an airplane at the rate of two miles a minute, eighty-three days would be required to reach the moon. It would take twenty-five years to reach Venus, forty-six and one-half years to reach Mars, fifty-four to reach Mercury, eighty-eight and one-half years to reach the sun, 372 years to reach Jupiter, 755 years to reach Saturn, 1610 years to reach Uranus, and 2571 years to reach Neptune. Millions of years would be required to reach the stars.

In number, the stars are countless. Even with the most powerful telescope, who can count the stars? In addition to the heavenly bodies that compose our planetary system, we are told that there are other systems on and on-God only knows how many. They all are the works of God's fingers! Oh the majesty of our Maker. If the creation is so wonderful, how much more wonderful is the Creator (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Isa. 40:12ff; Psa. 19:1, 2).

"What Is Man. . .?"

"What is man . . . " (Psa. 8:4): As the writer looks up, how small, poor and contemptible he feels himself to be; how puny and frail man is. Man is insignificant. In size man does not compare with the whale. In age, man cannot compete with the California redwoods or the cedars of Lebanon. In physical strength, man is no match for the elephant. Man can't swim as fast as a fish.

When I attended school at Georgetown, a chemistry magazine gave a chemical analysis of an "average" human body. "It said that a man has enough fat to make seven bars of soap; enough iron for a medium-sized nail; enough sugar to fill a shaker; enough lime to whitewash a chicken coop; enough phosphorus to make 2,200 matches; enough magnesium for one medical dose; enough potassium to explode a toy cannon; enough sulfur to rid a dog of uninvited guests'; enough water for a small-sized bath, and enough salt to pickle a pound of pork. " It said the total drug-store value was 98 cents.

Man is a physical being (Gen. 2:7; I Cor. 15:47). Of the seventy chemicals in "dust" in Gen. 2:7, all are found in man! God CREATED man. Man is not here by chance, by evolution, but by creation. "The dignity of man" is not an empty title. Man, frail man, is the crown of God's creation!

"What a piece of work is man! How infinite in reason,
How, noble in faculty; in form and moving how
Express and admirable; in apprehension how like an angel;
In action how like a God; the beauty of the whole world."
--Shakespeare.

"The son of man . . ." (Psa. 8:4b): Man is made in the likeness of God. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and "man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7) This Psalm is frequently quoted in the New Testament. Jesus designated Himself as "the son of man." The use of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 2:6-8) shows us how the New Testament application to the Messiah is affected. The Psalmist regards man as one who glorifies God and as a prince created of God.

Man failed to bring glory to His creator. "For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:21, 22). God became man, even Jesus the Restorer of that which man lost through sin (John 1:1, 14; II Cor. 5:19), and He was crowned with glory and honor (Matt. 17:1-8; Heb. 2:5-10).

"Made him a little lower than the angels . . ." (Psa. 8:5): God has placed man next in dignity to angels. Adam in his original condition was to "have dominion" over God's creation (Gen. 1:26-28). Angels, heavenly messengers that cannot die, are a little higher than man! Man can die. Jesus, too, was made a "little lower than the angels" that He MIGHT DIE IN OUR BEHALF (Heb. 9:22; I Pet. 1:18, 19) and "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:9-15). Jesus Christ our Lord was made "in the likeness of men . . . and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" to save us (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:5-10).

Jesus entered the state of humanity---a little beneath the angels--in order to raise redeemed humanity above the angels!

III. God's Ownership Is Complete (Psalm 8:6-9)

"Thou madest him to have dominion . . ." (Psa. 8:6): Man is God's offspring, made in His image and in his likeness. Man is God's child -a part of himself. This explains why God is mindful of man, why God visits man in mercy. The Father loves the child and fastens his affections upon him. "Man only appears insignificant," says one. "His rounded brow speaks more than the arched sky, his eyes shine out deeper than stars, and in his lips there is music beyond that of wind or wave. Less bright than the sun, less bulky than the planet, less abiding than the stars, he is greater than all!"

God gave man a vast domain. All created things of the earth have been placed at his feet. Man is the monarch of the world, God's vice-regent. The earth, the air, the sea, and all things therein are subject to him. Nature yields to him her bounty. Man scales the highest peaks, harnesses the lightning, sounds his voice around the world, and makes the animals to serve him (verses 7, 8).

Man in the person of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the head and representative of the human race will not only be restored to his original position but also exalted far beyond it. God alone will not be under the dominion of Man (I Cor. 15:27, 28). You are a "KING . . . unto God" through Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:5, 6).

"Oh Lord, our Lord . . ." (Psa. 8:8): The Psalm closes as it began. He has demonstrated what he expressed in verse 3 that the name of Jehovah, whose glory is reflected by the heavens, is also glorious on earth. Thus the Psalmist can as a conclusion repeat the thought with which he began in a wider and more comprehensive meaning, and weave the psalm together into a wreath of praise!

How can we live in God's universe and not believe in Him (Psa. 14:1)? and fail to acknowledge Him? and refuse to adore Him? and without praise for Him? How can we feast on His bounty and not look up in gratitude? How can we rule and reign over God's creatures and refuse to recognize the source of our authority? How can we live in God's house and refrain from yielding to His holy and righteous will?

WHAT IS MAN?

Psalm 8:4,5

The mountains tower toward Thee -- But cannot serve Thee;
The trees reach in praise to Thee -- But cannot hear Thy voice;
The clouds declare Thy glory -- But cannot grow like Thee--
What is man?

What is man that Thou art mindful of him?
What is man that Thou has created him a little lower than the angels?
What is man that Thou hast breathed Thy spirit on him?
What is man that a fragment of Thyself doth him indwell?

Let man stand with peace and power -- For his strength cometh from Thee;
Let him grow in grace and wisdom -- As he lifts his heart to Thee;
Let his very life reflect Thy glory -- As he makes Thy will his own;

Then, O God, may man grow more like Thee,
And serve Thee, praise Thee, worship Thee!

-By Winona R. Jewell.

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QUESTIONS

1. How does David begin and end Psalm 8 (Psa. 8:1, 3)?
2. On what occasion did Jesus use Psalm 8:2 (Matt. 21:15, 16)?
3. Can you name some things on earth which speak of the excellency of "thy name" (Psa. 8:1)?
4. Where was Jehovah "set thy (His) glory" (Psa. 8:1b)?
5. What is the word which in the KJV is translated Lord, and what is its meaning (Psa- 8:1)?
6. Out of whose mouth has Jehovah "ordained strength" (Psa. 8:2) or praise?
7. Can you quote some references which prove that "babes and sucklings" would be able to lisp and speak (I Sam. 1:22-24; Mark 7:27)?
8. Why do you believe this is an evening Psalm (Psa. 8:3)?
9. What is the approximate space between the eight planets and the earth of our solar system?
10. Is it possible to count all the stars (Psa. 8:3)?
11. How did God make the heavens (Psa. 8:3; Geu. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Isaiah 40:12ff; Psa. 19:1, 2)?
12. "What is man . . ." from a chemical analysis (Psa. 8:4)?
13. From what did God create man (Gen. 2:7; I Cor. 15:47)?
14. In whose likeness did God create man (Gen. 1:26, 27)?
15. To whom are the words "the son of man" applied in Heb. 2:5-8?
16. Who was made "a little lower than the angels" (Psa. 8:5)? Can angels die?
17. Who was made "in the likeness of men . . . and became obedient unto death" to save man who through sin brought death upon himself (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:5-10; I Cor. 15:21, 22; I Pet. 1:18, 19)?
18. Over what did God make man to have dominion (Psa. 8:6-8)?
19. Who alone will not be under the dominion of man (I Cor. 15:27, 28)?
20. If you have not surrendered yourself to God the Creator and His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour, will you do so today (Psa. 8:9; Heb. 3:15)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 49
Psalm 23

Page 1
Memory Verse: Hebrews 13:20-21

Memory Verse:

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:20, 21).

THE SHEPHERD PSALM

Psalms 22, 23, 24 form a trilogy. They have a wondrous relationship to each other. They have been called "The Cross, the Crook, and the Crown!"

Psalm 22

"The Cry of the Crucified" perfectly and properly associates this Psalm with the one Son of God, Jesus Christ. Read the Gospels. You can not fail to see that this is the Psalm of the Cross, Psalm 22:1 being the cry that was wrung from the breaking heart of the Crucified One (Matt. 27:46)---the fourth word from the cross. The method of crucifixion was predicted by the Psalmist (Psa. 22:1), the bones (of the hands, arms, shoulders, and pelvis) out of joint (Psa. 22:14), profuse perspiration caused by intense suffering (Psa. 22:14c), the action of the heart affected (Psa. 22:14c); strength exhausted, and extreme thirst (Psa. 22:15); partial nudity with the hurt to modesty (Psa. 22:17)---these circumstances are precisely those fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. "The blood marked way of the cross stands out here without doubt."

Christ was: 1) Forsaken by God (Psa. 22:1, 2); Scorned by Men (Psa. 22:7); 3) Exulted over by Satan (Psa. 22:13); 4) Heart-broken by Sin (Psa. 22:14); and 5) Pierced by Sinners (Psa. 22:16).

Psalm 23

"The Safety of His Sheep" speaks of the Crook or the Shepherd just as Psalm 22 spoke of the Cross. To those whom He has won through His passion, He becomes known as the Shepherd. There could be no twenty-third Psalm without the twenty-second.

The twenty-third Psalm is simply sublime and sublimely simple. It has been used in more prisons, recited more at funerals, read in more hospitals, marked by more mothers and fathers in their children's Bibles when they leave home, than any other one passage in God's Word.

