



# Search The Scriptures

VOLUME 61

*"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).*

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# BEGINNING OF OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

## 781 Lesson

### DAVID BRINGS BACK THE ARK TO JERUSALEM

**MEMORY VERSE** “And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD” (2 Samuel 6:17).

**TEXT: 2 Samuel 6:1-23**

For many years, the Ark of the Covenant had been out of public glare, tucked away in the house of Abinadab. The nation of Israel lived in denial of it throughout the reign of Saul, except once when he requested its presence (1 Samuel 14:18). Now that David, a man after God’s heart, had taken over power in Israel, he decided to establish his kingdom in the Lord and on godly principles. As a first step, he set out to bring the ark of God into the city of David and restore proper worship. His action also reflects his gratitude to God for sparing his life and fulfilling the promise to establish his kingdom. Though David’s first attempt to bring back the ark failed because they “**sought him not after the due order**” (1 Chronicles 15:13), he did not give up, but made necessary corrections and eventually brought the ark to its rightful place.

**Question 1:** What can we learn from the initial failure and David’s final resolve to bring back the ark?

**THE DECISION TO BRING BACK THE ARK** (2 Samuel 6:1-4,6-10; 1 Samuel 4:3-6; 1 Chronicles 15:3; 1 Corinthians 10:9)

**“And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims”** (2 Samuel 6:2). The ark meant so much to

the children of Israel because it symbolized God's holy presence, power, and blessing (1 Samuel 4:3; Joshua 3:13; 2 Samuel 6:11). Its obscurity during the reign of king Saul spelt gloom and defeat for Israel, even after its return from the land of the Philistines (1 Samuel 6:7-21; 7:1,2). This must have spurred David and the entire nation of Israel to thirst for its return.

David's decision to bring back the ark is highly commendable because, for Saul's forty years in the saddle, he relegated the ark of the Lord to the background. It was not surprising that he made so many mistakes, lived in disobedience and died a tragic death. Children of God should cultivate the presence of God's Holy Spirit and live in obedience to His word so as to escape the multiple pitfalls associated with divine absence. The ultimate desire of every child of God should be to attract God's presence into their families, businesses and homes. Just like David decided to bring back the ark, we should long after God's presence, power, righteousness and harvesting of dying souls into His kingdom.

With the support of thirty thousand chosen men, the king **"set the ark of God upon a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart"** (2 Samuel 6:3).

**THE DEMISE OF UZZAH FOR CONTEMPT** (2 Samuel 6:6-10; 2 Kings 2:23-25; Psalm 19:12,13; Hebrews 10:29; 2 Peter 2:10)

Although commendable, David's decision to bring back the ark was not according to the laid down procedure. While it was in transit towards the city of David, **"Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God"** (2 Samuel 6:6,7). Uzzah's action was termed a transgression before the holy God and he was struck dead for being presumptuous.

The children of Israel had been instructed on how to transport the ark from one place to another; and the responsibility was given to the Levites (Numbers 1:50,51; 1 Chronicles 15:15). It amounted to an act of presumption or taking God for granted that the ark was transported in a cart, talk less of Uzzah or any other person attempting to hold it. The Israelites had earlier been warned to avoid presumptuous sin. **“And the man that will do presumptuously... even that man shall die... And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously”** (Deuteronomy 17:12,13).

God is all-knowing. Uzzah’s supposed zeal smacks of undue familiarity and contempt of His holiness and caused Uzzah to incur divine wrath. He manifested zeal without knowledge and it cost his life. Men ought to know that though God is love, He is also **“a consuming fire”** (Hebrews 10:29). Sacred things must be handled with reverence, care and caution. Believers must avoid Uzzah’s error in their relationship with God and be conversant with His will as stated in His word while zealously serving Him (Romans 10:2). Considering Uzzah’s punishment, we should avoid all rashness and irreverence in handling holy things. God will be sanctified in those who come to Him in this dispensation of grace.

<p><b>Question 2: What lessons can believers learn from God’s wrath on Uzzah?</b></p>
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Presumption is a canker that heaven-bound Christians should avoid. We should not conduct ourselves in any manner suggesting that we are familiar with God or His word or leaning on our own understanding because we have been long in the faith. Taking decision on spiritual matters without support of the Scriptures is dangerous. Many of the children of Israel lost their lives in the wilderness because of presumptuous acts. The Scripture warns us: **“But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities”** (2 Peter 2:10).



The breach and judgment on Uzzah forced David and his people to abandon the program of bringing the ark back to Israel, albeit temporarily. The ark was, instead, taken to the house of Obbededom. **“And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obbededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obbededom, and all his household”** (2 Samuel 6:11).

**THE DEMONSTRATION OF JOY IN THE LAND** (2 Samuel 6:5,12-15,17-19; 1 Chronicles 23:5; 15:16,27; Psalm 81:1)

As soon as David heard that **“The LORD hath blessed the house of Obbededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God”**, he **“went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbededom into the city of David with gladness”** (2 Samuel 6:12). The king perceived that God had forgiven their transgression and was now favorable to them. As he read God’s frown against them in Uzzah’s death, he also read His favour to them in Obbededom’s prosperity. If we repent genuinely and make necessary corrections, God will surely forgive our trespasses (Isaiah 1:18,19; 1 John 2:1).

The blessing that came upon Obbededom showed that as the ark was a huge blessing to godly Israel, it was a great curse to their enemies (Exodus 14:20). Happy was the nation and people who obeyed the Lord and had it with them. In like manner, Christ is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to those who are disobedient, but to the believer, He is a Cornerstone, elect and precious (1 Peter 2:6-8). Contemporary believers should give God first place in their lives knowing that He will surely bless them. Those who truly reconcile with Him have the opportunity to enjoy His blessings always (Romans 5:1; 8:31,32). Since Christ is a blessing to all, sinners and backsliders should welcome Him into their lives. He said, **“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me”** (Revelation 3:20).

**Question 3: What can believers learn from David's new commitment to bring back the ark?**

Despite the initial setback, David kept the vision of bringing back the ark by correcting his errors and following due order. He did not allow the failure that he had experienced to scuttle the project. This is a great lesson for believers: the giant in them can still rise again if they obey the Lord (Job 22:29; Micah 7:8).

As David and his men brought the ark into the royal city, **“David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod”** (2 Samuel 6:14). His action was, first, a reflection of how much he loved the Lord. He counted it a great privilege to serve Him. Second, though a king, he forgot his royalty and abandoned himself in God's hands. We cannot serve God with all our hearts if we are too conscious of our position, prestige and fame. If we are obsessed with our social status and what people will say about us, we might not be able to give everything to the Lord. Third, David was not ashamed to be associated with the Lord and His work. Fourth, he served with all his might, heart and soul. Our service to God should not be half-hearted, but total. How believers need to cultivate these attributes of David in order to be their best for the Lord.

As soon as the ark was lodged in Jerusalem, David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to God for His continual favour. Believers must appreciate God for all He has done for them; they should express this in praises and prayers and avoid all forms of unrighteousness and ungodliness. Besides, our worship sessions must be devoid of frivolities and worldliness or anything that would drive His presence away from us.

**THE DANGER OF DESPISING GOD'S ANOINTED** (2 Samuel 6:16; 20-23; Numbers 12:1-10; 16:1-5,31-35; Ecclesiastes 10:20; Psalm 105:15; Acts 23:3-5; 1 Peter 3:10)

David's great and heart-felt service to the nation was misunderstood and despised by no distant person



but his own wife, Michal. She felt that her husband-king was not dignified enough before the people and had behaved in a manner unbecoming of royalty. “... **And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!**” (2 Samuel 6:20). She had forgotten that it is a great honour to be associated with the King of kings and, anyone thus privileged should count their richest gain but loss and pour contempt on all their pride. David never forgot his humble beginning. He did not think he was too big to sing and dance before God. Rather, he humbled himself not minding his royal status. No one should be too ‘great’ to serve God or too ‘dignified’ to undertake any assignment for Him. Jesus says, “**Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels**” (Mark 8:38). Michal reproached David unjustly for his devotion; God therefore put her under a perpetual reproach of barrenness. Believers are not to speak evil of God’s servants or despise those that are sent by Him to feed them with the word of life (Ecclesiastes 10:20).

<p><b>Question 4: What are the dangers of despising God’s word or ministers?</b></p>
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It is instructive that believers must strive to uphold and bring back the presence of God where it is noticed to have departed. They must restore His praise in their personal lives, fellowship, community and nation through holy living. Sinners and backsliders too, should welcome Christ, the living ark, into their lives and make Him their Master and Lord.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

	<b>MORNING</b>		<b>EVENING</b>	
MON	1 Timothy	1-3	Deuteronomy	1
TUE	"	3-4	"	2
WED	"	5-6	"	3
THUR	2 Timothy	1-3	"	4
FRI	"	3-4	"	5
SAT	Titus	1-3	"	6-7
SUN	Philemon	1	"	8-9

# 782 Lesson

## GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

**MEMORY VERSE:** “And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever” (2 Samuel 7:16).

### TEXT: 2 Samuel 7:1-29

**D**avid brought back the ark of God to Jerusalem in the preceding chapter and began to enjoy a reign of peace and rest from all his enemies. While ruminating on divine goodness, mercies and presence he had enjoyed in times of war and peace, he broached the idea of building a temple for God, a project Prophet Nathan promptly endorsed. That same night, however, God came to Nathan and gave him a message for David. As noble as his plans were, he did not have the Lord's approval. Truly, **“There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand”** (Proverbs 19:21). God had another plan for him and his posterity that far exceeded what he had conceived. What a great and marvellous God we serve: One whose thoughts and ways are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8,9). We thus learn to commit all our ways into His hands and lean on Him to fulfil all that He has promised us.

**Question 1:** What was David's concern in the text and how does that apply to believers today?

**GODLY CONCERN FOR A BEFITTING PLACE OF WORSHIP** (2 Samuel 7:1-3; 1 Chronicles 17:1,2; Proverbs 11:14; Nehemiah 1:3; 2:17-20; Haggai 1:4,8; Psalm 69:9; John 2:14-17)

**“And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest roundabout from all his enemies; That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains”** (2 Samuel

7:1,2). Though David was chosen and anointed by God to be king over Israel, he went through trials, temptations and hardship. His ascendancy to the throne would have been practically impossible given the array of forces and obstacles that confronted him. While ruminating over his travails and numerous divine interventions that brought him from tending the sheep to the throne, David thought it right to use his moment of peaceful reign to serve God by way of building a befitting place for His ark. He wanted to reciprocate divine goodness by doing something for His glory. Thus, he considered it unethical to dwell in a stately palace while the ark of God dwelt within curtains.

Grateful souls who have enjoyed divine benevolence cannot be contented living in comfortable houses while the church of God is in shambles. God is not happy with indifference to building a befitting place of worship for Him. **“Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house”** (Haggai 1:4,9). Like David, believers whom God has lifted up to great estates in life should think of how to use their privileged positions and fortunes for the glory of God and the expansion of His Kingdom, rather than live to please themselves only.

**Question 2: What do believers learn from David’s proposal to build a house for God?**

David, however, did not embark on this noble plan without consulting the Lord. He sought counsel from Prophet Nathan. This is a clear rebuke to all believers who lean on their own understanding. The Bible says, **“Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety”** (Proverbs 11:14). We should seek godly counsel on immediate and future plans so as to receive guidance, whether in the choice of career, marriage, projects, property acquisition or on other issues of life.

From Nathan's wrong approval of David's plan and God's eventual revelation of His mind, Christian leaders should learn to lean on God as they carry out their God-given assignments. Samuel made a similar mistake when God sent him to anoint David to replace Saul. Thus, ministers should be patient in spirit and pray so as not to mislead those who come to them for counsel.

### **GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID AND HIS POSTERITY**

(2 Samuel 7:4-17; 1 Chronicles 17:3-15; 2 Chronicles 21:7; 7:18; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 55:3; Matthew 9:27; Psalm 89:3,4,28,29)

God directed Nathan to reveal His mind concerning the project of building a befitting place for Him. Though He rejected David's proposal to build a house for Him, saying, **"Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in..."**, He acknowledged and appreciated his intention. The execution of the project was to be handled by his son, Solomon who said, **"the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart: Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name"** (2 Chronicles 6:8,9; 1 Kings 8:18). God reserves the right to reject or approve of our good intentions.

Prior to the revelation of the covenant, God reminded David of his humble beginning as a shepherd boy and how divine benevolence lifted him to the throne, granted him success and victory over all enemies, bestowed the divine presence on him and made him a great name (verses 8,9). He also spoke about granting His beloved people of Israel a permanent settlement and protection from their enemies. He ensured that they possessed the land of Canaan and settled them in a nation that could not be conquered by surrounding enemy nations. With the revelation of the past and present favour bestowed on David and His plan for the children of Israel, God made a covenant of mercy with him saying, **"...I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out**

of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: **thy throne shall be established for ever**" (2 Samuel 7:12-16). This is referred to as the Davidic covenant. This covenant is not only with David but with his posterity. A covenant is a legal or contractual agreement between two or more parties with conditions for its execution.

**Question 3: Explain God's covenant with David in the text.**

God's covenant with David had both immediate and future fulfilment. One, the "**seed**" of David who would build God's house found immediate fulfilment in Solomon who built a temple in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 17:13; 22:9,10; 28:6). But a more perfect fulfilment was in Christ who was called the Son of David (Matthew 1:1; 9:27; Luke 1:32). Two, Solomon built a physical temple, but Christ came to build spiritual temples for God's dwelling (1 Kings 8:17-20; Zechariah 6:12,13; 2 Corinthians 6:16). Three, Solomon was enthroned king over the kingdom of Israel but Christ, the "**Son of David**" was crowned the King of kings and shall reign literally in the Millennium Kingdom; He shall reign forever (Isaiah 9:6,7).

Four, it is a covenant of perpetual mercy, unceasing and "**sure mercies of David**" (Isaiah 55:3) which Solomon enjoyed. It also relates to Christ's work of redemption through which penitent and sincere seekers would receive divine mercy. It was this unfailing mercy in the Davidic covenant that two blind men requested when they cried, "**Thou Son of David, have mercy on us**". Five, God promised to chastise David's seed if they disobeyed Him. Nonetheless, all Israel shall be saved



at the Second coming of the Lord. Christ, the Seed of David, only bore chastisement for the sins of mankind for the sole purpose of our redemption.

