

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Tuesday Night Lessons

Taught by Bro. Giuseppe Petrelli



TO THE READER

Tuesday night lessons were taught by Bro. Giuseppe Petrelli. This group of lessons from THE BOOK OF GENESIS is a continuation of the lessons begun in the World War II period.

Many of those who attended Tuesday night lessons went to serve in the Armed Forces during World War II. So that those in the Armed Forces could continue enjoying these lessons, Joseph Garippa transcribed these lessons in shorthand, typed them and distributed the lessons to those in the military services. It is because of his commitment to the work of the Lord that these lessons were preserved and are made available to us.

For Biblical references, the King James Version of the Bible was used. In several instances the New Revised Standard Version was used.

PREFACE

Genesis not only is the first book of the Bible, but it is also the book of many beginnings. It begins with the revelation that God is the Creator of the universe and of all that exists on earth. It also teaches us that God's creative power comes from His word. More than once in the first chapter, God declares: *Let there be...*and there was. At the conclusion of the sixth day of creation, we are told that everything that God made was very good.

The book of Genesis traces the origin of mankind to Adam and Eve, whom God created in His image and likeness - to distinguish man from all other living creatures and to reveal that he is a spiritual as well as a physical being.

The book of Genesis also reveals the fall of man. Deceived by Satan, the ancient serpent and the father of lies, first Eve then Adam ate the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. And although they did not die at once, their sin of disobedience led to their expulsion from Eden, but not before God had revealed to them that a Redeemer would arise from Eve's seed to crush the serpent's (Satan's) head.

Never could Adam and Eve have imagined the far-reaching consequences of their sin. Beginning with Cain, their firstborn, who killed his brother Abel and in so doing became the first murderer, their descendants, with the exception of Abel, Enoch, and Noah, were not subject to God's authority. We read: "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5) To stem the growing tide of lawlessness and corruption, which pervaded society, God sent the Great Flood in which everyone perished, except Noah and his family. Noah's descendants, however, fared no

better than the antediluvians. In time, they too, cast off all divine restraints by building the tower of Babel as a symbol of their independence of God. Once again God intervened, not by sending a flood, but by confusing their speech and dispersing them on the face of the earth.

The book of Genesis then speaks of Abram, whose name God later changed to Abraham. Called by God to leave his home in Chaldea, Abraham settled in Canaan. God rewarded his faith and obedience by giving him and his wife Sarah, now well advanced in age, a son. Isaac, the son of promise, was born when Abraham was a hundred years of age and Sarah was ninety. Later, Isaac and his wife Rebekah became the parents of twin sons Esau and Jacob, and the latter, in turn, became the father of twelve sons from whom the future nation of Israel arose. The book of Genesis closes with Joseph becoming the ruler of Egypt and Jacob and his entire family leaving Canaan to join Joseph in Egypt.

The book of Genesis is God's spiritual blueprint of His love and purpose for all creation. It foretells the coming of Christ, the second Adam, Who would redeem and restore to mankind all that the first Adam lost as the result of his sin and disobedience. It also reveals Eve as a prophetic type of the Church of Christ, destined to assist Him in this work of redemption and restoration.

Abel, Enoch, and Noah foreshadow that remnant in every age which is determined to do what is right and pleasing in God's sight, despite the spirit of ungodliness which prevails in their day.

Abraham is prophetic of the elect, who are called to forsake this world for another country. Imitating Abraham's faith and obedience, they too are heirs of a City whose builder and maker is God. Isaac, the son of promise, speaks of sacrifice.

He is a beautiful type of Jesus Christ, Who, like Isaac, also offered Himself as a willing sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will. And, by reflection, he also is a prophetic type of the Church of Christ - of those who are willing to offer themselves to God as a living sacrifice of love.

In Jacob we see the conflicts and struggles of the natural man before he becomes the spiritual man; and, as a result, his name is change to Israel, a prince of God. Jacob is also a prophetic type. He describes the conflicts and struggles of those who, before they can become a new creation in Christ, must also be willing, like Jacob, to give up all their rights to themselves.

Joseph is another beautiful type and prophecy of Jesus. Rejected and sold as a slave by his brothers, he became the supreme ruler of Egypt. Like Joseph, Jesus was also rejected by His own. And like Joseph, He too, is destined to become the absolute ruler of this world. The day is coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father.

Lesson 1 Genesis 1:1-end

This seems to be a book that we all know—that is a mistake. Because we are familiar in a sense, we think we know. This book is the key to all the scriptures. Genesis: Beginning.

“In the beginning, God created the Heaven and the Earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” What about before this beginning? We have only one honest answer to give—we don’t know. Don’t try to know all the answers. Our minds cannot solve all problems. When we are in the great beyond, we will know more. The little we know, we have to comprehend from God Himself. The word “heaven” means everything in the Universe. Earth is not the center of the Universe, but only one of many planets. In this book, the author starts with the history of the earth.

Earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Did God make the earth in such a condition? Would God make something like this? How is it that God created something in this manner? We have an answer in Isaiah 45:18. God created the earth and created not a waste or ruin. God did not create it in this state of ruin, but it *had become* without form and void. It was created good, but some misfortune happened in this planet and it became waste and void. There is no date or time set, but we have the information that the earth had become a desolation. No one knows how many thousands of years elapsed between the first and second verses. In the third verse, an enemy passed. The earth was inhabited by angels, and this enemy caused a rebellion between the angels and their Creator. Then, the spirit of God moved upon the ruins and began a move of restoration. The grace of God moves and

comes to our rescue when we go through misfortune. God does everything by the Holy Spirit. When we are in sorrow, fallen in some disgrace, immediately you feel something moving in you that is like a mother trying to revive you. God has the spirit of restoration.

In the first two verses of the Bible, God created, and some evil agent forced a rebellion. God did not create earth in this state of desolation. He did not make the earth in ruin, but the earth *became* a ruin by some mysterious rebellion of which we have no definite facts.

In the beginning of the restoration what is the first act of God? When the Lord wants to restore someone, what is His first step? When God wants to save the sinner, what is the first thing that He does? If a man does not see his own condition, he does not accept Jesus—it is impossible. People accept Jesus when they know their own condition. In order to make it possible for one to see his own condition, he needs more light. The first step that God made was to make light. “And God said; Let there be light: And there was light.” How did this light come into being? By God’s mouth; God speaks. Anytime the Lord wants to do something, He speaks. He spoke with these words: We need light, so let there be light. We need something that shows the ruins. People need to see their own ruins. We may have plenty of dirty spots, but we cannot see them until the light comes. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.” When the Lord wants to save a sinner, light begins to shine in the dark places and they see their own ruins. When God speaks, the light comes into their hearts and they ask for mercy. When light came, something happened. God saw that the light was good and he divided the light from darkness. Light came and God said, “All right—that is fine. Now we must separate the light from the dark.” The more light in our lives, the better it is. The more we know ourselves, that we

are poor and needy, the better it is. We will become smaller in our own estimation. When you are all dressed up and you go walking the streets of your own town or city, you may feel proud; but when you go into some big millionaire's home, even when dressed your very best, you feel so insignificant. It is not easy to preach to a self-satisfied man. A man who says, "I am good; I don't kill anyone, etc.," is self-satisfied. The Pharisees were satisfied in their own ways and did not accept Jesus. Only a sick man will go to a physician. It is the same throughout the ages to the end of the dispensation. People who do not have any light do not care for Jesus.

He divided the light from the darkness. You will see what is dark and what is light when they are separated. He called the light "day" and the darkness He called "night." We are living in the night but we do not belong to the night. The evening and the morning were the first day. How long were the days in Genesis? Twenty-four hours? We do not know how long they were. The word "day" is also translated as "period of time." They could have been thousands of years.

"The evening and the morning..." When *we* speak of a day, we always speak of the morning first and then of the evening. Man begins with the morning and ends in the night, but God's policy is the opposite. Instead of beginning with the morning, He concludes with the morning. He takes you when you are in darkness and leads you into the light. Man begins with the charming things and finishes in tragedy. God began with the evening and finished with the morning. The ways of man are contrary to those of God. The Lord began with the cross but ended with the glory. At the wedding of Cana, the good wine was kept for the last. Everything that is worthwhile begins with trouble but finishes with glory. The *last* book of the Bible is REVELATION. It says that there shall be no night there...it

will be all morning. God begins with the evening but gradually ends with an eternal morning. We are serving a mighty God!

After the first day, He made a firmament, separated waters from waters, called the firmament heaven and then came the second day. Then God *said* something else. Everything new begins with the word of God. God saw that it was good. He did not ask any scientist's opinion. He did not go around to beg opinions of others. Man would have said that it was no good. The earth seemed shapeless at that time. If one who does not understand, sees a building under construction, he may think that it is no good; but when the contractor sees it, he thinks that it is very good.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night." He created the light in general, and then commanded other lights. *That* light was already in existence but He commanded other lights. We have one great light and many other little lights. Jesus is the great light and we Christians are the little lights. God created the greater light for the day and the smaller lights for the night. The stars, the smaller lights, shine in the night. Stars typify Christians. While Jesus was on this earth, it was day; but now that He is gone, spiritually speaking, it is darkness and we stars are shining through the darkness. In Revelation, chapter 1, it says that stars are ministers of Christ.

Then He commanded that the waters be not idle but produce something, and the waters brought forth fish. The evening and the morning were the fifth day. Everything that God said was good today, was not good on the morrow during these six days of creation. When the waters were all in one place, the Lord said that it was good, but when the time came that the waters were divided, God saw that NOW it was

good. Before the animals, etc. had come, it was good; but now that they came, NOW it is good. Everything is good in its own time; but when its time is over it is not good anymore. For example: Grammar School is good for a child, but when the child is grown, he should go to another school; Grammar School is not good anymore. Progress is God's work. His command is always: MOVE ON!