Henry Ward Beecher called it "The nightingale of the Bible. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but, oh, it has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy, greater than the heart can conceive. Blessed be the day on which that psalm was born!"

What Pike's Peak is to the Rockies and the Matterhorn is to the Alps, the twenty-third Psalm is to the whole range of revelation recorded in this poetic book.

I. The Shepherd (Psalm 23:1)

"The Lord is my shepherd" (Psa. 23:1a): The name "Jehovah-Rohi" means Jehovah my Shepherd. The primary meaning of this word is to feed or lead to pasture, as a shepherd does his flock. David may have composed this Psalm while he was yet a shepherd boy, watching his father's flocks, on the very same Shepherd Field where, 1000 years later, the Angel Choir announced the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-20).

YEAR 2 - LESSON 49 - PAGE 2

"Shepherd": Jesus Christ's relation to his people is often represented by the figure of a shepherd. "I am the good shepherd," He claimed (John 10:11, 15; Heb. 13:20, 21; I Pet. 2:25; 5:4). Read also Gen. 48:15; Isaiah 40:11. Just as David led, loved, and labored for his flock, so our Lord Jesus Christ is our Shepherd.

"My Shepherd": How much is wrapped up in the pronoun "my" Shepherd. Is He YOUR SHEPHERD? If not, accept Him as your Saviour today (Heb. 3:15).

"I shall not want" (Psa. 23:1b): Since we are the "sheep of his pasture" (Psa. 95:7) we shall not want. We can depend on our Shepherd to lead and feed us (Phil. 4:19). WONDROUS LEADING!

II. The Still Waters (Psalm 23:2)

". . . green pastures" (Psa. 23:2a): My Shepherd "maketh me to lie down in green pastures," pastures of tender grass, not in respect to food, but as places of cool and refreshing rest. Did you ever know a HUNGRY SHEEP TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES? Only FULL SHEEP lie down.

If church members were really sheep of the Shepherd, they wouldn't have to be begged to remain in "green pastures" (the church prayer meeting, Bible study, communion, active service, and fruit-bearing in their proper relation)! "I will give YOU REST" (Matt. 11:28). The rest which satisfies is in Him (Christ), and not apart from Him. What a WONDROUS FEEDING we have in Him who fulfilled the word of Ezekiel (Ezek. 34:11-16).

". . . still waters" (Psa. 23:2b): "He leadeth me beside the still waters," or waters of stillness. This is the place of the quiet flow of the water that invites repose. This is a contrast with rapid streams on the one hand, and stagnant, offensive pools on the other.

III. The Soul (Psalm 23:3)

"He restoreth my soul . . ." (Psa. 23:3a): The Shepherd revives or quickens (Psa. 19:7) or relieves (Lam. 1:11, 19) the soul. Restoration is the act of saving those who are sold out to the devil. Christ selects and claims us. We belong to God by right of creation, inheritance, and redemption. We "are bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:20). Only through Him do we have salvation (Acts 4:12; I Cor. 3:11). The Lord "restores" the soul by causing it amidst the dryness and heat of temptation and trouble to taste the very essence of life that refreshes and strengthens it. WONDROUS KEEPING of the Soul!

"He leadeth . . . paths of righteousness" (Psa. 23:3b): The Lord leads carefully and without risk or wandering. Such are safe paths, pleasing to God---and man (Prov. 3:5, 6).

IV. The Shadow (Psalm 23:4a)

". . . valley of the shadow of death" (Psa. 23:4): Even when one passes through the dark valley as gloomy as the shadow of death, where surprises and calamities of every kind threaten, he fears no misfortune. In the darkest and most trying hours of life, our Shepherd is near. Dangers, darkness, the shadow of death are not far away from any of us. "The shadow of death" does not refer to the actual death of the Psalmist, for he lives to tell of it, and of what follows. It is some great crisis of the spiritual life in which his weakness and suffering were very great, and the darkness awful. Yet, he was delivered from it. God did not forsake him; nor will He forsake us (Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5). The picture is that of a deep ravine overhung by high cliffs, filled with dense forests; how dreadful to the timid. What a hiding place for beasts of prey! It is expressive of danger. It surely includes the great enemy of man, death (I Cor. 15:21-23, 26). WONDROUS COMFORTING! HE IS WITH ME!

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VI. The Staff (Psalm 23:4b)

"Thy rod. . . staff" (Psa. 23:4b): The rod and staff are symbols of the shepherd's office. By them, he guides the sheep. He feeds and protects his own. The rod and staff in the Shepherd's hand comforts those who are led with a feeling of security, and therefore a cheerful spirit. Our "good shepherd" has never lost a victory (I Cor. 15:57; John 16:33). WONDROUS SUPPORTING!

VI. The Substance (Psalm 23:5)

"Thou preparest a table . . ." (Psa. 23:5a): After the figure of the shepherd fades away in verse 4, that of the host appears. His enemies must look quietly, without being able to do anything, and see how the Shepherd provides bountifully for His guests. Think of sheep feasting a short distance away from wolves and the wolves unable to hurt the sheep! The Shepherd is NEAR.

"Thou anointest my head with oil" (Psa. 23:5b): The Lord anoints the head of his own with sweet perfumes as at a joyous magnificent banquet.

"My cup runneth over" (Psa. 23:5c): He fills his cup to excess. This represents abundance. WONDROUS SUPPLYING!

VII. The Surety (Psalm 23:6)

"Goodness and mercy shall follow me . . ." (Psa. 23:6a): The favor of the Lord does follow us. Ask any genuine saint (Psa. 34:7). With two divinely given attendants, goodness and mercy, life will be carefully tended, bountifully fed, securely guarded, graciously guarded, and tenderly supported by a loving Shepherd!

"I will dwell . . . house of the Lord for ever" (Psa. 23:6b): What a thrilling thought when David breaks through with the announcement that a heavenly home awaits us when the toils of life are ended. The Shepherd graciously invites the weary pilgrim to come in after the toil and stress of the day is done.

Thank God, at the end of the earthly pilgrimage we shall be with Him forever. Jesus is our hope and guarantee of eternal life (John 11:25, 26; 14:1-3; Rev. 1:18).

Can you say today, "The Lord is MY SHEPHERD?" In a day of "megaton" bombs, do you dare go a single day without the presence of the eternal Shepherd? Do your children know, love, and follow the Shepherd? Life is not worth living without Him! Unless He is YOUR SHEPHERD, you can never know the joys that you have right to enjoy as you journey along the way. Why blunder and stumble when the "Good Shepherd" wants to be your guide (John 10:10)? WONDROUS FOLLOWING!

Psalm 24

In this song the Saviour who through suffering triumphed, the Shepherd who through pilgrimage leads His own, is seen ascending to the place of power and authority. The Messianic application is plain. Here is seen the "CROWN!"

1. The Creative Power of God (Psalm 24:1, 2): The Lord is sovereign over the created world and its inhabitants.

2. The Cleansing Pardon of God (Psalm 24:3-6): "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" The answer declares the need for PURITY OF CONDUCT and CHARACTER. God's grace forgives; only thus could hands be clean and hearts pure.

3. The Conquering Prince of God (Psalm 24:7-10). "By our calendars, yesterday He passed through Psalm 22. Today He is exercising the office of Psalm 23. Tomorrow, He will exercise finally the authority of Psalm 24!"

QUESTIONS

1. What do Psalms 22, 23 and 24 form?
2. What have they sometimes been called?
3. Who quoted Psalm 22:1 while on the cross as applying to Himself (Matt. 27:46)?
4. Which word was this from the cross, and is it recorded in more than one gospel?
5. What kind of graphic death does Psalm 22 describe (Psa. 22:14-17)?
6. Explain how the circumstances of the death of Christ on the cross precisely fulfill Psalm 22?
7. What did Henry Ward Beecher call Psalm 23?
8. Whom did David call "My Shepherd" (Psa. 23:1)?
9. What is the primary meaning of "Jehovah-Rohi" in Psa. 23:1)?
10. When do you think David composed Psalm 23?
11. Who claimed to be "the good shepherd" (John 10:11, 15)?
12. Is Jesus the Shepherd and Bishop of YOUR soul (I Pet. 2:25), and can you say He is "My Shepherd"?
13. If we are His sheep, what has the Chief Shepherd promised us when we "shall appear" (I Pet. 5:4)?
14. Where did the Shepherd lead his sheep (Psalm 23:2)?
15. What is the meaning of "He restoreth my soul" (Psalm 23:3)?
16. Can you explain the meaning of the "valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4), and who will be with us as we walk that way?
17. What comforted the Psalmist (Psalm 23:4b)?
18. What did the Shepherd prepare for His own "in the presence" of enemies (Psalm 23:5)?
19. What follows us "all the days of my life," and where will we dwell forever (Psalm 23:6)?
20. What does Psalm 23 mean to you?

YEAR 2 - LESSON 50 - PAGE 1
WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 50
Psalm 37

Page 1
Memory Verse: Psalm 37:23-25

Memory Verse:

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:23-25).

THE MILLION DOLLAR PSALM

Psalm 37 is the climax of "The Security Psalms," that is, Psalms 32-37. Out of his personal experience of financial hardship, Oliver Goldsmith put the words of Psalm 37:23-25 into the mouth of his Vicar of Wakefield, "That text is worth a million pounds!" The international bankers will have to work out the exact equivalent in our currency today, but we are all agreed that is a lot of money!