**Questions 4: Explain the double fulfilment of the Davidic covenant through his seed and how we can benefit from it.**

Moreover, the Scripture reveals that God raised Christ as the promised Seed of David to be our Savior; “...**he raised up unto them David to be their king... Of this man’s seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead... he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses**” (Acts 13:22,23,33,38,39). So, forgiveness of sins, justification, salvation, healing, deliverance, righteousness, holiness, Holy Spirit baptism and innumerable blessings have been procured by Christ for all and are obtainable only by mercy and grace through the Davidic covenant. Besides, believers shall also reign with Christ in His Millennial Kingdom. The literal reign of David and Solomon ended long ago but the blessings of the covenant will forever be enjoyed by those who believe in Jesus Christ.

**GRACIOUS APPRECIATION TO GOD AND PETITION FOR CONTINUED FAVOUR** (2 Samuel 7:18-29; 1 Chronicles 17:16-27; Psalms 102:18,28; Ezekiel 36:37; Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 2:8,9)

After receiving this covenant from God through Nathan, David appreciated His goodness. “**Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears**” (verse 18,22).

**Question 5: What should believers do when they receive God's favour?**

David was full of praises to God for the favors and mercies bestowed on him. As believers, we should never think our achievements are by our own merit but by grace. **“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God”** (2 Corinthians 3:5). David knew he could not have attained his present status without God. He affirmed that He raised him from a humble background to great honors. Thus, we should ascribe all we have and are to the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8,9).

David afterwards prayed to God to confirm the covenant made unto him. **“And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it forever, and do as thou hast said. And let thy name be magnified forever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee”** (verse 25,26). As David pleaded with God to perform His promises, believers should claim God's promises through prayer of faith. Though God has committed Himself to fulfilling His promises, He requires that we pray for their fulfilment. **“Thus, saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock”** (Ezekiel 36:37). This underscored David's petition that God should do as He had promised. God has made great provisions pertaining to life and godliness through Christ and has given us precious promises through which we can enjoy them. Believers need to acquaint themselves with God's promises concerning every area in their lives and pray to claim them.

God fulfils His promises to those who believe and trust His faithfulness. He answered David's prayer and fulfilled His promises in the covenant through the incarnation of Christ (Luke 1:30-33). As God made a covenant of mercy with David, so will He make with everyone who

establishes a relationship with Him. Those who seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness will enjoy all other provisions. God's promises of abundant life of holiness, dominion, healing and health, deliverance, protection, provision, and heaven, are available for appropriation by all believers.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Hebrews	1-2	Deuteronomy	10-12
TUE	"	3-4	"	12
WED	"	5-6	"	13-14
THUR	"	7-8	"	15-16
FRI	"	9-10	"	17-18
SAT	"	11	"	19-20
SUN	"	12-13	"	21-22

# 783 Lesson

## DAVID EXPANDS HIS KINGDOM

**MEMORY VERSE:** “And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put the garrisons, and all they of Edom became David’s servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went” (2 Samuel 8:14).

**TEXT:** 2 Samuel 8:1-18; 10:1-19

Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, annihilated major enemies of the nation but left the various tribes to conquer the remaining ones within their allotted territories. However, due to lack of zeal and love for the Lord, none of the tribes was very successful in this regard. Had each tribe accomplished total destruction of the enemies, there may be no need for David to fight any war. With time, these nations grew stronger and became snares to Israel. When David became the king, he had to wage wars against them, relying on God’s assurance and promise that “**...thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever**” (2 Samuel 7:16). The Lord gave him victory, expanded and consolidated his kingdom.

In our texts, David initiated aggressive campaigns to conquer and subdue all enemies who dwelt on the land that the Lord had promised the children of Israel. He was successful in this campaign as he subdued all of them.

**DAVID’S CAMPAIGNS AND CONQUESTS** (2 Samuel 8:1-8; 1 Chronicles 18:1-6; Genesis 3:15; Psalm 8:2,3; Revelation 20:1-4,7-9)

After God’s covenant with David, commonly called the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:1-29), the king embarked on a series of wars with renewed vigor against surrounding nations. This was in line with God’s commandment that “**thou shalt smite them, and**

**utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them”** (Deuteronomy 7:2). Prominent among the nations listed for destruction were the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Syria, Amalek and Edom. And in that order, the Philistines were smitten and subdued (2 Samuel 8:1). The Moabites were subdued, reduced to the level of servants and made to pay tributes (2 Samuel 8:2). The Ammonites and the Syrians were all smitten, subdued and made servants (2 Samuel 8:12; 8:3; 10:15,16). The Edomites in league with the Amalekites and other nations that threatened to render previous victories fruitless were conquered by troops led by Abishai and Joab (2 Samuel 8:13,14; 1 Chronicles 18:12; 1 Kings 11:15). The Ammonites’ capital city of Rabbah was besieged by Joab (2 Samuel 11:1) and finally conquered by David (2 Samuel 12:26-31).

These wars of David with the surrounding nations had a greater significance: they specifically encapsulate the great conflict which was ordained from the beginning (Genesis 3:15). They appear to portray the continuation of the spiritual battle between Satan and the lineage of David from which the Seed of the woman was to come. The victories also foreshadow the victory of the Son of David over Satan and the nations which will mass against the millennial city (Revelation 20:7-9).

**Question 1: How central is the Davidic covenant in both the new and old testaments?**

All the seven nations that David warred against were a confederate of proud, selfish, idolatrous war mongers (Psalm 68:30). They, like Satan, fought against the counsel of the Most High and sought to exterminate the people of God. Their confederacy is described in the Psalms. **“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”** (Psalm 2:2,3).

**Question 2: In spiritual terms, what do the wars of David typify?**

In all of David's wars, the Lord preserved him wherever he went. His victories, protection and preservation in the midst of foes should encourage contemporary Christians. **"The Lord preserveth the faithful"; "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely"; and "shall be saved"** (Psalm 31:23; Proverbs 10:9; 28:18). We must live by the word of God if we expect to be kept by His power. Every believer who evangelizes, delivers the oppressed and engages in Christian service is in a holy strife (Philippians 1:27; Ephesians 6:12; Jude 3) and might be exposed to dangers as David but God will always protect His own. Christ said: **"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows"** (Luke 12:7).

**THE DEDICATION OF SPOILS OF WAR** (2 Samuel 8:9-18; 1 Chronicles 18:6,13; Psalm 31:23; Deuteronomy 32:41-43; Proverbs 10:9; 28:18; Luke 12:7; 2 Samuel 8:10,11; 1 Chronicles 18:9,10; Acts 4:34-37; 20:35)

David gathered all the spoils of war along with other presents brought to him and deposited them in the sacred treasury for future use. The king's piety is an example which Christians of all ages should follow.

**Question 3: What treasure must an individual contribute to the kingdom of God?**

Today, the first treasure we must dedicate to God is our hearts. Others – gold, silver, houses, land, talent – must equally be laid at His disposal. Our time should also be used for His glory as we take time off to share the gospel with other people.

**Question 4: What can believers learn from the grateful heart of David to the Lord?**

By laying the best of his treasures before the Lord, David exhibited an unselfish spirit. When his gold and silver increased, he thought of God and the overriding national interest. The Bible says, **"if riches increase, set not your heart upon them"** (Psalm 62:10). Secondly, he displayed a grateful spirit. He recognized



that battles were never won by brawn or brain, but God's providence (1 Chronicles 29:10-14). Thirdly, he exemplified a faithful spirit. The best and the greatest portion of his spoils were devoted to God (1 Corinthians 4:2; Proverbs 3:9,10; Luke 19:13). Finally, his act suggested a devotional spirit.

David was also diligent in appointing qualified leaders into various offices for easy administration of the kingdom (2 Samuel 8:14-18). He was the king and overall head; Joab, the military commander; Jehoshaphat, the recorder; Zadok and Ahimelech, the priests and Seraiah, the secretary. Benaiah was a sectional head over the Cherethites and the Pelethites and David's sons were chief rulers. By devolving power to other sectional heads, David was in a better position to oversee and supervise his rapidly expanding kingdom. So, the king's territory suffered no damage.

**DAVID'S VICTORY OVER THE AMMONITES AND SYRIANS** (2 Samuel 10:1-19; Judges 11: 4-6; Deuteronomy 31:6-8; 1 Corinthians 16:13,14)

David displayed outstanding quality of kindness to the Ammonites. But their rejection of that kindness led to further expansion of his kingdom. Heeding the wrong advice of his princes, Hanun humiliated the ambassadors sent by David. Provocative as it was, David did not make any move until the Ammonites enlisted the help of other nations in a confederacy against Israel. "...**The children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bethrehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ishtob twelve thousand men...**" (2 Samuel 10:6). The display of war tactics, courage and bravery of David's army under Joab and Abishai saw to the defeat of these nations and the Ammonites became slaves to Israel.

<p><b>Question 5: What can we learn from David's kindness and the response of the Ammonites?</b></p>
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David's deed of kindness to the Ammonites and their response throw up some vital lessons. One, it is always

good to show kindness. David, like our Lord Jesus Christ, was full of compassion and mercy even to the merciless. We need to emulate such because we can win more souls into the Kingdom by our deeds of kindness to sinners. Two, we must depend on God, not on the arm of flesh, for guidance before taking important decisions. Hanun's reaction to David's kind gesture, based on the advice of the princes brought evil upon him and his people. Three, sinners and backsliders are consumed with fear and insecurity; fear has torment (1 John 4:18). Therefore, sinners should repent and turn to the Lord while backsliders should pray for restoration so as to be bold before the Lord. Four, the tactics and courage displayed by Joab and Abishai are lessons to us in defeating the cunning craftiness of Satan who is always waging war against believers. Prayer and obedience to the word of God will help believers to plunder Satan's strongholds and liberate the captives for Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Five, all things work together for good to them that love God (Romans 8:28). The twin means of aggressive campaigns and kindness assisted David to expand and consolidate his kingdom. At the end of time, people who make themselves enemies of the cross of Christ will be subdued and punished while those who embrace His mercy and love will reign with Him forever.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	James	1-2	Deuteronomy	23-24
TUE	"	3	"	25-26
WED	"	4-5	"	27
THUR	1 Peter	1-2	"	28
FRI	"	3-4	"	29-30
SAT	"	5	"	31
SUN	2 Peter	1-2	"	32

# 784 Lesson

## DAVID'S KINDNESS TO MEPHIBOSHETH

**MEMORY VERSE:** "And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually" (2 Samuel 9:7).

**TEXT: 2 Samuel 9:1-13**

Our text opens with David's question expressing his desire to extend kindness to the house of Saul, for Jonathan's sake. In spite of Saul's unprovoked persecution and oppression, David remembered the sacrifice and selfless love of Jonathan and determined to reciprocate it. Usually, most leaders who assume office against all odds embark on revenge missions against their real or perceived enemies. David did not. He did not allow the gall of bitterness to develop into hatred against Saul's offspring. Also, his new position as king did not becloud his sense of gratitude towards a man who, at the risk of his own life, saved him from the sword of Saul. Such is the attitude of a person whose relationship with the Lord is sound and convincing.

How David went about seeking and restoring Saul's estate to his children and grandchildren and the special privilege accorded Mephibosheth, though lame in both feet, form the discourse in this study.

**DAVID'S DETERMINATION TO RECIPROCATE JONATHAN'S KINDNESS** (2 Samuel 9:1,2; 10:2; 1 Kings 2:7; Matthew 5:44,45; 18:35; Mark 11:25; Ephesians 4:31,32)

**"And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"** (2 Samuel 9:1). David's request to extend kindness to the house of Saul was out of a genuine and sincere heart. This attitude marked him out from people of the world who would have seen their

ascension to power as an opportunity to deal with their perceived enemies or those who had persecuted them unjustly. Recall that David was hunted for a long time by Saul for no fault of his. He hid in caves and mountains in order to escape his spies and murderous attempts. But for God, he would have died before getting to the throne. Now at the helm of leadership in the nation, he could have marked out Saul's descendants and those who took sides with him for elimination. If he wanted to avoid being labelled a vengeful king, he could use the services of the secret agents to carry out the executions. David's attitude shows that, one, he was forgiving. He generously forgave Saul for his unjustified persecution and other oppressive actions against him. He ignored the tendency to remember the hurt and harm inflicted on him. Two, in spite of his other challenges, he did not overlook the good deeds of Jonathan, but remembered his unqualified love. Three, he did not draw a battle line between him and the house of Saul; he drew them with a cord of love. Four, he did not subtly develop a program or policy of systematic oppression, elimination or annihilation of the house of Saul as some would do against their opponents.

**Question 1: Itemize the godly qualities exhibited by David in this passage.**

David's action is in perfect consonance with God's express word against retaliation, victimization and oppression. It says, **"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing"** (1 Peter 3:9; see also, Leviticus 25:17; Romans 12:17; Leviticus 19:18; Proverbs 20:22; 24:29). Instead, we are admonished to show mercy and kindness even to the undeserving (Matthew 5:44,45). True believers in Christ should be willing to forgive, ready to do good and support the oppressed, downtrodden people. The idea of retaliation or revenge should be strange to them. They should imbibe the godly traits manifested **"in the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel"** (2 Samuel 23:1).

**Question 2: What can believers learn from David's attitude to show kindness to everyone left in Saul's family?**

**DEMONSTRATION OF GENUINE KINDNESS TO MEPHIBOSHETH** (2 Samuel 9:3-8; Isaiah 43:4,5; 41:8-10; Titus 3:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:18,19; 1 Cor. 15:10)

**“And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?”** (2 Samuel 9:3). David demonstrated genuine love and kindness to Mephibosheth, despite his physical deformity. Mephibosheth could have been ignored easily by the society, but he became a delight of the king of Israel. The king brought him to wine and dine at his table, thus giving him the status of a prince among the privileged few in the land. Mephibosheth himself confessed that he was no better than **“a dead dog”** (2 Samuel 9:8). The king's action can be likened to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to mankind which is not premised on personal qualification or endowment, but on Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross. No one merits the privilege of getting to heaven and sitting with the King of kings in His kingdom, but for His work and atonement on our behalf. Christ Jesus reconciled mankind to himself, even when we were unworthy and dead in our sins and trespasses (2 Corinthians 5:18,19). He, through His priceless mercy, quickened us (Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13) and made us sit together with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6,7). Christ is the Qualifier of the unqualified, the Savior of the condemned and Lifter of the downcast. He remembers the forgotten, exalts the downtrodden and gives hope to the discouraged.