There were two Adams in the Bible. The natural Adam comes first and the spiritual comes next. The first Adam was disobedient, but the second Adam was the perfect man. "Let us create man in our image..." In what way is this image meant? In every human being there is a spark of human love—something of the image of God. Not an actual image—it is something that gives only an idea of the spiritual image. We are given to understand of the heavenly things. In the 26th verse it says, "Let us." It speaks of more than one individual. In this verse you see the Trinity. This is the work of the Trinity. They are not three separate people. The Lord says, "Who has seen me has seen the Father." If one comes to your home to see the father, and father is not at home, the wife or the children will help the visitor in what he wants. In this way, by seeing the wife or the children, he has really seen the father. The family has the unity of idea. The Church should have one heart, one spirit, one idea.

Man was made to have dominion over everything on the earth. God made man to be a commander who should not be afraid of any animal, not be afraid to eat anything, not afraid to walk on the waters. Man failed in this. There was only one perfect man like this: Jesus Christ. When Jesus was baptized, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit came down in the shape of a dove. An animal that is very quiet and simple came and rested on Him. He did not fly here and there but rested upon Jesus. Then the voice from above said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well satisfied. Everything is

o.k.—I have now found the perfect man.” God was looking all through history for the perfect man. That is why He is called the SON OF MAN, and not the Son of any special race. The more you enter in Christ, the more you have spiritual authority over the things around you.

“Male and female created He them.” In every woman there is some masculine trait. She has a certain ability like a man; she has courage at times. Also, in every man there is a feminine trait; he is gentle at times. There is a similarity between the sexes. God gave unto man everything that could be wanted and yet, man sinned and failed. Thereafter, God kept on looking for the perfect man who is Jesus.

No one comes to church who was not a ruin before. No “saints” come to church. When they see that they are a ruin, then they realize that they need a Savior. The Lord prepares us to receive the light. When the light comes, the darkness is discovered. Then light and darkness are separated. We are now living in the darkness of the world and are waiting for that day when there shall be no more night, but all day!

Lesson 2

Genesis 2:1-15

Genesis 2:1 & 2: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.” What is the meaning of the word “rest?” You will meet the 7th Day Adventists. The days of the first chapter of Genesis are defined as periods of time. The sun is what makes the days, but the days began before the sun was created. When you speak of rest, what do you mean? In the Old Testament, it meant absolute rest; no work whatsoever; something exterior; something on the outside. One could be *thinking* of anything he wanted, but as long as his hands were resting, he kept the law. The New Testament teaches spiritual things. The law was not concerned about the *minds* of the people as long as they rested in their bodies. Did God need any rest? Rest is necessary for the body, because it gets tired. Rest means ceasing from work. Did God rest in this sense? A carpenter rests, a mason rests, but did God stop His work? In St. John 5:17 we find that there was an argument between the Jews and Christ. The Lord had healed someone on that day, and the Jews told Him that He was sinning. The Lord answered them, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” It was the power of the Father that healed the sick through the Son.

A factory worker takes a rest because he is tired. Then, if God needs a rest, it means that He gets tired. Is this so? In Isaiah 40:28 we find: “Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding.” God never stopped work on the seventh day, because Jesus said so. He is the Almighty. Since He does not need rest, He is never sleepy,

etc. What kind of “rest” is the “rest” spoken of in Genesis? In Matthew 11:28 & 29 we read: “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Jesus was looking the people in their faces and saw that they were carrying heavy sorrows, and He was moved with compassion and said, “Come unto me all ye who are weary and I will give you rest.” He did not say that He would stop them from working in a factory, etc. No—He said, “Come unto me all ye who are weary; come to my school and learn that I am meek and lowly.” Only then will you find rest and tranquility; peace of mind. When you meet Jesus, you will find an eternal rest. “Come to my school and you will find rest and peace.” You see someone in trouble, and you say, “Rest, rest; I will help you. I will pay your obligations.”

We must be thoroughly taught on this subject. In speaking of this subject, we must be gentle. We must be strong in the meaning, but gentle in the way we speak of it. Firm, but gentle. We must learn these two qualities. Heb. 4:7-10: “Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” Here we see that God changed the day of the Sabbath. The Lord does not send so many commandments; one new commandment is enough to annul all previous commandments.

As it is written by the Psalmist, David, in Psalm 95:7: “For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today if ye will hear His voice, harden

not your heart.” The day was changed from a day of 24 hours to one that is called “today.” Today, if you will hear His voice, right now, today. Today—when the Holy Spirit moves, is your day of rest. How long is this day? It is your whole life long. You have rest all your life from the moment you meet Christ to eternity. God Himself changed the day. If it were not for these words, we would uphold the 7th day, but the day was changed. No longer a day of 24 hours, but an eternal day.

We have seen what God’s rest is. He never ceased from working. God is tireless; He is never weary. The rest of God is not the rest of the working man. He created man and put him in the garden; when the Lord put man in the garden He did not give him any big list of commandments. There was only one “but” to the garden, and that was the one concerning the tree of life. And yet, the serpent deceived the woman and then the man. Because of this they were cast out. The Lord said, “Do what you please, Satan, but the victory is in my hands. The last cut is mine. I know what I will do. Some day, I will have a big laugh on you.”

So the rest of God is trust in Him. Be what may be, you must trust; have full confidence; abandon yourself in Christ. It doesn’t mean to stop working. We may *need* that kind of rest because we are human, but there is no religious connection. God continually works; every day, every minute. He supports the universe every second. The Pharisees said, “You should not do this; you should not do that.” But Jesus said, “My Father is working, so I work.” The Pharisees said, “We need rest,” but in Isaiah it says, “God does not get weary.” Rest; you go to sleep at night and say, “I commit my life unto God.” That is rest. Be in peace; when Jesus came into this world, the angels said, “Peace.” People will say, “What will come tomorrow? Rest; each day will bring its own burdens. Before our real conversion, we

ran here and there trying to save others, and perhaps we were not really saved ourselves. But now, we rest!

Scripture verses: John 5:7 God always works
Isaiah 40:28 God is never weary
Matthew 11:28 God's rest
Hebrews 4:7-10 God changed the day
Psalm 96:7,8 Today is the Day

Lesson 3

Genesis 2:7-9 & 16-25

Verse 7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Isaiah 43:1: "But now saith the Lord that created thee O Jacob and he that formed thee O Israel." The names apply to the same man. What is the difference between Israel and Jacob? Jacob is the natural name but Israel is the name of Grace. The verse says that the Lord CREATED Jacob but FORMED Israel. Two operations for the same man. The first operation created Jacob and the second formed Israel. The Lord worked in the life of Jacob until he became Israel. What is the meaning of Israel? It means Prince of the Lord; it is a victorious name. What is the meaning of Jacob? Supplanter! The Lord created Jacob and each one of us. Even when we were saved, we have been created. In order to form Israel, it took a discipline of many years. For many years, he was still Jacob, and for many years, we have been Jacobs also. Perhaps even now, we are some Jacobs. It took a long time to change this man through discipline, through sorrow, until one night, the Lord had to cripple him. Then his name was changed. This will happen in the life of each one of us. Some day we will be no more Jacob but an Israel. Teachers and pastors must be patient toward the forming of Israel. He created Jacob, but Israel was formed. This is the second creation.

In the first Adam, we have the natural formation. Did God form man of some expensive material? Something very rare? No; He formed him of the dust of the ground. Then God breathed into his nostrils and man became a living soul. Man in himself is dust plus something else. God breathed into his nostrils and man became a living soul capable of

becoming spiritual. There are two forces working in man, two tendencies, one heavenward, and the other earthward.

Psalm 139:15: "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret." You have worked in secret; we don't remember our formation. The things that belong to this earth, shall be discovered by ourselves when we come into the realm of the Spirit. We discover ourselves, our earthly tendencies, and are ashamed of ourselves. The Lord says: "You discover yourself now, but I have known you before you were born."

We have received the breath of life. Many times you feel down-hearted and all of a sudden you feel a breath come in you and you are revived. Verses 15-17: "And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Here you see man in the Garden. He had everything which anyone could possibly desire. There were no limitations to his liberties except for one. He could eat of every tree except of the one containing the knowledge of good and evil. Did the Lord God explain why he should not eat of it? The Lord does not always explain His reasons to us.

When Job was in temptation, a servant of the Lord said to him, "You are stumbling about the proceedings of God because you don't understand why. You are stumbling because God does not explain all of His reasons. You are not an obedient child. You should obey without discussion." We must learn obedience without understanding. But then, the understanding will come. Your "why" will come in time but meanwhile, we must understand without the "why."

There was an employee of the railroad in Berlin, and as the train was coming, he started to lower the gates. His little boy was playing on the tracks and trains were coming in both directions. The man could either neglect his duty of lowering the gates and go to save his boy, or neglect his boy and do his duty at the railroad. However, the man did one thing: He shouted to his boy, "Jack! Lie down between the tracks!" These words were like an electric bolt going through the boy and he threw himself down; and the trains passed by him without injuring him. Now suppose it was one of our children. He would have begun to say, "Why? I don't see why you want me to do such a thing." There is too much WHY in us.

We must learn blind obedience. Why must we obey blindly? Because He is good; He is wise; He knows what He is doing. We can trust Him implicitly. Our first lesson is obedience without reasoning. The reason will come later on. In religion, God touches your heart and you don't know why. The reason does not come first. First you are touched and you feel something in you change, but later you find out all about it. Why did the Lord pay the same amount to the men who worked 12 hours and to those who worked only one? No reason was given to them. After you accept the thing from the Lord, then you will receive a reason. At first, it may seem unreasonable, but after you have obeyed, you will find that it has a far-reaching reason. In Isaiah 42:16 we find that the Lord leads the blind by a way which they do not know. Let us not be too smart; it does not pay. Darkness will become light.

John 9:39-41: And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye

should have no sin; but now ye say, we see; therefore, your sin remaineth.” It means that He came to judge His people and when people accept the judgment of God, in their own estimation, they become blind. When you, yourself, see that you are blind, then God gives you of His light.

There was a lawyer in Italy who had six children. He would play together with them and become as one of them. All at once he made a motion and each of the children became like a little soldier. He did not give any “noes” to the children. Don’t give many “noes,” but when you do, die on that “no.” We don’t know how to cultivate our children. “Don’t do this, don’t do that.” We give too many “don’ts” and we never enforce any of them.