This Psalm has fascinated literateurs like William Makepeace Thackeray, Sir Walter Scott, and others. They have woven this immortal testimony of the psalmist into their classics. Irreligious folks today are hard beset in a time of storm. How many displaced refugees are in the world at any time -- barely kept alive by the limited benevolence of compassionate agencies and individuals? Multiplied millions have HOMELESS MINDS. Souls need resting-places and hearts need shelter. Men on all sides falter and fail. A concise suicide note left by a successful business executive read: "I'm sorry, and I'm scared."

Evidently, David had had some bitter experiences with his enemies. Here he sets them down and gives us all some splendid advice. Psalm 37 is priceless. Why not commit it to memory?

This Psalm has as its keynote, "fret not" (Psalm 37:1, 7b, 8b). The underlying problem is the prosperity of EVIL MEN. The problem is still with us, and tries many a tried and trusting heart. How shall we keep the soul sweet, steady, and strong in every circumstance of life? Are there resources to lift life about anxiety and fears? Can we say with Watts, "I believe the promises of God enough to venture an eternity upon them"?

My friend D. B. Eastep divides this Psalm into two parts: 1) The Commands (Psalm 37:1-8, 26, 34); 2) The Promises. "Go over this Psalm again," he advises, "and notice how many PROMISES there are in it. Almost every verse is a promise. There are MORE PROMISES than there are COMMANDS. That is just like God. How good He is!"

I. The Prosperity of Wicked Men Is Short-Lived (Psalm 37:1-11)

1. The secret of positive quietness for the believer (Psa. 37:1-8).

"Fret not thyself . . ." (Psa. 37:1): Fretting is wrong; it is harmful; it is needless. Let the trusting wait. Events will justify the action. We are not to fret because of "evil doers." A day will come when evil doers shall no longer cause the righteous trouble.

"Fret not . . ." (Psa. 37:7b): We are not to fret because of him who prospers in his way and brings wicked devices to pass. God here does not tell us to cease from fretting about him who prospers in the things of this world, BUT to fret NOT AT HIM who prospers in evil deeds. We shall see such evil workers defeated (verse 9).

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"Fret not . . ." (Psa. 37:8b): "Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil." Moffat translates it this way: "Fret not . . . it only tends to evil." The Revised Version puts it: "fret not thyself, it tendeth only to evil doing." Not only does it lead to evil, it is evil. The Bible says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

"Neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity" (Psa. 37:1b): Envy is an awful sin. It caused Cain to slay Abel. It was envy that crucified Christ (Matt. 27:18). It is such a deadly and devilish sin that God here warns us that we are not to be envious against the workers of iniquity. It surely is doubly wrong to envy the righteous and godly? Are you envious? "Stormy weather may curdle even the cream of humanity!" Evil men "shall soon be cut down like the grass . . . (verse 2). The scythe of death is sharpening. It comes quickly (Prov. 29:1). Death kills the ungodly man like grass, and wrath withers him like hay.

"Trust in the Lord . . . do good" (Psa. 37:3): A plain and positive command. "Trust" is the New Testament equivalent for "Faith." Surely God's children should trust Him, "and do good." Be actively obedient. Doing good is a fine remedy for fretting. Do good and you'll go on your way "rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). God promised to keep such "in the land and verily thou shalt be fed" (verse 3b). God made Canaan the land of promise to flow with "milk and honey." He Shepherded His own as they honored Him with faith and integrity. God's promise is our perpetual banquet. We shall neither lack things spiritual or material (Phil. 4:19). Let us "Dwell in the land and feed on His faithfulness" (Revised Version).

"Delight thyself also in the Lord . . ." (Psa. 37:4): Make the Lord the joy and rejoicing of thy spirit. Bad men delight in carnal objects. Do not envy them, or imitate them. Draw from God all that inward joy which He would give you. "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Men who delight in God desire or ask for nothing but what will please Him; wills subdued to Him may have what they will!

"Commit thy way unto the Lord . . . trust" (Psa. 37:5): It means, "leave it all to Him." We are commanded to trust God for everything. Let Him plan, lead, direct, and bless. "If this command were obeyed by Christians, we would have so many blessings we would not know what to do with them. What would happen to a locomotive if it did not let the rails direct its path? It would be wrecked. So it is with a life. If it is not God-directed, it is doomed for failure. That is really the meaning of the 'ungodly'. When applied to a person, it is one who does not want God to direct him, one who does not commit his way to God." Twice we are commanded to "trust" God (verses 5, 40).

"Rest in the Lord . . ." (Psa. 37:7): This is the climax and result of trusting and ceasing from fretting. "Rest" in the Lord. It means, "Be still before the Lord." When practiced it is an indication of faith. Because faith never frets, IT RESTS. It pleases God when we REST IN HIM. Fretting and unrest is saying that God does not know what is best for our lives, and that He is not able to control circumstances. Resting in the Lord was the secret of the happy, fruitful and successful life of Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission.

2. The sudden destruction of the wicked (Psa. 37:9-11).

"Evil doers shall be cut off . . ." (Psa. 37:9): Instead of anger against the arrangements of God and jealousies of the temporary pleasures of the wicked, let us remember that they shall soon "be cut off."

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"Wait upon the Lord . . ." (verse 9b): In verse 7 we are commanded to "wait patiently for Him." We are to let God take His time. This develops patience. Do not hurry God. "Ye have need of patience that after you have done the will of God ye might receive the promise." "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). We "wait upon the Lord" in prayer, meditation, study of God's Word, as we seek His will for our lives daily (Acts 17:11; Prov. 3:5, 6). Our Lord dignified verse 11 as one of His beatitudes (Matt. 5:5).

II. The Prosperity of the Wicked Has Within It the Elements of Its Own Destruction (Psalm 37:12-20)

"The Lord shall laugh . . ." (Psa. 37:13): Punishment comes at last to the "wicked" who plots against the just. The elements of destruction within wickedness overthrow the evil one. This is all stated by way of contrast. "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (verse 16). This principle is up to date. Ill-gotten gains and the triumph of wickedness are alike doomed by inherent evil to sure destruction (verses 17-21).

III. The Way Established by the Lord Is Sure (Psalm 37:21-31)

1. God is over all (verse 23a).

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord" (verse 23a): God's purpose runs like a thread through the texture of our lives. A personal God reveals His plan in His own-- ever onward and upward, in revelation, nature, and in our individual experiences. "He will keep the feet of his saints" (I Sam. 2:9; compare Psa. 37:4, 5; 40:2, 3). The all-powerful God of love and goodness steers our life toward a goal. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD DIRECTETH HIS STEPS" (Prov. 16:9).

Like Hebrew letters, Providence may have to be read backwards at times, but that there is a pattern is undeniable. Thackeray, in *THE NEWCOMES*, has old Colonel Newcome in an almshouse with a Pauline contentment that would make a millionaire green with envy! The old man gives his testimony: "Don't be agitated I am very happy. I have good quarters, good food, good light, good fire, and good friends. Blessed be God, I am as happy as the day is long!" Displaced souls might well find their solace and serenity in the same source in a day when every other hospital bed in America is occupied by a mental patient.

2. God in all (verse 23b, 24a).

"He delighteth in his way" (verse 23b): Our actions affect God. As parents are pleased with the tottering footsteps of their babes, so God is pleased with those who delight in his way. This is a solemn and searching thought. "In all their affliction he was afflicted and the angel of his presence saved them" (Isa. 63:9). To please God was the driving motive of Jesus (John 8:29); it ought to be ours. The best and shortest of all funeral sermons that the greatest of all preachers gave is couched in seven words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" (Matt. 25:21).

"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down" (verse 24): Disasters and reverses may lay him low. Like Job, he may be stripped of everything; like Joseph, be put in prison; like Jonah, be east into the deep. "He shall not be utterly cast down. He shall not be altogether prostrate. He shall be brought on his

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knees, but not on his face. "A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again" (Prov.24:16). To fall down on a deck or bridge, is not the same as falling overboard or over the bridge. See Micah 7:8; II Cor. 4:9; Rom. 8:34; 11:11,12.

3. God is under all (verse 24b, 25).

"The Lord upholdeth him with his hand" (verse 24b): Desperation swallows up many souls. Those who turn to drink are made desolate; those who dope are destroyed. To do wickedness is to be destroyed. To do good under all circumstances is to know the personal assistance of the Lord. Where grace does not keep us from going down, it shall save us from staying down! Job had double wealth at last, Joseph reigned in Egypt, and Jonah safely landed! God is the helper of His saints; none can prevail against them.

"I have been young . . . old" (verse 25): With our more complex civilization in the midst of which we live, perhaps sometimes the righteous have been driven to beg, but even now such cases are extremely rare. After some varied experiences, I would want to subject him who begs to severe cross-examination before accepting his testimony against that of the psalmist in verse 25! God never forsakes the righteous; that is a rule without exception! Seldom, or never, do their seed beg bread. "God is able to make all grace abound toward us" (II Cor.9:8) to make "our daily bread" (Matt. 5:11; Phil. 4:19). Why whittle down these promises by undue spiritualization? Take God at His word. Cooperate with intelligence and industry and God will supply our every need!

IV. The Safety of the Righteous against the Wiles of the Wicked (Psalm 37:32-40)

"The Lord shall help them, and deliver them..." (Psa.37:40): This is the final contrast of the Psalm. "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him" (verse 32). The way this Psalm appeals to men is proof of how prone the heart is to rebel against the seeming prosperity of the wicked. It is also a demonstration of the conviction of men that it is better to trust in the Lord than to achieve any kind of success by any other means. Faith does falter, and demands some explanation. It finds all it asks when resolutely it obeys the commands to "Trust" (verse 3), "do good," "delight" (verse 4), "commit" (verse 5), and "wait on the Lord" (verse 34).

