

TEMMIT! FOR CHILDREN

Bible Lesson Quarterly

Year 1 - 2nd Quarter: "MESSIAH OUR PRINCE"

This Quarter of Bible Story Lessons we are going to learn wonderful truths about Jesus! Where was Jesus before the Bethlehem story? Well, we are going to learn all about it!

For our Bible lessons we are going to use the King James Version of the Bible, just like the boys and girls used to use to learn to read from in the pioneer days. There will be some texts to look up for each day and you should practice your memory verse until you can say it without looking. Don't forget to learn the text too.

Weekly Bible Lesson #1: "JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT"

MEMORY VERSE: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

Matthew. 1:23

(Notice this from the Old Testament: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14)

Sunday

Text: Revelation 12:7 "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."

You have probably heard many times the stories of Jesus when He came to this earth, but many people are not aware that Jesus is our Creator and has been always, always with God.

Jesus has many other names in the Old Testament. One of them is 'Michael'. This name means 'equal with God'. No other being is equal with God except God, the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They have always been together. They are equal and always agree, but they have chosen to have slightly different jobs.

God the Son was the one who actually did all the creating, although God the Father and the Holy Spirit were also there agreeing and helping. It makes a lot of difference to our understanding when we know that the very one that made us—is the same one who loved us enough to suffer and die for us!

Jesus, under the name Michael, was the one who cast Satan out of heaven when he rebelled. This was only done when everything had been tried to help Lucifer, but he would not be helped. He decided to fight the first war, and he lost.

Thought - God is not just a power, or a far off ruler - He is really our Heavenly Father who cares about each one of us!

Monday

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and

with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"

"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 1:9

These are the only two places where 'Archangel' is mentioned. It means leader or ruler of the angels or the highest angel. Now Jesus is God—and not an angel, but because He likes to be close to the beings He created, He appeared like one of them, like an angel, so they could get to know Him.

When He came here as a man, it was so we could get to know Him, and so to really love Him, as we learned to understand how much He really loves us.

Now some people have got hold of that name 'archangel' and made up many silly stories about it. They have said there are seven archangels, and they are the bosses of the angels. They think Michael is the head angel and do not know that He is really Jesus. We know this from the texts above – only God can raise the dead - angels do not have power to raise the dead. Jesus does have that power because He is God.

The other verse shows us that Michael is the archangel, who is Jesus. The verse tells us that when Jesus went down to raise Moses from the dead and take him home to heaven, Satan tried to stop Him. Jesus had beat Satan in heaven and he beat him there also, and raised Moses and took him home with Him.

Thought - Every time Satan tries to beat Jesus, he looses, and if Jesus is in your heart, Satan can't get you to do bad things!

Tuesday

Text: Daniel 10:21 "But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."

Daniel 12:1 "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people:"

Here are two other texts about Michael in the book of Daniel. Daniel is a book of prophecy and helps us to understand what is happening now—and what is going to happen soon.

Here we see the angel telling Daniel that Michael is 'your prince' in other words, He is the one taking special care of us. In the 1st verse in Daniel 12, we see Him standing up for us. Did you ever have a friend that would always 'stick up for you'? Well, when the wicked people who have rejected Jesus, persecute God's faithful people in the end times, Jesus will be right there to help them.

Finally just like it happened in heaven with Lucifer, everything will have been done to try and help the people of the world to give their hearts to Jesus, but they will refuse to be helped. They will try to kill all God's people. Then Michael stands up! Jesus, our Great Prince will stand up and come to rescue His people and take them home to heaven.

Thought - God's people who give all their heart to Him do not need to be afraid, because Jesus will always be with them. Even in a dungeon you can be happy, when Jesus is close to you.

Wednesday

Text: Revelation 13:8 "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Back in Eden, when Adam and Eve first sinned, they would have died right away. God said they would die; why didn't they die right then? Because Jesus stepped in and took their place. Although He did not come to earth as a man until many years later, He had already agreed to pay the terrible price for sin, and so give man a second chance.

With Lucifer, there was no hope that he or his angels would ever change, but with man, God knew that if He gave a most wonderful example of His great love, a few people would believe Him and decide to obey Him. God is so kind that even if only two people believed and were saved; Jesus would have gone through all that just for so few.

Some people think Jesus died to change the Law of God, so people don't have to obey it any more. This is not true at all. Jesus died so we could be forgiven for having broken God's Law and be given power through Him to obey the Law. Those who go to heaven will have chosen to believe God and obey Him forever. Jesus' life and death for us makes this possible. When we ask Him to, Jesus puts His obedient life in us and we live His obedient life, instead of our rebellious life.

Thought - Remember that every person you meet is someone that Jesus died for!

Thursday

Text: Daniel 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

This is one of the two places that the word 'Messiah' is used in the Bible. It means 'anointed one'. Down through the years the promise of the coming Redeemer was cherished. Eve may have thought her first baby was the One, but she had been very disappointed.

Finally when Israel was in captivity in Babylon because of refusing to obey God, the exact time when the Messiah would come was given to Daniel.

This is the biggest proof that Jesus was the Saviour, the Seed of the woman, and sadly most people do not even know about it! Some religions teach that any good per-

son is just the same as Jesus, but this prophecy shows that there was only one Jesus, and He had to be anointed in that very year; and He was!

In Bible prophecy a day means a year; so a week means seven years.

Once you know when the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given, 457 BC, then you figure out 69 weeks of years, 7x69, it brings you to 27 AD. What happened that year? Well, that was the very time Jesus was baptized and the Holy Spirit came on Him as a signal. By this He was anointed as our Saviour, our Messiah.

Thought - Bible prophecy is the proof that God is real.

Friday

Text: Daniel 9:27 "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"

The prophecy goes on to tell us that God would still work especially for the Jews for one more week, which is seven years. In the middle of the week He would cause the sacrifice to cease. Now how did He do that? By dying on the cross exactly 3 ½ years after AD 27! The lambs and sacrifices all pointed to Jesus who would die for our sins. So once He had died on the cross there was no more need for sacrifices.

On the day that Jesus died, the Passover lamb was about to be killed when a mighty angel ripped the curtain in the temple from the top to the bottom, the priest dropped the knife and the lamb ran away. That was the signal that the sacrifice had been made and no more lambs were to be offered. The Jews kept on offering them until the temple was destroyed, but they didn't mean anything any more. God had provided Himself a Lamb, just like Abraham had said.

There were still 3 ½ years left after Jesus died, during which God still had the Gospel preached especially to the Jews. But at the end of the week of years in AD 34, they killed

Stephen, and after that the Gospel went to the entire world.

After waiting all those years for their Messiah to come and even when they had the

very time He would come shown to them, they didn't know Him when He did come.

Thought - The Bible prophecies show the truth. We must be sure to study our Bible so we will not be fooled. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #2: "JESUS IN THE SANCTUARY"

MEMORY VERSE: "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" Psalm 77:13

Sunday

Text: Exodus 25:8 "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

We are going to look at the sanctuary and what it shows us about Jesus and what He is to us. When Adam first sinned, God told him a way to be saved would be provided, and he was to offer a lamb to show his faith in what the Lamb of God had promised to do for him.

The very first man born here, had his own ideas about how to worship God, and we learned what happened in the story of Cain and Abel.

The ones who followed Cain's ways had their own kind of religion. Their offerings were a gift from them to the god or gods they worship, but the offering of a lamb by God's people was to show the Great Gift God was giving to man. It was opposite. If we give something to God, we can be proud of that. But when we know the truth, that God has to give everything to us—or we will perish, then we can't be proud any more. God wants us to be humble, so He can change our wicked hearts and give us Jesus' good heart.

When the Israelites were slaves in Egypt they learned to think like the Egyptians, and that is why when Moses was away from the camp, even though God had just given them His law, they made an idol and had a pagan feast.

Many people died because of this wicked thing but afterwards God said to Moses; "Let them make me a sanctuary" He had a plan

to try and show them more clearly what He was trying to do to save them. Every part of the sanctuary and the services tells us something about Jesus and how He saves us.

We are going to look at some of the lessons. We could study it for years and still learn new things, but we will just learn about a few this week. If you can get a picture showing where the different things were in the sanctuary it will help you. I will put one here in this lesson for you to see, if you can't find one.

Thought - God wants us to understand what He is doing for us, so that we will work with Him.

Monday

Text: John 10:9 "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

The sanctuary was a very beautiful tent shaped like a rectangle. It had two parts inside which were like two squares. All around this tent was a courtyard. We are going to look at that courtyard first.

The courtyard tells us about things that were going to happen on earth. It had only one entrance on the east side. This was so the people coming to worship would have their back to the rising sun and not think about worshipping the sun like the pagans did. The one entrance means Jesus is the only way for us to be saved. There are not lots of different ways.

The HOLY SPIRIT works on our heart to

help us to want to come to God. When we come through the only door, Jesus, we see first a pile of ashes. These are the remains of the sin offerings, and are left for a while for people to see before being carried out of the camp. This helps the Holy Spirit to show the sinner that 'the wages of sin is death' and unless God saves us from sin—that is what sin would do to us!

But there is hope! We see the Brass Altar of sacrifice with the slain lamb upon it; it tells us about the only cure for sin—the blood of Jesus, the gift of God, paying the price of the broken law, for the sinner. We pray and tell God we are sorry for our sins. We have faith that Jesus died to forgive us and take away our sins. He is our Lamb that God gave to pay for your sins and mine.

Now right in front of the sanctuary tent we see a double dish of water called the Laver. It is where the priests would wash their hands and feet before they would go into the tent. It tells us about the power of Jesus to take sin out of our hearts. Jesus power can change us so we don't want to sin any more. Jesus gives us His good, kind heart in place of our selfish one. The Laver also is like baptism. It shows that we have given ourselves to Jesus.

Thought - When you feel you want to do something bad, pray and ask Jesus to give you His heart and drive Satan away. Jesus will help you, when you choose His way!

Tuesday

Text: Psalm 119:11 "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Now before Jesus died, only special people called priests were allowed to go into the sanctuary tent called the Holy Place. And only the High Priest went into the second square called the Most Holy Place. He only went there once a year. The people were taught about what was in there, but never got to see it with their eyes. They saw it by faith.

Why was this? Because the tent part represented the sanctuary in heaven, where Jesus would go as our Great High Priest, after He died on the cross and went back to heaven. We learn about this sanctuary and what the things in there mean, but we can't see it for ourselves. We see it by faith.

Now we have come to God, we have told Him we are sorry for our sins and given Him our hearts to be washed clean and Jesus' heart to be given to us. By faith we go through the curtain door into the first part of the tent—the Holy Place.

Because of what happened in the courtyard, we now belong to Jesus. Everything in this Holy Place tells us what Jesus has given us and how He helps us to grow up in Him. You see when we first choose to belong all the way to Jesus, we are like a little, newborn baby. Even if we are a grownup—a new Christian is a baby Christian. He needs to be cared for and grow. Jesus takes care of us so we can grow.

What do we need to grow? We need food. In the Holy Place we see a table with big fresh loaves of bread on it. It was called the Table of Shewbread.

It means the Word of God, the Bible, which is what the Christian must have every day or he will starve to death. The loaves were carefully placed on the table to show us that we must be careful to take time every day to read the Bible and learn from it.