The Lord God said to the man and woman: “Walk in the Garden. It is all yours, BUT...” The Lord put a BUT in the sentence and what a BUT! It was only one command for a thing that seemed insignificant. Adam could have said, “Why? Will I become poor if I eat?” No reason was given, just “Don’t eat of it! If you do, you will surely die.” We must obey without reasoning. We must consecrate our minds to the Lord. You cannot reason the things of God; but you must accept them. What you don’t know today, you will know tomorrow. When the Lord was washing the feet of the disciples, He said to Peter, “You don’t know now why I do this, but you will understand some day.” Peter said, “No, don’t wash my feet.” And the Lord said, “Well, suit yourself; you will not be a member of my party.” Then Peter said, “Then, wash not only my feet, but my whole body.” You will understand some day. Can we trust God? John 6:69: “We believe and we are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

We begin only by believing. The faith of today becomes the reality of tomorrow. Today we believe; tomorrow we know.

God gives you light. It is so nice to believe such a friend as He. He deserves even more than our belief! God gave one command: “Don’t eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Don’t try to discover why this is good and why this is evil; why this man is rich and this man is poor; why this and why that. Be satisfied with not knowing.

God says, “Leave everything to me; I have the eternity in my hands. I will give account in my realm.” Don’t try to be a reasoner. Leave the fruit of good and evil to God. Don’t touch it! The moment you begin to question this Book, you will destroy it. Don’t try to understand too much. Trust God and be led by His Holy Spirit and Light.

Lesson 4

Genesis 3:1-19 & Ezekiel 28:11-19

Verse 6: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” This verse links with 1st John 2:16: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life is not of the Father but of this world.” Where you don’t find one of these three, there is no sin. Sin is manufactured by the inner lust. These three are in the world: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride of life. These three lusts were in the woman, Eve.

Verse 1: “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?” So far, the Lord has been called only “God,” but now you see that He is called “Lord God.” My master—absolute owner. In this chapter, man comes under a master. Now for the serpent. Did he act on his own impulse or was some sinister power working in this animal? Satan was incarnated in this serpent. We have a few hints of the story of Satan but no full history. God created heaven and earth, and earth BECAME void. Some tremendous rebellion (which some people link with the rebellion between the angels and Satan) had brought this ruin about. Ezekiel 28:13: “Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in the day that thou wast created.”

Here we find a very brilliant description of Satan. No human author could give such a picture of Satan as Ezekiel gives in

such a few words. Satan was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. There are two beauties: the beauty of Christ and the beauty of Satan. The beauty of Satan is visible, but that of Christ is invisible; it is discovered only by the Church. No man is more wise than Satan of Satanic wisdom. Was Satan covered with rags? He was covered by every precious stone that could be imagined. Not only this, but in the day of his creation, the creator prepared something for him, just like a king prepares for a newborn prince. So when Satan was created, music was created for him. Satan was a great musician. Ezekiel 28:14: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire." So Satan was one of the main cherubs. He had others under his command. Verse 15: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." He did not remain perfect. What is iniquity? It is the inner propensity to evil. Outside he was a perfect gentleman, very humble; but inside there was iniquity. How did the iniquity of this angel come to be? Verse 16: "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned." He was a very busy angel. Verse 17: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Then all of a sudden, Satan was cast from heaven to the ground. This is the picture of Satan. Now he appears in the garden. Adam and Eve were very happy there; they could eat of everything except of the tree of life. They should have obeyed without knowing why, but now comes the serpent. We see another picture. He does not come as an angel but as a serpent and Eve was not afraid of the animal. As yet, there was no fear. Beware of people who are subtle. "Be ye harmless like doves and wise like serpents." Serpents are wise but not innocent. Doves are innocent but not wise. We need both. The serpent was subtle and approached the woman with the following words. Verse

1: “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” What is the meaning of the word “yea?” It is translated as “Is that so? Is that the news that goes around this garden? I heard something like that. I want to be instructed. I want to learn. You know more than I do. Hath God said? Satan can never say “Lord.” Paul says that no man can say “Lord” with his heart, except by the Holy Spirit. Satan continues: “Is that the information that I heard? Do you want me to believe that? Did God say that you could not eat of every tree of the garden?” What mark of punctuation appears at the end of the sentence? A question mark! Were there any questions in the first two chapters? In the first two chapters you see only “God said; God said; God said.” There were no questions up to now. This is the beginning of questions. This question mark looks like a snake when he stands. Questions insinuate doubt. The tone of the question insinuates that God did not say so. That is the first thing that Satan does in people. He tries to make them question. “Who wrote the Bible? Who saw Jesus come from the grave? Who created God?” Questions, questions, questions. The first question came with a lie.

The woman answered the question. Verse 2: “And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” The woman spoke too much with Satan. She began a discussion and we should never discuss with Satan. When you see a malicious person, don’t discuss with him, but the woman gave a long answer. The woman said, “...lest we die... We would like to eat but we are afraid to die.” She did not say, “God has been so good.” No, rather she mentioned that they would die. They were afraid to die. When we begin to tremble, Satan will overpower us. Satan then said, “Don’t be afraid.” He gave a word of assurance. First you see the timid woman saying,

“We cannot touch the fruit because we will die; we are afraid to die.” Then you see Satan who gives a word of encouragement. “I am your friend; don’t be afraid; be independent; have courage; you shall not die.” You can imagine a smile on the face of the animal. Then he began to speak in a mysterious way. “God knows His business. He knows why you should not eat of it. You don’t know Him. For God knows...” He did not say that they were ignorant but said, “God knows that your eyes will be opened. He does not want this to happen.” A good salesman makes you see diamonds. “You two don’t know anything now. I pity you. You will be as Gods. You don’t know what you are missing; you will know good and evil.”

Now the woman began to look at the tree. She began to think, “Oh, what taste it must have! It must be good to have the eyes opened. I want to know everything.” The woman saw that it was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and it made one wise. She took of it and ate it. Then she called her husband and gave it unto him, and he ate it also. Immediately something happened. Their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked. They were clothed with innocence before, but now they were ashamed and sewed fig leaves together. Now did God go right after them like a policeman or did He wait a while and give them a chance to think it over? He waited till the cool of the day. They heard the voice of God passing in the cool of the garden. The voice began to follow them and they hid themselves. They were covered by fig leaves and yet they felt uncovered before God. They hid themselves among the trees. Men are a type of trees. So, when one does wrong, he begins to hide among other men.

Verse 9: “And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” This is the second question mark. From now on, this book is full of questions. God

began to look for Adam like a father and not like a policeman. “Where are you?” This does not mean in what place are you hiding but, rather, it means, “In what condition are you, Adam? How do you feel now, my son? Do you feel very wise?”

Where was the serpent? The serpent was not there but God called him also. “Now answer me, Satan, where are you?” This is a tremendous question. This question is being asked of us every day. Where are we? Are we following God’s plan or are we in Satan’s territory?

Lesson 5
Genesis 3:9-24

What happened as soon as Adam and Eve ate of the fruit? Their eyes were opened to their own nakedness and they hid themselves. Before hiding, they tried to cover themselves with fig leaves but they did not succeed in covering themselves. Even with the leaves, they felt naked. After the Lord had given them a little time, He went to them with a beautiful question. "Where art thou?" In this instance, this question means, "In what condition are you now? Do you feel happy? Did you gain any knowledge of heaven? Where art thou?" And the man answered. Verse 10: "And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He answered and gave a picture of his own misery. "I ran away because I heard thy voice." A man who sins and does not repent, hides himself and has no courage to go to church. He was afraid. Was he ever afraid before? He was in sweet fellowship with God. But now he was terrorized more than afraid because he was discovered. That is the condition of every sinner who does not repent.

And the Lord answered. Verse 11: "And He said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" Now begin questions after questions. There were no questions until Satan came. Now God is questioning man. What did Adam answer? Verse 12: "And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Why did the Lord repeat his command in the question? The Lord refreshed the memory of the man. God asked Adam the question in a way so that Adam could have given the correct answer. "Have you been disobedient, Adam? I gave you a commandment; have you disobeyed me?" What should Adam have answered? "Yes, Lord, I

have disobeyed.” A clear-cut answer. But did he answer in this manner? God asked him in a nice way so that he could have given the proper answer. Does Adam’s answer show any repentance? He gave an accusation. That is the trouble with many church people; they are always ready to see the faults in others. There may be faults in others but that does not excuse *us*. A real Christian always blames himself. Someone else may be instrumental in planning our sin but we are responsible. When you accuse yourself, God will come to your defense. If we judge ourselves, we will not be judged. 1st Corinthians 11: “Now I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.” The man who is severe with himself will find God a great lawyer. God’s question put Adam on the way to confess. “Tell me, son, have you disobeyed my commandment?” Adam should have answered, “Yes, my God, I have disobeyed.” When the woman was first presented to him, he was glad and said, “bones of my bones, flesh of my flesh.” But now he blames her. Of course, it was true, but there was some blame on him too. Now the Lord turns to the woman. Verse 13: “And the Lord said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” She should have repented and said, “Yes, I have disobeyed.” But both accused someone else. She said, “Yes, but you put the serpent in the garden. He beguiled me.” There is no repentance in this answer either, so the punishment came. Did the Lord ask the serpent anything as he did with the man and woman? There is no need to ask the serpent; that is his job. There should be no discussion with Satan. How did the Lord punish him? Verse 15: “And I will put enmity between thee and this woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This is the verse of redemption. According to the flesh, Jesus was born of a woman. Christ will bruise Satan’s head, and Satan will do some evil too. Satan is now bruising the

heel of the Lord by continually spreading evil throughout the world. Now, the punishment of this woman: Verse 16: “Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” It was a type of slavery, but this curse was taken away in Christ.