Psalm 37: Key Words

Plenty: "Trust in the Lord" (verse 3).
Punishment: "The Lord shall laugh" (verse 13).
Preservation: "The Lord upholdeth" (verse 17).
Perception: "The Lord knoweth" (verse 18).
Protection: "The Lord loveth" (verse 28).
Persistence: "They forsaketh not" (verse 28).
Provision: "The Lord shall help" (verse 40).
Power: "The Lord shall deliver" (verse 40).
Pardon: "The Lord shall save" (verse 40).

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QUESTIONS

1. What is the climax of "The Security Psalms" (Psalms 32-37)?
2. What words did Oliver Goldsmith put into the mouth of his Vicar of Wakefield and what did he say of the text (Psalm 37:23-25)?
3. What is the keynote of Psalm 37 (verses 1, 7b, 8b)?
4. What is the underlying problem of this Psalm?
5. Is this problem still with us?
6. Can you say, "I believe the promise of God enough to venture an eternity upon them"?
7. How does D. B. Eastep divide Psalm 37?
8. From the argument of Psalm 37, why is it better to be righteous than wicked (Psa. 37:2, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 20, 28, 34-36; 73:18; Eccl. 8:11-13)?
9. Is it rebellion against God to disobey His commandments (I John 5:3; Psalm 37:3-5, 6)?
10. Why are we not to be "envious against the workers of iniquity" (Psa. 37:1b, 2)?
11. Are you "waiting patiently for" the Lord (Psa. 37:7, 9b)? If not, why not (Isa. 40:31)?
12. Do you believe Psalm 37:16?
13. What is promised the "meek" (Psa. 37:11; Matt. 5:5)?
14. Does evil have within itself the elements of its own destruction (Psa. 37:12-20)?
15. Does God order the steps of every man (Psa. 37:23a; I Sam. 2:9; Psa. 40:2,3; 37:4,5)?
16. Does God permit the righteous to "be utterly cast down" (Psa.37:24; Prov.24:16)?
17. What was David's experience about the righteous man and his seed (Psa. 37:25)?
18. Do you believe God is able to supply all our need (II Cor. 9:8; Matt. 5:11; Phil. 4:19)?
19. Who has promised to help and deliver us from the wicked (Psa. 37:40)?
20. Which is your favorite verse in Psalm 37?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 51

Page 1

Psalm 51

Memory Verse: Psalm 51:10

Memory Verse:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Public Reading: Psalm 51:1-19.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN or THE BLESSEDNESS OF CONFESSION

Psalm 51 is intensely individual. It is a penitential Psalm. Read also Psalm 32. It is the outcome, not of a lifetime, nor of a year, but of an hour's sin. Many men (and women) would not be in the penitentiary if they could recall a few minutes spent in sin!

This Psalm is David's reflection upon his own past. His lust with Bathsheba (II Samuel 11, 12) and murder of Uriah now rise up and haunt him. It is the plaintive wail of a broken heart. In agony of soul, he sobs out his confession of his great sin into the ear of God. As is usual with sin, the horror of it is only felt after the deed is done! Sin is deceitful (I Timothy 2:14; Romans 7:11). The devil is too wise to show us the result of sin. If he did, he wouldn't have many followers.

Yesterday I stood by the casket of a young fellow just thirty-two years old. His mother stood there, too, and wept, saying: "I love him so much I wish I could exchange places with him, I'd rather have the clods thrown on my coffin than to have them thrown upon his." Sobs shook her body. If that young man could have seen the sorrow, the shame to his loved ones, and his own cold, dead body before he yielded to temptation, I believe he would have shunned the appearance of the evil that killed him!

I. Repentance from Sin (Psalm 52:1-6)

1. A cry for forgiveness (Psa. 51:1, 2).

"Have mercy . . . blot out my transgressions" (Psa. 51:1): This is David's confession of guilt. He appeals to the mercy of God, even before he mentions his sin. He pleads with God to "blot out my transgressions," my revolts, my excesses. "Transgressions" are literally "rebellions" (Psa. 19:13; 32:1), "setting one's self against the will and law of God. It is treason against God. David saw God as the one to whom he must answer (see Rom. 14:12). The prayers or confessions of sin number twenty-two in verses 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 3, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18. To "blot out" means "to erase the lines," obliterate the record.

"Wash . . . mine iniquity" (Psa. 51:2): Iniquity is that which is "twisted" or "warped" or "crooked." David pleads with God "wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity." Purity as well as pardon is desired by those truly penitent. Conviction of sin precedes the petition of forgiveness of sin (See II Sam. 12:13; Psa. 32:5; I John 1:7-9). David's "sin" was literally "missing the aim or the mark"; it was error, failure, and a blunder. David had loved and yielded to adultery with Bathsheba. This led to the murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite, a noble patriot. Now David hated and confessed his sin. He **DIED TO THE PRACTICE OF SUCH SIN. That IS REPENTANCE FROM SIN** (See Luke 13:3; Matt. 21:29; Acts 17:30, 31; II Pet. 3:9). Sam

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Jones once defined repentance as "being so sorry for your meanness that you quit it!" Exactly. You stop sinning, you stop serving the devil when you repent (Rom. 6:6-13, 23).

2. A sincere confession (Psa. 51:3-6).

"I acknowledge . . . my sin" (Psa. 51:3): David sees the immense number of his sins; he makes open declaration of them. "My sin," "My sin," he confesses, as a whole is never out of my mind. When Nathan said: "THOU are the man . . ." (II Sam. 12:7), the prophet brought David to his knees in repentance. This Old Testament, as well as the New, has its story of a prodigal son. The story of the Old Testament prodigal is told in II Samuel 11:1-27. The story of his return to the Father's house is told in Psalm 51.

"Against thee . . . only, have I sinned" (Psa. 51:4): David had, of course, sinned against Uriah, against Bathsheba, and against himself. Primarily he had sinned against God. He had sinned WITH BATHSHEBA. "At every point at which we touch His creatures, we touch God Himself; every blow struck at them is struck at Him . . . The guilt of every sin is fundamentally the same, revolt against God. This is, in a true sense, the only sin" (Acts 25:41, 45; Acts 9:4). David felt that his sin was committed in all its filthiness while Jehovah himself looked on (see I Pet. 3:12). David could not present any argument against divine justice; David was wrong; God would have been just in condemning him.

"I was shapen in iniquity . . ." (Psa. 51:5): McGarvey asks: "Does verse five teach that the human race is totally depraved. No." (See Gen. 1:28; I Tim. 4:3; Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 7:1-40). The marriage relationship is honorable, and commanded of God to be kept holy. Of course, our parents were sinners (Rom. 3:23) as we all are -- by choosing wrong when we reach the age of accountability. However, the relationship of husband and wife and the bearing of children is NOT SINFUL. Had David been "conceived" out of wedlock that certainly would have been a sin on the part of his mother.

"Thou desireth truth in the inward parts . . ." (Psa. 51:6): God demands reality, sincerity, and true holiness. He cannot tolerate the pretense of purity. David knew that the fall was not "a fall upward," and that sin was not "a quest for God." David saw that sin meant anarchy in the heart and chaos in the soul; that sin defied God and denied His righteous government.

II Redemption from Sin (Psalm 51:7-11)

1. Prayer for full cleansing (Psa. 51:7-9).

"Purge me . . . be clean" (Psa. 51:7): Sprinkle the atoning blood upon me with the appointed means. Let the sin-offering purge my sins. See Ex. 12:22; Num. 19:6, 8. The idea of atonement is here. "Purge" refers to vicarious satisfaction (Num. 19:17-20). The sinner who comes to Christ today has the gospel preached to him. He believes the gospel (Rom. 10:17; John 20:30, 31), repents or dies to the practice of sin (Luke 13:3; II Pet. 3:9), confesses his faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:9, 10), and is baptized into His body, the church (Mark 16:15, 16; Gal. 3:27). The sinner APPLIES the blood of Christ TO HIS SINS by being "baptized into His (Christ's) death (Rom. 6:3), that is, into the blood of our precious Lord. IF AFTER becoming a Christian a man falls into sin, he repents or turns from sin, confesses his sins to His Saviour, and is cleansed by the blood of Christ (Gal. 6:1; I John 1:7-10). He will make any restitution that may be necessary, as did Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10). Any wrongs that may be corrected; must be corrected (Matt. 21:20), or repentance is not genuine, but a mockery! The blood applied makes one "Whiter than snow" (see Isa. 1:18). This brings the JOY OF PARDON (read Acts 8:39). David seeks joy for a sinful heart, music for crushed bones (verse 8), and repeated the prayer of verse 1 with the enlargement of "all" (verse 9).

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2. Prayer for a new heart and a new life (Psa. 51:10-11).

"Create in me a clean heart . . ." (Psa. 51:10): David in verse 7 asked for a "clean" heart; now he seeks a heart suitable to that cleanness. None but God can create either a NEW HEART or a new earth. God's part in salvation is to provide the way of escape through the giving of His only Son (John 3:16; 1:27). Man's part is to believe and obey the gospel of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4). A "right spirit" is a firm spirit, constant, not yielding to temptation. The Holy Spirit will not be taken from Christians who let Him reign within (verse 11; I Thess. 5:19; Gal. 5:22-26).