The loaves had incense sprinkled on them, to show us that we must always pray before reading the Bible, for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to help us understand right. He is our own special teacher and will help everyone who asks in the name of Jesus. Did you know that Jesus sends you a Teacher to help you understand the Bible? No matter if you are young or old, He will teach you if you ask Him.

Thought - Remember, books **about** the Bible do not have the **power** of the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy books! 'Eat' some every day!

Wednesday

Text: John 8:12 “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

On the other side of the Holy place across from the shewbread, was a beautiful lamp stand with seven oil lamps on it. The priests took care of it everyday, and It was always kept burning. It tells us more about Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit to be our special teacher.

Light is used to mean TRUTH. Jesus promises that He will show us the truth if we ask Him, and believe His Word. Seven means complete or always; Jesus will always give light for us if we believe on Him. A child that believes and reads Jesus' Word, the Bible, will be wiser than a grownup that doesn't believe in Jesus or the Bible.

When we really want to know; God will always teach us, if we ask Him in the name of Jesus.

Now we see something else here in the Holy Place. It is right in front of the beautiful curtain that is in front of the Most Holy Place. It is a lovely golden altar. Special powder, called incense, burns there all the time and it gives a perfume that is so nice to smell. It is called the 'Altar of Incense' and it is our promise that if we pray to God in the name of Jesus, He will always hear us.

The incense going up with a sweet smell is like our prayers that Jesus presents before God for us. Just like a mother watches closely her new little baby, just so does God listen for our every cry to Him in the name of Jesus.

Thought - See how the Holy Place shows us that Jesus takes good care of us?

Thursday

Text: Exodus 26:34 “And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the

testimony in the most holy place.” (The ‘testimony’ is the 10 commandments)

Behind a most beautiful red, blue and purple curtain, all full of golden pictures of angels, was the Most Holy Place. This place represented God's throne room in heaven. Inside was an ark, which is a Bible word that means a box. It was a beautiful golden box. Inside were three things; the stones with the 10 Commandments on them, Aaron's rod that budded, and a pot of Manna.

Over top of this box was a pure gold lid, called the Mercy Seat. It represented the very throne of God, and two angels made of gold, knelt on each end—just like the angels that are near God's throne in heaven. Their heads were bowed reverently and they looked towards God's Law in the ark.

In the sanctuary on earth there was a bright, beautiful light, called the Shekinah Glory, that was there above the Mercy Seat. Do you know what that light really was? It is such a wonderful thing! It was the very presence of Jesus!

Thought - It is so wonderful that God put a mercy seat over the box with His law in it. That meant that there was a way sinners, who had broken the law could be saved. That way was through Jesus.

Friday

Text: Matthew 27:51 “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”

When Christ died, that heavy curtain was ripped in two from top to bottom; this showed that the way to the Most Holy Place was now open. No human priest is now needed. Jesus is our High Priest; and He stands for us before His Father. He presents our prayers to His Father, and the Father gives Him blessings and help for us.

In the earthly service, only one day a year the High Priest would enter the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement. That day

was on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Next week we'll learn more about that special day.

Now we come by faith and stand beside Jesus before the Mercy Seat and pray to God the Father. We can do this because Jesus paid for our sins with His blood. He is the Lamb that God provided. When we pray, for whatever we need and for power to become like Jesus, He asks the Father, and the Father gives it to Jesus, who gives it to us. That's what it means to pray in the Name of Jesus.

Because of Jesus sacrifice for us we can ask for whatever we need and know that if

we really need it, we will have it. Sometimes we ask for things God knows are not good for us. What does He do then? He gives us what is good for us instead. We never need to be afraid to pray to our Heavenly Father in the Name of Jesus. He will always hear us and help us in just the right way!

The sanctuary shows how God saves us and changes us, so one day we will be free from sin inside and be able to go to heaven and see our Lord face to face.

Thought - Let us work with Him by praying and reading our Bible to learn more about Jesus every day! = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #3: "JESUS, OUR PASSOVER"

MEMORY VERSE: "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

1 Corinthians 5:7

Sunday

Text: Exodus 12:13 "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

That very first Passover was a solemn and awesome event. Nine plagues had fallen upon Egypt, changing that once rich country into a ruin, but still the stubborn Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not give in to obey God and let His people go. By now even his officers were pleading with him to send the Israelites away while there was still some of the country left!

Now God sent special instructions to the people through Moses and Aaron. One final plague was coming and this time they had to do something to protect themselves. They were to take a lamb and bring it in to live with them for four days. Then on that fateful day they were to kill it and catch the blood in a basin. Then they were to take special herbs and dip them in the blood and splash the blood on the top of the doorpost and on

each side.

Then they were to roast the lamb and eat it that night with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. They were to eat it all and not break any of the bones. They were to be all packed and ready to leave and have their coats on and their walking sticks in their hands while they ate it.

Thought - They had to show they believed what God told them by obeying.

Monday

Text: Exodus 12:12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD."

Each one of the plagues God sent on Egypt was against their idol-gods to show the people their gods had no power. Now the final one struck against Pharaoh, who claimed himself to be a god.

The Israelites had to make sure their children were safe at home that night. They followed what God had told them to do. They

were all ready to leave. They roasted the lamb and ate it all up. If there was any left, they burned it in the fire.

They ate the bread without yeast, called unleavened bread. They also ate the bitter herbs. This was a good meal and would give them strength to go on the long journey. After the meal they waited for the word to leave from Moses and Aaron.

At midnight there came a great cry all over the land. In every house, where there was no blood on the door, somebody died! The angel came through the land and every first-born child died, both man and animals. The Egyptians were horrified and afraid. Pharaoh sent word; "Hurry up and leave here before we are all dead!!"

His eldest son lay dead in the palace; he was to be the next king; now he was dead. Pharaoh was very sad, as were people all through Egypt. But the death angel 'passed over' the houses with the blood of the lamb on the doorposts.

God told the children of Israel to run to the Egyptians and ask them for gold and jewels and things of value. The Egyptians were so afraid they would give the Israelites anything they wanted. This was how God restored to the Israelites some of the payment for their working for so long as slaves to the Egyptians.

Thought - If you were a child in Egypt that night, you would have wanted to know for sure the blood was on the door!

Tuesday

Text: Exodus 12:30 "And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

This whole happening was a lesson from God to help His people understand more about the plan of Salvation. Everything had meaning in the Passover service.

The unleavened bread, without yeast, represented that they were not to have any sin

in their home or heart. They were to put away all sin, just like they got rid of all the yeast. For seven days before the Passover they ate bread without yeast. During this time they were to ask God to forgive their sins and make sure they were obeying all His commands.

The bitter herbs they were to eat, represented that they were to be humble and truly sorry for sin. They were to confess and ask for forgiveness.

Of course the blood of the lamb pointed to the blood of Jesus, which was the only way the sinner, could ever be forgiven. That blood has to be on the doorposts of our hearts, so the death penalty against sin will 'Passover' us.

Eating the lamb would give them strength to journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Jesus told the people when He was here that they were to 'eat His flesh'. The Bible represents Jesus' flesh—the bread of life—the roast lamb. When we eat it every day, by reading and studying it, we have strength to leave the world behind and get ready for heaven.

Thought - The Words of the Bible make us strong in the Lord!

Wednesday

Text: John 2:13 "And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

Four days before the sacrifice, the people chose a lamb and set it aside and brought it into the family. Jesus was 'set aside' by Judas making arrangements to have Him betrayed to the priests.

The very time when the Passover Lamb was to be killed was 3 O'clock (the ninth hour) on the day of unleavened bread; that year it fell on a Friday. Jesus died on the cross at that very hour. The Angel of God ripped the great curtain in the temple from the top to the bottom. The Passover lamb, the priests were about to kill, jumped down and ran away.

God had provided Himself a Lamb! The

Lamb of God had become our Passover!

Thought - Think about what it means to have the Blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of your heart!

Thursday

Text: John 13:17 "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

The Jews who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, continued to offer lambs at the Passover year after year. But now it had no meaning. Jesus, the Great Passover Lamb had been offered. Never again would animal sacrifices have any meaning.

At the 'Last Supper', Jesus took some of the unleavened bread and some of the pure, unfermented grape juice and He gave His followers a new service to do to remember Him.

The bread meant the body of Jesus offered for them and it also means the Holy Word, the Bible which gives us knowledge and strength.

The Grape juice represented Jesus blood, which covers our sins and His power to take away sin out of our lives, if we let Him.

Jesus told them He wouldn't drink grape juice any more until we all drink it with Him in Heaven. You see, He loves us and looks forward to when we can all be together as one happy family forever!

Thought - When you see the Lord's Supper with the bread and grape juice, think

about the Passover Lamb Jesus, Who died for you!

Friday

Text: Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The Passover was in the spring of the year; in the fall was another great ceremony that God gave the Israelites to help them learn about the plan of Salvation. It was called the 'Day of Atonement'.

In the earthly service, only one day a year the High Priest would enter the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement. That day in 1844, was on October 22. Remember in our history stories that the people expected Jesus to come on that day? But later they learned He had gone into the Most Holy Place to start a special work of judgement to see who would go to heaven with Him when he comes back.

It was called 'Cleansing the Sanctuary' by removing all the sins the people had confessed. We will learn more about it in our next lesson.

Thought - I want all my sins washed away by the blood of our Passover Lamb, don't you? = ^ .. ^ =

Write your name in the Banner to say "Yes, Jesus is my Passover Lamb!"



Weekly Bible Lesson #4: "JESUS, OUR BRIDEGROOM"

MEMORY VERSE: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Matthew 25:10

Sunday

Text: Matthew 25:1 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

In our lesson this week we will look at the story Jesus told to show us what would happen in the last days. The 'Virgins' in the story are what we would call bridesmaids. They each had a lamp and went out to meet the Bridegroom.

Now the Eastern weddings were never held in the church; the Bride got ready at her house. Then the Groom came at night with a group of happy friends and took the Bride to his house, where there was a lovely feast, music and great happiness!

These Bridesmaids were to have their lamps burning when the Groom came and they would go with the procession to the Groom's house where they would all go in to the marriage.

Thought - Jesus' stories teach us many lessons!

Monday

Text: Matthew 25:2-4 "And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

Now the lamps represented the Bible. The virgins all seemed the same at first. They all had the Bible. They all knew about the Truth. And they all went out to meet the Bridegroom.

The message of Jesus coming that went out before 1843, caused many people to 'come out' and look for the Bridegroom, Jesus, to come to the earth. They were all

excited. They all had their Bibles and there seemed no difference between the wise and the foolish.

But there was a difference; the foolish ones had no spare oil. Now what was the oil? Well we often hear that the oil was the Holy Spirit, and that is part of the story. But the oil means really loving the truth, having faith in God, and learning to really trust and believe on Him. It means having the Holy Spirit in your life as your personal Teacher, and having given your whole heart to Jesus, so no matter what happens, you will still trust Him. It only comes from personal experience.

Thought - It is a day-by-day knowing Jesus, giving our whole heart to Him, and learning of Him, that gives the spare oil.

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 25:5 "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

Now the people first thought Jesus would come in 1843, but he didn't. When they were disappointed this first time, everything seemed to get quiet for a while. They saw the text in Habakkuk that said "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Habakkuk 2:3

This was the time in the story that all the bridesmaids slumbered and slept. They still looked all the same. Now of course this does not mean that everybody just sat down and slept. No, the Advent people kept studying and preaching that Jesus was soon coming, but there wasn't much power in it for a while.