Now the punishment of Adam: Verses 17 & 18: “And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.” There were no thorns in the earth up to now; he probably could walk on the waters, but now he became subject to the things of the earth. He would eat with sorrow. Verse 19: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Here it speaks of another food. It speaks of bread. This covers a great mystery. How will he eat his bread? In the sweat of his face. There are some millionaires; they don’t have to sweat for their bread. Consequently, this must be another bread. This bread is Jesus. He is the bread of life. Do you think that it is easy to preach and understand Jesus? It is not. This Jesus has many oppositions. There are many who try to falsify this Jesus. How long will we eat of this bread? Till we return to the condition of dust. Many people preach this verse at funerals; this is a mistake. You must eat of this bread until you become dust. The more bread you eat, the sooner you will become dust. Do you have to eat in order to die? When you eat of Jesus, you become smaller in yourself. When you meet Jesus you fall at His feet like a dead man. St. John would rest himself on the bosom of Jesus—what familiarity!

But in Revelation 1:17 it is different: “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.” St. John is exiled in Patmos and when he saw Jesus in all His glory, he fell at His feet as dead. When you meet Jesus, *you* die. No man can see the Lord and live. Simon said, “Let me see Him and die.” You cannot see Him and remain the old self that you are. His presence will crush you. So, you will eat of Him until you become dust. But, will he leave you dust? Job 19:25-27: “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. When I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.”

Even with his body corrupted and his skin destroyed, yet God will appear and resurrect the remains. When we finish, God will begin. When you read further on in Job, you see what became of him. Job 42:5 & 6: “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” He is no more the big Job that he was at first. He had been eating much bread of affliction. The lamb of the sacrifice should be eaten with bitter herbs. One mouthful of the lamb and one mouthful of the bitter herbs. One mouthful of blessing and another mouthful of sorrow. Mr. Job has become dust. Mr. So & So must become dust also. The Lord loves the dust; He builds of the dust; He cannot improve our old self but must destroy us completely before being able to build us up.

When you are dust, you become the servant of the Lord. When Adam sinned, the Lord said to him, “You thought you were a big man. You were so proud when you walked in the garden. I did not tell you of your origin. Without my breath you are a piece of dust. Since you are so proud, I will tell

you of your origin. You are dust. I must build you again. Now you will eat bread in sorrow and the more you eat, the more you become dust.” The more we comprehend Christ, the more we become dust. God delights in dust. We have to lose our importance. We must become dust. Are we ready?

Then the Lord God said to them, “Get out from here. This is not your place. You are too proud to stay here.” And cherubs were put at the gate of the garden. Suppose Adam would attempt to return to the garden? He would go through the sword. In order to go back, you have to be pierced by a sword. You want to know good and evil, but in order to go back, you have to be pierced. This pictures the cross of Christ. You will have knowledge but only through the cross of Jesus. Wisdom is obtained only through Christ. Christ becomes knowledge in us. Little by little we grow. We have to get the sword in order to get the knowledge. Luke 2:35: “Yea, a sword shall pierce through my own soul also; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” Through that piercing, your mind will be opened.

Lesson 6
Genesis 4

Genesis 3:21: “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” Adam and Eve were clothed of fig leaves. Did they feel themselves protected by those leaves so that they could appear before the Lord? No. they hid themselves. So they were naked just the same. They were still naked and needed clothing, so the Lord clothed them by making them coats from the skins of animals, thus establishing the first sacrifice.

Had there been any deaths before this time in the Garden of Eden? Then what about this making coats from the skins of animals? This suggests sacrifice. Sacrificing means the shedding of blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. So the animals were sacrificed so that Adam and Eve could be clothed. Jesus is the Lamb that was offered before the foundation of the world. Sacrifices are first made in the spirit and then they are actually made. Adam and Eve did not succeed in covering themselves with leaves, so the Lord covered them with the skins of animals so that their sins would be covered. Must we be clothed with our own righteousness? We patch some fig leaves together and think that we are clothed; but, can this pass the inspection of heaven? No; we need a different clothing, so God provided the necessary clothing through Jesus. We are clothed in Christ. We are clothed in His righteousness.

Cain was older than Abel. Out of envy, Cain killed his brother, Abel. Abel was approved of God but not Cain. What about the blood of Abel? Did God say anything about the blood of this man who had been slain? Verse 10: “And He said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” The blood has a voice. What kind of voice? Abel’s blood was crying for

justice. “See my case; do me justice.” Let us see about another blood. The blood of Jesus is silent. Hebrews 12:24: “And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” The blood of Abel cries; the blood of Jesus speaks. While the blood of Abel cries for vengeance, that of Christ speaks pardon. It doesn’t speak only pardon, but speaks a new life.

When Eve had the first child, she called his name “Cain” which means acquisition: “I have gained something; I am rich.” She gave him a pompous name, a great name. Why did this woman speak so enthusiastically about her son? A promise was made to her. Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Eve knew that Satan had deceived her, but God made a promise. The Lord was speaking to the serpent, but was indirectly making a promise to the woman: “between thy seed and her seed.” The many demonized people are Satan’s seed. The seed of the woman would bruise the head of Satan. Eve was probably looking forward to this event. “I will have a son who will kill the serpent.” So when the boy was born, she said, “Now the savior has come.” So she called his name “Cain.” She later became disappointed because she had no confirmation of the first boy. Then another son was born and she called him “Abel—Vanity—No Hope.” “I am disappointed; it is useless.” She thought her first son was the redeemer. God had said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent’s head. In reality, Christ is the seed of the woman; for materially, Christ was born of woman. However, she did not understand; she thought that it would be Cain. But Cain was not the redeemer and she was disappointed. Then came the second son and she called him “Vanity.” In time, the two boys had some profession. The first son was a tiller of the ground and

the second was a keeper of the flock. Both came to offer something; Cain of the fruit of the ground and Abel offered the firstling of the flock. The command of the Lord was “sacrifice—blood” but what happened? Cain went to the Lord with no sacrifice, no blood. Abel approached the Lord in another way. Cain went to the Lord and said, “Good morning, I bring you some apples from my garden. You will accept it.” Abel went to the Lord and said, “I am a poor sinner. Have mercy upon me.” There are two ways of presenting the sacrifice. Some say, “Christ is good; He is this and He is that”; but others say, “Have mercy upon me, a poor sinner. I need a Savior.” The first group belongs to the class of Cain; the second group belongs to the class of Abel. The first group says, “I belong to the class of Christ; I am o.k.” The second says, “I need a Savior to wash my sins away.” The one who accepts Jesus as his Savior is the real worshipper. You may never have stolen but at some time, you desired to do so. You may never have killed anyone, but you may have hated someone. We must approach Christ through the blood.

Verses 4 & 5: “And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering, he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.” Details are scarce in the Bible; that is the reason for the Holy Spirit. People say, “The Bible, and only the Bible.” Without the light from heaven, however, you can understand almost nothing in this chapter. We need the Holy Spirit too.

Now both of these brothers came before the Lord. Cain came with fruit and flowers; the other came leading a lamb. “I am sorry, poor lamb, I must offer a sacrifice because I am a sinner. I cannot approach God without a sacrifice.” That is the way of the Lord. There is only one religion; the

religion of the blood; that is, Jesus Christ. Abel said, "I cannot look at your face; I need a sacrifice; I am a sinner." God looked in a spiritual way upon Cain. He must have been a fine young man and very sure of himself. God looks first at the one who offers and then at the offering. We may do many things, but the Lord looks first upon us and then on the things that we do. He looked at Cain: "You are a proud man." Cain looked at the blood and said, "I am a decent fellow; blood is for the sinners, not for me." Let us not be like Cain or we will be shut out from heaven. Cain said, "What sin have I committed?" What is the greatest sin in the universe? You are a father and have a "very good son." Everyone in the street speaks well of your son. But that boy never cared for the father. He is nice, though, very "decent." The father has appointed some regulations and the boy says, "Well, my father is crazy; this is not for me." Is the father pleased? Another example: Suppose you are a king of a big city and a terrible beast is killing many people in your city. You are determined that if blood is offered, the beast would be stopped. So you offer your only; you give an order that your son be killed of the most hated and sinful death—the cross. Then you make a written promise and have it posted throughout the city. You say, "Whosoever believes on my son, that I have offered my son to save the city, I will forgive him. Not only forgive him, but I will adopt him; I will call my clerk and my officers and we will make a document; I will make him a son in my house."

It seems incredible! Humanly speaking, it *is* incredible. This is foolishness according to the world, but that is the way of the Spirit. Now brother Cain, Mr. Gentleman, Mr. Self-Satisfied, comes. He goes and reads the proclamation and says, "He killed his boy and wants to make others as princes. It is a nice position." So, he goes to the palace and is introduced to the king, and the king says, "What do you think of my sacrificing my son for you?" And the

“gentleman” says, “I read your proclamation but that killing of your son is for the sinner. I never did anything wrong; I am good; I don’t need the blood of your son.” And the king says, “Well, what do you want here?” And the man says, “I want to be a prince.” But the king says, “You are my enemy; you do not appreciate the blood of my son; the blackest sinner of the universe you shall be.”

Then comes the worst man in the city. He goes and reads the proclamation also. He wants to know if it is true and looks and sees that it is signed, and says, “Is it possible? It says WHOSOEVER. There is no limit. I don’t deserve anything. I have committed all sorts of things but I will go.” So he appears before the king and the king says, “What do you want?” The man says, “What can I want? I have been your enemy all my life but there is a ray of hope in my heart. I read the proclamation that you killed your son to save others and if they come to you in the name of your son, you will make them your children. I have no right to stand here, but I come in the name of your son.” The king’s heart will melt. You have done the greatest good to the father by appreciating his son. “What sin did I commit?” some people may say. Is there any sin greater than this? This is the sin that will seal the destiny of those who will lose eternal life. So Cain came like a perfect gentleman. “I have arranged a nice basket of fruit.” And the Lord said, “You are too proud; take these back; I don’t need them.” The Lord did not accept the offering of Cain, and like all envious people, Cain made a long face; he became angry. And God said, “Why are you angry? It is your own fault.” Envious people are always angry. Instead of trying to improve themselves, they kill the person who is better than they are. Verse 7: “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” This is a heavy verse. Jesus is speaking these words to Cain. He was speaking these words to Cain *before* the crime in order to dissuade him from

committing the crime. He was trying to persuade Cain not to be envious. "You are accepted by the Lord if you do well; if not, sin lies at the door; but you can have victory over sin." Jesus has been made sin for us. 2nd Corinthians 5:21: "For he hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Jesus is not only sin-bearer, but He has been made actual sin. He not only was the sacrifice for sin, but a mass of sin Himself that we may be purchased.