III. Restoration of Joy (Psalm 51:12-14)

"Restore unto me the joy . . ." (Psa. 51:12): "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psa. 32:1). To be saved from sin brings joy (Acts 8:27-39; 16:25-34), then or now. Deliberately to depart from the way of righteousness brings condemnation, lack of joy and peace! David lost his joy in God when he sinned. A forgiven, joyful man will "teach transgressors thy ways" (Verse 13).

"Deliver me from bloodguiltiness . . ." (Psa. 51:14): David was worthy to die for the sins of murder and lust (II Sam. 12:9, 10; Psa. 5:6). He prays: "Free me" (see Psa. 39:8). God forgave Saul the murderer of Stephen (I Tim. 1:12-15). Thank God for I John 1:7 for erring Christians!

IV. Revelation of Praise (Psa. 51:15-19)

"O Lord, open my lips . . ." (Psa. 51:15): Deliberate sin closes our lips, makes it impossible to testify concerning Christ, and causes others to stumble over us. When our son went away from home to college, I wrote in the new Bible I gave him: "This book (the Bible) will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book." David's sole desire now is to please God. He deserved to die for the murder of Uriah and for adultery with Bathsheba. Nevertheless, God forgave him. David resolved to let his life and his lips forever praise God for victory over sin (verse 16-17).

"Do good . . . unto Zion" (Psa. 51:18): David feared lest because of his sins, divine judgment would fall upon Zion. For this reason, he prays for Zion's security and prosperity. He promised on behalf of the city of God, that she would render praise and true worship (verse 19).

An Analysis of Psalm 51

1. Sin defiles us (Psa. 51:2-7).
2. Sin haunts us (Psa. 51:3).
3. Sin makes us sad (Psa. 51:8).
4. Sin brings condemnation (Psa. 51:9).
5. Sin drives us from God's presence (Psa. 51:11).
6. Sin grieves the Holy Spirit (Psa. 51:11).
7. Sin robs us of joy (Psa. 51:12).
8. Sin destroys our testimony (Psa. 51:13-15).
9. Sin puts a stumbling block in the way of others (Psa. 51:14).
10. Sin closes our lips (Psa. 51:15).

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QUESTIONS

1. When did David offer the prayer of Psalm 51 (II Sam. 11:1-12:23)?
2. Who did David murder, and with whom did he commit adultery (II Sam. 11:14-16, 3-5)?
3. Is sin deceitful (I Tim. 2:14; Rom. 7:11)?
4. How many petitions or cries are there in this Psalm (Psalm 51:1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18).
5. How many confessions (Psalm 51:3, 4, 5)?
6. What is the meaning of "transgressions" (Psa. 51:1)?
7. What is the meaning of "iniquity" (Psa. 51:2)?
8. What spirit must always precede the forgiveness of sin (II Sam. 12:13; Psa. 32:5; I John 1:7-9)?
9. If one has truly repented, does he keep on repeating the sin (Lk. 13:3; Matt. 21:29; Acts 17:30, 31; II Pet. 3:9)?
10. How did Sam Jones define repentance?
11. What is the meaning of "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned" (Psa. 51:4)?
12. Does "I was shapen in iniquity" (Psa. 51:5) teach that the human race is totally depraved, or that the marriage relationship is sinful. (Gen. 1:28; I Tim. 4:3; Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 7:10-49)?
13. Did David pray for partial or for full cleansing from sin (Psa. 51:7)?
14. How was David made "whiter than snow" (Psa. 51:8), and what does a sinner do to receive the remission of sins today (Rom. 10:17; John 20:30, 31; Lk. 13:3; II Pet. 3:9; Acts 8:37; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27)? How does a sinning Christian obtain forgiveness of his sins (Gal. 6:1; I John 1:7-10; Acts 8:5-24)?
15. Who alone can "create" a "clean heart" in a sinner (Psa. 51:10), and how is this done (John 3:15; 1:28; I Cor. 15:1-4)?
16. How many promises and pledges did David make (Psa. 51:13, 14, 15, 19)?
17. How did David lose the "joy of thy salvation" (Psa. 51:12) and how is such joy restored?
18. With what sort of spirit is God pleased (Psa. 51:17)?
19. What is your attitude toward sinning David-contemptuous criticism, or of kneeling beside him in penitence to receive pardon from the same loving God who forgave him?
20. If one cannot be saved without the "shedding of blood" (Heb. 9:22), and since we are "baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3), His blood do you believe that Jesus spoke the truth when he said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?" (Mark 16:15, 16; Gal. 3:27)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 52
II Corinthians 8,9

Page 1
Memory Verse: II Corinthians 9:15

Memory Verse:

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Cor. 9:15).

Public Reading: II Corinthians 8:1-9.

THE GRACE OF GIVING

Christmas seems to always around the corner. It is always on the mind of children, especially. Christmas makes us think of God's gift to us. Let us study "A living example of stewardship."

"Christmas is God's shining love
Expressed in human birth
To make us, as in Heaven above,
One family here on earth."

The church family at Jerusalem was at this time poor and suffering. The subject of II Corinthians 8 and 9 is "The Collection for the Saints." In I Corinthians 16:1-4 Paul had given plain instructions concerning the gathering of a fund to help the poor, distressed Christians in Jerusalem. Famine and a real depression prevailed. Those Jews who had accented Christ as Saviour and Lord had lost their standing in Judaism.

Ignorant men complain that the Bible leaves people up in the clouds of impractical religious piety; that it is an empty hymn-singing display of religious theory.

Our lesson today is a wonderful window through which we may look into conditions which prevailed in the early Church. The value of this section is the revelation of abiding principles. The whole activity is described by the repeated use of the word "grace." It occurs seven times in chapter 8, and three times in chapter 9. "The grace of God" (II Cor. 8:1), "this gift (grace) . . . fellowship" (verse 4), "the same grace also" (verse 6), "abound in this grace" (verse 7), "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 9), "thanks be to God" (verse 16). That word "thanks" in Paul's letter was the same word, "grace," "grace be to God." Then "this grace" (verse 19), seven times in chapter eight.

"All grace abound" (II Cor. 9:8), "the exceeding grace of god in you" (verse 14); and "Thanks be to God" (verse 15). The word is "GRACE; be to God."

The grace of God is that which is health and beauty and glory and strength. God desires to impart it to others. Grace manifested itself in God's GIFT TO THE WORLD (John 3:16). His Son and the CROSS make that grace available to YOU-- to "every creature" (Mark 16:15, 16). God's grace, unmerited favor, is available to us all -- if we will accept it in full faith.

I. Christian's Practice of Giving (II Corinthians 8:1-24)

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1. The example of the Macedonians (II Cor. 8:1-5).

"The grace of God. . . " (II Cor. 8:1): Giving is a grace. Note the discussion on "grace" in the introduction.

Churches of Macedonia. . . . The only "churches of Macedonia" known to us were those in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 16:12-17:4).

"Affliction . . . poverty . . . liberality" (II Cor. 8:2): Philippi the leading Macedonian church was the only church from which Paul had accepted pay for his work, and that after he had gone away. Three civil wars in Macedonia reduced them to poverty. They were persecuted (II Thess. 1:4). Despite their poverty they gave (Phil. 4:10, 15, 16). Their poverty gave them an opportunity to give liberally. It was an exhibition of grace indeed.

"Beyond their power they were willing . . ." (II Cor. 8:3): They gave more than they could afford, and they did it willingly. By liberality, it does not necessarily mean large sums, but an amount proportionate to their ability. We estimate giving by the size of the gift; God estimates it by the size of the balance. Jesus said the poor widow "cast in more than they all . . . these have of their abundance cast in . . . she . . . hath cast in ALL THE LIVING THAT SHE HAD" (Luke 21:3, 4)!

"Praying us. . . that we would receive the gift (grace)" (II Cor. 8:4): They begged Paul to receive their gift (of grace) and pass it on to the poor saints in Jerusalem in the Spirit of Christian fellowship. The Macedonians sent prayers with their gifts. They prayed AND PAID! Poverty is never an excuse nor is prayer a substitute for doing what we can in the material assistance of others.

"They . . . first gave their own selves to the Lord . . ." (II Cor. 8:5): Their method was that they were **FIRST DEVOTED TO THE LORD**. Consequently, they were devoted to the apostles and the work of the ministry of the church. This is the secret of liberality, of service, and of every phase of Christian living. Christian giving is a sacred surrender of one's self. It is God's will that we be so moved. Have you first **GIVEN YOURSELF TO THE LORD?** Be careful about that. If you have not, you will give of necessity; you will give grudgingly. It is **SELF FIRST**, and **SUBSTANCE** then at the disposal of the leaders in Christ.

2. The privilege of the church -- giving after the manner of Christ (II Cor. 8:6-12).

"Finish . . . the same grace" (II Cor. 8:6): Months before the Corinthian church had promised to help the poor at Jerusalem. Little had been done about it since Paul had left Corinth. Titus was asked to go to Corinth and supervise the gathering of the collection (I Cor. 16:2).

"Abound in the grace also . . ." (II Cor. 8:7): The Corinthians had many graces (I Cor. 1:5; 8:1; 4:7). They were now to add the grace of liberal giving to the poor. Paul uses the example of the Macedonians as an example or comparison of how the Corinthians could **PROVE THEIR LOVE** and sincerity of Christ and others (verse 8). The grace of giving completes the graces of Christian character. This is so because giving is the **OUTFLOW OF THE INFLOW OF GRACE**. It is faith in action. It is love in its finest form.