**Question 3: How should believers relate with the less-privileged in the society?**

Mephibosheth was awe-stricken because he least expected the honour that was given to him. He exclaimed, **“What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?”** (2 Samuel 9:8). Redeemed sinners who benefit from the mercy of God need to acknowledge, with all humility, that it is of the mercy of

God that they got saved, not by personal qualification (Ephesians 2:8,9; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Titus 3:5). The realization of this should keep every believer in check lest they fall from grace.

### **THEY DELIVERY OF SAUL'S ESTATE TO MEPHIBOSHETH** (2 Samuel 9:9-13; 4:4; 19:28-30)

**“Then the king called to Ziba, Saul’s servant and said unto him, I have given unto thy master’s son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house”** (2 Samuel 9:9). King David did not have any sinister motive in bringing Mephibosheth to the palace other than to honour him and deliver his fathers’ estate to him. Here, he fulfilled his promise by ordering Ziba, Saul’s servant, to restore all that belonged to Saul to Mephibosheth. Backsliders who return to Christ will have their lost inheritance of peace, joy of salvation, assurance of sonship and righteousness restored to them. Also, their portion in the kingdom of God shall not be taken away when they go to meet the Lord.

David delivered on his promise to Mephibosheth, first, to show kindness to him for Jonathan’s sake; second, to exalt him from obscurity and uplift him from despondency associated with his physical challenge; third, to ensure that justice was done since his father’s inheritance rightly belonged to him; and fourth, so that the remembrance of Jonathan would not be forgotten from among his people. As King David used his position to favour Mephibosheth, believers should use their positions of authority to give hope to the hopeless, help the less-privileged and ensure that justice and fairness reign.

Ziba, Saul’s servant promised to diligently carry out the king’s biddings concerning Mephibosheth. **“Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king’s sons”** (2 Samuel 9:11). Like Mephibosheth was invited by King David into the splendor of the palace, Christ is inviting



all people into His kingdom with a promise of freedom from sin, satanic oppression, bondage to the enemy, etc. Those who honour this invitation shall be blessed here and hereafter. He says, **“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me”** (Revelation 3:20).

**Question 4: What are the benefits believers in Christ stand to enjoy today?**

Believers are blessed with the privilege of salvation, divine healing, sound health, deliverance, victories in life’s battle, and eventual reign with Christ. Like Mephibosheth, we should not allow our physical, social or financial disability to rob us of the great provisions and privileges that abound in the kingdom of God.

**“So, Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king’s table; and was lame on both his feet”** (2 Samuel 9:13). Saul’s grandson continued to enjoy the great privileges thrust upon him by the king in Jerusalem. A major condition of continuing to enjoy God’s great salvation is to abide in Him (John 15:4,5; Hebrews 3:14). He promised that if we continue in His word, we shall abide with him forever. **“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”** (John 14:3).

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	2 Peter	3	Deuteronomy	33-34
TUE	1 John	1-2	Joshua	1-2
WED	“	3-4	“	3-4
THUR	1 John	5	“	5-6
FRI	2 John & 3		“	7
SAT	Jude	1	“	8
SUN	Revelation	1-2	“	9

# 785 Lesson

## DAVID COMMITS ADULTERY

**MEMORY VERSE:** “And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die” (2 Samuel 12:13).

**TEXT: 2 Samuel 11:1-27; 12:1-31**

David had been a great warrior right from his youth when he was shot to limelight by defeating Goliath, the Philistine giant. He maintained consistent victories over Israel's enemies even as he roundly defeated the coalition of the Syrians and Ammonites in the preceding chapter. In the present texts however, we see this valiant warrior humiliated and prostrate before a hideous enemy, the flesh. David yielded to the demand of his flesh and committed adultery with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife in violation of God's commandment that **“Thou shalt not commit adultery”** (Exodus 20:14).

Rather than repent immediately after the ugly incident, he assailed to hide it, perhaps for fear of suffering public disgrace. Thus, David hatched different plots that included getting rid of Bathsheba's husband. He had forgotten that the word of God says, **“there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known”** (Luke 12:2). God sent Prophet Nathan to open up his can of worms and pronounce divine judgment on him and his posterity for his sinful acts. Believers need to learn that the flesh is a deadly monster that must be constantly tamed to avoid ruining their chance of entering heaven. They must imbibe the principle of self-discipline to avoid suffering similar spiritual fate. Apostle Paul said, **“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway”** (1 Corinthians 9:27). David's sin of adultery, his unsuccessful cover-ups, the wrath

of God he incurred, and his repentance are discussed in this lesson.

**Question 1: Identify the enemy that conquered David in the texts.**

**DAVID'S TEMPTATION AND FALL** (2 Samuel 11:1-4; Proverbs 7:26; Genesis 3:1-7; 1 John 2:15-17; Matthew 4:1-7; 6:13; 26:41; Luke 4:13; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 10:13, 1 Timothy 6:9; Job 31:1)

**“And it came to pass after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him; and all Israel, and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah, But David tarried still at Jerusalem”** (2 Samuel 11:1).

There is something significant about this period: it was the time kings **“go forth to battle”**. But David chose to tarry still at Jerusalem. This was a very costly mistake because there is a time and purpose for everything on earth. If David had been in the right place at the right time, he would not have been a victim of Satan's ploy to soil his testimony and garment of righteousness.

Rising from his bed at eventide and walking about on the housetop exposed the great warrior-king to a battle he never prepared for and, unfortunately, he lost out. This degrading defeat was not in the hands of enemy nations but from his own flesh. This evil had been the undoing of many people - leaders, great men like Samson, Reuben, Judah, Solomon and many contemporary believers. The Scripture warns against **“the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...”** (1 John 2:15-17). **“For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life”** (Proverbs 6:26).

Some careless believers have made a shipwreck of their faith because they failed to **“abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul”** (1 Peter 2:11).

**Question 2: In what areas should believers watch against immorality today?**

Christ's teaching on adultery reveals that the sin is actually committed before it happens in real life. He says: **"whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"** (Matthew 5:28). In God's reckoning, everyone who lustfully gazes at the opposite sex is a fornicator or an adulterer even when he has not gone into the real act. Things that incite and inflame the flesh are projected on multiple fronts in our society today, especially with the advancement of modern technology. No one needs walk around on rooftop before being confronted with David's kind of temptation. Live and still images of nude people litter social media platforms and are accessible on laptops, tablets, and cell phones. Pornography and obscenity in mass media and the Internet is the norm today. But the fact that it is becoming socially acceptable can neither change God's judgment on those who indulge in them.

Believers can overcome this evil by obtaining the sanctification experience, forsaking all appearances of evil, refraining from gazing at objects of temptation, avoiding sinful curiosity and passion, reading and meditating on God's word regularly, praying for preservation from evil and yielding or consecrating all members of the body entirely to the Lord. Job's consecration was: **"I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"** (Job 31:1).

**Question 3: Explain Christ's teaching on adultery and how believers can overcome this evil.**

From David's fall, believers must learn that, one, Satan is watching for their unguarded hour. Two, there should be no place for loose living. Three, the best of saints can be defeated after victory. Four, a believer's fall can have terrible consequences on himself and his posterity. Fifth, the backslider should promptly repent instead of covering up sin. Sixth, God still restores those who sincerely repent of sin.

**DAVID'S ATTEMPT TO COVER UP SIN** (2 Samuel 11:5-27; Proverbs 1:10; Ezekiel 33:12,13; Luke 13:1-3; Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 32:3; 1 John 1:8)

**“And the woman conceived and sent and told David, and said, I am with child”** (2 Samuel 11:5). On hearing this, David planned to cover up his sin by plotting to kill Uriah. He recalled him from the war front with the pretext of showing concern for his safety. The king instructed him to **“Go down to thy house and wash thy feet”** but it was meant to ensnare him in his (the king) mess. **“And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing”** (2 Samuel 11:11). Like Uriah, members of the church should maintain their consecration to the Lord. Uriah's self-control (which the king lacked) was a glaring rebuke of his betrayal and sin.

Having failed in his first cover-up effort, the king made Uriah drunk with wine with intent of making him return to his house to meet with his wife. This design was meant to result in a disputed paternity of the child. This also failed. Lastly, David sent a letter through Uriah to Joab, the army commander to set the former up to be killed. Thus, Joab became an accomplice in the death of Uriah. **“And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab, and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also”** (2 Samuel 11:17). David caused Uriah's death contrary to the word of God.

After Uriah's death, David sent and took Bathsheba to be his wife (2 Samuel 11:27). The journey into sin and backsliding goes from one level of degradation to the other. When sinners attempt to cover up sin, more sins are committed. David added murder, covetousness, hypocrisy and criminal conspiracy to his sin of adultery, all because he failed to promptly repent. **“But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.”**

**Question 4: What are the consequences of attempting to cover up sin?**

David's fall was a sad turning point in his life as there was a sharp decline in his life, family, nation and ministry. Believers are warned to flee from all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Things were never the same for David after this inglorious and shameful sin.

**DIVINE JUDGMENT FOR SIN AND DAVID'S PENITENCE** (2 Samuel 12:1-31; Psalm 51:1-17; Romans 12:6; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 14:10-12; Jeremiah 3:12,13,22; Proverbs 28:13; Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11)

God sent Prophet Nathan to David after the child was born to reveal his sin and the accompanying judgment. Nathan presented a parable on the merciless act of a rich man who used the only lamb of his poor neighbor to entertain his own guest. David responded in anger and pronounced a death sentence on the anonymous culprit, including a four-fold restitution for being so merciless before he knew that he was actually the offender. Nathan then bluntly revealed: **"Thou art the man"** (2 Samuel 11:7). Like Nathan, believers must faithfully declare the divine message without adulteration so that it can yield the desired fruit of righteousness in the lives of others.

Nathan also declared the grievous judgment of God for his sins. **"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus, saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun... because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die"** (2 Samuel 12:10-14). God is holy and just in His judgments; He hates sin and loves righteousness. Anyone who toys



with sin will definitely incur His wrath, irrespective of position, social status, political or religious title.

When David told Nathan, **“I have sinned against the Lord”**, he did the right thing. Believers should learn to accept responsibilities for their conduct and, if in error, should admit and repent promptly. This is because every unpardoned sin, hidden or open, shall be judged. **“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”** (2 Corinthians 5:10). David’s wholehearted repentance and earnest prayer for mercy and restoration is recorded in Psalm 51 as a model for every sinner or backslider on how to reconnect with God and be restored to His favour.

<b>Question 5: What does God expect all sinners to do today?</b>
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From the eventual repentance of David, we learn, first, that every secret sin is an open scandal before God. What David tried to cover up with the death of Uriah was not hidden from God. Second, **“Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished”** (Proverbs 11:21). God will always punish un-confessed sin, no matter the pedigree of the sinner, for God is not a respecter of persons. Third, secret sins eventually leave open scars. What David covered up for close to one year eventually became a scandal that affected many of his children.

It is important for the believer to know however, that the hope and promise of forgiveness is no license to sin. Apart from our ignorance or lack of knowledge of our length of life and when the rapture will take place, the scars that follow a pardoned sin, like we see in today’s study, might be too heavy a price to pay.

As a king, it was commendable on David’s part that he eventually humbled himself before God for his sins. Others deny, with empty boldness, when they are confronted with their errors. Instead of humility and genuine repentance, many choose to bluff their way through blatant lies. God expects all backsliders to repent.

The closing verses of the texts carry mixed blessings. The fruit of adultery David fasted to be preserved died in divine displeasure, but a second child was born by Bathsheba whom David named Solomon, a man of peace in view of God's promised reign and the peace that he obtained following his restoration. God also sent Nathan to christen Solomon with a second name, "**Jedidiah**" which means 'beloved by Jehovah'. That this son would eventually take the seat of David reminds us of the amazing grace of God that turned the shameful chapter in the life of David into a story of unmerited favour. God still forgives sins if there is genuine repentance, plea for mercy and faith in Christ, our Advocate and Propitiation (Hosea 14:4; 1 John 2:1,2). Aside victory over sin, there was also conquest of Rabbah, the city of the children of Ammon by David's army.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Revelation	3-4	Joshua	10
TUE	"	5-6	"	11-12
WED	"	7-8	"	13-14
THUR	"	9-10	"	15
FRI	"	11-12	"	16-17
SAT	"	13-14	"	18
SUN	"	15-16	"	19

## END OF OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

# BEGINNING OF NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

## 786 Lesson

### PRECEPTS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

#### **TEXT: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28**

The hope of rapture of the saints expounded in the previous chapter is both sobering and comforting. However, mere expectation without thorough preparation will lead to disappointment (Matthew 7:21-27; 25:1-13; Luke 13:26-30; Psalm 5:5-7; 2 Timothy 2:19). This study focuses on believers’ assurance in respect of last day events, identifies key elements that distinguish saints from sinners, and advocates maintenance of believers’ distinctiveness. Apart from being truly converted to Christ, contemporary Christians must totally conform to the word of God and be tenaciously committed to His cause.

**Question 1: What are Christ’s expectations from believers?**

**BLESSED READINESS AHEAD OF THE DAY OF THE LORD** (1 Thessalonians 5:1-4; Isaiah 2:12; 13:9; Jeremiah 46:10; Joel 2:1,11; Amos 5:18; 2 Peter 3:10-14)

**“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night”** (1 Thessalonians 5:1,2). In this epistle, the day of the Lord is treated as a period of unprecedented wrath upon humanity for their wickedness, unrepentant posture and rejection of God’s grace offered through Christ (Isaiah 13:6-11; Joel 2:11-13; 2 Peter 3:10). Unfortunately, sinners are unmindful of this, not for

lack of adequate information, but essentially because they are blinded by the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). Though sinners have access to God's word, they generally trivialize vital truth, wax gross with unbelief and get inescapably caught in the throes of latter-day indignation (Matthew 13:4-7; Mark 4:4-7; Luke 8:13; 21:34; 2 Corinthians 4:3,4; 1 Timothy 6:9,10; 1 John 2:15,16). However, faithful believers in this dispensation will not partake of the wrath as they would have left the earth in the rapture to be with Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

<b>Question 2: What is the attitude of sinners to the gospel?</b>
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Every rapture-conscious believer should be expectant like the five wise virgins waiting for the return of the bridegroom. One, the unpredictability of the exact moment of its occurrence should always evoke a sense of sobriety and watchfulness (Matthew 24:3-14,36,42-44; Acts 1:7; Revelation 16:15). Two, Christians should realize that faith in Jesus Christ unites us with other believers. As such, we should not forsake the enriching fellowship of precious believers (Hebrews 10:24,25; Proverbs 27:17; Isaiah 35:3,4). On the other hand, we should avoid needless intimacy with unbelievers in order to avoid spiritual contamination (Proverbs 9:6; John 17:6; Acts 2:40; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Revelation 18:4). Three, believers should **"...not sleep, as do others"** (verse 6). We should avoid every kind of spiritual lethargy and insensitivity that could lead to unwariness and carelessness (1 Corinthians 1:7; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; 2 Peter 3:12). Rather, we should maintain self-control (1 Thessalonians 5:6; Luke 22:46; Romans 13:11-14; Ephesians 5:14). Four, expectant believers should always seek heavenly treasures above mundane things (Luke 12:34; 21:34; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:1-3). Five, since the rapture is expected to launch believers into eternal rewards, we should serve God faithfully and relentlessly (1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 6:10). Six, we should put **"on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation"** (verse 8). Without faith, it is impossible to please God; and without love,

it is impossible to serve Him acceptably or reach men effectively with the gospel.