The churches that had thrown the Advent people out began at this time to have

big parties and suppers in the churches. Never before had this happened. Now they had fairs and picnics and parties, and also made fun of the idea that Jesus would come.

Jesus told about this in another story: "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Luke 12:45, 46

Thought - The Words of the Bible always guide us!

Wednesday

Text: Matthew 25:6,7 "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps."

Soon they saw that the 2300 days went to 1844. They saw that it would take all of 457, and all of 1843, to make 2300; therefore it would be in the fall, as the decree in 457 to rebuild Jerusalem went out in the fall. They looked at the feast of the 'Day of Atonement' and they realized that the time period would end on October 22, 1844.

Now all of a sudden, everyone was very interested. We are told that the Holy Spirit impressed their hearts, and they began everywhere to say the very words of Jesus' story, "Behold! The Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet Him!" Even little children preached the message using these very words.

Eagerly they awaited that day, but though they were ready and watching, nothing happened that they could see.

They were disappointed again!

Thought - When we have disappointments, we must always trust Jesus and the Bible anyway!

Thursday

Text: Matthew 25:8-10 "And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

Now we see a big difference between the wise and the foolish bridesmaids. When the disappointment came, the wise ones who really knew God, and really had given Him all their heart, and studied and had faith in the Word of God, were sad but they did not give up!

The people who were the foolish bridesmaids gave up their faith and went away. You see the story says they asked the wise ones for oil but they could not give them any. If I have really learned to love and trust Jesus and I have real faith in Him, I can tell you about it, but I can't give to you what I have. You have to get it for yourself.

Every one of us must know Jesus and have faith in Him for ourselves. Nobody can do it for us, although by sharing with us, they can help us want to have this true experience.

Thought - God has no grandchildren; each of us must be His child ourselves!

Friday

Text: Matthew 25:11-13 "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Now the story tells us that those foolish bridesmaids never did get to go in to the wedding. That was sad. They thought they were the same as the wise maids, but they were not ready.

Now the Spirit of Prophecy tells us that this story came true back in 1844. But it also tells us that the very same story is going to come true again. In our day, it will happen again! Again there will be people slumbering and sleeping; again there will be a cry; “Behold the Bridegroom Cometh”, and again there will be many who think they are ready—but who won’t be ready and will find out too late that they don’t really know Jesus!

It is a scary thought, but we don’t have to

be the foolish ones. If we really give our whole hearts to Jesus and learn from the Bible and ask Him to make sure we are ready; He will send the Holy Spirit to each one of us to be our teacher, and if we learn to listen to Him and choose to obey His Word, we will be ready. Jesus will make sure we are ready! Jesus has all power! We can count on Him!

Thought - I want to be ready when Jesus comes, don’t you? = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #5: “JESUS, OUR SHEPHERD”

MEMORY VERSE: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1

We recommend that if you don’t already know the 23rd Psalm by heart, that you learn it. It is full of precious promises! Remember as you read it, that it is talking about Jesus and how He cares for you.

Sunday

Text: Isaiah 40:11 “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

The idea of a shepherd and his sheep is used a lot in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Jesus told many stories about this idea. The word ‘shepherd’ is found in the Bible 42 times and in the Spirit of Prophecy writings 1165 times. Find all the stories Jesus told about sheep and shepherds in the Bible and read them. You will learn many things about Jesus.

The shepherds of the Bible were different than shepherds of modern days. They lived with the sheep, carefully guarded them from all harm and tenderly cared for them. They also patiently trained them. Each sheep had a name and was taught to know its name and to come when called.

The presence of the shepherd was a great comfort to the sheep. The areas where the sheep had to go for food were rugged and

many wild beasts were there that would harm the sheep. There were steep cliffs and pits where sheep could fall and get hurt.

These shepherds always led their sheep; they did not drive them or use dogs to frighten them into obeying. This is the same with Jesus; He loves us and wants us to follow Him because we love Him. He does not want us to obey only because we are afraid.

Thought - Jesus wants to care for us as a shepherd, staying with us day and night.

Monday

Text: Psalm 23:4 “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

The ‘Rod’ and the ‘Staff’ are two different tools the Shepherd uses to help His sheep. The ‘Rod’ means a stick used for fighting off enemies, like lions or bears that might attack the sheep. It would have a heavy iron tip on it, and when the Shepherd would smack a wolf with it, that beast would run away.

In the Bible it represents power of God to defend His people and to punish evil. It is a comfort to God’s true people to know that Right will win in the battle between Jesus and Satan.

The 'Staff' is what the Shepherd uses to guide and help the sheep. It was sometimes used to pull a sheep out of trouble as well. The Shepherd did not strike the sheep with the staff, but a naughty sheep might find his way blocked by the staff when he was straying, or the bend on the top of the Shepherd's staff used to hook his neck and pull him back from mischief or danger.

In the Bible, God's Ten Commandment Law is like a staff to guide and protect us from harm. The Staff is a comfort to the true people of God, as they know God's Laws are for their true happiness.

Thought - The more we understand God's Law, the more it will comfort us.

Tuesday

Text: John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

In Bible days when a vicious lion or bear would attack the sheep, the Shepherd fighting to protect and save them, could lose His life. When Jesus came to earth, He knew He would have to die a cruel and shameful death, to open the way to life for us.

In this story Jesus went on to say, "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." John 10:12

A shepherd that was just caring for sheep for money, would not love the sheep like the Owner of the sheep would. When danger came, this paid shepherd would run away to save his own skin. The poor sheep would be left for the beasts to kill and tear.

Jesus is the Owner of the sheep. He is our Creator! We belong to Him and so we are precious to Him.

Thought - How much our dear Shepherd loves us! He gave His life for the sheep to save us from cruel Satan.

Wednesday

Text: John 10:27, 28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:"

Jesus told the people and His disciples that they needed to know His voice. If they were truly His sheep they would know His voice. Why was this? Well you see; the sheep lived with the Shepherd every day. They were always near Him. They learned to obey His commands. They went to Him when they were hurt, and He cared for them. He guided them to good food and helped them to get water. And He loved them, so the sheep liked to be close to Him.

If we are truly Jesus' sheep, we will always want Him close to us. We will love to think about Him and to read His words in the Bible, (the whole Bible is really about Jesus) and to talk to Him in prayer.

We will tell Him all our troubles, and we will treasure each one of His precious promises. We will also know that His ways are where true happiness can be found. We will be happy to obey Him always, even when we don't understand why He wants us to do a certain thing, or to stay away from something that we may think is 'fun'. We will trust Him, because we will get to know that He knows best for us.

This kind of 'knowing His voice', is the same as the extra oil the wise virgins had in the last lesson. To get this we must give all our heart to Jesus, not just when we feel like it, but all the time. The Good Shepherd must live with us.

Thought - It is so important that we learn to know the voice of our Shepherd!

Thursday

Text: John 10:7 "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

This was another story Jesus told about sheep. He is the 'door' for the sheep. There is only one door through which the sheep

can go and find safety. That 'door' is the only way the sheep can be saved. It is the only plan of salvation for any one.

One reason that the Bible and true Christians are so hated by the wicked in this world, is because they tell the truth that there is not many ways to be saved, but only ONE WAY, and that is through Jesus. Other religions teach it doesn't matter; all ways lead to eternal life. Most say, why do you worry, you already have eternal life. This is still the old lie of Satan from Eden; "Ye shall not surely die."

Jesus makes it clear that if He did not save us, we **would** surely die. He also makes it clear that if we don't let Him save us, we will perish. There is no other 'door' for us, than giving ourselves to Jesus and trusting in Him.

Jesus also told in this story about the false teachers who say there is other ways. In the story, they climb over the wall. Jesus said they are thieves and robbers. They want to kill the sheep and eat them up. True sheep, who know the voice of the Shepherd, will run away from these false teachers.

Thought - True teachers always point to Jesus as the only way.

Friday

Text: Matthew 18:12 "How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?"

The sweet story of the Shepherd going out into the wilderness to find that one Lost Sheep can make our hearts glad, when we remember that we are that one Lost Sheep. The Shepherd had all those other sheep but He could not rest until He had found the one that was lost.

Why, was that sheep worth a lot to the

Shepherd? Well, not really, but He knew that if He did not find it, there was no hope for it to live out the night. The morning light would show only the scattered bones of that Lost Sheep. He knew it would be afraid and cold, and maybe even hurt and suffering. He loved His sheep and wanted them all to be safe and happy.

See the words of the old hymn, "There were Ninety and Nine", and see what the Shepherd went through to bring home that sheep.

Now think about that sheep for a moment. He was a disobedient sheep, wasn't he? If he was listening to the Shepherd and obeying Him, he would not have got lost. He decided at some point, "I don't need anyone to look after me. I can go my own way. I know better what is good for me than the Shepherd does." And off he went to explore the wide, wide world.

At first it seemed fun, but he soon found that he was in big trouble. He took a few bad falls; his white fleecy coat was dirty and full of burrs. He got hurt and had cuts and bruises. Finally when he decided to try and get back home, he fell into a pit and was helpless to ever get out. There he lay, crying in the night.

He heard the wolves howl and the lion roar. There was no hope left in his heart. Then he heard a sound; it was the voice of his Shepherd calling his name. Through the bushes he saw a glimmer of light from a lantern.

Feebly he bleated as best he could, hoping the Shepherd could hear him. Yes, He heard, he hastened to the sheep, tenderly lifted him out of the pit, and joyfully placing him high on His shoulder, He carried the sheep joyfully home!

Thought - I want to stay always with our dear Shepherd, don't you? = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #6: "JESUS' KINGDOM"

MEMORY VERSE: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 4:17

Sunday

Text: Matthew 3:2 "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Ever since man entered into sin he has lived in Satan's kingdom. All through history God's mission has been to try and show man what God's kingdom is like. Only when we see what God's kingdom really is, can we decide to leave Satan's kingdom and choose God's kingdom.

It is not easy for us to understand God's kingdom because it is so very different from everything we know here on earth. We are born into Satan's kingdom, we see it all around us and we think that this is the way things have to be. We even come to think that it is the only way, and even the 'right' way. But God's ways are much better.

First God showed His love for man, through the promise of a coming Savior, who would in love pay the penalty for man's sin, and allow him to belong to God's kingdom—if he chose to do so. The sweet lambs, gentle and innocent, that were killed, represented the gentle and pure 'Lamb of God' that was to come.

Why did not God have them offer a lion, or a bear? Because He was telling them that His kingdom is pure, gentle and sweet, His character is like that. Satan tries to keep us believing that God is harsh and cruel. He is not fierce and cruel; that is Satan's way.

They also showed that God is the One who gives us everything. The lambs offered were not something that man was giving to God; people cannot make a lamb; it was to be a symbol of the salvation God was giving to man.

So why was it an 'offering'? Well, the offering part was the faith, showing that they

believed in what God was going to do for them. When the person offering the lamb, thought about what God was willing to do for him, and how much God loved him, then he offered love and praise to God; that was man's only offering to God.

Thought - We really belong to God, but He is so kind, He allows us to choose if we want to be His, or not.

Monday

Text: Exodus 25:8 "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

As soon as the sacrifice idea was given to try and teach man about God's kingdom of love, old Satan got busy to twist it around and make it tell lies about God. He got the people to think the offerings were something they were doing for God, and that He was cruel, and loved to see things suffer and die.