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"The grace of our Lord Jesus . . ." (II Cor. 8:9): The incentive in giving is not the compulsion of a commandment. It is the SINCERITY OF LOVE. Giving PROVES the sincerity of our love. Paul appeals to the Corinthians to give after the pattern of Christ. "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Read Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 8:20; Luke 2:7. All of us can now say, "I'm the child of the King"! Study I Cor. 3:21-22; Rev. 1:6; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:7. Christ gave HIMSELF, HIS ALL. What a motive and a standard for OUR GIVING!

"Now therefore perform the doing of it . . ." (II Cor. 8:11): The Corinthians had made a pledge twelve months before to assist the Judean Christians in their distress. Something had happened to their good intentions. Was it the quarrels and dissension in the church? (I Cor. 1:10-13). A Christian or a mule cannot "kick while he is pulling; nor can he pull while he is kicking!" It is good sense and scripture to "WORK TOGETHER" (I Cor. 3:9). It gets things done for the glory of God. The Holy Spirit directed the Corinthians to MAKE PLEDGES to do GOD'S WORK! You and I make pledges every day. We made a pledge when we got married, when the gas, lights, and water were turned on. In addition, we pay the pledge, too! God ASKS US TO PERFORM IN KEEPING WITH OUR ABILITY. It may not be all we intended to do, but it can be all we are able to do (verse 12).

3. The method of Christian equality (II Cor. 8:13-15).

"Your abundance . . . their abundance" (II Cor. 8:14): The Jerusalem church had an abundance of spiritual influence and power. All churches Paul was founding owed it to Jerusalem that they had come into existence. They owed their gospel to Jerusalem. Spiritual abundance flowed from Jerusalem to them. The Corinthians were well able in their material abundance to relieve the poverty of the Jerusalem Christian. Some day the circumstances could be reversed and the Judeans would be called upon to supply the lack of the Corinthians. In our abundance today let us share. Tomorrow we may become poverty-stricken, and need others to share with us!

As it is written . . ." (II Cor. 8:15): See Exodus 16:17-18. In gathering the good things of life, let us not forget the greedy Israelite. We can use just so much of this world's goods to hoard will mean corruption and a curse. Use the surplus for the good of man, and the glory of God (Matt. 6:19-21). Be a wise and diligent gatherer; but be a generous and wise distributor.

4. Carefully administer the Lord's money (II Cor. 8:16-24).

"Thanks be to God . . . Titus" (II Cor. 8:16): Titus was one of Paul's intimate friends and assistants (Acts 15:2; Gal. 2:3, 5; Titus 1:4; II Cor. 7:13, 15; 8:23). Paul thanked God that Titus wanted to go back to Corinth (verse 17) and induce the church to take up the collection for the poor in Judea. He took with him "the brother" (verse 18, was it Luke?), and "our brother" (verse 22, an unknown third party) who was an expert money-raiser. The church at Corinth knew and trusted all three men. They were lovers of God, of the gospel, and of the poor. As honest men they would save Paul from being accused of dishonesty in handling the relief offering (Matt. 18:16; II Cor. 8:19-23).

"Show . . . the proof of your love. . ." (II Cor. 8:24): The proof of love is in giving. The proof of loving God is not in praying. We say we love --then give. We believe in missions --then give. We are

interested in the orphan --then give. Love thrives on giving; it dies when it withholds. God set the example when He gave His Christmas gift to the world (John 3:16)!

II. The Christian's Principle of Giving (II Corinthians 9:1-15)

1. The principle of readiness (II Cor. 9:1-5).

"You . . . ready a year ago" (II Cor. 9:2): Corinth had long since planned to give. Paul boasted of their readiness to the churches of Macedonia. The preparations had not been completed. Paul did not want his boast of their liberality (verse 3) to embarrass him and them (verses 4, 5). It is good to pray over the plans. Then work the plans. Paul did just that. This means glad and joyous giving; the kind that glorifies God.

2. The principle of the harvest (II Cor. 9:6).

"Soweth sparingly . . . bountifully" (II Cor. 9:6): What would you think of a farmer who sowed LESS GRAIN and EXPECTED TO REAP A BIGGER CROP? What he sows in the spring, he will reap in the fall. If he sows a few seeds, he will reap a little harvest. If he sows generously, he will reap bountifully.

3. The principle of giving cheerfully (II Cor. 9:7).

"God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7): We are to give according to the purpose, and of our freewill. We must not give grudgingly or of compulsion. God loves a cheerful giver. The Greek word translated "cheerful" might be translated "hilarious," "God loveth a hilarious giver." The spirit in and motive behind the gift is the important thing in God's sight-not the amount. If the spirit of man is right, the amount will be right!

4. The principle of divine grace (II Cor. 9:8-10).

"God is able . . ." (II Cor. 9:8): Let us take the right attitude toward God and His Word. He will take a wonderful benevolent attitude toward us. Paul quotes Psalm 112:9. "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth forever." God gives to us that our needs and those of others may be met. God gives that we may give. "God is able" to give us "all sufficiency in all things" that we may "abound to every good work."

5. The principle of thanksgiving (II Cor. 9:11-15).

"Thanks be unto God . . ." (II Cor. 9:15): This chapter fittingly closes with thanksgiving. Giving and gratitude are a proper cause and effect. When we give to supply the needs of the saints, they thank God for our gifts (verses 11, 12) and "glorify God" because of our surrender to the gospel of Christ and our "liberal distribution unto them" (verse 13). They pray for us, too (verse 14). Let us thank God for "his unspeakable gift" to us. This gift is Christ Himself, and He is absolutely beyond all our powers properly to appreciate. Jesus became God's pauper on earth (II Cor. 9:9), that you and I through His death on the cross, burial, and resurrection might be rich forever!

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QUESTIONS

1. What churches did Paul cite as an example of the "grace" of giving (II Cor. 8:1)?
2. What three things are stated to us as to the condition of these Macedonian saints (II Cor. 8:2)? Is being poor an excuse for not giving?
3. How liberal were these poor Macedonian saints (II Cor. 8:3, 4)
4. What was the secret of their liberality (II Cor. 8:5; Rom. 12:1; I Cor. 9:19, 20)?
5. Is the Christian to "abound in this grace" of giving (II Cor. 8:7)? How many times is "grace" used in these chapters? What were some of the graces of the Corinthians?
6. How is Christ the supreme incentive to liberal giving (II Cor. 8:9; Lk. 9:58; Phil. 2:5-8)?
7. Should a Christian make a pledge and pay it, too (II Cor. 8:10-12; 9:2-5)?
8. What is the standard by which God measures our gifts (II Cor. 8:12; Luke 21:1-4)?
9. What is the general principle to be observed in Christian giving (II Cor. 8:13, 14; I Cor. 4:7)?
10. In the light of this rule, is the church under obligation to provide for her lazy members who can and who will not work (Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:10-12)?
11. What was the Old Testament illustration of equality (II Cor. 8:15; Ex. 16:17, 18)? Could the greedy Israelite hoard up manna "for a rainy day"?
12. What possible criticism did Paul fear from his enemies regarding the collection (II Cor. 8:16-23), and how did he meet it?
13. How had the Corinthians encouraged the Macedonia saints to give liberally (II Cor. 9:2)? Did Paul think it was right to boast of the faithful giving of one church to provoke or stir up another church to more liberal giving?
14. Why did Paul send Titus and his two helpers into Achaia (II Cor. 9:2-5)? What do we know about Titus?
15. Is a Christian made poorer by what he gives (II Cor. 9:6-9; Prov. 11:24-26; Matt. 6:19-21)? Can we outgive God (Mal. 3:8-10)?
16. Are you the kind of giver that God loves (II Cor. 9:7)? What kind of giver is this?
17. How does liberal giving react in blessing to the giver (II Cor. 9:10)?
18. Are you willing for God to make the grace of giving abound in you (II Cor. 9:8)? Are you a good steward of what God has entrusted to you (I Cor. 4:2; Rom. 14:12)?
19. What is the effect of hilarious giving upon others (II Cor. 9:12-14), and what results for God?
20. Who gave the greatest possible gift to us, and Who is God's "unspeakable gift" (II Cor. 9:15; John 3:16)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year II

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 53
Psalm 78

Page 1
Memory Verse: Psalm 78:41

Memory Verse:

"Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" (Psalm '78:41).

Public Reading: Psalm 78:1-11, 34-39.

REBELLION AND RETRIBUTION

This Psalm is a notable one. It is a good one to study on the eve of a new year. It has been called the chief historical Psalm because of its length, wide grasp, and definite teaching.

Israel's waywardness and murmuring are graphically told in this Psalm. The past is treated not unworthily but it must have been painful reading to a Jew because of its faithfulness. "Remember Pearl Harbor!" We hate the sneaking treachery of the Japanese. However, do we remember that the Japanese could not have succeeded in their base treachery had we as a people been sober, chaste, and alert? You see, to remember this fact is painful to us? So to remember the seventy-eighth Psalm was painful to the Jew.

Despite all God had done for them and been to the Jews they kept not His covenant they refused to walk in His ways; a redeemed people, yet they were rebellious, full of murmurings, and despisers of the heavenly manna. For their rebellion, their revolt and defiance of His authority, God brought punishment and retribution upon them (Gal. 6:7, 8). When the people repented, divine pardon was given. God's grace led them to the land of promise.

Messages of rebuke are not popular, but they may save a people from destruction if heeded (II Timothy 4:2; Peter 3:9).