**BELIEVERS' RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD LEADERSHIP AND THE LAITY** (1 Thessalonians 5:5-15; Hebrews 13:7,17; 1 Peter 3:22; 4:8; Proverbs 20:22; Luke 6:35; John 13:34,35; 2 Thessalonians 3:13-16; Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:12,13)

In view of the imminent blessed hope, this section exhorts believers to practical holy living among the brethren and towards others. It also highlights the responsibilities of Christians towards their spiritual leaders. We are expected to **"know"** our leaders. This implies recognizing them as God's representatives who have oversight functions in God's house for the advancement of His project in the world through edification and mobilization of the church. Every member must therefore accept, appreciate and obey them in submission to the divine will. Secondly, we are expected to **"esteem them very highly in love"**. Though there is need for continuous personal development of leaders in Christian assemblies, basically, the respect given to them is not earned by physical attributes; it is conferred and commanded. Even where filial or other secular relations exist between a leader and some members in the fold, leaders must nevertheless, be honored **"for their work's sake."** Their work is appointed by God primarily for the benefits of the church, and the world. Therefore, a slight on a leader in a Christian setting is an affront to the appointing Authority (Mark 9:37).

The epistle also highlights admonitions that bother generally on responsibilities towards members in a Christian assembly. First, is the maintenance of peace among the brethren and with the leadership. We must deliberately avoid rancor, fault-finding and the like (Romans 14:17-19; Ephesians 4:3; Colossians 3:13-15; James 3:18). This usually requires forbearing and forgiving offences whenever they occur. Also, believers are exhorted to **"...warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak..."** (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Here, Paul tries to correct the widely held notion that these are purely pastoral functions.

### Question 3: How can members assist the pastor in his work?

Born again Christians should assist leaders in a church by correcting erring members in love and truth. One, they should speak against the introduction of corrupting practices or worldly influence in the church. Two, parents must inculcate Christian standards in their children. They must correct strange manifestations in speech, conduct and practice. Three, they can report seemingly incorrigible deviants to the pastor for further help. Four, members should organize relief for the elderly, bereaved, unemployed or sick brethren. Five, members can carry out diligent and thorough follow-up on new converts with a view to disengaging such from attachment to long held traditions which tend to limit our liberty in Christ. Six, we should dutifully remind one another of the Lord's imminent return and the need to be ready at all times.

As believers, in respect of our dealings with all people, we should “**...be patient toward all men.**” This implies that we should not easily give up on the possibility of anyone coming to terms with the truth on repentance, restitution, holiness, comportment to Christian standards or overcoming any obvious weakness. Also, we should not hastily judge the action or motive of others negatively (1 Corinthians 13:4; Galatians 5:22). The last of the admonitions in this section is an offshoot of the foregoing: “**See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men**” (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

### **BASIC PRECEPTS FOR RADIANT CHRISTIAN LIVING**

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-28; Romans 12:12; Ephesians 4:30-32; 1 Peter 1:1-6; Acts 17:11; Philippians 1:10)

While not being needlessly hilarious or frivolous, sobriety is not an excuse for melancholy. “**Rejoice evermore**” (1 Thessalonians 5:16). Compliance with this command is proof of continuing internal joy. However, the joy of the righteous is not a product of mere mundane

matters, but a result of right relationship with the Source of interminable joy. The born again rejoices for God's remission of past sins, righteousness graciously imparted, redeemable promises, hope of final redemption and eternal rewards. Even when there is a harrowing experience of hardship, persecution or poverty, rather than being moody, the believer rejoices. A joyful destiny commands a joyful disposition (Psalm 97:12; Proverbs 17:22; Matthew 5:12; Acts 5:41; James 1:9; 1 Peter 4:8,13). Though there will always be need for prayers in the life of a Christian or a church, there should always be thanksgiving for already answered prayers as well as for petitions awaiting answers. **"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"** (1 Thessalonians 5:18; Psalm 34:1; Ephesians 5:20; Hebrews 13:15). Joyfulness and thankfulness are proofs of vibrant Christian faith and God's abiding Spirit.

Our conduct in fellowship or response to God's word determines the level of our spirituality. The admonition, **"Quench not the Spirit"** is of great relevance to Christians in contemporary times.

**Question 4: Mention some attitudes that can constitute distraction to spiritual growth.**

So, we must avoid every disturbing act such as side talks, attending to phone calls, distracting movement or indecent posturing during fellowship meetings. As believers, we are expected to fuel the flame of the Spirit by regular meditation, self-examination and rededication to God. No one should resist the transforming influence of the Holy Spirit. Correction must be heeded promptly.

**Question 5: What are the consequences of despising God's word today?**

A disregard of God's word may manifest in lack of enthusiasm to listen to faithful ministers, opposition to sound doctrine, or reluctance to make Scripture-based amends to one's life. Such rebellion pitches one against the Lord, excuses one from His kingdom



and makes one condemnable (Psalm 50:22; Hebrews 12:25). However, to avoid the danger of straying into error through a counterfeited process, believers must try to verify the authenticity of any prophecy. This is even more necessary in this end times.

As the epistle winds to a close, three vital recommendations stand out. Firstly, the apostle model's reciprocal supplication between the leaders and the led. While he prayed and assured the church of God's ability, willingness and faithfulness to fully sanctify, he, in turn, requested for their prayers too. **"Brethren, pray for us"** (1 Thessalonians 5:25). Christians must cultivate the habit of trusting God for every need and pray for their leaders. It is instructive that Apostle Paul's request here has no particular specification or limitation. This indicates the need for Christians to pray on all points for both ministerial as well as personal needs of our leaders. Secondly, he advocates mutual affection among members. **"Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss"** (1 Thessalonians 5:26). It was common in Paul's culture to greet friends with a kiss on the cheek. The men greeted other men this way, and the women did the same with other women as an index of personal affection, not romantic love. Thus, the apostle encourages outward physical expression of true Christian love in a way that is culturally acceptable in our localities without breaking scriptural bounds.

Thirdly, by insisting that the epistle be read aloud, he recommends that members are well-informed in the Scriptures.

The study finally concludes with an apostolic benediction, **"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you"** As in all his other epistles, Paul the apostle reminds us of the indispensability of God's Resources at Christ's Expense (G.R.A.C.E). Everything that believers enjoy in Christ is by grace, not on the basis of merit or good works. By God's grace, believers' needs are met, their prayers are answered, they enjoy divine visitation and obtain the Christian experiences that make them walk in godliness and ready for heaven.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

	<b>MORNING</b>		<b>EVENING</b>	
MON	Revelation	17-18	Joshua	20-21
TUE	"	19-20	"	22
WED	"	21-22	"	23-24
THUR	Matthew	1-2	Judges	1
FRI	"	3-4	"	2-3
SAT	"	5	"	4-5
SUN	"	6-7	"	6

# 787 Lesson

## COMMENDATION OF THE BELIEVER AND CONDEMNATION OF THE UNGODLY

**TEXT: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12**

**MEMORY VERSE:** “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:7,8).

The second epistle to the Thessalonians was said to have been written soon after the first one while Paul was still working in Corinth with Silas and Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Acts 18:5). The Apostle was informed that his first epistle caused a mixed reaction among the brethren in the Thessalonian church. Many of them were confused about the timing of Christ’s return, while some thought the day of the Lord had already come or that a particular time had been set for it. As a result, they became idle, disorderly and refused to engage in any meaningful work since, according to them, it would be needless in view of Christ’s imminent return (2 Thessalonians 3:11).

The Apostle needed to write therefore to clarify his message on Christ’s second coming and correct perceived misunderstandings. Moreover, he set out in the epistle to comfort the suffering, persecuted saints, and charge the careless, unruly ones to be disciplined and diligent in lifestyle. The chapter under consideration challenges the believer to grow in grace, be exemplary in character, persevering in persecution, and **“be worthy of [His] calling”**, so as to **“fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness”** (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

**Question 1: How can Christian leaders ensure the brethren are sound spiritually and doctrinally?**

As a follow-up letter, the epistle is meant to encourage young and persecuted converts to establish them in the

sound teaching of the word of God so that they could be preserved in the truth. Soul-winners and workers in the church should not hesitate to teach and mentor young converts through personal visitation, letter writing, sending of text messages, e-mail or other useful means of communication in order to conserve them in the Kingdom of God.

### **PRAISE FOR GROWING AND WORTHY BELIEVERS:**

(2 Thessalonians 1:1-4; 1 Peter 2:2; Romans 1:8-12; 1 Corinthians 1:4-6; Ephesians 1:15,16)

Paul, the apostle, begins the epistle with his characteristic salutation “**...unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**” (2 Thessalonians 1:1,2). His introduction is similar to the earlier one to the same church (1 Thessalonians 1:1). Here, he is full of appreciation to God for their faith which had witnessed phenomenal growth. “**We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth**” (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

**Question 2: Why did Paul praise God on behalf of the Thessalonian brethren?**

The Christians in Thessalonica grew spiritually in the midst of persecutions. That their faith grew exceedingly implied that they became more and more established in the truth of the gospel. The Apostle expressed his great esteem for them because their lives brought glory and honour to God. He chose to speak of what was praiseworthy in a way of thanksgiving to God. He was grateful, not because the church had a growing popularity in the society, but in faith. Despite their growing challenges, they had a living and abiding grace which made their faith to grow to match their challenges. Obviously, they grew from salvation to sanctification and the experience of the Spirit's baptism. Believers today – whether new or old – should seek to grow steadily

spiritually. We should **“all come in the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”** (Ephesians 4:14). Indeed, we are commanded to keep growing in the spirit till the day of Christ (1 Peter 2:1,2; 2 Peter 1:3-11; 3:18).

Then he spoke of their **“charity”** – love – abounding. Where faith grows, love will abound, for faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). It is also noteworthy that the Apostle acknowledged their patience and faith in persecutions and tribulations which they endured principally for the cause of Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:4). When Christians continue to live for God and labor for the furtherance of the gospel despite their persecution and hardships, they become models and motivation to other Christians.

**PUNISHMENT FOR UNGODLY AND WICKED PERSECUTORS** (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Ezekiel 25:17; Matthew 5:10-12; Hebrews 10:30; Philippians 1:28-30)

As expected, the Thessalonians were persecuted because of their steadfastness and unwavering faith. They were persecuted because they would not compromise and conform to the evils of their day. The Apostle admonished them not to see this as strange because it was necessary **“that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God”** (verse 5). It is certain that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12; Acts 14:22; Philippians 1:28). As for reproach, ridicule, victimization, deprivation, even martyrdom, Christians should joyfully endure knowing that a great reward awaits them in the kingdom of God (Matthew 5:10-12).

**Question 3: What should be the attitude of a Christian to persecution?**

When Christians are persecuted, they should not seek revenge or resort to self-pity or compromise with the persecuting world. Rather, they are to rejoice and be glad because they are partakers of Christ’s suffering (1 Peter 4:13).

However, the Lord promises a just and equitable recompense for persecutors who refuse to repent and embrace Christ. “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God

to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you” (2 Thessalonians 1:6). The Christians’ unjust suffering from persecutors is a sign that the persecutors will experience God’s just retribution. Great indignation will come upon the persecutors because they rejected the offer of salvation, abhorred the light and hated righteousness, purity, the name of Jesus Christ and the people of God. This is a serious warning to those who have decided to work at cross-purposes with God and His word. The Lord has fired a warning shot to His adversaries because they shall be taken in their nets if they die persecuting the people of God. They should remember Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, and others. God will surely defend His children.

**Question 4: Distinguish between the rewards of the unrighteous and the righteous.**

Since God is a God of justice, right recompense of reward will be meted out to both the righteous and unrighteous at the end of the age. Faithful Christian believers will be rewarded with rest from all troubles and glorification in Christ. On the other hand, those who know not God or obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be justifiably rewarded with tribulation and everlasting destruction in eternal lake of fire (Mark 9:42- 44).

**PRAYER FOR GODLINESS AND GLORIFICATION OF TRUE BELIEVERS** (2 Thessalonians 1:11,12; Philippians 1:8-11; Colossians 1:9-12; Ephesians 1:15-19; 3:14-19)

Seeing that a great reward and recompense awaits both sinners and saints alike, Paul the apostle resorted to prayers for the believers **“that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power”** (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

Prayer is a great resort for necessary transformation in order to please the Lord in all things. To be worthy of God’s high, heavenly and holy calling, to live a life that is well pleasing unto God, we must pray for ourselves and intercede for others faithfully.

In most of the Pauline epistles, we encounter the Apostle's fondness for prayer for the brethren. To the Romans, he wrote: **"without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers"** (Romans 1:9); to the Ephesians, he said: **"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"** (Ephesians 3:14,16). This is a challenge to all Christians, especially leaders to give themselves to praying always for all saints (Ephesians 6:18,19; Acts 6:4).

The content of Paul's prayer for the Thessalonian believers is very instructive. One, he prayed that God would count them worthy of this calling; that is the calling to remain pure and holy in Christ till the day when He shall come to be glorified in His saints. Two, that they might have grace to live godly and glorified lives in Christ. The reason for our creation and redemption is to bring glory to God. Three, that God would fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power in them. Four, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in their lives. Five, that believers would be glorified in Christ. Let all Christians and ministers of the gospel be pre-occupied with the spiritual welfare and wealth of other believers in their prayers and intercessions.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Matthew	8	Judges	7
TUE	"	9	"	8
WED	"	10	"	9
THUR	"	11	"	10-11
FRI	"	12	"	12-13
SAT	"	13	"	14-15
SUN	"	14	"	16



# 788 Lesson

## WARNING AGAINST DECEPTION IN THE LAST DAYS

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

### **TEXT: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17**

**P**aul the apostle taught the Thessalonian recipients of this epistle about the certainty of Christ’s Second Coming. While they were eagerly waiting for His return, some erroneous teachers began to teach among them that the rapture had already passed. Expectedly, this falsehood generated tension, fear and insecurity in their hearts. When this deception, orchestrated to overthrow their faith, filtered into the ears of the Apostle, he wrote to debunk the error as well as re-emphasize the truth he ably communicated in his first epistle to them (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Like Paul, ministers of the gospel should watch against deception in lifestyle and doctrine, commit themselves to untiringly teach the truth that saves, sanctifies and prepares the flock for heaven. The Apostle’s warning is predicated on the danger deception and peddlers of falsehood pose to the Christian faith and our hope of heaven. The Adversary’s purpose is to deceive, discourage, destroy and damn men’s souls through false doctrines (2 Peter 2:1-3).