It did not take long until there was a false idea of God, and a religion built around that false idea. Cain, the very first baby born, decided that his offering was something he was giving to God. He believed Satan's lies about God being selfish and unfair, and he built a whole religion and way of life around that idea.

God kept trying to show man the Truth about His character and His Love. The next way we see with the Children of Israel as they came out of Egypt. They had pretty well forgotten everything they ever knew about God's character, and what His kingdom is really like. They worshipped like the heathen.

Jesus wanted to come close to them and teach them. So He said; "Make me a sanctuary so I can dwell among them". He was saying, "Make me a house so I can live with you".

See how He loved the people? They had been wicked and disobeyed Him, but He still wanted to be close to them and teach them. The sanctuary and its services were all lessons telling of God's Love.

Thought - When we do wrong, Jesus still loves us, He tries to come close to us, but we must choose to let Him help us.

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 5:19 "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

God gave the people of Israel a written copy of His Law, the very Law of His kingdom. This Law is really God's very character. It is what Love is all about. Back in the beginning Man knew what Love was, but as years passed and Satan twisted everything God had given to show His love to man, then it was needful that God give man a simple outline of what Love was and how it would act.

God's Kingdom is set up in such a way that what we do affects what kind of life we have. It is really so simple; God made us, He gave us everything, so our duty is to love Him and obey Him always. When we do this, we come closer to Him and because He is the source of Life, when we come closer to Him, we have more life, more happiness, more joy, more of everything that is good.

When we give all our love to God, we will also be kind to other people because we know they also belong to God, and He loves them just like He loves us. Therefore we will never want to hurt any of them. The last 6 commandments tell us what kinds of things will hurt others and ourselves. We won't do such things if we love God and are part of His kingdom.

If we break God's Law, we move further

away from God. Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of death. Pain, sadness, cruelty, loneliness, sickness and finally death are what happen when we follow Satan's ideas. But he tricks man into thinking that God causes these things. He says God's Law causes them. It is not true, they are caused because man goes away from God and God is the source of all good.

Thought - If I have a bright light and I turn it off and now my room is dark, should I say it was the light that made it dark??

Wednesday

Text: Hebrews 10:5 "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:... 7, Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."

After a while the sanctuary services and offerings and ceremonies were no longer helping the people to learn about God and His love. Like everything else, Satan got the people believing that the offerings and the ceremonies themselves, were what made them holy. No longer could they see the sweet promise of what God was going to do for them in these object lessons. They again thought just like Cain, that these were things they were doing to please God. They even worshipped the temple, thinking it was able to save them through some kind of magic. It was like an idol to them.

Was God going to give up trying to tell the people about what His kingdom is like? No, He decided to come even closer. A body was prepared and Jesus, who was God, just as much as the Father, came to earth to live among man. He was going to show them just what people in God's kingdom would be like.

All His life Jesus lived in the way of God's kingdom, not Satan's. When Satan caused his people to treat Him cruelly, Jesus showed us how God acts. He was patient, kind and helpful—always wanting to see people happy. His hands always were used for good. Never

once did they do something mean or cruel.

Because the people were like us; used to living in Satan's kingdom and thinking that it was the right way, most people did not understand Jesus. Even His parents and brothers and sisters often got angry with Him, as He would not do anything wrong. They were so used to some of the wrong ways, that they thought they were right, and tried to force Jesus to go along with them. He never would.

Sometimes we think we get lonely, but what about Jesus? All His life there was not one person on earth who could really understand Him. He was a heavenly plant, giving off always the perfume of kindness and love, in a world that was full of selfishness.

Thought - Take time often to think about Jesus and His goodness. How brave He was while here on earth, in the middle of Satan's nasty kingdom!

Thursday

Text: Matthew 7:21 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

When Jesus began His ministry the first thing He told the people was that they needed to repent. Why? What did they need to repent of? Well, He came to show them that they were doing the works of Satan and not the works of the heavenly kingdom. As soon as the people saw that there was a power here in Jesus, and a kind of life that they did not have, they were to repent and be sorry for their wrong ways and seek God's kingdom.

The people thought they were OK with God, because they were Jews, and God's special people. They thought that the services and ceremonies of the temple caused God to bless them, because they could please Him by doing these things. They didn't remember that the ceremonies pointed to Jesus. They had lost sight of what the prom-

ised Messiah was to do for mankind, and instead were looking for a mighty general to come with big armies and make all the other people in the world to be their slaves. They thought Satan's ways of force, were the right ways, and so they were cruel and harsh to everybody.

When they saw the sweet, gentle, patient ways of Jesus, they saw something so very different, that they didn't want to believe it could be the right way.

No! They said; we want someone that will fight for us; someone that will give us riches and power over everybody; somebody to make us big and important. We don't want to learn to be kind and nice. We don't want to learn to help the needy. We won't believe that this poor man of Galilee is our Messiah.

They saw the miracles Jesus did with the power of His heavenly Father, and they knew that ordinary men could not do such things. But they declared Jesus was using Satan's power to do these things. They were so used to Satan's kingdom that they couldn't recognize God's kingdom when it was right there with them.

Thought - We must be careful, or we can fail to know Jesus' kingdom, and get it all mixed up with Satan's kingdom, and follow Satan and think we are following Jesus!

Friday

Text: Matthew 23:13 "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." Read all the 'woes' in this chapter.

One of the saddest things about Jesus' time on earth was that the very leaders of the church; the 'Seventh-day Adventists' of that day, did not want any part of the real kingdom of heaven! They had the habit of listening to each other, and their own so called learned men, and few of them bothered any more to read the scriptures for

themselves. They loved to show how smart they were, and the people were so used to admiring these leaders and obeying them, that they didn't even know the Son of God when He was right there in front of them.

For more than three years, Jesus tried to show these leaders about God's kingdom, how it was so different from what they were teaching, but they wouldn't believe Him. Finally Jesus knew that He must tell the people what these leaders were really like. He knew that when He did this, they would never stop, until they had killed Him. But for the sake of a few that might wake up and believe the truth, He told them just what they were; right to their faces.

He made it plain to them that even though they thought they were following God, they

had changed leaders and didn't know it. They were doing the works of Satan. He also told them that they were stopping people from entering the kingdom of God and being saved, which would have believed God, if these wicked leaders had not stopped them. When people believed in Jesus, the wicked, selfish leaders threw them out of the church!

It has never been God's plan for human leaders to rule over God's people, telling them how to worship God. He wants each one of them to learn and follow Jesus himself. A body is no good with more than one 'head', and Jesus is the Head of His people. He never gave that job to anybody else.

Thought - Let us, each one, learn to follow Jesus all the way into His kingdom!
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Weekly Bible Lesson #7: "JESUS' KINGDOM STORIES"

MEMORY VERSE: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 19:14

It is a good idea to read each story from the Bible.

The whole stories follow the texts for each day.

Sunday

Text: Matthew 13:24 "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:"

Jesus told this story and many others, to try and help people here on earth to be able to understand God's kingdom. We are going to look at some of these stories and try and see what He is telling us in each one.

Here we see God as a man who planted only good seeds in his field. Then when his servants were sleeping, an enemy sneaked in and planted weed seeds. As plants began to grow in the garden, the servants saw some that didn't look right and asked the Master, "Where did these bad plants come from?"

He told them, "An enemy has done this". You see God made everything perfect in this world, but now we look and see bad, cruel things happening. Many people think that

God causes these sad things, but He tells us the truth, it wasn't Him that did it. He never wanted death and pain to come to His creatures. "The enemy has done it". When man chose to believe the devil, the doors were opened for every kind of suffering to come.

This story also tells us that the weeds are people, who really belong to Satan's kingdom mixed with people who have given their hearts to God. When the servants saw this, they asked the Master if they should pull out these weeds. He said 'No, lest ye pull up the wheat at the same time'. You see, we don't know for sure if someone we know is wheat or a weed because only God can see his heart.

When plants are small, weeds often look like plants and plants like weeds but when they are bigger then you can tell. At harvest time he said that the reapers would gather the weeds into bundles to be burned and the wheat into His barn. Later Jesus told the disciples that the harvest is the end of

the world, and the reapers were the angels.

We are very close to this time and in the world we see people joining up in groups all over. In this way they are gathering up into bundles. The angels are busy in the world trying to guide people to obey God, and thus be gathered to Him. At the last it will be easy for anyone to see who are the wheat and who are weeds.

Thought - Wheat or weeds, the choice is ours to make to follow Jesus or bundle up with the world.

Monday

Text: Matthew 13:31 “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:”

Here is another seed story. It tells us that the mustard seed was a very small seed but it later grew into a very large plant, like a small tree. In this story Jesus was telling us that, when we first learn about Jesus and start to follow Him, it seems only a small part of our lives, but later, as we grow to know Him, it becomes the biggest thing in our whole lives.

Also the tiny seed doesn't seem very important and the little sprout is small, but as it takes hold of the rain and sunshine that God sends to it, it begins to grow and sends down its roots and spreads forth its branches. This is how we grow strong in Jesus. Day by day we read His Word and we learn lessons from Him. The Holy Spirit is like the rain to help us grow to be like Jesus. Slowly and surely through God's power we grow to know God and His ways.

The mustard seed story also meant that each of us, as we grow, is to seek to help others also, just like the plant spread its branches so the birds could rest there and find food and shelter. As Christians we are to be a blessing to all around us.

Another meaning in this story is that the little seed which Jesus was sowing in the

hearts of His disciples, sure looked smaller than any other at that time. The powerful Pharisees and the mighty Roman government looked much more important. But Jesus knew that the little seed would eventually outgrow them all. It is in our day that the beautiful plant is going to be seen full-grown. The truth of Jesus will tower over all powers in this earth even though they will all try to destroy it, they won't be able and many 'birds' will find shelter there.

Thought - Let's grow everyday by learning about Jesus and trusting in Him.

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 13:44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

This is an exciting story! A man was ploughing in a rented field. All of a sudden his plough hit up against something. Thinking it was a rock, he stopped his animal, and went to try and get it out of the way. He found it was a treasure chest full of valuable things. It had been buried for years.

What could he do? He had to own the field to claim the treasure. Carefully he buried it and raced home to gather together everything he owned to sell and get the money to buy the field. It cost him everything he had but he then had the treasure and was a rich man for the rest of his life.

The gospel is like that to us. The only way we can own the heavenly treasures God wants us to have, is if we give up every earthly thing and reach out for the mysterious heavenly treasure. Our very life, our heart, our mind must be surrendered and laid at Jesus feet. Only when we give everything to God can the precious treasure be ours.

Once we have begun to enjoy the heavenly treasure we will be always glad we made that surrender. No one who gives up all to Jesus is ever sorry. As we receive from God

the heavenly blessings, the things we gave up are like dirt to us, we would never trade our heavenly blessings for our old, worldly life.

I'll tell you a secret though; sometimes it seems so hard for us to surrender all to Jesus, and we never know the greatest of His blessings until we do. People can go for years thinking they belong to Jesus, but in their heart they still hang onto something worldly they think they want. Those people find religion boring and they like to do worldly things as much as possible and still think they are Christians, They will never be truly happy until they give up all and 'buy the field'.

Thought - Don't be fooled into being 'half a Christian'; we are either all God's or we are really not His at all!