The occasion of the Psalm is removal of the sanctuary from Shiloh in the tribe of Ephraim to join in the tribe of Judah, and the transfer of preeminence from Ephraim to Judah. This was God's judgment on Ephraim under whose leadership the nation had shown the same spirit of rebellion that had characterized their ancestors in Egypt.

I. A Disobedient People (Psalm 78:1-11)

"Give ear, O my people, to my law . . ." (Psa. 78:1): Psalm 78 is the warning-mirror of history from Moses to David. The poet comes forward among the people as a preacher and demands a willing, attentive hearing. The Lord Himself was speaking through the Psalmist. Spurgeon has again: "Men lend ears to music, how much more then should they listen to the harmonies of the gospels." See Matt. 13:14, 15, 53; Rev. 2:7. Are you listening the right way to God as His Word is read? The psalmist will set forth the history of the fathers after the manner of a parable and riddle that it may become a teaching history (verse 2).

"We have heard and known . . ." Psa. 78:3): This was history handed down from the fathers to the sons (Ex. 12:14); Deut. 6:21, Ex. 13:8). They were not to "hide them from their children . . . praises of the

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Lord. . . his wonderful works" (verse 4).

"He established a testimony in Jacob. . ." (Psa. 78:5): "Testimony" and "law" here do not refer to the Mosaic economy, but to a specific arrangement to transmit that law. Things of the past are to be recounted **FOR THE SAKE OF THE CHILDREN!** The new generation to come would be safeguarded in its hope, its memory, and its conduct (verses 6-8). God did not want them to be like their stubborn fathers.

"Children of Ephraim. . . turned back in. . . battle" (Psa. 78:9): The privileges of the first-born belonged to Joseph (I Chron. 5:1) and were assigned by Jacob to Ephraim (Gen. 48:1), the youngest son of Joseph. Just when Ephraim turned back we do not know. Was it in Numbers 14:40-45? Read also Num. 2:18-22; Hosea 5:3-14; 11:3-12; Josh. 17:14; Judges 8:1-8.

"They kept not . . . refused. . . forgot" (Psa. 78:10, 11): As the singer tells the "praises of the Lord" (verse 4), he recites the disloyalty of the people in spite of the goodness of the Lord.

The prophetic writing (especially Hosea) show that Ephraim became the leader in the rebellion and disloyalty which cursed the nation. Figuratively, and as standing for the rest, Ephraim is addressed. The people armed and equipped were guilty of cowardice. They turned back **BECAUSE THEY FORGOT GOD.** The result: **GOD GAVE JUDAH THE PREEMINENCE** (Psa. 78:67-70).

II. A Despised Provision (Psalm 78:12-34)

"Marvelous things did he . . . Egypt" (Psa. 78:12): Beginning with Egypt, the Psalmist proceeds to sing of what happened year after year until the kingdom was established in David's hand (Psa. 78:68-72). We do not find there the minute accuracy of the annalist, but the free, general treatment of the poet. Rebellion and retribution vividly stand out.

"Zoan" (verses 12, 43): A Delta city located on the eastern bank of the Tanitic branch of the Nile. An important royal storehouse, it was built seven years after Hebron in Palestine (Num. 13:22). It was also called Avaris and Tanis --names referring to the same site or one contiguous.

"He divided the sea . . ." (Psa. 78:13): This account of Exodus 14:21-31; 15:8 states that "the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." "He led them with a cloud" (verse 14; Ex. 13:21, 22).

"He clave the rocks . . . gave them drink" (Psa. 78:15): The writer condenses into one the two instances of the giving of water from the rock, in the first year of the exodus (Ex. 17:17-7) and in the fortieth year (Num. 20:2, 7-13). In spite of repeated miracles, the people kept on sinning (verses 16-18).

"Can God furnish a table . . . ?" (Psa. 78:19, 20): Three times Israel doubted, and disbelieved the power of God. The Lord had often helped them in the past. Now facing a new need they blasphemed Him (See Matt. 15:19). How many times God has enabled this church, or you and me, to **GO THROUGH SOME RED SEA** difficulty. God has never failed us. Yet, let some enlargement of the Gospel program be suggested (a secretary, a missionary living-link, the planting of a New Testament church, an evangelistic rally, the purchase of a bus to reach others with the Word of God, the putting out of the Whole Bible Study Course on

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a national basis) and listen to the voices of doubt and unbelief. To hear such folk talk you would THINK GOD IS DEAD. It is bad when we see the giants, but not God (Num. 13:33; 14:1-10). Grasshopper church members and leaders will never take America for God! A genuine desire to "go forward" with God (Ex. 14:15) will always find grace to meet any problems that come up. God's wrath is stirred by such unbelief (verses 21-24).

"Man did eat angels' food . . ." (Psa. 78:25): Notwithstanding Israel's unbelief, God remained faithful. He caused manna to rain down out of the open gates of heaven (Psa. 105:40; John 6:31; see also Gen. 7:11; II Kings 7:2; Mal. 3:10). To rain down is a figurative expression for a plentiful giving from above.

"The wrath of God . . . slew . . . smote" (Psa. 78:31): The carnal lusting of Num. 11:31-34 caused the break out of a sickness which was the result of the immoderate indulgence to which the best-nourished and youthful feel a prey. "They sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works" (verse 32). "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). Let us beware of unbelief (Num. 14:28-34).

"He slew them . . . they sought him" (Psa. 78:34): When a special judgment suddenly and violently thinned the generation that otherwise was dying off, as in Num. 21:5-9, those who were still preserved in the midst of this dying again remembered the God who had proved Himself to be a "Rock" (Deut 32:15, 18, 37).

When God chastised them, the nation partially reformed; yet their general conduct was rebellious; all over twenty years of age died except Joshua and Caleb, for UNBELIEF (Heb. 3:15-19; Num. 14:30). IF SICKNESS, suffering, disappointment or even death can draw us to God, we should pray for these to come (Rom. 8:28; II Cor. 11:7-10)?

III. A Divine Pardon (Psalm 78:35-39)

"They remembered . . ." (Psa. 78:35): If trouble drives us to God, we should thank God for trouble!

"Flatter him . . . they lied" (Psa. 78:36): They sought to win God over to themselves by fair speeches; with their tongues, they played the hypocrite to Him. Their heart was not sincere towards Him; they proved themselves not steadfast in their covenant-relationship to God (verse 37).

"Forgave their iniquity" God moderated his anger against Israel, and took human frailty and mortality into consideration. After a short life, man falls prey to death. This determines God to be long-suffering and kind (See Gen. 6:3; 8:21). Genuine repentance can now bring God's mercy and forgiveness (II Yet. 3:9; Acts 17:30-31). How often we fail God; yet His grace NEVER FAILS US IF WE COME TO HIM (John 6:37; Psa. 86:5).

IV. A Directed Pathway (Psalm 78:40-54)

How oft did they provoke him . . . grieve him" (Ysa. 78:40): Israel did not deserve God's forbearance. They continued to rebel against God, and grieved Him.

"They turned back . . . limited" (Psa. 78:41): The poet comes back one more to the provocation of God by Israel in order to expose to awful ingratitude of God's people. How could they do it? How can we "turn back" and "limit" God? We limit God BY UNBELIEF (Compare Heb. 3:16-19; Deut. 1:19ff). God requires belief (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; Psa. 84:11; Phil. 4:19; Mt. 6:33) on the part of His people, and especially under Christ.

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We limit God by our disobedience. This is a direct consequence of disobedience (Isa. 59:1, 2). Naaman had to obey God's word to be cleansed (II Kings 5:1ff). We must obey God to be saved (I Tim. 2:3, 4; II Pet. 3:9; Rev. 3:20; Jno. 4:40; 6:44, 45; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:15, 16).

We limit God by our failure to pray as we should. Compare Matt. 7:7-11; 21:22; James 4:2b.

"Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
O, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Ev'rything to God in prayer."

God wants us to expect an answer to our prayers (Jer. 33:3; Eph. 3:20). God prompts us to pray; it is inconceivable that He would mock us by exciting desires which he never meant to satisfy (Psa. 37:4, 5; Phil. 4:6, 7).

"He brought them to the border . . ." (Psa. 78:54): Verses 42-54 tells how God delivered Israel from Egypt and established them in Zion. He sings anew of the things they had forgotten, and of God's signs in Egypt, and His bringing them into possession.

V. A Delivering Power (Psalm 78:55-72)

He cast out the heathen . . ." (Psa. 78:55): God did it. He worked and works through His people (I Cor. 3:9). After the death of Joshua and Caleb, Israel once again "tempted and provoked the most high God" (verse 56). Think of the apostasy during the period of the Judges. Like a "deceitful bow" (verse 57)-a bow that discharges its arrow in the wrong direction. Idolatry in Israel caused God to "abhor Israel" (verses 58-59); Deut. 32:16, 21). Note that verse 59 is purposely worded like verse 21. The divine purpose of love, spurned by the children just, as by the fathers, was obliged in this case, as in the former, to pass over into angry provocation.

"He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh. . ." (Psa. 78:60): In the time of the Judges the tabernacle was set up at Shiloh (Josh 18:1). By the time of Eli and Samuel (I Sam. 1:1-3:21) it had become a fixed temple building. When this building was destroyed is not known but probably not until the Assyrian period (Judges 18:30ff; Jer. 7:12-15). The rejection of Shiloh preceded the destruction of the buildings. The Philistines took the ark of the covenant; it never returned to Shiloh (I Sam 7:2). War [I Sam. 4) and the fire of war (as in Num. 21:8) brought death and sorrow to all (verses 61-64).