**MISINTERPRETATION OF THE TIME OF CHRIST’S SECOND COMING** (2 Thessalonians 2:1,2; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 7-11; Luke 21:9,19; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Matthew 24:6-14,31; 2 Peter 3:3-8)

Paul the apostle wrote to the Thessalonian brethren to correct the erroneous teaching that the post-rapture day of the Lord or the day of divine judgment upon the world had come. The implication of this error was that the Thessalonian believers had been left behind. This falsehood gained originality from spurious claims that it was a new revelation by the “**spirit**”, “**word**” of mouth

or “**letter**” purportedly written by the Apostle. Some mischievous impostors actually wrote to the church in Paul’s name to make this falsehood believable. On discovering this deceit, the Apostle passionately pleaded with the church not to believe any doctrines, dreams or revelations that lead astray.

**Question 1: State the error that was spreading among Thessalonian believers and its implication.**

The proliferation of religious literature, audios and visuals and the multimedia channels of spreading falsehood worldwide make this plea more relevant to present-day believers. Besides, “**Even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time**” and that “**Many false prophets**” and “**many deceivers are entered into the world** (1 John 2:18; 4:1; 2 John 7). The Apostle clarifies, in consonance with other New Testament scriptures, that deception in the last days will lead to “**a falling away**” from the faith near the Second Coming of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1,2; 2 Timothy 3:1-7; 4:3-5). This agrees with Christ’s warning that false Christ’s will emerge to show “**great signs and wonders**” in order to deceive (Matthew 24:24). Their ability to conceal their real identity as “**wolves**” in outwardly pious religious gab will make unsuspecting believers let down their guard and become easy preys.

**DESCRIPTION AND DAMNATION OF DECEIVERS AND THE DECEIVED** (2 Thessalonians 2:3-5,8-12; Daniel 7:25; 8:9-11,25; 1 John 2:18,22; 4:1-6; Isaiah 14:12-15; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Hebrews 2:3; Ephesians 5:6; Romans 1:23,24,28-32; 2 Peter 2:1-3)

The Antichrist, the grand deceiver, is described in the text as “**...that man of sin ...the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God**” (verses 3,4). He will be the embodiment of sin, lawlessness, rebellion, blasphemy, wickedness and apostasy. This great world leader who will arise during

the great tribulation is also referred to as the beast, prince, king of fierce countenance and the Antichrist (Daniel 8:23-25; 9:26; 11:36; 1 John 2:18; Revelation 13:1-17). He will violently oppose every form of true worship and will enthrone himself in the temple of God, claiming to be God and demanding worship. Those who refuse to worship him will be severely tortured and many will be martyred.

**Question 2: From the text, why is the Antichrist described as “the man of sin” and “son of perdition”?**

The Antichrist will be empowered by Satan who has been a liar, deceiver, seducer and corrupter from the beginning. He has lying spirits that perform lying wonders (1 Kings 22:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). His interpretations of Scriptures, gifts and favors are deceptive and destructive (Genesis 3:4-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3,4; Revelation 13:14-18; 14:9-12). Satan, as Lucifer, deceived about one-third of the angels, and together with them staged a failed coup in heaven against God. His incurable evil ambition of becoming God led to his expulsion from heaven to the earth.

The mystery of iniquity that is already at work through agents of the Antichrist would climax during the great tribulation when, “**with all power and signs and lying wonders**”, the son of perdition will unveil a policy of peace to achieve massive deception. Though looking like a lamb, he will be diabolical and destructive (Daniel 8:24).

As forerunners, present-day antichrists use lying signs and wonders to delude multitudes of people who love miracles more than salvation and worldly ease more than heaven. Interestingly, Christ teaches that we can identify end-time deceivers “**by their fruits**” (Matthew 7:15,16). Modern-day false teachers will not appear outwardly as deceivers but the fruits of their life and labor, message and ministry, fellowship and followers will reveal their true identity as persons who possess gifts without grace, charisma without character, love without light, tenderness without truth, hospitality without holiness, worship without the word, eloquence

without enlightenment, prosperity without purity and success without salvation. As deceivers, they pretend and pose as shepherds, but they do not protect and feed the sheep with the substance of the word of God; they devour the sheep and make merchandise of them.

**Question 3: How can believers identify false prophets and teachers today?**

The Apostle's rhetorical enquiry that: "**Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?**" referred to the truth he had communicated in his first epistle to them. Having placed a curse on himself or any other preacher or angel that would introduce any other gospel, he re-emphasized the same truths he had always taught. Christ's teaching on salvation, restitution, sanctification, Holy Ghost baptism, marriage, rapture, Second Coming, heaven and hell are unchanging. Believers should cultivate the habit of regular intake of the Word to avoid losing their conviction and the risk of being tossed about by destabilizing winds of erroneous teachings. Ministers also should employ all available means to constantly remind the flock of God's word to preserve them from being preyed by deceivers.

The Lord Jesus will slay the Antichrist at His coming. "**Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.**" People who do not love or who abandon the truth that saves, sets free and sanctifies are given over to "**a reprobate mind**" and "**strong delusion**" of deceivers and will be eternally damned (Romans 1:28; 2 Thessalonians 2:11). God expects everyone who hears the gospel to believe and be saved but "**he that believeth not shall be damned**" (Mark 16:16). Believers must therefore beware lest they throw their souls into the mouth of "**ravening wolves**" disguised in "**sheep's clothing**".

**DIVINE RESTRAINT ON THE ANTICHRIST** (2 Thessalonians 2:6,7; Genesis 6:3-5; Isaiah 59:19-21; 1 John 2:18; 4:3-6; Galatians 5:16,17; Revelation 20:1-3)

Prior to the day of the Lord and the full manifestation of the Antichrist, the Apostle hinted that the church will **“be taken out of the way”** at rapture. The Holy Spirit who indwells the Church now **“withholdeth”** or restrains the full manifestation of the Antichrist. He will not be available after the rapture to hold back lawlessness from overflowing and overturning the world.

The Holy Spirit restrains, limits and neutralizes the plans and activities of agents of Satan through the believers’ prayers, gospel- preaching and godly influence. Indwelt by the Spirit, the believer is a co- laborer with and battle axe of God. Seventy disciples of Christ dethroned Satan from the communities they reached with the gospel; Paul the apostle broke the influence of Bar-jesus from Sergius Paulus and Philip loosened the hold of Simon the Sorcerer over Samaria by the operations of the Holy Spirit.

<b>Question 4: When will the man of sin be revealed and why?</b>
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Apostle Paul uses the words **“And then”** in verse 8 to show that it is only after the rapture that the Antichrist or the **“Wicked”** will fully manifest.

**SALVATION AND SANCTIFICATION OF HEAVEN-BOUND BELIEVERS** (2 Thess. 2:13,14; John 15:16,19; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Acts 15:7-9; Ephesians 1:4-7; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 4:3,4,7,8; 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:12-14; 2:10,11; Colo. 3:4)

Moving from the revealed damnation of the Antichrist, false prophets and their deluded followers, the Apostle now praises God for **“brethren beloved of the Lord.”** Having responded to God’s call through the gospel, they were converted (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

It needs be underscored that God, in His sovereignty, has chosen everyone to be saved (2 Peter 3:9) and offers this salvation through the gospel. **“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit.”** And those who accept His choice, repent of sin and believe in Christ are

saved. Essentially, God initiates our salvation: **“The LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself”** (Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2) but we must appropriate His provisions for our salvation for it to become effective in our lives (Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15,20). Those who reject or turn away from the Lord make His choice of none effect in their lives (Matthew 13:15; Acts 28:27) and incur eternal suffering. Moreover, God expects everyone He saves to be conformed to Christ through sanctification of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:4-7; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,4,7,8; 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:12-14) in preparation for the final salvation. Sanctification is a gracious experience of inward holiness provided by Christ and performed by the Spirit in consecrated and surrendered believers. The ultimate outcome of our salvation, **“the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ”** will be the crowning joy and blessedness of our response to God’s call and choice.

**Question 5: Why are salvation and sanctification experiences indispensable for everyone to enter heaven?**

**EXHORTATION TO STEADFASTNESS** (2 Thessalonians 2:15-17; Romans 15:4-7; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Philippians 2:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3; 4:13-18; 5:11-15; John 14:16-18; Hebrews 6:18-20).

In view of the predicted **“falling away”** from the faith, the appearance of the son of perdition, the rise and deception of false prophets and antichrists, the danger of being seduced by counterfeit miracles, false signs and lying wonders, and the necessity of possessing **“the love of the truth”**, these brethren were called to greater faithfulness and unwavering steadfastness. Saved and sanctified, they were exhorted to **“stand fast, and hold the traditions which [they] have been taught, whether by word, or by our epistle.”** Contrary to the doctrine of eternal security of saved souls, the Apostle clarified that present salvation does not automatically lead to final salvation. Believers must persevere and maintain their spiritual experiences of salvation and

sanctification while upholding unadulterated truths of the Word to obtain eternal glory.

The “**traditions**” Apostle Paul refers to here are not “**the traditions of men**” which “**make the word of God of none effect**” or “**spoil**” or damn people’s souls (Mark 7:6-9,13; Colossians 2:8). Any traditions which are contrary to the word of God are worthless, dangerous and soul-damning.

The Apostle prays for the Thessalonian believers in the closing verses of this chapter to receive divine comfort. He recognizes Christ as well as God the Father as the Source of our comfort, love, consolation and hope. Suffice it to say that comfort or consolation from earthly sources will fade away and terminate at death. Redeemed by God’s love, we have “**everlasting consolation**” and “**good hope through grace**” which shall continue to strengthen and sustain us to the conclusion of time when we shall enter the everlasting Kingdom.

While still on earth, God who saves us through Christ also enables and establishes us “**in every good word and work.**” The good word and work are the indisputable proofs of our conversion. Being establish in them by way of good works is the antidote to yielding to falsehood.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Matthew	15	Judges	17-18
TUE	“	16-17	“	19
WED	“	18	“	20
THUR	“	19	“	21
FRI	“	20	Ruth	1-2
SAT	“	16	“	3-4
SUN	“	22	1 Samuel	1



# 789 Lesson

## ADMONITION AGAINST IDLENESS

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread” (2 Thessalonians 3:12).

**TEXT:** 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18

Apostle Paul ended his epistle in the previous chapter with prayers for the Thessalonian brethren. He prayed that God would comfort and establish them in the faith. As he rounded off this second epistle to the Thessalonians, he exhorted them to **“pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith”** (2 Thessalonians 3:1,2). While he had condemned unruly behavior exemplified by laziness (1 Thessalonians 4:11; 5:14), it was apparent that there were some that did not take the admonition seriously. Thus, he had to re-echo the same message with greater emphasis.

Apostle Paul was informed of the disorderly walk of some brethren in Thessalonica, and he used the information to teach them on the expected attitude to heretics and the disobedient within the fold. Information to ministers that is aimed at promoting godliness and practical obedience to God’s full-orbed truth is scriptural and such should be encouraged.

**PURPOSEFUL MUTUAL PRAYING FOR GOSPEL WORK** (2 Thessalonians 3:1-5; 2 Corinthians 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; Acts 4:24-31)

**“Finally, brethren, pray for us”.** Paul underscored the importance of prayer in the concluding chapter of this epistle. He strongly believed in the potency of prayer. While he was a prayerful person himself, he enlisted

the brethren to pray for him. By this request, he wanted all God's children to be partakers in His work. While everybody cannot be pulpit ministers, every person can pray for the success of the gospel. His request for prayer is not only for ministers but also for all saints (Ephesians 6:18).

<b>Question 1: What was Paul's prayer request for the Church?</b>
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Apostle Paul's prayer request was hinged on three factors. One, that the word of the Lord may have free course. Two, that the word of the Lord be glorified. Three, that they will be delivered from evil men. These requests give us a guide on how to pray for the messengers of God and their messages. It is instructive that these requests were not centered on mundane things but on spiritual matters. The gospel is to be freely applied to all men, and it is glorified when it is attended by large number of recipients, heard with reverence, cheerfully obeyed and believers' lives transformed by it.

There had been several oppositions to the gospel. The Sadducees and Pharisees constituted great opposition in Christ's time. Despite all the antagonisms by evil spirits, and men energized by Satan, the gospel had and will remain invincible. Jesus said: **"upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"**. The church will continue to move forward. Apostle Paul's expression of confidence in God and the brethren teaches that ministers of the gospel are to be positive in their expectation from members, believing that God will help them.

The coming of Christ and the need for patience while waiting cannot be over-emphasized. Therefore, the Apostle prayed that **"the Lord direct [their] hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."** In the midst of sufferings, trials and persecutions, the Lord expects that we manifest patience because **"...he that shall come will come, and will not tarry"** (Hebrews 10:36,37). The hope of Christ's imminent return should comfort the hearts of true Christians who are bereaved, suffering, sick and

persecuted. It should also make us watchful and compel us to preach the gospel as Christ commanded.

**THE PROBLEM OF IDLENESS AMONG THE SAINTS** (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Timothy 3:5; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 6:9)

**“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us”.** Paul had exemplified, both by teaching and practice, the indispensability, desirability and dignity of labor. Yet, there were some who walked disorderly among the brethren as they refused to work. The mistaken belief that Christ would soon come induced some of the Thessalonians to idleness. They opined that if Christ was to come soon, of what value would their labor be? But they erred. God, at the beginning, commanded Adam to till the ground. Christ said, **“I must work”**. Apostle Paul’s confession showed that he labored so much with his hands. **“Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.”**

The idle person is injurious to himself and to others because he will lack necessities of life and be dependent on others. Those who are idle in the church are not helpful because they will lack the resources to provide for the needs of their families and support gospel work. Truly needy brethren cannot receive any assistance from them. They are also injurious to the community because they will discourage industry.