Wednesday

Text: Matthew 18:23 "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants."

Here is a story both wonderful, and a little scary. The King starts looking over the books and finds out that one of His servants owes Him a huge amount of money! It was like millions of dollars. The man is called in, and the King says, "Where is my money?"

The poor servant could never get that much money, not even if he worked all his life! The King says, "Sell this man and everything he has and pay me!"

The man cries, "Oh, please, give me time and I will pay it all!" Now there was no way he could pay that debt, but he said he would. But the King was sorry for him and he forgave all that huge debt.

The man then rushes out, and who should he see but a servant who owed HIM a little bit of money. "Give me that money right now" he shouts, grabbing the man by the throat. The poor man didn't have the money,

and the selfish servant put him into prison!

When the kind King found out about it, He was angry that the man did not show the kindness that had been shown to him, and he had him sent to a worse place than prison.

We owe everything to God. We can never pay our debt, but sometimes we think we can make up for sin by 'good works'. We never can. Jesus forgives us freely when we confess to Him. We must forgive one another!

Thought - We will be treated in the judgment like we treat other people!

Thursday

Text: Matthew 22:2, 3 "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come."

This is showing us what God has done, He has made ready a wonderful kingdom and He invites us to come and share it. But so many, in fact most people are too busy with their own ideas and business and have no time for God.

Look at what they did! They made jokes about the invitation and laughed at God's faithful prophets and messengers. They even beat and killed the ones He sent to invite them to the wedding!

It says that finally after many invitations the King sent and destroyed the wicked city and burnt up the murderers. God wants us all to be saved and happy in His kingdom, and He has done and is doing every thing He can so this can happen. But there comes a time when, if people won't listen no matter what, they will be destroyed. It happened to Old Jerusalem, the city that killed their Savior! It will happen to people today also, if they refuse to let God save them.

Thought - Day by day are you saying 'Yes' to God's Spirit when He invites you to get ready for heaven? Or are you saying; "Go away! I want to have fun."

Friday

Text: Matthew 18:1-4 "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

The disciples were all fighting again; each one wanted to be the most important one. Each one wanted to be the boss. They decided to come right out and ask Jesus who was going to be the top man in His kingdom.

Imagine their surprise when He called one of the little children, who liked to hang around Jesus, and picking him up, told the selfish disciples that they needed to learn to be like that sweet child.

Satan's kingdom is all about PRIDE. Everybody wants to be first; everybody wants to be the boss; everybody wants to have ev-

erything for himself. If you watch yourself closely, you may find yourself acting like that. Saying, "Me first"; "Give me the big piece"; "You do what I say"; "Don't touch my things!" That is the spirit of the kingdom of darkness.

Jesus' kingdom has a sweet, unselfish spirit. The Spirit of God teaches us to be gentle and patient. It shows us to be unselfish, to treat others like we would like to be treated.

Little children, before they are spoiled, are happy, friendly and content with simple things. They are not worried about making everybody think they are the most important. Don't be stuck-up and proud and bossy; be gentle and sweet, like Jesus is with us.

Also the big thing Jesus was showing was how we need to TRUST Him, like a little child trusts his parent, who loves him. A little child doesn't lie awake worrying if his mom will feed him. He just trusts that whatever he needs, his parents will be there to give it to him. God is always there for us too, if we only learn to trust Him.

Thought - Let us all learn to trust Jesus all the way, like a little child trusts his loving parent. = ^ .. ^ =



Weekly Bible Lesson #8: "JESUS' VINEYARD STORIES"

MEMORY VERSE: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5

Sunday

Text: Isaiah 5:1 "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:"

There is something very interesting about Jesus teachings to the people when He was here on earth. Some people will tell you that the things He taught were all new. This is not true at all! Everything Jesus taught was in the Scriptures of what we now call the Old Testament. But the people had listened to the false teachers so long, they didn't know what was in the Bible any more, and the things sounded new to them.

We have the same problem today. Years ago the people of our church and most Protestant churches knew what the Bible said. But people have allowed their leaders to tell them what is in the Bible, and they have read books about the Bible, and books where the so called 'educated' leaders tell you what is in the Bible, and tell you what it means. Because of this very few people in the world, or the church, really know the Bible now, and so Satan can trick them easily, and false teachers fool them all the time. When someone teaches them the truth from the Bible—they think it is strange and wrong.

When Jesus told the story of the vineyard the priests at least knew the story from the book of Isaiah. BUT because of their false ideas and pride they didn't understand what it meant to them. This story made the priests of the church at that time very angry with Jesus for telling it!

A vineyard is like an orchard for grapevines. Vines can't stand up on their own like trees and so they need special care and help to grow and make good grapes. It's sort of the same as the stories about sheep, who

also cannot take care of themselves. The vines need special frames so they can grow up them. They need trimming and much care. They must be protected from wild animals that like to munch on grapevines. Then the sweet, delicious grapes will grow for eating or juice.

God called His people His special vineyard then He told them about all the special care He gives to His vineyard. Read the story in Isaiah 5:1-7 and see what God said about His vineyard.

Thought - Jesus shows us that we need His care and how He loves us and cares for us.

Monday

Text: Isaiah 5:2 "And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes."

Now in the story, the fence or wall that Jesus put around His vineyard, is His Ten Commandment Law. Did you know that God's laws are to protect you and keep you happy? Yes, that is true! God knows just how His created children need to live, so they can have happy joyful lives of freedom. When we break God's laws, we become captured by Satan, and he fastens his cruel chains on us and makes us his slaves. He tries very hard to get people to break at least one commandment; then he has power over them.

The tower was the words of Jesus' prophets. Just as the tower was to watch for beasts and enemies, so the words of the prophets are to warn and protect us. If we listen to them and obey them, we are protected from

evil and nobody can fool us or sneak up on us.

The winepress was where the people would gather in worship and enjoy all the sweet grape juice of blessing that would come from belonging to God.

Jesus showed that He did everything right for His people but what did they give Him? Was it good deeds and honour and kind words? NO! It was wild grapes!

One time I picked wild grapes to try and make some jam. I had a shiny steel spoon and when I stirred these grapes in a pan, they were so sour they took the shiny part right off the spoon! Wild grapes represent wicked, cruel and selfish deeds.

Israel refused to obey God. God then said He would let bad things happen to those vines, because no matter what He did for them, they just wouldn't listen or obey Him. They just wanted their own selfish ways.

Thought - The writings of Ellen White, Jesus' special messenger to us, are part of our 'tower' for today.

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 21:33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:"
Read Matthew 21:33-43

This is where Jesus continued the story that Isaiah had written to old Israel. He tells another chapter of it. In this story the 'husbandmen' are the people whose job is to take care of the vines, like the shepherd cares for the sheep. They represented the teachers and priests and pastors. God wanted to help His people, so they could grow and bring happy fruit, and He set up certain people to work for Him and help the vines to grow. God gave everything so that the vines could grow lovely and strong.

Then it says the owner went to a far coun-

try. Now a strange thing begins to happen. It was Gods vineyard. The vines were God's vines. God hired the husbandmen and paid them for their work. He gave them what they needed to care for the vines but somehow they get the idea that it all belonged to them!

They start refusing to give the fruit to God, and instead when He sends servants to come and receive some of the fruit, they were cruel and unkind to them. They beat them, stoned them and killed them.

So God sent more servants, but the same thing happened. These people in the vineyard had decided to keep all the fruit, and have the vineyard for themselves. The priests and rulers wanted all the glory and honour from the people to go to them, not to God. And when messengers and prophets came to them with messages from God, they drove them away or killed them.

Thought - We must give our honour and obedience to Jesus and not to men who would get us to disobey God.

Wednesday

Text: Luke 20:15 "So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?" You can read this story also in **Luke 20:9-19**

Finally the story says God sent His dear Son. "Surely they will reverence my Son!" He said. But what happened? They said, "Look, this is the heir of the vineyard!" They knew the vineyard really belonged to Jesus, so in the story they thought that if they got rid of the heir, they could keep the vineyard for themselves. They threw the Son out of the vineyard and killed Him!

Now just think for a minute; Jesus was telling this story to the leaders of the church at that time. He knew they hated Him and were determined not to let the people follow Him. They wanted the people to keep following and obeying them. They wanted to steal the Lord's vineyard for themselves. They were already planning how they could kill Jesus

and so stop Him from teaching truth to the people any more.

Here was Jesus, looking them right in the eye and telling them that He knew all about what they were planning to do. And He was warning them that if they did it, they would be destroyed! The leaders hated Jesus even more after this story.

Well, as you know, they did do it. They cast Jesus 'out of the vineyard' and they killed Him. And after God had pleaded with them, through many more servants, to repent so He could forgive them, they would not repent, although a few priests and people did repent and became Christians. In AD 70 the city of Jerusalem was totally destroyed by Roman armies.

Thought - It is dangerous to choose our own ideas when the Bible tells us they are wrong.

Thursday

Text: Matthew 20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard." See the whole story: Matthew 20:1-16

Now Jesus continues the vineyard story. God took His vineyard away from the thieves, and now He goes and hires workers to come and work there. Notice, God hires these workers Himself. They don't just wander into the vineyard and start working, they don't decide themselves, "Oh, I guess I want to work in that vineyard so away I go;" and please notice this; the other workers don't get to say who is going to work there. God chooses them Himself.

Down through the centuries in the Christian church, God has called people to 'go and work in His vineyard'. In our stories we have seen this. Wycliffe was called by God; Huss and Jerome were called by God. The problem is that churches and people and other ministers have decided that they are the ones who should hire the workers, and when they start doing what only God is able

to do right, then all kinds of problems arise!

There is a lot of work to do in the vineyard, and from time to time the Lord sees that more help is needed, so He goes and calls others to come and work also.

Finally in the story the owner goes out and sees people standing in the market place waiting for work. By now it is only 1 hour to quitting time, and I can imagine these men thought they were going to go to bed hungry that night; no work, no money for food.

Here comes the Lord, "Why are you not working?"

"No body hired us", comes the sad reply. Nobody wanted these men, but the Lord says, "I want you, go work in my vineyard and whatever is right I will pay you." Off they go to the vineyard, happiness beams from their faces. They start right in with joy and eagerness and before you know it, the work that the other workers thought would never get done, is all finished.

Thought - If you give all your heart to Jesus and learn from Him and obey Him, He will give you work to do for Him also.

Friday

Text: Matthew 20:12 "Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day."

Now the Master calls His workers and beginning with the last ones who worked only one hour, He gave them their reward; 1-penny, which was good money in those days. But when He got to the first workers, He gave them the same and they were not happy. They began to grumble, saying that the Lord was not fair.

"After all," they said, "These guys only worked one hour in the cooler part of the day, and we worked all day long in the heat!" These ones were in the habit of grumbling and complaining. To them the Lord's work was hard and a heavy burden. They were always trying to get something more for themselves. They are the kind of people who are

always talking about how much they gave up for the Lord, and how hard it is to serve Him. Notice that the Lord had to tell them how much He would give them, before they would agree to work for Him.

Now these last workers were so glad to have the chance to work in the vineyard, they were happy and eager, and this made their work so much more helpful to the Lord. They thought it was an honor to be there in the Lord's vineyard and they were thankful. They were able to easily finish the job that the grumblers thought was too hard. They

hadn't even thought about how much money they would get; they just left that to the Lord to decide.