So Cain invited his brother to go into the field; not in the same place; he was ashamed of the place, so he called Abel to another place. The innocent brother went with him, and this monster must have made a terrible motion all of a sudden and killed him. Then he hid the body. No one saw him; but after a while, a voice came after him. The same voice that followed his father, Adam, came after him and called him and said, "Where is your brother?" Cain knew, but said, "I don't know." Then, immediately, he added something else: "am I my brother's keeper?" Yes, we are; we are responsible for each other. Then the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cried after me from the ground. You are cursed. The ground will not give you any food." Did Cain say, "I repent!" Nothing like this. Rather he said, "This punishment is too much. Wherever I move, they will kill me." So the Lord said, "I will put a sign on you that even the animals will be afraid to touch you." Vengeance belongs to the Lord. So Cain went into exile. His descendants, the Cainites, were those who perished in the flood, but the spiritual seed was not renewed until a third son was born to Eve.

Lesson 7

Genesis 5:18-32

Another son was born to Eve, and she called him “Seth,” which means “appointed.” By this son, there was a religious beginning

People lived hundreds of years in those days, and Methuselah lived the longest. You can't be sure that these years were the same as they are now; this was studied by many. During the period of the flood, it speaks of something happening in the tenth month of the year. So, at any rate, there were several months in a year. Also in those days, they had large families. Who knows how many great, great grandchildren they had during the time they lived. But, in the end, they died. In every verse, it speaks that they lived so long *and they died*. You enter a cemetery here. Everyone died except for one person. People may say, “I wish you 100 years of life.” What is 100 years? They will disappear just the same. The words “And he died” are repeated like a refrain of sorrow in this chapter. Verses 1 & 3: “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God created He him; and Adam lived 130 years and begat a son in his own likeness; after his image, and called his name Seth.”

Here you find two likenesses. Adam was created in the image or likeness of God. He came fresh from the hands of the Creator. He was created in the spiritual image of God. The people were of one color and one race. The divisions came afterward

People ridiculed the scriptures, but they could not succeed in destroying even one verse of the book of Genesis. The systems of science change, but the scriptures remain untouched. The first verse speaks of likenesses. That was

the first work of the hands of the Almighty. Adam had already been disobedient, and now you find another likeness. Adam lived 130 years and begat sons in *his own likeness*. So now the likeness begins to change. When something is told from one person to another, the first person tells it rather faithfully, then it is told and retold until you can no longer find the truth. Adam was created in the likeness of the Almighty God. Adam's sons were created in the likeness of their father. From then on, children began to become in the likeness of their fathers. *That* image has been fading from the face of the earth, but by the Holy Spirit, it is being restored until we become in the likeness of God.

Do you find an exception to the repetition "and he died?" Do you find one who did not die? Enoch was the only one in this chapter who did not die. Verses 21-24: "And Enoch lived 65 years and begat Methuselah. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah 300 years and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were 365 years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." He was different from his father and different from his father's father. Enoch did not resemble his father, and his son did not resemble him. Religion is not hereditary. Each one must seek for himself. You can leave an estate to your children, but not religion. The only thing you can do is to pray for them.

Now you find some strange happening. Hebrews 11:5 & 6: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation, he had this testimony that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him! For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." What is the repetition in this chapter? In this chapter you see a repetition of "by faith." Does faith mean by sight? Faith means by

hearing the word of someone and believing that word. By faith, Abel offered the sacrifice. By faith Enoch walked with God. But, did he walk with God from the very first day of his life, from when he was very small? Did he begin when he was a little child? However, children must not excuse themselves by this observation. When was his beginning? Verse 22 says that Enoch walked with the Lord for 300 years. He lived 65 years before walking with the Lord. For a number of years, we don't know what kind of religion he had, but there was some preparation. Sixty-five years passed and he had a son. When he had that son, there was a new beginning. He began to walk with God. What force or what courage told him to walk with God? Hebrews tells us that it was by faith. He did not see God, but his own conscience told him something. So one day he made a decision; he said something to himself. There was the little child in his house and he said, "From this moment on, tell my friends that when they come here, I have a program in my life. I want to walk with God." He did not say that he wanted to run or fly; no, he said that he wanted to *walk* step by step. That is the most difficult to do. There is nothing wrong with having revivals when they are conducted well, but many times they are a ruin when they work on the emotions of the people; they have no substance.

To walk is something serious. Enoch was a young man of 65 years of age. He went to his friends and said, "I have made a decision. From now on, I want to walk with God." Does this mean anything? Are you free to go where you like or do you have to study the desires of your companion? Some people cannot talk together unless they come to an agreement. Did Enoch say, "I want to walk with you, God, but we have to go to this place?" In order for Enoch to walk with God, he had to adapt himself to God, not God to Enoch. God is true. There is no iniquity in Him. He never makes any mistakes. Enoch had to study God in order to walk with

Him. Then the two began walking together, one near the other. Did he walk a few minutes and repent? Or did he walk a few years and change? What does the record show? Verse 22: "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah 300 years, and begat sons and daughters." 300 years, day after day; he had a big walk by faith. Since he walked with God, could he please the people? It was impossible. Try to walk with God for one day and see how much trouble you have with people. If you walk with God, you cannot walk with others. He became a stranger to everything else, little by little. But what was the force that led him to this decision? By faith. He had heard that God was good and that He gave life and he said, "I don't want to know anything else; I want to know only God." Now what happened? Verse 24: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." By walking so many years with God, he became a stranger. Everybody talked about him. "Look at that crazy man; he goes with his head in the skies." He became such a stranger, that one day, God took him. He walked with God 300 years, and then God finally took him. One day Enoch disappeared entirely. He was going from mountains to mountains, from glory to glory and one day, the Lord said, "Come with me. You no longer belong to the earth." So Enoch left without seeing death. There are only two men who did not die. Later on you read of Elijah. Before Elijah was taken up, he had to swallow many pills. You cannot walk with God and please the friends and relations. They come to your home when you have to go to church. When you go to work and have to leave them, they understand, but for church, it is not convenient. Hebrews gives you the key to the victory: "By Faith." To build on the sand is easy and very rapid, but to build on the diamond, gold, and silver, is very tiring, but when you have built, you know where you stand. By faith means without reasoning. By faith Enoch was translated from one realm to a higher realm. No one could find him. No man could put his finger

on him. Before he was translated, he had this testimony that he pleased God. Too many want to please both God and the people but the time comes when they have to decide either one way or the other. For a time, the Lord allows you a certain liberty but then comes the time when you have to displease humanity. Without faith it is impossible to please God. If a man says that he loves you but does not trust your word, can you believe him? "I am your friend. Ask anything you want; but if I lend anything, I want your signature." You say, "o.k.," but you don't say that he is your friend. When you love someone, you believe that person's word. God is pleased with the person who has faith in Him. We must believe that He *is*. Is that all? And that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him. You may say, "Well, I looked for Him." You have to go back and seek Him again and again. The good shepherd sought for the lost sheep until he found it. God loves the person who seeks with insistence. The work of the Lord requires diligent and earnest seeking. It costs to be a Christian but it pays. It is the only worthwhile thing. To believe is a great thing. You must believe in the reality of God and that He pays well and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him. Enoch did all this and one day he disappeared. He had been taken in God's arms and transported to heaven. Come what may come, but no one could touch him when he was in the arms of the Almighty.

Lesson 8

Genesis 6

Verse 22: “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” It says that Noah did everything just as it was commanded. Is there any book that can compare with the Bible in simplicity, few words, clarity, etc.? Man tries to make a book so colorful. This Book is so simple and quiet that no book can compare with it. Noah means “rest, repose, consolation.” When this son was born to the family, his father said, “We will call him “Rest.”

People might doubt there ever having been a flood but there is a witness in the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:37-39: “But as the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.” The Lord Jesus here puts a seal of truth on this incident of the Old Testament. If you take Jesus out of humanity, there remains a mass of human beasts. The Lord will come suddenly and the people will not be prepared. This is the idea of the verses. In these verses it speaks of the man, Noah. Then, there must have been a man called “Noah.” Then also, there must have been an ark because it is mentioned by Jesus here; and also the flood was mentioned. So, Jesus confirms the narrative of the Old Testament.

We are studying old books but not an old testament. What is the difference? People usually think of the 29 books of the Old Testament, but the Old Testament means the old covenant; the pact that God made with man through sacrifices. Not only one sacrifice, but through many sacrifices. Which is *the* sacrifice? The Old Testament is built on “If you do this and this, you will live,” but no one

could do it. The Old Testament speaks of the pact that God made with man and the New Testament is the pact that God makes with man through the one sacrifice, which is Christ. The New Testament is "Grace and more Grace." St. John said that the law of the Old Testament came by Moses but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. St. John 1:16 & 17: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." We could never exhaust the fullness of Christ. The New Testament builds upon grace. The Old Testament says, "Do and you shall live." But the New Testament says, "Believe and trust Jesus, and you will receive the strength to do what you have to do." The trouble with many churches is that they don't give the proper place to the Bible. They worship the Bible. The Book has its proper place. In St. John 5:39 it says, "You are searching the scriptures for you think that you will find eternal life in them, but the scriptures are only a witness of me." Many people read this verse incorrectly. If Jesus had meant this as a command, it would mean, "I command you to search the scriptures. You imagine that you possess eternal life but you are deceived, because they are only a witness. I command you to do something that gives you nothing in the end." Is there any sense in this? There is no sense in this. Rather the words of the Lord were not a command but a statement. The Lord said to them, "I know that you search the scriptures. You are always with the Book." We also have the Book but we watch Christ. It is better to know a little and live the little that we know than to know a lot, only in theory. When does one know that the blood of Jesus cleanses him? He has to feel something in him. Jesus was speaking to the Jews telling them that they were continually searching the scriptures, thinking that in them they had eternal life. They would say, "Moses said this" or "Moses said that." They always quoted Moses but never obeyed him. The Bible is only a witness; it needs an interpreter. Put the Book in the

hands of a child and it will cut his hands. It must be given with wisdom. We are studying Christ in the Bible.