<p><b>Question 2: Enumerate the possible dangers that are associated with idleness.</b></p>
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The church must not encourage idleness through charity for the indolent. Rather, brethren are to withdraw fellowship from such as a corrective measure. **“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from**

**every brother that walketh disorderly**". The goal of discipline is to correct by making such people ashamed. Withdrawal of fellowship and admonition are vital tools in helping the idle people who despite encouragement to work and still remained unyielding.

**Question 3: What are the types of disciplinary measures that had been used in the Scriptures?**

While everyone should work to earn their living, they should be encouraged to give to the needy as well as God's work. There are always genuine cases of need. People may be adversely affected by disasters like famine, socio-economic downturn, unpaid salaries, incapacitating sicknesses and others. To such, the Lord expects the church to rise to the duty of help and hospitality and furnish them with such things as are necessary. With such sacrifices, God is well pleased (Hebrews 13:16).

**APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION FOR SAINTS** (2 Thessalonians 3:16-18; Romans 15:33; John 14:27; 20:21; 1 Corinthians 16:21; Romans 16:20)

Apostle Paul ended this second epistle with an apostolic benediction: **"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all"** (verse 16). This has been his pattern of writing. Here, he wishes them peace which the Lord alone gives. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. To have certain and durable peace, sinners must repent of their sins and accept Christ as Lord and Savior, while believers must abide in Christ. The world is indeed full of upheavals and this will definitely escalate as the age winds down, but believers are assured of peace. **"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"** (Philippians 4:7).

**Question 4: Identify the prayer wishes of Apostle Paul for the Thessalonians.**

As his usual practice, the apostle showed affection for the Thessalonian brethren and commended them to the grace of God. God's grace is all that every heaven-bound pilgrim needs as he journeys towards heaven. Grace is the unmerited favour God freely bestows on the morally weak but repentant sinner by saving him from sin. We need grace to live victoriously and serve God acceptably. Grace and peace are like twin blessings that make the believer live the days of heaven on earth. Peace is the effect of grace obtained from God within the soul (Colossians 1:14; Romans 5:1). It is the divine rest and tranquility in the heart that attests to the reality of cancelled sin and entry into God's family (Ephesians 2:18,19). How we need to ask for grace and peace for ourselves, family and others!

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Matthew	23	1 Samuel	2
TUE	"	24	"	3-4
WED	"	25	"	5-6
THUR	"	26	"	7-8
FRI	"	27	"	9-10
SAT	"	28	"	11-12
SUN	Mark	1	"	13

# 790 Lesson

## CHARGE AGAINST FALSE DOCTRINE

**MEMORY VERSE:** “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so, do” (1 Timothy 1:3,4).

### TEXT: 1 Timothy 1:1-20

**T**he epistles of Paul to Timothy are called Pastoral Epistles. They are written to exhort, instruct, warn and encourage ministers and believers to remain godly and steadfast in the faith. This first epistle consists in admonitions, plainly setting out the duties of faithful pastors. Before Paul exhorted Timothy to stand against false doctrine and advance the gospel of Christ, he had declared himself as the **“apostle of Jesus Christ”**. He addressed this epistle to Timothy whom he described as **“my own son in the faith”** (verses 2).

Paul and Timothy were on gospel itinerary to Macedonia via Ephesus. They however discovered that false teachers had begun to undermine the great work done in Ephesus. The Apostle had to excommunicate the two ringleaders of the heresy, namely, **“Hymenaeus and Alexander”** (1 Timothy 1:20). He left Timothy in charge of the church there in Ephesus and went to Macedonia. While there, he wrote two letters, one to Titus in Crete (Titus 1:5) and another to Timothy in Ephesus with a charge to maintain doctrinal purity. **“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightiest charge some that they teach no other doctrine”** (1 Timothy 1:3).

A study of this epistle is relevant to our contemporary world and churches today because of the similarity between their situation then and now. Both the Old and New Testaments speak against the admittance of false teachers in the fold. **“But the prophet which shall**

**presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak or that shalt speak in the name of other gods, even the prophet shall die”** (Deuteronomy 18:20).

Though we are not to put people to death in the New Testament dispensation, we must resist false teachers and their teachings. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ warns us in His sermon on the mount to be wary of “**false prophets**” who, though come in “**sheep’s clothing**” are actually “**ravening wolves**” (Matthew 7:15).

<p><b>Question 1: What should be our attitude as Christians to false prophets?</b></p>
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**EXPLICIT WARNING AGAINST FALSE DOCTRINE** (1 Timothy 1:1-11; Matthew 16:6-12; Galatians 1:6-10; Matthew 24:4,5,11-13,24,25; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1; Jude 4,12-19)

Paul, as a good shepherd and a minister with the mind of Christ, was mindful of the evil false doctrine can do in the church of God. False doctrine cannot be separated from false teachers just as a book cannot be separated from the author. He explicitly warned Timothy “**to charge some that they teach no other doctrine**” other than the ones he had handed over to the churches at Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse and Thessalonica. He warned that no innovation should be made either in the apostle’s doctrine itself, or in the manner of teaching it. This brings to the fore the need for a continuous watch against false doctrine wherever it surfaces. And as believers, we should not “**give heed to fables and endless genealogies**”. We must bear in mind that sound doctrine is corrupted, not only by false opinions, but also by utterances which do not help our faith in any way.

It is well known and documented that false teachers lead sinners farther away from the cross of Christ by preaching the doctrine of eternal security, promoting worldliness, lesbianism, homosexuality, polygamy, gay marriage and antichrist philosophies. They attempt to



take believers out of the narrow way by perverting the doctrine of holiness and righteousness. Therefore, every form of false doctrine should be vehemently rejected and resisted by believers. **“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 3).

**Question 2: What should be the believer's attitude to false doctrine today?**

Believers should take their stand against false doctrine by obeying God's word in all circumstances, avoiding false teachers like one would a contagious disease and follow **“charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned”**. This, of course, is what keeps them from veering off from the path of righteousness into empty disputes on spiritual things, or **“vain jangling”**.

Apostle Paul also emphasizes the purpose of the law. For instance, the ceremonial law was a schoolmaster to lead us unto Christ, and He is the end of that law for justification to everyone who believes. But false prophets do not use God's words for the purpose for which they were given. In other words, they do not interpret the law according to its spirit and design; hence, they do not use it lawfully.

Again, the expression, **“the law is not made for the righteous”** needs to be explained for clearer understanding. It does not mean that the righteous are lawless. It simply means that the law does not stand against the righteous; it does not condemn him because living by grace, the righteous lives to the glory of God, and so, does not expose himself to its reprimand. This is not true of unbelievers. But the false prophets will interpret this passage out of context to mean that the believer should disregard the laws of God. This is a pointer that false prophets and teachers are spiritual criminals who will receive God's inevitable eternal judgment for polluting the gospel of Christ and recruiting candidates for hell.

**Question 3: What penalty awaits teachers of false doctrine and their supporters?**

**EXTRAORDINARY SALVATION OF A WICKED AND PERVERTED SINNER** (1 Timothy 1:12-17; Acts 4:12; Proverbs 28:13; John 3:1-7; 1 John 3:8,9; Ephesians 2:8,9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 3:20; Acts 9:1-18)

The miraculous transformation and regeneration that Paul had when he encountered the only Savior of the world, Jesus Christ lingered in his memory for the rest of his life. His salvation was extraordinary; it was through a divine encounter. He had been a great persecutor of early Christians and was the one who took custody of the clothes of the mob that stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7:58). But the Lord arrested him, and he admitted that his salvation was by mercy and not by merit. No one gets saved on account of good works but only by grace.

It was on his way to Damascus to arrest the Christians that he had an unforgettable encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ that led to his surrendering his life to Christ. Describing his sinful state before salvation, Paul, the apostle, said he **“was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious”** person; classifying himself as the foremost of sinners.

**Question 4: What was the spiritual state of Paul before his salvation? How can a sinner be saved?**

Paul's salvation confirms that God's grace is always available to save all sinners who come to the Savior for salvation, and that all sinners who truly repent of their sins will surely receive God's pardon. The blood of Christ is powerful enough to blot out past sins. All that a sinner has to do is to recognize the biblical conclusion that he is a sinner (Romans 3:23), confess and forsake those sins (Proverbs 28:13) and accept Christ as Lord and Savior (Revelation 3:20). Paul's salvation demonstrates that all sinners who repent will be saved. If an unrelenting and dreadful sinner like Paul could be saved, every sinner can repent today and have their names in the book of

life, no matter how vile. God is ready to forgive (Isaiah 1:18).

### **EXPRESS CHARGE TO WAR A GOOD WARFARE**

(1 Timothy 1:18-20; 6:12; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:3,4; 4:7,8).

Paul here charged Timothy to be faithful to the Captain of salvation, contending against sin and striving to save sinners. Timothy, like every believer today, was expected to contend with earnestness as a Christian and a minister in the holy service in which he was engaged, and endeavor to secure the victory. That is the good warfare. As a true soldier of Christ, he was not expected to permit false doctrine in the church of God. He was supposed to **“contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 3). That is what we are also expected to do today because false teachers are crafty wolves clothed as faithful prophets. They are daring in their approach, deceitful in appearance, destructive in their application of biblical principles and determined to attack innocent souls (1 Kings 13:11-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 2 Timothy 2:17,18).

A Bible scholar likens a believer who embraces false teaching or give up the faith to a soldier who throws away his armour and to a sailor or pilot who abandon his helm and compass. Those who thus reject God and the gospel have made shipwreck of their faith, an allusion to ships that are ruined by storms on the high sea.

True believers must watch against false teachers and their doctrines; pray for grace to maintain the standard of holiness; expose and warn others of the dangers of false doctrine; remain steadfast and unmovable in God’s service; live blameless and harmless lifestyle and determine to make heaven at all costs.

<p><b>Question 5: What should true believers do to resist false doctrine and teachers?</b></p>
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Paul echoed the importance of avoiding throwing away the faith citing the examples of Hymenaeus and Alexander whom **“he delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme”** (verse 20). Such was a replica of the type given to a man who committed immorality in the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 13:2,10). The church should not tolerate any form of sin especially heresy. Those who are found to be heretic in their teachings should be vehemently rejected and strictly avoided, however highly placed in the church, before they pollute the whole of congregation (Titus 3:10).

As believers who have pledged our allegiance to the King of kings and Lord of lords, we should make up our minds to get involved in purging the church of false prophets and their teachings by joining the church leadership in exposing them. False teachings embedded in tracts, books, CDs and VCDs should be avoided by the membership of the church. Every member is to **“Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”** (Hebrews 12:14), but not at the expense of sound doctrines.

### DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Mark	2-3	1 Samel	14
TUE	“	4	“	15
WED	“	5	“	16
THUR	“	6	“	17
FRI	“	7	“	18-19
SAT	“	8	“	20
SUN	“	9	“	21-22

## END OF NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

## BEGINNING OF SPECIAL STUDIES

# 791 *Lesson*

## THE NEW BIRTH

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

**TEXT:** John 3:1-7

**T**he new birth is the foundational spiritual experience everyone must have. Jesus underscored the importance of this experience when He spoke to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews (John 3:3). No one can claim to have a relationship with God or enter His Kingdom without being born again. Any favors God bestows on people are designed for this singular purpose: to draw them to obtain this experience. He has also promised to bestow countless other blessings on people who seek and obtain His righteousness through the new birth experience.

**Question 1:** Why is the new birth an indispensable Christian experience?

The importance of this experience cannot be overstressed. The new birth is the beginning of a life-long experience of walking with Christ. Of all the experiences that a natural man can have, the new birth is the most glorious. Without it, the spiritual life cannot be enjoyed.

Nicodemus, a man of high social and religious standing in Israel, marveled at the message and necessity of the new birth. This shows that salvation cannot be obtained through participation in religious activities, memorizing the doctrines of the Bible and trying to be morally good. An inward change wrought by the Holy Spirit is the only means that makes the new birth possible.

There are those who believe that they are saved because they have godly parents. Others bask in being raised in a Bible-believing church. Yet, some people hold to “good works” as their hope of salvation. All who want to make heaven their eternal abode should realize that apart from Christ, every other ground is “sinking sand.”

### **A RULER AND HIS PROFESSION** (John 3:1,2; 7:50-53; 19:39; Acts 26:24-29)

Our text reveals a ruler of the Jews “named **Nicodemus**” (verse 1). Nicodemus was not just a Pharisee, he belonged to the Sanhedrin, the highest ruling religious council. As a Pharisee, he was learned in the Mosaic laws. He was a defender of the law and would not want it to be broken (John 7:50,51). This prominent religious leader of the Jews came to Jesus by night. He had an issue bothering his mind. As a Pharisee and a ruler, he was not bold enough to come to Jesus within the public glare. Yet, he could not stay away either because he felt there was something uncommon about Jesus.

**Question 2: Why are many people reluctant today to surrender their lives to Christ?**

In his confession, Nicodemus declared Jesus as Master (Rabbi); that He is a Teacher come from God and an extraordinary miracle worker with God’s backing. He acknowledged His great and unusual ministry. His encounter with Christ was not like those of other Pharisees and Jewish leaders who were looking for ways to ensnare Him. Nicodemus was sincerely concerned for his soul and was convinced that Christ could show him the way into the kingdom of God. Convinced that something was missing in His life, though he was religious, he came to Christ to know the truth. How eternally rewarding if people would cast aside their religious garb and descend from their lofty positions to seek the most important experience in life!

### **THE INDISPENSABLE QUALIFICATION FOR ENTRY INTO GOD’S KINGDOM** (John 3:3,5-8)

As Nicodemus spoke of Christ's greatness, Jesus answered, **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"** (verse 3).

Jesus was unequivocal in revealing that there is an experience which qualifies one for the kingdom of God. This experience is variously called the new birth, salvation, regeneration, being born again, justification, conversion, redemption, etc.

To be born again is to become a new creature in Christ. It is a change or transformation that comes through the renewing of the mind by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. John Wesley described the new birth as "that great change which God works in the soul when He brings it into life; when He raises it from the death of sin to life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the almighty Spirit of God when it is created anew in Christ Jesus; when it is renewed after the image of God, righteousness and true holiness. Then the love of the world is changed into the love of God; pride into humility, aggression into meekness, hatred, envy, malice into a sincere, tender love for mankind. It is that change whereby the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is turned into a Christ-like mind.