Jesus finished by saying, "For the last shall be first and the first, last". It means that those who are always trying to push themselves in to be first, and get more than others, shall be left out of His kingdom in the end, if they don't let Jesus change their hearts.

Thought - Let's not ever have a grumbly spirit, but instead be happy and thankful always. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #9: "JESUS' STORIES OF LOVE"

MEMORY VERSE: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee." Luke 15:18

Sunday

Text: Luke 15:11, 12 "And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living." Read the whole story in Luke 15:11-32

Jesus wanted to help the people to see that the Heavenly Father loved sinners and dearly longed for them to return to Him. He told the story of a young man who asked his father to give him his inheritance right away. He had no right to this, while his father was still alive, but he demanded it anyway.

The Father knew that this wasn't a good idea, but the boy wouldn't listen and just wanted to get away from the family and do his own thing. He was tired of having to obey his father, and thought he could be happy, if he got out of there. He had no thankfulness to his Father, to whom he owed everything he had.

So the father gave him his share in money, and the boy wasted no time in leaving. It seemed like a lot of money he had, and he headed for the city where he bought whatever he wanted. Soon he had lots of

friends who flattered him and made him feel important. But they also helped him spend his money on foolishness and parties.

The boy in this story represents someone who has known Jesus, but decides that religion stops him from having fun. He decides to turn his back on everything he used to believe in, and just do as he pleases.

The money is life, health, strength, abilities and other blessings that God bestows on everybody. Each person gets to choose if he will use what God gives him to serve God, or to serve himself. Every life used to serve ourselves is a wasted life.

Thought - We must remember always that everything we have, has really come to us from our heavenly Father.

Monday

Text: Luke 15:14 "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."

The day came when the boy woke up, perhaps he was sick with a hangover from a party the night before. He looks in his purse and finds all the money is gone! He goes to his so-called friends but none of them will

help him; they just sneer at him and walk away.

○ He tries to get work, but times are bad there, and no one wants to hire him. Also he probably looks like a drunk, and not like a workingman. Finally someone says; "Alright, I'll give you a job good enough for you! Go feed the pigs."

So here was the boy who thought he was so smart that he didn't need to obey his Father, out in the fields knocking down pods and seeds from the trees, so the pigs could eat. The man who hired him, didn't even offer him some food to eat. He was so hungry he wanted to eat the pig's food.

Now when he got hungry he began to think; he remembered his Father's home; he remembered his Father's love and kindness and how he had wept when the boy left. It was hard to admit he had been wrong about his Father, but finally he said, "At least there is food to eat there, and my Father doesn't keep pigs. I can tell him how sorry I am, and just maybe he might give me a job".

○ So off he starts; no pride now; no fancy horse to ride; no designer clothes; just bare-foot and ragged he trudges back to his Father's farm.

Thought - When we leave God's ways, we always come to a time when our 'substance' is gone and we have nothing left, and find 'pigs' all around us.

Tuesday

Text: Luke 15:20 "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

○ The Father had been watching for the boy in the story, waiting and longing for him to come back. He didn't care about the money. He loved his boy. He had a spot where he would go and watch, and pray for his boy to come back. Then one day there was a figure limping along the road, way in the distance. He could hardly see him, but he knew who it

was.

The old Father ran down the road with eager joy and when he reached the ragged boy, he flung his arms around him. The boy repented to his Father, saying he had sinned against him and against heaven and wasn't worthy to be his son anymore. But before he could add, "Could I perhaps be accepted as a servant?" the Father put his own robe around the boy, and called out for clean clothes and shoes to be brought and a feast of delicious food to be prepared. He even put the family ring on his hand, which meant that whatever the Father had he would share with the son.

It was a joyful time. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents.

Thought - When you do something bad, and are sorry and repent asking Jesus to forgive you, even the angels sing in joy.

Wednesday

Text: Luke 15:28, 29 "And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:"

There is a sour note in this lovely story; when the older brother came in from his work, he was not happy his brother had come back, he was angry! He doesn't even call the other boy his brother, but says "Thy son". He would never have welcomed the boy back home.

You see, even though he hadn't gone away like the brother, he had the same attitude of resentment towards his Father. He felt that his Father was a hard man, and he worked so hard for his Father, and never had any fun. And yet he stayed and pretended to serve his Father, so he could one day get his inheritance. His attitude was that of a servant and not a son. The boy that was willing to be a

servant was welcomed as a son, and the boy who thought he was a son, had made himself to be only a servant.

Jesus was trying to get the church leaders to see that they were like this brother. They considered God to be harsh and demanding and that they deserved His blessings because of all they did for Him. They felt no love or thankfulness to God for the privilege of belonging to Him. They had no love for the lost sinners, only scorn, so they showed they were not one with the Father.

But the sinners that were coming to Jesus and repenting of their sins, were full of love for their Heavenly Father. Heaven was rejoicing for these dear ones returning to the Father.

Thought - If we are really our Father's children, we will love others as He loves us.

Thursday

Text: Luke 10:27 "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself."

See the whole story: Luke 10:25-42

The Scribes and Pharisees knew what the Law of God said about loving their neighbours, but they had a way of trying to wiggle out of it. They would argue about who was to be thought of as a neighbour. They were sure it wasn't the poor people; or sinners; or Romans; certainly it was not Samaritans!

So to answer their question, Jesus told a true story. We are told that some of the very people who were in the story, were listening to it. Jesus told about a man who was traveling to Jericho along a dangerous road, where robbers lurked.

Suddenly a band of robbers attacked him, and beat him, and took everything away. They took his donkey, his money, and even his clothes and left him all bare and wounded, almost dead.

Then Jesus told of two men who came by, one at a time past the poor, hurt man. One was a Priest and one was a Levite. In our day it would be a Pastor and a deacon. But they would not help the poor man, as they felt they were too important to do such a job, and anyway, maybe the robbers would grab them too. So they hurried away.

Thought - Satan is the cruel robber who takes everything away from those who fall for his lies.

Friday

Text: Luke 10:33,34 "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

There wasn't much hope for that poor wounded man lying there by the road but here comes someone else; a Samaritan. He sees the poor man and the Bible says he had compassion on him. This means he felt loving pity for him. He knew that the hurt man was a Jew, and that he wouldn't help a Samaritan.

He didn't let that stop him; here was a fellow man that needed help, so he helped him. He tore up some of his own clothes, and made bandages for him and used oil and wine to cleanse and sooth his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his own donkey and carried him gently to an inn.

There he had to rent a room, buy food and care for the man all night long. The next day he paid the innkeeper, and gave him extra money, so the man could stay there until he was well. Then if that wasn't more than enough, he told him that if the man needed more, to give it to him, and the Samaritan would pay for it all when he returned.

In this story Jesus showed us all clearly who our neighbour is, that we are to love; it

is anyone who needs our help. We are to do for others, what we would wish someone to do for us, if we were in the same place.

Thought - It is good to remember that all people really belong to Jesus so if we love Jesus, we will love them too. = ^..^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #10: "JESUS, THE 'WORD' OF GOD"

MEMORY VERSE: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Psalm 33:6

Sunday

Text: Deuteronomy 8:3 "... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

If you look carefully in the Bible, you will see that it says over and over 'The Word of the Lord' came to somebody; it says it 255 different times! It uses it to tell about God giving messages to a prophet, so he or she could tell them to the people. Not all the prophets wrote messages down, but many of them did. These written messages became our Bible, and so our Bible is called the Word of God.

In our memory verse we see that the Word of God created everything! There is great power in the Word of God. There is no real power in my word or your word; if we say, "Let the dishes be washed", or "Let the lawn be mowed" then to make it so, we would have to go and do it, before it would be done, or we would have to get someone to do it for us.

This is not true with God's Word; when He spoke "Let there be something" then that something was there; it was so! Not only was it so, but also it was good and not just good, but perfect! "As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler (shield) to all them that trust in him". 2 Samuel 22:31

Nothing that man does is every totally perfect, and nothing that God does is ever not perfect! This shows us that if we are to be 'perfect' like the Bible tells us to be, then God's powerful, perfect Word will have to

make it so. (Matthew 5:48)

Thought - Think about the Bible as the perfect and powerful Word of God!

Monday

Text: John 1:1-4 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

There is a most interesting thing in these texts, we see that everything was made by the "Word" of God, and the "Word" was God. In John 1:14 we see clearly that Jesus is called the "Word" of God.

How could Jesus be the 'Word'? Well think about it this way, suppose I want to tell my class how to do a certain task; I could write all the instructions down and send them to the class. This would be my written word. But I could also send someone there to show you how to do the task, that person would also be my word to you, to teach you how to do the task. You see the written word represents me, and so does the messenger I send, represent my word to you.

God's written 'Word' came from God to teach us, and Jesus, God's messenger, also came from God to teach us. They both have the same purpose; to show us what God is like and how we can become like Him. They are both God's Word. So we know too that they both have great power and they are both perfect.

Thought - Have you thought before that

the Bible and Jesus are both messages sent by God to you?

Tuesday

Text: Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

Ecclesiastes 3:14 “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it:”

If something is perfect and it was changed, it couldn't be perfect any more, could it? God makes it very clear that He does not change, and His Word doesn't change.

Most people today will tell you that when Jesus came to earth, He taught completely new ideas that had never been heard of before. This is not at all true. Jesus didn't teach anything, that wasn't already in the scriptures. He was the Word of God, and He taught only what the written Word of God said.

The Gospel for Adam and Eve after they sinned, was the same as the Gospel for David and Daniel, and the same as the Gospel is for you and me. The ONLY difference is that until Jesus died on the cross, people were saved by believing and obeying God by faith in a Saviour Who would come; and now we are saved by believing and obeying God by faith in a Saviour Who has come.

Thought - If there were different rules for people before Jesus than for us, this would not be fair, would it?

Wednesday

Text: Isaiah 45:6 “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.”

In the Old Testament, the words “I am the Lord” are found 162 times. When Jesus was here on earth He said many times “I Am”. One of the names for God is “I Am”.

When Moses talked with the Lord (Jesus) at the burning bush, He told Moses to tell

the people “I AM hath sent you”. In John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.”

When He said this the leaders of the Jews were going to kill Him, because they recognized He had called Himself by the Name of God; I AM.

What does the name ‘I AM’ mean to us? Well it means that Jesus is the One who is always there for us. He doesn't die or get sick; He doesn't get too busy to have time for us; He doesn't get tired of us or have to sleep; He doesn't go away on business trips or vacations. Whatever our need may be, He is there saying, I AM your answer for all your troubles.

Thought - Jesus never is too busy for you; are you ever too busy for Him?

Thursday

Text: Revelation 1:8 “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

This is Jesus talking to John in this verse, the same Jesus that held little children on His lap: the same one that tells us not to be afraid but to trust in Him.

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. We would say, “I am the A and the Zee” It means He was there in the beginning creating us, and He is there now recreating us, and He will be there in the end for us as well.

When we think about Jesus as the ‘Word’, then this makes a lot of sense; a Word is made of letters and Jesus is the whole Alphabet! He is the Word that contains all other words.

He says He is the Almighty; All Mighty! In another place He says, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Matthew 28:18 If All Power is given to Jesus, how much power does Satan really have? NONE. How much power do evil men have, who work

for Satan? NONE. Satan can have no power over any of us, if we trust Jesus and refuse to listen to Satan's lies.