Verse 6: “And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.” In another part of the Bible it says that God repenteth not. God is never surprised. God knows everything. It means that it gave God sorrow. It afflicted Him. Hebrews 11:7: “By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” The refrain or note of the whole 7th chapter of Hebrews is “by faith.” Without seeing, but by faith. By faith being admonished by a divine learning, he obeyed the Lord and built an ark on the land without a foundation.

The children of God were marrying the daughters of man. Here you see a little problem. Who are these children of God? In the previous chapter we read of two descendants. One of Cain and one of Adam who was Seth. With Seth, the spiritual seed was renewed, and they should not have mingled with the others. The daughters of man were the daughters of Cain. What kind of children were born of these marriages? They were different from others. Verse 4: “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were men of old, men of renown.” These children became giants in evil. They were heavy in sins. The sin was caused from the very beginning because the parents should not have intermarried. Faithful ones should not marry an unbeliever. This does not mean that those who belong to different churches are unbelievers, but an unbeliever is one who entirely denies God. Verse 5: “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,

and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” When it says that God saw it means that He took notice, because God always sees everything. The time came for God to come down and take notice. What did God see? These children killed many people. You may say that there is no reference to any killing or of murders, thefts, etc.; you don’t find any such details of evil here. It says that giants were on the earth. God did not look at the hands of those giants but looked at their hearts. The human judge can do no better than to look at the outside but God can and does look at the heart. Man may seem blameless from the outside and yet on the inside you can see much iniquity. In the New Testament there is given a story of a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years. This cripple was helpless, and when the Lord healed him, he said to him, “Sin no more.” What kind of sin could he ever do? Who knows how far his imagination could travel. Only God knows. God cleanses the hearts. What is the complaint of the Creator about these giants? Why was He displeased? Perhaps these giants were very polite. Modern society is very polite, but much of it is false. These things cannot deceive God who looks to the imaginations of the heart. “Blessed are they who are pure in heart for they shall see God.” When the soul is cleansed, the outward actions will change also. A man can be a demon or a saint, depending on the mind. It is difficult to think good continually but if you do it, you will become a saint. Let us take heed to our thoughts. When the children of God and the daughters of man intermarried, it displeased the Lord. Verse 3: “And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.” The Lord speaks of His “Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is the Lord’s spirit and the Holy Spirit works in every heart, even in the heart of the sinner. It works on your conscience. Then the Lord reduced the years of man to an average of 120 years. When the Lord was grieved at what He saw on earth, He was determined to

destroy everything. However, God always works through a remnant. When He destroys one thing He leaves something else. That is the history of the church. The Lord always works with the remaining few. Verses 8 & 9: “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” Noah was a saint and just according to his light. Of course, the only perfect one is Jesus, so when it says that some man was just, it means that he was just up to a certain point. Noah was the perfect one in his generation. In the 8th verse, it says that Noah found grace. When one receives grace, does that mean that he is receiving payment for something that he deserves? Does anyone *deserve* grace? Was Noah saved because he was just? Noah was just, but he needed grace. This is the first time that “grace” is mentioned in the Bible. It is an anticipation of the New Testament, and prophecy of Jesus. So, even though the people of the Old Testament were not under the covenant of grace, through the mercy of God, many received grace. It was a thing undreamed of.

Verse 13: “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” Noah had a command to build a queer building. He did not consult an electrician. The building did not have ordinary measurements. It was lined with pitch on the inside and outside. It had room for animals. It really was a strange building but it was the salvation of Noah and his family. Many laughed at Noah. They probably saw him selling all that he had and putting everything in that building. Then, he was not even building the boat in a dry dock. Where was its foundation? They mocked Noah very much. Long before the flood actually came, the Lord had already destroyed the earth in His Spirit. He had made up His mind a long time before that He had to flood the corrupted earth. We had to

undergo a baptism of water; this baptism destroys the past and builds anew.

Every person has a secret fight within himself. When you meet people, don't try to reason with their mind, but appeal to themselves. Ask them what their conscience is telling them. The Holy Spirit confuses the greatest sinner in his own conscience. Where else in the Bible do you find the number 120? There were 120 people in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost. It is a blessed number.

Lesson 9
Genesis 7

1st Corinthians 1:25: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” Everything seemed so foolish to the onlookers; the very queer building, pitch on the outside and on the inside, only one window, several floors, awkward dimensions, animals together with humans, etc. But in Corinthians we find that the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Who went to capture these animals? There is something very instructive in this. At a certain command of God, the beasts went into the ark of their own accord. The people may have said, “Who is this crazy old man? Is he a magician or some kind of wizard that he makes the animals go into the ark?” People who don’t have any love of God cannot believe. Could they have wanted any more of a miracle than seeing the animals walk into the ark by themselves? They should have said, “Let us go into the ark also.” But they didn’t.

Matthew 11:25: “At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” The babies accept the Lord and the people who are too smart remain outside the kingdom of God. When the baptism of the Holy Spirit came, the big men of understanding laughed. They said, “What is this babbling of words?” Every church that rejected the speaking of tongues lost much power. We are pretty fortunate if we are among those who are called babies. Animals obey the Lord and men do not.

Isaiah 1:3: “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” Here it mentions two animals that cannot be yoked together. It is impossible to plow with the ox and ass

together. One moves slowly and digs deeply, while the other moves faster but is superficial. This is the lamentation of the Lord. The animals obey the command but Israel, the people of God, do not know and do not consider the things of God. To consider is to apply your mind to something; to weigh things. The Lord wants His people to consider. Paul writes to the Philippians and says, "Let your moderation, or consideration be known to all men."

Why do we make enemies many times? Because we speak without considering. We must learn how to consider. We are too superficial. Why? Because many churches work on the emotions. There is much grabbing of people. If you want a church that is built on the rock, you must put your life to the work. Another verse about knowing is in Jeremiah 8:7: "Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord." The ass and the ox know, and the people of God do not, but is that all that is said about it? Jeremiah speaks of some other animals. All these other animals know their proper place and time and yet, the people of the Lord don't. Man can go as high as an angel and as low as a demon. An animal cannot do this, but man can. Man who does not have any understanding is classified lower than an animal.

When the Lord is moving, people do not realize it. The mass of people did not enter the ark; *only eight people entered*. The number eight represents a new beginning. In this queer building there was only one window; we have to admit that this was strange. There was only one door, and that one door was closed by God Himself. The door had been wide open all those years while Noah was preaching; but one day, an invisible hand closed it. When He closes the door, can any man open it? Neither can any man close it when He has

opened it. In the New Testament it speaks of a door being shut. Matthew 25:10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." They began knocking and saying, "open, open!" But the voice that was inside said, "I don't know you." There was a person who once said, "Doesn't the Bible say that the Lord will come down and take vengeance against all those who do not know Him?" This man was mistaken. What is the meaning of the word "know" in the scriptures? In one sense it means to have fellowship, to have communion with, unity, to care for a person. So when the Lord said that He knew them not, did it mean that He didn't know their names? They said that they had some experience together, etc., but the Lord said that He never knew them; He never had communion with them. The Lord will take vengeance against all those people who do not care for Him according to their light. We are responsible for the light that God wants to give to us.

Verse 23 says that only Noah and they that were with him in the ark remained alive. The ark is a prophecy of Christ and of the church of Christ. Only the people who are in the Lord will live. With the exception of Noah and his family, all humanity perished. Verse 1: "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Everything was at the command of the Lord. Does the Lord say that He found Noah's children righteous? We suppose that they were not like their father, but because of the father, the whole family was saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and all thy family." *You* first must be saved entirely and then comes your family. The command was to come into the ark. Noah could have said, "I am a good man. I don't need to go into the ark." Would he have been saved? There are some conditions that we **MUST** obey. During all the years that Noah was preaching,

the Lord was patiently waiting. The people had no belief in him while the construction was going on. They probably thought that he was crazy. He was constructing a building which was touching the earth but was not attached to the earth with a foundation. However, that was the secret in the salvation of the people in the building because when the floods came, the ark could easily be detached from earth. What lesson do we get out of this? We should cling to nothing in this life. Sell yourself to no place, no friends, or anything. Be free and ready at God's command. Use things in this life, but don't abuse them; love your friends in God and your enemies for God's sake. Keep yourself always ready to go.

In the 4th verse, the Lord sets the date: "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." Only seven days more. It was the last extension of grace. When the animals started walking in, the people must have laughed. Then when the seven days were expired, the Lord shut the door and soon the rains came. It rained for one day, two days, three days, four days; and when the people saw that the waters were not stopping, they ran from hills to high mountains and then came their end. What happened to the ark, however? The more waters that came down, the higher the ark went. The meaning is that when you are in Christ, the more troubles, the more afflictions that come in your life, the higher you will go. The same waters were a destruction to one and a salvation to another group. The mass of people saw many things and had many years of preaching and yet, they were not converted, so they perished.

Lesson 10
Genesis 8

Verse 21: “And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination in man’s heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.” The marginal note on the word “savor” is “rest.” The Lord smelled a sweet savor of rest. We meet some people and their presence gives us rest, while the presence of others gives us trouble. Peace and rest go together. There is no rest without peace and no peace without rest.

Verse 1 says, “And God remembered Noah.” Everything begins with God. God commanded Noah to go into the ark and He commanded him to go out. The waters were slowly abating from off the face of the earth and Noah was waiting to see the condition around him and he opened the window. Verses 7-9: “And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.” He sent two animals out, the raven and the dove. The raven stands for the presence of evil. A man is a sinner first, then he becomes a saint. There is no saint who has not been a sinner at some previous time. Now what about the raven; did it come back to the family? As soon as it was released, it went to and fro; it was a vagabond. Then Noah sent a dove. Where do you find the dove in the Bible? It is mentioned in two books. Song of Solomon 2:14: “O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance,

let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.” The dove is a symbol of something that is very beautiful in God’s sight. The Lord speaks to the dove in this verse and says, “Let me hear thy voice.” He encouraged her by saying, “Thy voice is sweet.” Would you encourage a person who is not modest or a person who is proud? There is a time when the church becomes so modest, living in the clefts of the rock. This dove would not show itself anymore, but the Lord says, “Come out; I want to hear your voice; don’t be afraid.” The Lord will give you your place when the time comes. “Come out to a ministry,” the Lord calls. In this incident, the dove is a symbol of the church. The dove is also mentioned in Matthew 3:16: “And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” The Spirit of God was descending like a dove, and lighting upon Christ. So, it is a beautiful type. The dove stopped upon Jesus; it is the Holy Spirit.