**Question 3: Describe, in your own words, the new birth experience.**

Man was created by God in His own image and likeness. God is holy and righteous and so man originally was holy and righteous. Then sin came, and man became depraved, without any ability to do good. From Adam's fall, all that are born inherited the sin nature. Indeed, after the fall: **"there is none righteous, no, not one."** All are qualified for hell. Therefore, everyone born into the world must be born the second time if they are going to be delivered from the nature and power of sin. The new birth experience is not optional for all who desire to enter into heaven.

**Question 4: Mention some religious activities that people often mistake for the new birth experience.**



There are activities that do not qualify as substitutes for the new birth experience. Examples of these are regular church attendance, being a worker or leader in the church, ability to recite large portions of the Bible, being a moralist and a keeper of the law, observing the ordinances of water baptism, Lord's Supper, and such like. No religious activity can take the place of the new birth. Religious pilgrimages and other rituals or ceremonies will not do.

It is noteworthy that Jesus said the new birth is by water and the Spirit (John 3:4,5; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 1:23; John 15:3; Titus 3:5). The word of God is compared to water that cleanses because it washes away sin. As the word of God is proclaimed, the sinner and the self-righteous see the need to repent and trust the Word for forgiveness and cleansing. Jesus said, **“ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you”** (John 15:3).

Also, the Spirit of God is indispensable in the work of regeneration. There can be no transformation except there is a renewing of the mind by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is One that reproves of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). The natural man cannot change himself. The Spirit brings conviction as one hears the Word, leading to repentance and conversion.

**COMPARISON AND CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TWO BIRTHS** (John 3:6-10; Ephesians 4:17,18; Romans 9:6,8; Mark 12:32-34; Acts 17:23-25; Isaiah 48:8; Acts 28:27; John 3:6; Galatians 5:19-23; John 1:12,13; Job 14:1; 15:14; Colossians 1:13,14; John 6:37; Psalm 51:5; 2 Peter 1:3,4).

**“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again”** (John 3:6,7).

The Lord compares the similarities and differences between the natural and spiritual birth. Although a baby exists in its mother's womb, it is not counted as part of the family before it is born into the world. So,

it is with spiritual birth. One may be interested in the Word of God, fellowship in a gospel church but cannot be regarded by God as part of His family until he or she is born again.

Secondly, an unborn child is completely in darkness. Even though it may be breathing in the mother's womb, it does not see the sun and everything around. It has eyes, but it cannot see. So are sinners or the unregenerate. They may have physical eyes, but they are blind spiritually. Again, the unborn baby dwells in total darkness even though it might be deriving some nourishments from the mother. The same is true of anyone who is not born again: he may enjoy some provisions and protection from God, but he is still in darkness spiritually.

Thirdly, an unborn baby seems to be very near yet very far. Its conception may bring joy into the hearts of other members of the family. Older siblings may rejoice and expect to have someone added to the family. But it is difficult to predict its future.

Fourthly, an unborn baby derives sustenance from its mother, yet it does not know her; the mother is the unknown personality supplying all its needs. Although, the Lord gives the sinner light, food, rain, etc., he does not know Him as Father.

As there are similarities, so there are also contrasts. The natural man is ruled and controlled by the dictates of the flesh. But to be born of the Spirit is to experience transformation and live by the Holy Spirit. Two, when a man is born of the flesh, he is born of the will of man. But when such becomes born again, they are born by the Spirit of God.

Three, the natural birth brings one into the world of sin. Spiritual birth takes away from the world of sin into the kingdom of God.

Four, natural birth takes place without one's personal decision. But spiritual birth needs a personal decision.

Five, when one is born of the flesh, one possesses the depraved, human nature but when born of God, one possesses the divine nature.

**Question 5: How is the natural birth different from the spiritual birth?**

**STEPS TO THE NEW BIRTH** (Romans 3:23; Luke 18:10-14; Mark 1:15; 1 John 1:9; Romans 10:4-10).

First, the sinner must acknowledge his sinful state because all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Excusing our sin will not do. We must agree with God that we are sinners.

Second, repentance is compulsory. True repentance leads to confession and forsaking of all known sins (Mark 1:15; Proverbs 28:13).

Third, recognize the need for a Savior. No man can save himself. All our acts of righteousness are filthy rags in the sight of God.

Fourth, believe that Jesus died for our sins. Anything besides the blood of Christ cannot atone for sin (John 3:16).

Fifth, the sinner must invite Jesus into his life as personal Savior and Lord. Jesus will not save anyone against their will; He will not do it by force. He stands at the door of the heart knocking and waiting for to be let in (Revelation 3:20).

Sixth, the sincere seeker must believe that his sins are forgiven (John 1:12). All those who truly repent and receive Christ become new creatures.

**Question 6: What is the evidence of the new birth experience?**

Many people have been unable to experience this great blessing because they think their money, water baptism or tears will buy the experience for them. Others think their sins are too great that they cannot be so easily

forgiven. The truth is, God will not accept any other means of salvation since Christ died for our sins. God counts sin as sin, whether big or small. Believe in His love and faithfulness to be forgiven as He has promised.

Marks of the new birth are clearly outlined in the scriptures (2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 1:11; Galatians 5:22,23; 1 John 3:9; Ephesians 4:23-32). When this miracle happens in our lives, we will know it. Heaven also knows because the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are involved. Our neighbors, family members will know by the fruits we bear. Jesus said: **“by their fruits, ye shall know them.”** When a person is born again, he begins to hate the sins he used to like before. His language, dress code, relationship, etc. will change. Old things will pass away. All lying, stealing, drinking, smoking, cheating, partying, will become things of the past.

The new birth experience is real and glorious. It is the gateway to God’s inexhaustible blessings on earth and in heaven.

DAILY BIBLE READING				
MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Mark	10	1 Samuel	23-24
TUE	“	11	“	25
WED	“	12	“	26
THUR	“	13	“	27-28
FRI	“	14	“	29-30
SAT	“	15	“	31
SUN	“	16	2 Samuel	1-2

# 792 Lesson

## HELL: THE DESTINY OF SINNERS

**MEMORY VERSE:** “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15).

**TEXT:** Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:3-15

**T**he fact and reality of hell are recurring and important themes in the Scripture. It is vividly captured as the ultimate place of agonizing torment and everlasting punishment in unquenchable fire for those who reject the offer of salvation provided by God through Jesus Christ. Yet, the teaching on hell is not popular in many religious circles. Many people have tried to rationalize the truth of the Bible on this subject due to the frightening credentials of the teaching on hell. Against the attempts of many philosophers to make men believe that hell is not a material place of life after death but a phenomenon of the present, the scripture provides unambiguous and ample illuminations of the fact that hell is the indisputable abode of sinners. That the unregenerate, mortal man does not find the knowledge of a certain divinely ordained eternal punishment a convenient subject to face is pitiable. The Scripture truly affirms that **“the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (1 Corinthians 2:14).

**Question 1:** What is the essence of teaching the doctrine on hell?

It should be emphasized, however, that the essence of the teaching of the doctrine on hell is not to scare or frighten hearers but to get them adequately prepared to avert the danger that is inherent in being in that terrible place throughout eternity.

**WRONG NOTIONS ABOUT HELL** (Psalm 9:17; 1Corinthians 2:14; 1:18,21,23)

It is unfortunate that as fearsome as hell is, erroneous and unscriptural views of false teachers have largely interfered with the essence of the message, that is, to forewarn wayfarers of the danger that lies ahead. Even in religious circles, Bible-carrying individuals are not spared this assault.

**Question 2: Mention some erroneous beliefs of religious sects about hell.**

Chief among these false ideas about the eternal doom of the wicked are the doctrines of purgatory and annihilation. The doctrine of purgatory has it that there is an intermediate state between death and appearance before God in judgment where the unrighteous dead remain for a while to suffer during which their concerned savior can “atone” for their sins and “qualify them for heaven”. The second false doctrine – annihilation – states that sinners will be burnt up in hell at once. These doctrines are as false as they are unbiblical. But strange enough, most of the congregations that uphold them believe that there is a place of blessedness where the righteous will live in full consciousness for ever after death. The future punishment of the wicked is eternal while the sinner at death automatically receives an express translation into hell **“where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”** (Mark 9:48). The needless controversy over the reality of hell is not strange. Actually, no man believes in hell because he simply wants to; he believes in hell because he is compelled to do so.

**THE FACT AND REALITY OF HELL** (Psalm 9:17; Matthew 7:15-19; Revelation 14:10,11; Matthew :22,29; 10:28; 18:8,9; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 12:5; 16:19-31; Matthew 25:41-46; James 3:6).

It is true that eternal punishment is not a pleasant subject for discussion, yet it is a fearful reality, an awful and tragic fate of those who fail to appropriate God’s provision for their salvation here on earth. Since God is holy, sin must be punished. To speak otherwise is to **“speak not according to this word... because there**

**is no light in them”** (Isaiah 8:20). Even commonsense agrees that, ‘if there is a paradise for virtues, there must be a hell for [vices] crimes.’

When a sinner dies, his soul immediately proceeds to hell where, with full consciousness, he tastes the excruciating pain that hell offers. The story of Lazarus and the rich man best illustrates the eternal punishment awaiting sinners (Luke 16:23,24). Hell is also a place where the memory of the damned comes alive. The rich man recalled his riotous living while on earth as well as his five brothers that were yet unsaved. Beside the acute discomfort of hell, the regret of an error of judgment while on earth on the part of the unsaved, presents an everlasting torment on its own.

<p><b>Question 3: What does the emphasis in the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ teach us about the reality of hell?</b></p>
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The word of God is clear with respect to the teaching on hell. Every part of Scripture makes it clear that hell is a place of everlasting torment in unquenchable fire. The regular usage of hell in scriptures, apart from the allusions drawn to it by the Lord and other Bible characters, lend enough credence to its reality.

The Lord Jesus Christ spent considerable time affirming this reality. He warned the city of Capernaum, for instance, that it would be turned into hell because of its iniquities (Matthew 11:23,24). He did not mince words as He warned repeatedly on the danger of hell and the need for His listeners to steer clear of it (Matthew 5:22,29,30; 10:28; Luke 12:5). He made it clear that there was everlasting punishment and an eternal abode for all sinners who die unsaved (Matthew 7:15-19; 18:9; Revelation 14:10,11; Matthew 25:41-46). He also repeated three times the fact that, in hell, **“their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched”** (Mark 9:43-48).

The Apostles were also united in their warning against the danger of hell as an eternal place of doom for sinners (Romans 2:5-9; Hebrews 10:26,27; James 3:5,6; 2 Peter

3:7; Jude 7,23). John the Baptist was very clear on the issue and made it plain that **“trees that bringeth not forth good fruit”** shall be **“cast into the fire”** (Matthew 3:7-10). Therefore, the church cannot take a less specific position on the teaching. Those who know the truth (and perhaps taught others) but fail to live righteously should bear in mind that God is no respecter of persons and that **“the soul that sinneth it shall die”** (Ezekiel 18:20) and shall have its **“part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone”** (Revelation 21:8).

**ESCAPING THE DANGER OF HELL** (Matthew 7:14; Isaiah 52:11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1; Revelation 21:1-8,27; 22:14).

**Question 4: To avoid hell, what does God command the sinner and the believer to do?**

It will be utter foolishness for anyone to deceive themselves for any reason and trifle with sin and its consequent eternal doom. Everyone – within and outside the church – must live with the consciousness that **“the wicked shall be turned into hell”** (Psalm 9:17) irrespective of age, sex, social status, educational background, nationality or tribe.

Those whose nature and lifestyle can be described as unclean, those who are beastly and not on the highway of holiness are on the broad way to hell. The way to hell is broad because it has a lot of latitude. In it, there is no restriction, self-denial, submission to God’s will, sacrifice or consecration. Fornication, homosexuality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, lying are some of the sins that characterize the lives of people on the broad way. The destiny of everyone who remains obstinate in sin is hell.

But everyone who seeks to escape from hell must be free from every sin. Those who will escape hell must have a definite change of life, character and aspirations. They must come over from the broad way to the narrow way where they can serve God in holiness, remain



uncompromising and follow the totality of God's word for the rest days of their lives. God wants us to be clean, holy and righteous to be able to get to heaven.

Continuity in the narrow way requires separation from unbelievers to avoid being smeared by unclean, sinful lifestyle. God's express command to everyone is to come out of defilement and sin into the highway of holiness; the sinner must repent of his sins and exercise faith in Christ's blood for cleansing. And those that have entered must not only pray for sustaining grace to continue on the path of holiness and righteousness that leads to the heavenly city but must also help others to come into this narrow path.

## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Luke	1	2 Samuel	3
TUE	"	2	"	4-5
WED	"	3	"	6-7
THUR	"	4	"	8-9
FRI	"	5	"	10-11
SAT	"	6	"	12
SUN	"	7	"	13

# 793 *Lesson*

## THE URGENCY OF OUR TASK

**MEMORY VERSE:** “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: The night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

**TEXT:** Luke 13:1-5; Ezekiel 3:17-21; John 4:35-38

**T**he task of taking Jesus’ saving gospel to the sinful and drowning world is urgent and important at all times. The consequences of the gospel if preached or if denied the sinner transcend this transient world.

The task of preaching the gospel is urgent because time is running out. The world will soon come to an end (1 Corinthians 7:29-31; 1 John 2:17) and the opportunity for service to the Lord will also close with it. Since God’s revealed judgment against sinners is unchanging, the unending cry of multitudes of people who would have been saved had they heard the gospel from any believers around them should compel us to reach them with the gospel. There is the dreadful reality that the time of God’s mercy may pass when seekers may not find Him (Isaiah 55:6). It is therefore dangerous to delay or fail to preach the gospel.

Every lost opportunity leaves the heart more hardened and makes it more difficult to come into conformity with God’s will (Hebrews 3:12,13). Lost days of grace amount to incalculable loss. Therefore, believers should preach while the opportunity lasts, and sinners should respond and be saved while the Spirit is calling.

**Question 1:** Why is gospel-preaching by every believer very urgent?

**BELIEVERS’ DUTY AS WATCHMEN** (Ezekiel 3:17-21; 2 Kings 9:17-20; Romans 10:13-15; Isaiah 62:6,7; Jeremiah 6:17; Revelation 3:14-22)

The work of a watchman is to warn others of impending dangers. The prophet is the watchman of God to warn

careless evildoers of the dangers of sin (Jeremiah 6:17). Careless souls move about blindly till doom's day. Scorners may continue jesting till the day of death if no one warns them. Few realize they may be close to death. Many fail to recognize there is only a step between them and death (1 Samuel 20:3). As there are lots of careless people among those who do not know Christ, so there are careless and negligent people among those who profess to know Christ.