Thought - There are many stories about superheroes these days. Jesus is the only real superhero.

Friday

Text: John 18:36 "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

There are many very false ideas that people are saying today about Jesus. We'll look quickly at two of them, as most others are related to these. One is that Jesus was a rebel, and was stirring the people up for social reform. Our text shows clearly that Jesus did not get involved with earthly governments.

In fact there were times when the people wanted to make Him king. Now if He had wanted to be in politics, that would have been His perfect chance, but He would have no part of such an idea.

The New Age and Eastern religion people, try to tell us that Jesus went to Tibet when He was young, and He learned how to do miracles there, and all the Eastern stuff.

Anyone who reads the Gospels will see, that there is never even one place where Jesus talks about any thing found in these heathen religions. Yet, sad to say, many people are fooled by those who claim that all religions worship the same God, and Jesus was just another guru.

The Bible says; "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)" 1 Corinthians 8:5 Until you really get into reading the Bible, it is easy to be fooled, as it seems the different religions are all saying some truth; but the Bible says, look at the fruit. Satan's religions may sound good, but they always bring people down into confusion and slavery; while the pure religion of the Bible has POWER in it to lift people up, and set them free from Satan's chains, to become like Jesus.

Thought - The best way to know Jesus is to read all about Him in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand and know truth.
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Editor's Note- To learn more about the wonderful way the Lord helps those who stand for Him, even to death read the books, "Hus the Heretic by Poggius the Papist" a first hand account of the trial of Huss, written by an eyewitness of it in the 1400s, also "Foxes Book of Martyrs" You can get these and other wonderful books from Laymen Ministries 1-800-245-1844.



Weekly Bible Lesson #11: "JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!"

MEMORY VERSE: "... Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11

Sunday

Text: Jude 1:14 "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints."

History and the Bible have two main parts; everything before Jesus came to earth points towards His coming and everything after, points back to His Coming. But everything in all history and Bible also points towards Jesus second Coming! This is the great event that is the theme of all scripture, and every true Christian's hope in all times. Jesus is coming to earth again—What if it were today? Are you ready? Are you sure?

Our verse shows us that even before the flood, God's prophet Enoch talked about that wonderful, but for some, dreadful day.

Jesus had a lot to say about His second coming. He told us what things would be like when that time was close. He told us signs in the earth; see Matthew 24:7 "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, (terrible diseases) and earthquakes, in divers places."

We certainly see all these things; did you know that we now have more earthquakes each year, than they had in a hundred years, before the 'time of the end' began in 1798.

The wonderful book, "The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan", that Ellen White wrote as God showed her what the end times would be like, is very important for all of us to read carefully and study now. The final things are happening all around us, and we need to understand, so we will not be fooled by Satan's tricks. We are told that almost everybody will be fooled! Get this book and read it for yourself; especially the

last half of it.

Thought - If you feel afraid of Jesus Coming, you need to tell it all to Jesus, and ask Him to show you what is in your heart that needs to be given to Him, so you can be happy when you think of His soon coming. Remember, He loves you and will help you if you let Him.

Monday

Text: 2 Timothy 3:2-5 "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, (they can't control their tempers) fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, (proud of their selves) lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

We are also told what the people will be like in this text. Read it carefully and think about each thing it tells us. It is certainly what people today are like, and they are getting more like it every day!

Notice that it says they will have a 'form of godliness'. This means they are going to claim they are religious and follow the Lord. This is truly Satan's masterpiece, when he can get people to think they are following the Lord Jesus, while they are really following the devil.

It tells us how to tell the difference: 'but denying the power thereof'. This means that they won't really believe in the Power of God and His Word. They will follow men instead.

They will have 'great leaders' and 'highly educated' people telling them what to do and what to believe and giving them books to read, instead of studying God's Word, and seeking to have God teach them Himself, which is what He promises to do.

They will like lots of big meetings, and exciting ceremonies. They will like to point to their big church buildings, and how many people go to 'their church'. But when you start talking to them about the Power in Jesus to get rid of sin in the life, and the way the Lord teaches and blesses each of us, as we seek to know Him for ourselves, you will find they don't want to hear that. Also they will talk a lot about 'love' but they will be selfish and not have 'natural affection'.

Anybody who tells you that you can't stop sinning until Jesus comes back is one of these 'denying the power thereof' people. The Bible says, "From such turn away".

Thought - If Jesus has beaten Satan every time and in every place, He can beat the power of Satan in your heart also. Satan can't make you sin, if you choose to give all your heart to Jesus, and let Jesus be in charge of your life.

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 24:37- 39 "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Be sure and read all of Matthew 24, and notice how many stories Jesus has there to tell us what would happen at His coming. Here He says that the people will be like before the flood; they will just be going on with their fun and business and won't know anything is happening.

But how could this be at the time of the flood? Didn't Noah preach to them for 120 years? Didn't he build the huge boat to warn them? Didn't he beg them to get on board? Yes, all that is true but they didn't know until the flood took them all away! WHY? Because what we refuse to believe and obey—we don't really 'know'.

It is the same today, most people don't want to believe that the things the Bible told us are really happening all around us, and what we won't believe and obey, we don't 'know', not even if God sends an angel to shout it right into our ears!

Paul tells us of a different class though; "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

Those who love the truth will see the signs, and will believe what the Bible says about them, and will give all their heart to Jesus, and He will work with them to get ready. Jesus will take care of them all through the terrible times ahead. If we know Jesus and really belong to Him, we have nothing to fear!

Thought - Jesus told us the things ahead of time so we can know He is in charge and He will not fail to take care of the smallest, weakest person who has given their life over to Jesus. The prophecies are to make us brave, not to scare us.

Wednesday

Text: Matthew 24:48-51 "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and

appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Here we see a ‘servant’ who his Lord told to care for the other servants. This means a Pastor or a teacher or a church leader. He decides that Jesus isn’t coming back for a long time, and so he starts putting himself in the place of the Lord. He gets the other servants to wait on him, and he bosses them around and tells them what to do himself, instead of leaving them to follow the orders of the Lord, the same as he is supposed to do.

He makes himself the boss over the Lord’s people, and is so busy having a good time taking that which really belongs to the Lord and using it for himself, that he doesn’t know when the Lord is returning. He gets caught doing this when the Lord comes back and the Lord is very angry with this servant. The last sentence shows that this person will be lost.

Thought - Jesus never gave any man the right to tell His people how to worship Him. They are only to teach the Lord’s words and let the people decide for themselves to follow the Lord or not.

Thursday

Text: John 17:24 “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

This is Jesus talking to His Father in this verse; here we see that He longs for us to be there in heaven with Him. He is looking forward to coming back to get all his dear ones who, down through the ages have chosen to obey and love Him, and allow Him to make them ready to live in heaven.

Can you imagine how sad He must feel when He sees the very ones that He suffered and died for, so they could have a chance to be saved, wanting to stay on earth and play

with sin and Satan’s ‘toys’, rather than wanting Him to come back? How His dear heart must ache when He hears someone say, “Well if I have to stop watching movies to go to heaven, I just won’t go”. Or “I love my sports, if I can’t keep playing them, I don’t want to belong to Jesus.” Or “If I can’t wear jewelry and dress just like everybody else, then forget it!”

When we are really ‘born again’ and have given our whole hearts to Jesus, we will not even want any of old Satan’s things; not even a little bit now and then! We will hate what we once loved, and love what we once hated. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Worldly things) Matthew 6:24

Thought - Jesus is willing and able to change you so you can go to heaven but He will not change heaven so you can go there without being changed.

Friday

Text: Matthew 10: 22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

Psalms 91:14,15 “Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.”

Here we see that the faithful will be hated by the people who are fooled by Satan; But they are cared for by Jesus! He will give them food and water, while all the world will be starving. He will have His loving arms around them, while all the world is terrified and angry. They will have the protection of mighty angels, while the world will be attacked by Satan and his nasty devils.

Truly, it is not the faithful who should feel afraid of the end times, but it is very

important to seek Jesus now and be among those who do listen to Him, and obey His true Word and trust in His care.

Do you know how to see if you will stand in the time of trouble? It is easy to find out. Just watch and see how you act from day to day.

If a temptation comes, do you say, "Oh, just this once won't matter", or do you say "No! I have chosen to be like You, Jesus help me!"

If someone calls you a nasty name, do you get angry and call him one back? Or do you stay quiet in Jesus' strength?

It is the habits we are forming now that will tell if we will be among those who look up and say, "This is our God! We have waited for Him and He will save us!" Isaiah 25:9. Or be with those that cry to the rocks and moun-

tains "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:" Revelation 6:16

Yes, our day-to-day choices are what will cause us to be either ready or not ready. It is up to each one of us to seek Jesus in prayer and Bible study and ask Him to show us what needs to be changed in us, so we will be ready and happy to see Him come. And remember that what He shows you needs changing in you, He will change, if you cooperate with Him.

He won't do it without your permission and choice, and you can't do it with out His power, but working together with Jesus, you will never be lost!

Thought - I want to see each one of you in heaven! = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #12: "JESUS IS COMING AGAIN-THE REAL AND THE COUNTERFEIT"

MEMORY VERSE: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Revelation 1:7

Sunday

Text: 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10 "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

We know that Satan is going to try to appear as Jesus. He is going to come, and most of the people on earth will be fooled by him. Already there are demons pretending to be Jesus appearing to people. Devils are also appearing as 'Mary' and different heathen gods. It is important that we know how to tell the difference so we will not be fooled.

Notice in our text that it talks about the "Love of the Truth". This is so important, because only those who have it will be saved

in these last days! It means that we will love and believe what God tells us in his Word and in the Spirit of Prophecy, even if our human hearts would wish things were different.

So many people are falling into Satan's traps right now because they want to believe stories that the Bible tells us are not true. Here are some of these "Pleasing fables" that they are hanging on to:

It doesn't matter which day I keep; Sunday is just as good as Sabbath.

I go to heaven as soon as I die.

I will still go to heaven even if I have sin that I know about in my life.

Mary, and angels and spirits of the dead are from God, and I can talk to them.

The Law of God was done away with when Jesus died; I don't have to keep it.

The Spirit of Prophecy is out of date; I

don't have to obey it.

It doesn't matter what I do, Jesus doesn't expect me to be like Him.

If people want to recognize a counterfeit piece of money, they always study the true. Christ's second coming has unique features that Satan cannot counterfeit. We must know them well so that we won't be deceived.

Thought - Dear students, we must 'love the truth' even if it seems hard to us, it's the only way to be saved.

Monday

Text: Matthew 24:27 "As the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." Revelation 1:7 "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him."

Well, most of us never see those people who claim to be Christ. So most certainly, they can't be!

No one will have to tell you when Jesus comes; you will see Him coming in the clouds. There are other signs the devil cannot duplicate. Christ is not going to suddenly appear in some remote place or step out of a flying saucer. Just a while ago a man claimed on TV that Jesus was going to appear in the desert on a certain day. He didn't, but people are still following that man!

The people of the world are expecting Jesus to appear in Jerusalem, and that the Jews will accept Him, and build a new temple for Him. They think He will set up a worldly kingdom, and of course each one of them wants to be the greatest in that kingdom. They believe He will bring in 1,000 years of peace on earth.