"Then the Lord awaked . . . chose the tribe of Judah" (Psa. 78:65, 68): God moved by compassion, elected Judah and Mount Zion and David (verses 69-70), and received His people to Himself afresh. Through David's son, Jesus our King, the will of God will be brought to perfect fruition. The poet has fulfilled his mission with a pure heart and with an intelligent mastery.

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QUESTIONS

1. Why is Psalm 78 called an historical Psalm?
2. What part of Israel's history is recorded in Psalm 78 (Psa. 78:12, 70-72)?
3. It is important that people hear rightly the message of God in every age (Psa. 78:1-3; Matt. 13:14, 15, 43; Rev. 2:7)?
4. How were the Jews to transmit God's dealings with them (Psa. 78:3-8; Ex. 12:14; Deut. 6:21; Ex. 13:8)?
5. What cowardly thing did Ephraim do as noted in Psalm 78:9?
6. Can you name three things Israel did despite the goodness of the Lord to them (Psa. 78:10, 11)?
7. What "marvelous things did" God "in the sight of their fathers" in Egypt (Psa. 78:12ff, 43:51)?
8. How did Israel cross the Red Sea (Psa. 78:13; Ex. 14:21-31; 15:8)?
9. With what did God lead Israel by day and by night (Psa. 78:14; Ex. 13:21, 22)?
10. Despite God's every provision for their needs, what blasphemous questions did Israel ask (Psa. 78:17-20)?
11. Do you think God's people today show doubt when some worthy program is suggested, and we only see the difficulties and forget to "go FORWARD" with God (Ex. 14:15); Matt. 28:18-29; Heb. 13:8)?
12. What kind of food did God rain down from heaven for His people (Psa. 78:25; 105:40; John. 6:31ff)?
13. When judgment fell on the people from God, what happened (Psa. 78:34; Num. 21:5-9; Deut. 32:15, 18, 37)? What two men over twenty years of age did not die in the wilderness?
14. Do you think that if it takes sickness, suffering or even death to draw men to God that we should pray for these things to come Rom. 8:28; II Cor. 11:7-10)? Why (Psa. 78:35)?
15. Can you conceive of men trying to "flatter" God, and of "lying into him with their tongues" (Psa. 78:36)? Were such men faithful to their covenant with God (Psa. 78:37)?
16. Despite God's goodness, what did Israel do as recorded in Psalm 78:40, 41?
17. Can you name at least three ways in which we "limit" God today (Psa. 78:41)?
18. After God brought Israel through the desert, and established them in the land, what did Israel do, and to what were the fathers likened (Psa. 78:54-58)?
19. What was God's reaction to Israel's idolatry (Psa. 78:58-59)?
20. In forsaking the tabernacle at Shiloh and Ephraim, which tribe did God choose through whom His son should come (Psa. 78:60, 68-70)?

WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

GENESIS THROUGH REVELATION

Summary of Year 1, Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4

Year 1
Lesson 1-13

First Quarter
Gen. 1-23

1st The Creation -----Gen. 1
2nd The Creation of Man -----Gen. 2
3rd-The Fall of -----Gen. 3
4th-Cain and Abel . -----Gen. 4
5th-Enoch and Noah-----Gen. 5, 6
6th-The Flood -----Gen. 7, 8
7th-God's Covenant with Noah -----Gen. 9
8th--The Tower of Babel -----Gen. 10, 11
9th-The Promised Messiah -----Gen. 12
10th--Lot's Choice -----Gen. 13, 14
11th-God's Covenant with Abraham----Gen 15-17
12th-Abraham's Faith and Failure -----Gen. 18-20
13th-Isaac's Birth/Abraham's Testing-- Gen. 21-
23

Year 1
Lesson 14-26

Second Quarter
Gen. 24-50

14th-A Bride for Isaac-----Gen. 24
15th-A Bad Bargain-----Gen. 25
16th-The Sin of Isaac-----Gen. 26
17th ~Jacob's Deception & Departure-Gen. 27, 28
18th-Jacob's Experiences at Haran -----Gen. 29-31
19th-Jacob and Esau-----Gen. 32, 34
20th-Back to Bethel-----Gen. 35, 36
21st-Joseph the Dreamer -----Gen. 37, 38
22nd-Joseph's Temptation & Triumph-Gen. 39,
40
23rd-Joseph Exalted to Power-----Gen. 41, 42
24th-Joseph Returns Good for Evil---- Gen. 43-45
25th-Joseph Reunited with His Father -Gen. 46-
48
26th-Promises and Partings-----Gen. 48, 50

Year 1
Lessons 27-39

Third Quarter
Ex. 1-40

27th-The Egyptian Bondage-----Ex. 1
28th-Moses' Birth, Training and Call -----Ex. 20
29th-The Plagues -----Ex. 5-10
30th-The Passover -----Ex. 11-13
21st-Crossing the Red Sea -----Ex. 14, 15
32nd-Hunger and Thirst Satisfied -----Ex. 16-18
33rd-The Law -----Ex. 19-23
34th-The Tabernacle -----Ex. 24-27
35th-The Priesthood -----Ex. 28-31
36th-The Golden Calf-----Ex. 32
37th-Preparation to Build ----- Ex. 33-35
38th-The Tabernacle Built -----Ex. 38-40
39th-Review -----Ex. 1-40

Year 1
Lessons 40-52 ----

Fourth Quarter
Leviticus, Numbers,
Deuteronomy

40th-The Offering -----Lev. 1-7
41st-The Priesthood Consecrated -----Lev. 8-10
42nd-Annual Atonement -----Lev. 16
43rd-"Feasts of The Lord" -----Lev. 23-27
44th-In the Wilderness-----Num 8-11
45th-The Day a Nation Died-----Num. 12-15
46th-Rebellion and Its Results -----Num. 16-19
47th-The Brazen Serpent -----Num. 20, 21
48th-Balaam's Prophecy-----Num. 22-
32
49th-Cities of Refuge-----Num. 33-36
50th-Israel's Choice-----Deut. 27,30
51st-The Death of Moses -----Deut. 31-34
52nd-God's Message to Me -----Hebrews 6:20;7:8

WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

GENESIS THROUGH REVELATION

Summary of Year 2, Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4

Year 2 First Quarter
Lesson 1-13 ----- Joshua, Judges,
Ruth, I Samuel 1-21

Year 2 Third Quarter
Lessons 27-39 -----II Kings 1-Ezra

1st- Joshua and the Jordan -----Joshua 1-5
2nd-The Conquest of -----Joshua 6-7
3rd-Joshua's Last Counsels -----Joshua 23-24
4th-The Beginning of the Judges -----Judges 1-3
5th-Deborah and Barak -----Judges 4,5
6th-The Career of Samson -----Judges 13-16
7th-Ruth -----Ruth 1-4
8th-Samuel's Call and Commission ----I Sam. 1-3
9th-The Capture of the Ark -----I Sam. 4-7
10th-Saul: Israel's First King -----I Sam. 8-12
11th -Saul's Downfall -----Sam.13-15
12th-David and Goliath -----I Sam. 16-17
13th-David and Jonathan -----I Sam. 18-21

Year 2 Second Quarter
Lessons 14-26 ----- Samuel 22-I Kings 22

14th-David in Exile-----I Sam. 22-24
15th-Sin and Sentence of Saul -----I Sam. 25-31
16th-David Becomes King of Judah ---II Sam. 1-6
17th-The Davidic Covenant -----II Sam. 7-10
18th-David's Sin and Repentance----II Sam. 11,
12
19th-Absalom's Rebellion -----Sam. 13-
19
20th-David's Sin in Numbering Israel -- II Sam.
24
21st-Solomon Made King -----I Kings 1-4
22nd-Building the Temple -----I Kings 5-8
23rd-Solomon's Apostasy -----I Kings 9-11
24th-The Kingdom Divided -----I Kings 12-16
25th-Elijah at Mt. Carmel -----Kings 17, 18
26th-Elijah at Horeb-----I Kings 19-22

27th- Elisha's Call----- II Kings 1,
2
28th The Ministry of Elisha ----- II Kings 3,
4
29th The Healing of Naaman -----II Kings
5
30th Further Ministry of Elisha ----- Kings 6-
8
31st Reign of Jehu -----II Kings 9-10
32nd A King, A Queen, & a Priest--II Kings 11-
12
33rdth The Death of Elisha ----- II Kings 13-
16
34th Israel's Downfall and Captivity ---II Kings
17
35th Hezekiah's Good ----- II Kings 18-
20
36th Manasseh and Josiah -----II Kings 21-
23
37th Judah's Downfall, Captivity--- II Kings 24,
25
38th The Decrees of Cyrus and Darius --- Ezra 1-
5
39th Confirmation of the Decrees ----- Ezra 6-10

Year 2 Fourth Quarter
Lesson 40-53 -----Neh. - Psalm 78

40th God's Call to Nehemiah -----Neh. 1-3
41st Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem ---Neh. 4-
7
42nd God's Word Restored ----- Neh. 8-13
43rd Esther Made Queen of Persia -----Esther 1-5

44th A Self-Made Trap-----Esther 6-10
45th The Trials of Job -----Job 1-3
46th Job's Deliverance ----- Job 32-42
47th The Perfect Man -----Psa. 1
48th The Dignity of Man ----- Psa. 8
49th The Shepherd Psalm ----- Psa. 23
50th The Million Dollar Psalm -----Psalm
37
51st The Blessedness of Confession -----Psa. 51
52rd The Grace of Giving ----- II Cor. 8, 9
53rd Rebellion and Retribution -----Psa.
78