<b>Question 2: What is the work of a watchman?</b>
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In the church of God, to aid and abet any sinful conduct is to deny both the overseer of the church the knowledge of his flock about which he must give account to God, and the backslider the opportunity to be availed good counsel and correction of his evil way.

Sinners inside and outside the church must be warned of the danger of sin. Everyone should be given the opportunity of hearing the saving gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). If they hear the gospel and by faith repent from sin and call on the name of the Lord as their personal Lord and Savior, they would be saved, else, they will be damned (Mark 16:15,16). But how **“shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”** (Romans 10:14).

As our lesson today reveals, ours is a God of justice. He does not act indiscriminately. It is the soul that sins against Him that shall die (Ezekiel 18:4). God will not slay the righteous with the wicked (Genesis 18:23-33). When a man sins, the immediate fruit of his action is guilt. He bears the burden of that guilt. What he does with his guilt is very important. He may repent of his sins, call upon God for forgiveness and permit Jesus Christ to wipe away his guilt through His shed blood on the Cross. If he does this, he will be saved. But if he refuses to repent, he will continue to bear the burden of his sins. He risks eternal damnation if no one warns

him of the evil of his way and shows him how to be free. This task of warning the careless and guiding him unto salvation is not optional for the believer. We are compelled to warn the sinner and the backslider to repent; else, we too risk our own place with God. Our souls are in danger of eternal loss except we warn the careless sinner in or out of the church.

**DANGER OF INDIFFERENCE** (Revelation 3:14-19; Ezekiel 34:1-6; Isaiah 32:9; 47:8; Amos 6:1; Zephaniah 1:12; Matthew 22:5; 24:12)

The Laodicean church was indifferent about spiritual things; consequently, it was on the verge of getting its relationship with the Lord severed. The case of the Laodicean church is similar to the state of many believers today. Half-heartedness in the service of the Lord has never pleased God.

<p><b>Question 3: What inevitable end faces the sinner in the church who refuses to repent?</b></p>
---

All those who profess devotion to God but are by their lives and desire uncommitted to Him, are condemned in the Scripture. For example, Saul, the first king of Israel, obeyed God in the mission God sent him, but not wholeheartedly. He was judged and rejected (1 Samuel 15:13-19). Jehu avenged God upon the house of Ahab as God had stated, but he **“took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God...”** and consequently, **“in those days the Lord began to cut Israel short...”** (2 Kings 10:30-32). The people of Judah who the Lord had given a great victory in battle were not total in their devotion to Him. They held on to their idol worship and did not prepare **“their hearts unto the God of their fathers”** (2 Chronicles 20:31-33). So too was Amaziah (2 Chronicles 25:2). Needless to mention Judas Iscariot, who for his partial devotion to the Lord and for the reward of his iniquity, fell headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels gushed out (Acts 1:16-20)

To be indifferent to the cry of dying sinners is to break the already heavy heart of the Lord. He expects that

having saved us, He will use us to save the world (John 17:20; 21:15-17). To be lukewarm, indifferent or nonchalant about the urgency of the task of the gospel is to heartlessly damn the world for which Jesus bled and died (Isaiah 53:1-5).

**Question 4: What are the dangers posed by indifference to the urgency of our task?**

Causes of lukewarm disposition to gospel-preaching include absorption in business (Luke 14:18), procrastination (Acts 24:25), and insensitivity (Acts 28:27). But the Lord is calling us to repentance (Revelation 3:19).

**THE UNDYING VISION** (John 4:35-38; Matthew 18:11; Mark 4:29)

**“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest”** (John 4:35)

To the husbandman or farmer, the long days of toiling and sowing precious seed, contrast sharply with the happy and joyous time of harvest. For him, harvest time comes with great expectation. He looks forward to it with infectious enthusiasm and passion. The Lord in this text draws a correlation between the natural way of sowing or planting seed with the spiritual sowing of the seed of the word of God. In either case harvest time is eagerly awaited.

With the right preparations, the seed sown is sure to germinate with the promise of fruitfulness and a good harvest. But unlike the natural seed which usually took about four months to bear mature fruits, Jesus, who a short while earlier had just sown the precious seed of the gospel into the hungry and ready heart of the Samaritan woman, was expecting immediate results. **“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest....”** The Lord knew that the potent testimony of the Samaritan woman would begin to bear

bountiful fruit immediately, not till four months.

But looking down, His disciples could not see the already ripe bountiful harvest from Samaria about to be gathered into the Kingdom. **“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields,”** Jesus urged the disciples, **“for they are white already to harvest.”** The field of harvest is all around us today. The readiness of the dying world to be saved stresses the urgency of our task to reach the dying sinners around us with the saving gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It also points at the fact that while we continually look down, too preoccupied with the mundane things of life, we fail to see sinners with wounded hearts, bruised by sins and heading towards destruction. Their desperate plea forbids us to linger. It must be now. They are ripe already for the harvest. We are to immediately put in the sickle, because the harvest is come (Mark 4:29).

**THE REWARDS OF SOUL-WINNING** (John 4:36-38; Psalm 126:5,6; Daniel 12:3; Proverbs 11:30; 1 Corinthians 9:19)

The labor of soul-winning is not without reward. Jesus says in our text: **“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal.”** This reward is partly in the present time and in the future also. As the harvester rejoices when his fruits are gathered into the storehouse, so does the soul-winner when souls are won to the Lord. In fact, the more fruit the harvester gathers, the more his joy, so too the greater number of souls won to the Lord, the greater the joy of doing the will of God; for **“Herein is my Father glorified”** Jesus says, **“that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples”** (John 15:8). And this is the primary duty of the believer. Jesus emphasized this when He said, **“ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...”** (John 15:16).

**Question 5: What are your rewards as a soul- winner?**

Beyond the present, the reward of soul-winning is largely in the future when the saints shall be gathered home to glory. **“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”** (1 Corinthians 15:58).

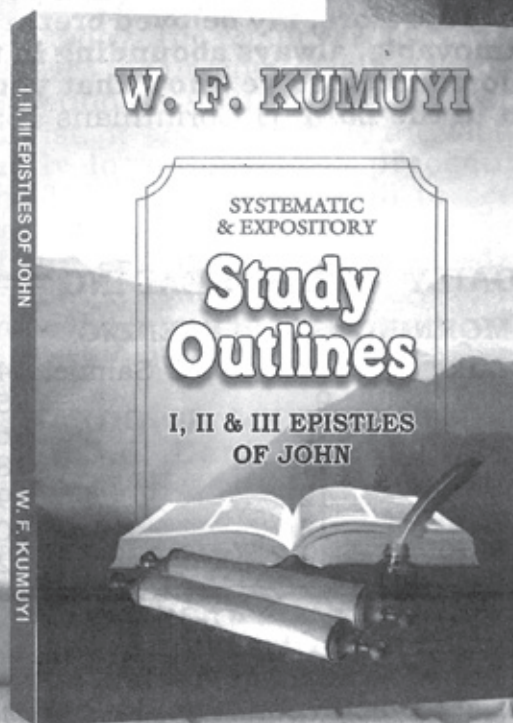
## DAILY BIBLE READING

MORNING			EVENING	
MON	Luke	8	2 Samuel	14
TUE	“	9	“	15
WED	“	10	“	16-17
THUR	“	11	“	18
FRI	“	12	“	19
SAT	“	13	“	20-21
SUN	“	14	“	22

**THE END OF THE STUDIES, BUT BE ADVISED  
THE WORD OF GOD IS TIMELESS (DOES NOT  
BECOME OBSOLETE AT ANY TIME). THEREFORE,  
ENDEAVOR TO KEEP THIS BOOK HANDY.**

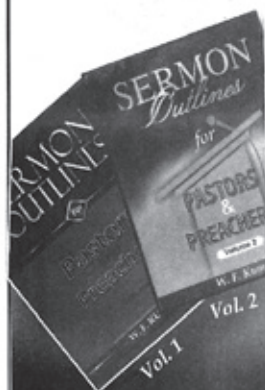
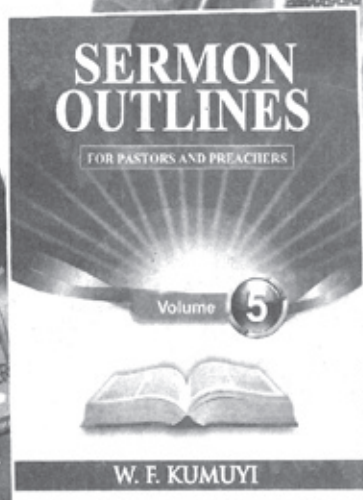
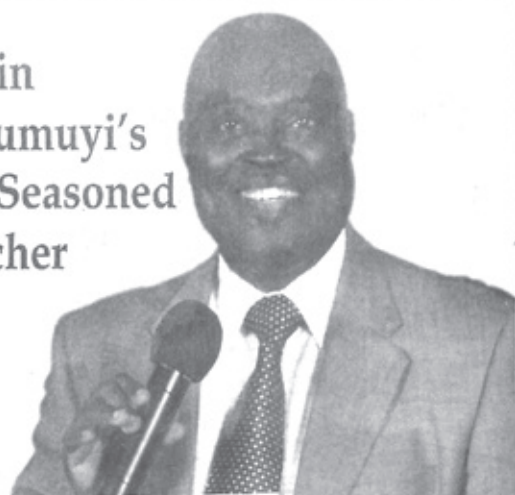


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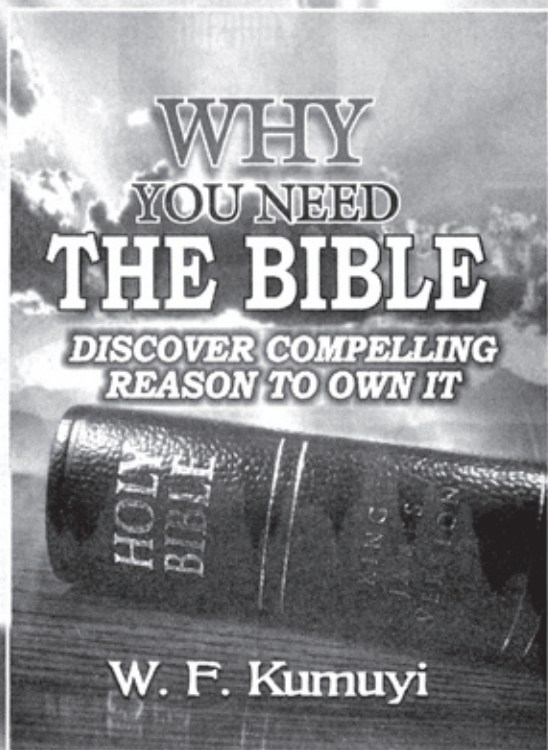
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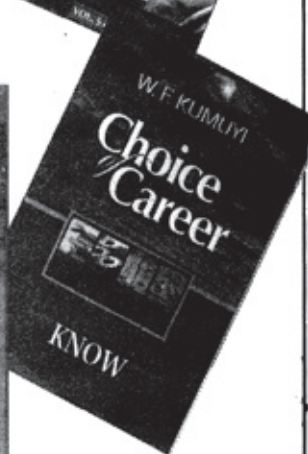
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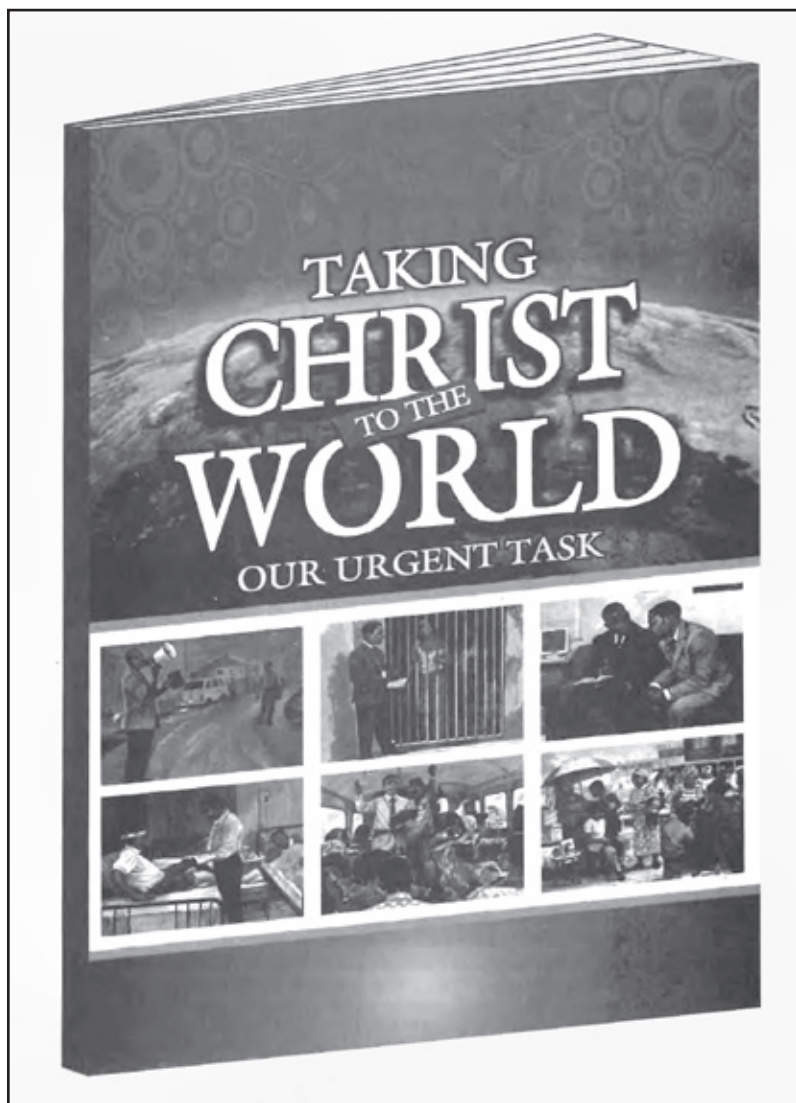


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Rockland County	10:30 AM

#### **MONDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Rockland County	7:00 PM
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#### **TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Bronx/Queens/New Jersey/Co-op City and Staten Island	7:00 PM
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#### **WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Brooklyn	7:00 PM
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#### **THURSDAY (REVIVAL SERVICE) FAITH CLINIC**

Rockland County	7:00 PM
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#### **FRIDAY (REVIVAL SERVICE) FAITH CLINIC**

All the Church Locations except Rockland County	7:00 PM
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