When Jesus comes, He will not set foot on this earth. He will not set up any earthly kingdom; instead the world will be destroyed. There will be peace on earth, because all will be dead who remain here, except Satan and his nasty bunch, and they can see what a mess they have made of things. Satan claims to be able to raise the dead; he promises his

followers that he will do that. Well, he will have 1,000 years to try, and he won't be able to!

Thought - Only those who read and love the Bible will not be fooled!

Tuesday

Text: Matthew 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory."

Jesus will not be coming back alone. It will be in glory! Why does Jesus bring the angels with Him? He gives the answer: "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31.

Yes, Jesus will be accompanied by all the holy angels, filling the sky with glory indescribable. Now you know why these people who claim to be Christ can't possibly be! They would have an impossible time trying to duplicate Jesus' return! No one can! But there are more events connected with the coming of Jesus.

It Will Be an Audible Coming! "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

So you see, Christ's coming will not only be visible, but also audible, heard by everyone. So penetrating will be the call of God and the fanfare of the trumpet that the dead in Christ will be awakened and come forth from their graves.

Can you imagine the joy when the graves are opened and families are reunited?

Thought - Do you see how impossible it would be for Satan to counterfeit the Real Coming of Christ?

Wednesday

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:17. "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up

together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

There is still more good news! Notice what happens to the righteous living at Christ's second coming! The Righteous Living are Caught up to Meet Jesus. The faithful followers of Jesus are caught up with the resurrected dead to meet the Lord in the air, what a happy reunion that will be for many families.

And All of the Saved Will Be Changed!

Paul gives us more details of what will happen when Jesus returns: “Behold, I show you a mystery; ... we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

And there is something else God will give His people: “...We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” Philippians 3:20, 21.

A body like Christ's! No more aches or pains, or disease. What news could be more welcome?

Thought - God will give every follower of Jesus His gift of love, life everlasting. All other gifts are meaningless without this gift of immortality.

Thursday

Text: Revelation 6:14-17 “The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, ... and the mighty men ... hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that

sits on the throne ... For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

There will be a Great Earthquake: “And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.” Revelation 16:18.

This earthquake will break down the cities of the earth at the coming of Christ. No one could possibly miss an earthquake like this, as it ushers in the coming of Christ!

Jesus warned that His coming would be at a time when no one was expecting it. In Matthew 24:30, we are told that when Jesus returns, “...all the tribes of the earth will mourn...” This is what Jesus said would happen to those who are not ready for that day!

They are lost, and they know it! What a sad picture, when it could have been so different. Friend, that day will be real! There will be no waking up to find it was only a dream! Nothing is more important on earth, than being ready to meet Jesus when He comes.

How fragile are the earthly treasures we prize so greatly! Notice how easily those proud buildings fell down on September 11! One mighty earthquake, and it will ALL be gone!

Jesus warned that His coming would be at a time when no one was expecting it. He also said that people would be busy wasting their lives in foolish pleasure. “Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” Luke 21:36.

Thought - Where will you be, and what will you be doing, when Jesus comes?

Friday

Text: Revelation 16:14 “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of

the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

Let's just review quickly.

- 1.False prophets and christs will try to deceive everyone. The devil will try to impersonate an angel of light.
- 2.The second coming will not be secret.
- 3.Every eye will see Jesus coming.
- 4.All the holy angels will come with Jesus.
- 5.He will come with the blast of a trumpet.
6. He will come with a shout of the Arch-angel.

- 7.The righteous dead will be resurrected.
- 8.The righteous living will be translated without seeing death.

9.All the righteous will be given immortality.

10. All of earth's ungodly people will mourn when they see Jesus.

11. A great earthquake will destroy the earth.

12. All sinners will be slain.

Thought - Also remember that a counterfeit comes first; after Jesus really comes—no human will be left alive on this earth!
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Weekly Bible Lesson #13: “JESUS OUR SAVIOUR”

MEMORY VERSE: “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Matthew 26:41

NOTE- I urge all of you to get the book Desire of Ages, and read the chapters on Gethsemane, the trial and crucifixion; it is an eyewitness account!

Sunday

Text: Matthew 26:38, 39 “Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

We all know the story of the cross, but we need also to look carefully at the story of Gethsemane. Jesus' struggle there was so hard, that if His Father had not sent an angel to strengthen Him, He would have died right there, and never gone to the cross!

Jesus had a true relationship with His Father. He talked with Him (prayer) and obeyed Him always. But now He was coming to the time of the great sacrifice. Jesus' decision time had come and so had His hour of temptation.

That terrible night the sins of the entire world were laid on Him, your sins, my sins,

and all the terrible sins ever done in this whole wicked world! You know how bad you feel when you do wrong, and you are sorry about it? Well Jesus was feeling the sorrow and guilt for every sin and He knew that His Father would have to turn His face away from Jesus, and let His anger fall on those sins.

Satan was determined to get Jesus that night; he made the disciples sleepy so Jesus didn't have any human help at all. How it would have cheered Him if He could have known they were praying, but no, they were sleeping.

Satan then came to Jesus and said something like; “What's the use of You going through all this? The people don't even care to be saved. Look at your 'best friends' over there, sleeping. Why don't You just forget the whole deal and go back to heaven?”

The Bible tells us that Jesus sweat drops of blood; His agony was so intense. He didn't feel like going to be mocked and cruelly treated. He didn't feel like being nailed up naked on a cross, any more than you or I would. But above all, He could not bear the thought of His Father's face being turned away from Him, as all the sins of a guilty world rested on Him.

Three times He prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done!" He didn't want to do it, but as He saw that if He didn't, there would be no hope for any of us, He agreed to do it.

Thought - Jesus saw you that night, He saw me, He loved us so much He decided to do whatever needed to be done to make our salvation possible!

Monday

Text: Matthew 26:41 "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Jesus warned the disciples to wake up and pray! Satan would not have been able to keep them sleepy and stupid, if they had listened to Jesus and prayed for help from God.

Jesus knows that the hour of temptation will come to us also. He also knows, and says in the same verse that we are weak in the flesh. Therefore He tells us the only answer that will give us success, watching and prayer to God. Because of the times we are in, and especially the time, which is just before us, we must have these two things if we are to meet the hour of temptation and win. The "hour of temptation" — the word temptation means a test. Do you know of any test that we will have to face in the near future? Are you aware that one of the greatest hours of temptation is with us, right now?

Do you ever notice that when you go to read your Bible or pray to God, you become sleepy? I told you before that many people reading the book the Great Controversy, where it tells about what is happening right today in our world and in our churches, find themselves bored or sleepy, or busy.

I have been giving Bible studies to people and had them suddenly become so sleepy they decide to quit. I try to explain to them what is happening so they can pray about it and ask Jesus to drive Satan away. But if they won't believe what is happening, they

don't pray and like the disciples they sleep through the time God is trying to talk to them.

Always pray and ask God to send His Holy Spirit and holy angels to help you to read or study His truth. Ask Him to stop Satan from making you sleepy or bored and if you start to feel that way, pray and say, "No! I won't let Satan steal my blessings! Jesus, help me to stay awake!"

Thought - The Battle for life is won or lost by who we let have control of our minds, Jesus or Satan. Remember that Satan wins when we choose OUR own ways instead of God's.

Tuesday

Text: "Feeling how terrible is the wrath of God against transgression, He exclaims, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Desire of Ages 685

God hates sin. We need to be truly sorry for our sin and learn to hate it, because it kills. We need to understand in a very real sense, that it not only killed the Son of God, but it will also eternally kill us, if we refuse to give it up!

Why does God hate sin so much? Because He knows that it hurts and destroys those He loves!

I have noticed that often, even among church people, if someone talks about sin, people will giggle. This is amazing; sin is not a joke! Before Jesus even went to the cross, He was dying from the effects of the sin of the world placed on Him.

"Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God." Desire of Ages 687

He asks His Father if there is not some other way:

But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that sinners, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He

sees the power of sin. The woes and sorrow of a doomed world rise before Him. He sees what will happen to it, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. See Desire of Ages 690 & 693

Jesus was willing to be forever separated from His Father, if that was the only way to save you and me.

Thought - We should spend time every day, thinking about, and reading about Jesus' loving sacrifice for us!

Wednesday

Text: Isaiah 63:3 "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me."

It is natural for us to like to have friends and have people like us. We like people to think well of us. Jesus felt that way also, He would have been greatly encouraged if His disciples would have been awake and praying for Him and their own selves with Him.

But look at what happened to Him; after more than three years of healing people and being kind to them, he only had a few friends left, and what did they do? One of His closest friends sold Him for money, and another one swore and said that he didn't even know Jesus. But Jesus made up His mind that He would obey His Father in heaven no matter what happened. See what the Bible says in Hebrews 5:8 "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;"

What? Jesus learned obedience? Yes, that is what it says. In Gethsemane Jesus chose to obey His Father! Once Jesus made that choice, Satan was defeated. Even though he got the cruel priests and other men to mock Him and beat Him and do every nasty thing they could think of to Him, Jesus patiently bore it all. Satan could not make Jesus disobey His heavenly Father.

Have you ever felt all alone? Have you ever had your friends laugh at you because you would not go along with them and do something wrong? Well always remember, even if

all your earthly friends leave you, when you stand for what is right, Jesus and the angels will never leave you. God sent an angel to strengthen Jesus when He was determined to obey His Father, and we will be given strength and courage to stand alone also.

Thought - The secret is to CHOOSE that no matter what comes, you WILL obey God in the power of Jesus!

Thursday

Text: Matthew 26:59 "Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death."

No one likes to be blamed for something he did not do; but do you know people get angrier when blamed for what they did do? Guilt brings anger. But it does hurt to be lied about. Jesus bore it all silently, He did not get angry and yell back at them. Jesus is our example, when people say mean things to us, answer quietly or just stay quiet. God knows the truth and He will be on our side and help us.

One of the reasons the Priests and rulers were so angry with Jesus, was they knew, deep in their hearts that He was right and they were wrong. But they were determined to go their own way no matter what. Because of this, the very sight of Jesus standing there, made them furious, due to their own guilt. Led on by Satan, they were as rude and cruel as they could be; still Jesus remained calm.

If only they could get Him to do something back in anger, then they could feel a bit better about their own wickedness; but He didn't do it.

Thought - The Bible says that it would be better to suffer for something you didn't do than for something you did do. See if you can understand why.

Friday

Text: Matthew 27:22, 23 "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus

which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified."

Jesus stood there, looking into all those angry faces. Perhaps there were some that He remembers healing, but now they look like demons, screaming for His blood. And yet He was willing to go through it all, so that even they—could have forgiveness and be saved.

But it wasn't the cruelty of men or demons that finally broke the heart of Jesus; it was the hiding of His Father's face.

"As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was to suffer under divine justice. He was to understand what justice meant. He was to know what it means for sinners to stand before God without an in-

tercessor." Prophets and Kings- 691

There are some who say that because God cannot die, Jesus didn't really die the second death like sinners who refuse salvation will have to die. Well, if He didn't pay the whole price for our sins, Satan would have said it was not fair. But Satan cannot say this, because Jesus paid the whole price.

He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He could not see, at that time, that He would ever rise again. He experienced that final, horrible separation from his Father and it broke His heart; but at the last moment, He clung by faith to His Father; "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit", then hung His dear head and died.

Thought -

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died;
My richest gain, I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride!

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