The raven went forth from the ark and found food for itself; dead animals, etc., and it amused itself, but the dove found no rest. There is no rest for the Holy Spirit. It returned unto Noah, and Noah put his hand out of the window and took the dove back again. Then he sent her out again and the dove went away. There is a great mystery in this. The dove did not return till Jesus came and was baptized. The Holy Spirit was always on the earth but came in a special way when Jesus was baptized. It came to stay. The dove returned twice but the third time, it did not return. Verse 11: “And the dove came in to him in the evening and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.” The dove did not say anything; of course, it could not speak, but it brought something. It brought an olive branch, which stands for peace, and Noah understood by this simple token that the

waters had abated. One day he uncovered the ark and saw that everything was dry. Verses 15 & 16: “And God spoke unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy son’s wives with thee.” God spoke unto Noah. Did Noah go out of his own choice? He could have gone out because the earth was dry, but who put him in the ark? God put him in the ark and God should also let them out. So God told Noah to go out with his family and the animals, and Noah obeyed. Now what happened? What was the first thought of this righteous man who feared and loved God? He did something immediately. We should remember to do something when we come out of some trouble. For many months, he had been in a kind of prison and now he had only one thought. Now he needed a new beginning and many of us forget this. Verse 20: “And Noah built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.” What is an altar in the Bible? Psalm 51:19: “Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with the burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.” Did Noah put these animals on the ground? He made an altar upon which he could put the sacrifice. “Upon thine altar...” David speaks these words in a time when there were many altars but he speaks of *one* altar. The real sacrifice shall be put on “thine altar.” The altar means something in the Christian life. Hebrews 13:10: “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.” These words are to the Christians. If we did not have this verse, we would be unable to understand the meaning of the altar. “We have an altar...” Who are the “we?” Is it the Christians or the Jews? The writer, St. Paul, is a Christian, and he says, “We have, we Christians have, an altar.” The altar is Christ. You can do anything you please, but if you don’t put it on the altar, it will have no value. The sacrifice must be clean, it must be the best, etc., but you must put it on the altar. Paul continues

and says that they who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat of the sacrifice. They were confused and they were bringing something of the Old Testament into the New Testament. “Don’t do this; don’t do that.” They brought much trouble to the apostles. The mingling of Judaism with Grace brings trouble. People are afraid of the law, but we want the love of Christ. A penny given in the love of Christ is better than a million given in the fear of the law. You cannot serve both Moses and Christ at the same time. If you serve Moses, you have no right to approach the altar; go after Moses. You have to choose either one or the other, but we must preach Grace and Grace. The law of the Spirit is not the law of the Old Testament. We study as an illustration for teaching, but we must have our altar, which is Christ. So those who serve Judaism have no right to approach the other.

Romans 4:15: “Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.” Law worketh anger. It is not the fault of the people. Put people under a law and little by little they will become arrogant. “You must do this; you must do that.” Examine the work and wherever the people have been under too much of a strain, too much authority, you cannot change them. Grace, marvelous grace! The Lord begins in the inner life and little by little He changes you. Peter had a sword. What teacher would allow a disciple to carry a sword for three years? A disciple of the Lamb of God was carrying a sword! The Lord could have said, “Shame on you, Peter; I am a teacher of peace.” What is the use of putting away the sword materially and carrying it in the heart? The Lord knew that some day he would put the sword away. Another instance is at the wedding of Cana when the Lord made wine. The people could have said, “Shame on you; the guests are drunk already and you make more wine.” The Lord said, “This is their custom. What is the use of washing the outside of the cup?” Man cannot be wiser than God. He knows how to work in people. If you

say, “Do this; do this,” the people will run away. Man needs a powerful law, and only the love of Christ dispels the law of Moses. When a thing is forced too much, it breaks. Let us be wise; the Lord works gradually, beginning from the inside.

Noah had to stay in the ark for many months and days. The dove had to be sent out again and again. When Noah went out from the ark, he immediately built an altar. He selected clean animals and offered a burnt offering, and God smelled the offering. We have various senses in the church. When it says that God smelled, it would be vulgar to imagine God with a face of man smelling; it is a spiritual smelling. Isaiah 11:3: “And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.” The word “understanding” means scent or smell. When people are in peace, they have rest in their souls. So the Lord smelled and saw that the sacrifice was good. He smelled peace and was satisfied with Noah. There is quietness in the Lord. The Lord said, “There is no use in sending flood after flood. I will use some other kind of chastisement.” He selected people from people, but promised that he would no longer send any floods. The imaginations of man are always evil. Does it say that their imaginations are evil when they are old? It begins when they are young and as they grow older, they become worse and worse unless they are born from above.

This phrase of being born from above is not understood by many. It means being a citizen of that country where there is no malice. If you find yourself without any malice, without suspicion, you must say, “I don’t belong to this country,” because your imaginations are not evil. It is a bad sign when we are full of evil imaginations. The imaginations of those who are born again are not evil.

Lesson 11
Genesis 9:8-29

The Lord made a promise never to destroy the earth by a flood. We have all seen a rainbow. No painter could reproduce a rainbow. It is a masterpiece of God, and it stands for a promise. What does the rainbow tell us? Verses 13, 16, & 17: “And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. “Go forth of the ark, thou and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons’ wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.” Whenever we see a rainbow let us remember that God made a pact with Noah that He would never destroy the earth with a flood. You don’t find among the miracles of Jesus, any which are entirely alike. There is something new in every miracle. From every meeting that you go to, there should be some new inspiration of God. Everything that is too systematic is dry, but the Holy Spirit is never dry but always new. God moves you in love; you are not under law. No two days are exactly alike; no two faces are exactly identical. Every one of us answers to an originality of God. So, when we see the token in the sky, we remember that God made a promise.

1st Corinthians 13:7: “Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” Charity beareth all things. Charity in this verse means love. Love beareth all things, believes all things, and hopes all things. The word “beareth” in the original and in many versions is “covers.” Charity covers all things. Charity spreads a mantle over dirty things. 1st Peter 4:8: “And above all things have

fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” Does it say, “Above all, have lukewarm charity?” When you are carrying a pitcher of water, if it is boiling hot, it will arrive hot, but if it is lukewarm, it will arrive cold because there are many things you have to go through. Our charity must be fervent. Charity covers the sins of others and does not like to repeat scandals. Where is the word “cover” found first in the Bible? Adam was found naked when the Lord called him. Although he covered himself with fig leaves, he was uncovered just the same before God, so the Lord gave them a covering made from skins of animals. Some animals were killed. There is a price for everything. Only things that cost something have some value. The Lord said, “You need a covering and someone must pay for it.” It is the law of sacrifice. In order that the ass might live, the lamb had to be slain. There are many asses that are found around you and many that require mercy and someone has to pay for them.

In Exodus there is an incident that tells of an ark that was overlaid with gold. In the ark there were two tables of the law, but God was not looking at the tables of the law, but was looking at the covering of gold. So when we are praying, the Lord does not see *us* but sees us under a covering. We would not have the courage to go before the Lord, but Christ covers us. Must we look at each other without this covering? Must we look at each other’s sins? Blessed are the merciful, those who cover, those who spread mercy on others.

We have to read things as they are and not as we would make them; Noah became drunk. It was not grape juice, it was real wine that he drank. Something very displeasing happened. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Shem represents the Hebrew race. Ham represents the Negro race (also some of the Yellow race), and Japheth

represents the White race. Now when Noah drank wine, he was uncovered within his tent. Ham, the second of the three sons, saw the condition of his father, and did something very improper, very disgraceful. He told his brothers. He had a good laugh at the expense of the old man. However, what did the brothers do when Ham made this irreverent report? They did something that we should always do, something very noble. We should learn this lesson very well in our lives. May we say something evil about someone just because it is true? Paul says that no wicked word should come out of your mouth but only words of encouragement to others. That is why some people have a weak life, because their tongue is wicked. It is true that the heart commands the tongue, but the tongue also controls the heart. When you stop a wicked conversation about an enemy of yours, and try to cover him without saying things that are false, while you are covering, grace will flood your heart and you will begin to love your enemy. You will begin to speak well of someone you do not care for. If you cannot say something that is good, don't say anything at all. Don't go discovering evil. That business belongs to Satan. Put a mantle on your shoulders and cover up.

In many places, we find that the Lord blessed the blind. "Thine eyes shall see no evil." Don't try to discover scandals. Let your mouth always be full of wisdom and grace and you will become a citizen of that country; and you will suffer when you hear something improper. Every day you will become more and more like Christ. I would like to relate a personal experience that happened about thirty years ago. It is a picture that I cannot forget. I was a Baptist minister and went to visit a poor family. In this family there was a beautiful little girl who belonged to the Sunday School. They opened the door of their little place and in the middle of the floor there was such a mass of dirty things. This mass was very visible, confronting the door. Of course,

I did not look at these things. All at once, this little girl wanted to go out and, in a very nice way, she put herself between me and that dirty mass of things. She covered it in a way that I could not see that dirty sight. Behind that child was something very unpleasant. I could no longer see that unpleasant sight but saw the beautiful child who was in front of it. Immediately this taught me a lesson of covering. People sometimes enter into very imprudent conversations and someone else, in a very nice way, switches the subject. Blessed are these people who know how to cover.

So the two brothers covered their father. Noah was a prophet and when he awoke, he was told what had happened and he began to curse the one and bless the others. We should not curse anyone, but this was God's judgment. Verse 25: "And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Canaan was the son of Ham, so we see that the curse was upon the children of Ham. Those whose acts are evil, their children will suffer; those who act well, their children will prosper. However, in the New Testament, this is changed.

Now what about the blessing? He blessed the two sons who went backwards with a garment on their shoulders. Verses 26 & 27: "And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." The children or descendants of Ham, the African race, have been servants of servants. In some of the southern countries in which I have traveled, I have seen one Negro who had command over five or six other Negroes. They are servants to one who is a servant himself. There is a beautiful book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," that gives a story of some Negroes. Some people were speaking of this book and said, "See, they must be servants of servants." But, what happened one day? Recall the picture of Jesus carrying His

cross. The Gospel says that Jesus was carrying His own cross and then it says that a man, Simon of Cyrene, was forced to carry the cross after Jesus. In reality, Jesus was the greatest servant in the universe. He never did anything of his own mind but always did the will of Another. Maybe He fainted under the cross, and another was forced to carry the cross. Was a descendant of Shem, a Jew, or a descendant of Japheth, a white gentleman, forced to carry the cross? They would have risked a revolution. However, it says that Simon of Cyrene, one of the Negro race, who was probably coming from his field and going to Jerusalem to have a little rest, was forced to carry the cross. When the officer saw this poor Negro coming, he said, "Now I am out of trouble," and he said to him, "Come here and carry the cross." Now you see two slaves, Christ and the Negro both carrying the cross. So the curse upon the descendants of Ham was taken away in Christ. The day that Simon of Cyrene carried the cross of the Son of Man, the curse was taken away.

Lesson 12
Genesis 11:1-9

Verses 8 & 9: “So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” The word “babel” means confusion. Remember when the Lord asked the disciples who the people thought He was? There were not two people who agreed on a definition of Jesus Christ; only the Holy Ghost agrees. Where there is no Holy Spirit, there is confusion.

What is the main point in this lesson? This is a very simple lesson but in the scriptures, the things that are the simplest are the deepest. The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. The language is naturally more important than the speech. The plan of God is that we go back to one language and one speech. This is a long time after the flood. The people traveled eastward and when they reached a certain plain, they remained there to live.

Now comes the lesson. Verses 3 & 4: “And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” They spoke one to another and made a plan. They said, “Let us make brick.” They also said something else. So far, there is no sin, but what did they want the bricks for? They wanted to build a city, but is that all that they wanted? They also wanted a tower. They did not want a very low tower; their program was very extravagant. Man wanted a city and a tower, but when the Lord created man, He put him in a

garden, not a city. The first one to build a city was Cain. These people wanted not only a city, but an exceedingly high tower. The tower was to be so high that it could reach heaven. Why this? By building this city and tower that reached heaven they would have a memorial. They said, "Let us..." They encouraged each other. They did not say, "Let God" nor did they say, "God willing." They wanted to make themselves a name. When Satan tempted Eve through the serpent, why was she overcome? What did the devil say to her? "If you eat of this, you will make a quick fortune." People are after quick fortunes. They want to become millionaires without any work. "You will become like God." The temptation was in the pride of the woman. Here again it is the pride of these people that caused them to do what they did. "We need a name; we are no longer a small group." They didn't mention anything about God at all. They were a very proud people. Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." In some other place it says that pride is the beginning of sin, and avarice is the beginning of evil. It was pride that caused the downfall of Adam and Eve. Did the Lord command them to build a city? Abraham did not build any city because he was looking for a celestial city. He was looking for a city whose builder and architect is God. We should be looking for that heavenly city too. Man tried to make himself big but in order to save mankind, the Lord had to make Himself as nothing. Man fell by pride and the Redeemer saves by humility. Man begins with something immense, but the Lord begins in a humble way. He selected a few unimportant men as disciples; He came like a servant. Philippians 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the

death of the cross.” Here you see the humility of Christ. Man wants to make himself a big name but Christ made Himself of no reputation. We must enter into the Spirit of Christ; we must deny ourselves.

These people told the plan among themselves, but God heard them and came down to see the city that the children of men were building. God is everywhere, and it is not necessary for Him to “come down” as it says here; but it means that He put His hands in the matter. Verse 7: “They were confused. They were not as one anymore and could no longer understand each other.” Is unity brought about by saying, “Let *us*?” Is it possible to bring about unity in this way? If we submit ourselves to the will of God, then there will be unity. What a discord in our own beings! There isn’t even unity in ourselves. The mind would like one thing and the heart tells you something else. But when does this unity come in us? Continually I hear people say, “Let us do this” or “Let us do that.” WE, OF OURSELVES, CAN DO NOTHING! When we renounce our own will and say, “God’s will be done,” then we will become one in God and one among ourselves. There is unity in Him only.

The Lord said, “Let us confound the language of these people;” and they no longer understood each other. When people do not understand each other, it means that one of the party is carnal. If both parties are spiritual, they will harmonize. “If two of you agree as touching anything and you will ask it of God, the Lord will do it because God is in the midst.” There is also the agreement in the mind. For instance, if two assassins get together and one of them says, “Let us kill that person,” the other may say, “Yes,” but in the heart he says “No.” Out of courtesy, the husband or wife may agree to something, but in their own heart they may not. There is no spiritual agreement except in God. If the husband says, “Let us do this,” the wife says, “Well, I don’t

want to disagree with him,” so she says “Yes.” This is obedience but not agreement.

When a teacher is instructing a child in music, he gives much time to fundamentals so the child will have a good foundation. Verdi, a noted Italian musician, would practice a long time at the piano so that he could attain flexibility in his fingers. We too must have a sound foundation.

These people were building the city, but were stopped by the Lord. Some people remained in that place and some others went away, and the place was called Babel. We must cease saying, “Let us.” Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” The Pentecostal Movement was very precious when it was small, but when it became big like other denominations, it began to fail; but thank God that He has sent another revival.

Lesson 13

Genesis 11:26-end & 12:1-9

This is the life of Abram. What is the meaning of the name “Abram?” It is one of the greatest names in the Bible, and it means “Great Father” or “Exalted Father.” Later on the name is changed to Abraham which means, “Father of Multitudes.” In Hebrews 11:8-10 we have the key to the life of Abraham: “By Faith.” Faith is not by sight, but by believing without seeing. Hebrews 11:8: “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place that he should receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” This is the first step in the life of Abraham. By faith he left the place of his habitation not even knowing where he was headed for. Would you buy some property without ever having seen it? It seems foolish. Suppose Abram had asked some wise people in his town, they would say to him, “Where are you going, Abram?” “I don’t know,” Abram would answer. The wise people would then say, “You are a crazy man; you are an old crank.” Abram was an old man when he left the land of Ur; he was 75 years old, but he moved by faith. It is not easy to walk by faith; one must love God and believe that He deceives no one. The word of God said to him, “Leave your home town, and your family, and everyone, and go to a certain territory that I will give you as an inheritance.” We want to know too much in life; we want to have everything very clear before us. According to the world, this is all right, but according to God, you must not reason too much with Him. Trust and obey!

When Abram finally arrived in the land that he was headed for, he found enemies there, but he got along with them. God had given him a promise that the land he was headed for was his inheritance. Consequently, what could Abram have done when he arrived there? It is logical that he could say,

“This land is mine” but what *did* he do? When he arrived in the place that was to be his inheritance, he remained a stranger. He arrived a stranger and remained a stranger. Isn’t this strange? We don’t consider enough the great characters of the Bible. He moved by faith, and by faith he remained a stranger. He did not go to some farmhouse and say, “Your house and farm are mine because God gave them to me.” He never became a citizen of any country. I have nothing to say against your citizenship and my citizenship of this country; we are speaking of spiritual things. Hebrews 11:10: “For he looked for a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God.” This is the reason. He could not find any place that he could call his own city and he was continually looking for another city. He had a long vista. He was a man of faith. Who was the architect and builder of the city for which Abraham was looking? It was God Himself.

Verse 28: “And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.” This was one of Abraham’s brothers. In this verse, it speaks of a funeral. It was a funeral that was different from those of Abraham, David and Joseph. He died in the presence of his father. You may think, “What is the use of telling me this? What do I care about his dying before his father?” Could his father help him? Could the earthly father help his dying son? The father was there but could not help him. Later on, however, we will read of someone who is both father and God, and in the presence of such a father, there is no death. This is one of the many little hints that are scattered here and there in the Bible that seem to have no bearing on the subject, but they are shown later on.

The command came to Abram to go away from his old place. While Abram’s father was with him, did he reach Canaan? They left the land of sin, but did they reach the place

destined by the Lord? They started, but did not arrive; at a certain place called Haran, they stopped. Verse 31: “And they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.” This little group started from the land of the Chaldeans with the intention of reaching a certain territory that God had destined for them. They did not have a map to show them the direction but they knew that a certain place was destined for them. But here you see a failure. They left with all intentions of reaching Canaan but they stopped before they got there. I do not know what they found in the land of Haran but they said, “What is the use of going on to the land of Canaan; we have left the Catholic Church.” Yes, it may be true that you left the Catholic Church, but *where are you now?* You left the land of Ur but you must go on until you reach the land of Canaan. God kept silent during the time that they dwelled in Haran. They were to go to Canaan but they stopped and dwelt in Haran. It was a tragedy. Maybe it was a nice territory for cattle, but the old man was still with him. Beware of old people! The older we get, the more foolish we are if we are not in God. They remained in Haran until the old man died. When the old man died, the Lord appeared once again and said, “Go on now, my boy.” Abram himself was not even a young person. He could have said, “I am old now.” But they started out again. They had a good start at first, but they stopped. Have we stopped in our lives? Are some of us dwelling in Haran? May the Lord reveal to us where we have stopped. The Holy Spirit tells us to go on. The old man did not reach Canaan. In each one of us there is an old man that must die. The old man in us will not reach Canaan.

Verse 1: “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” The funeral of the old man was made and the Holy Spirit appears again, but the

Lord had given the message before. Was the command only to get out of his country? He did go out from his old country but was that enough? The Lord told him to get away from his kindred. He began to obey but he stopped. The Lord's words here are a reprimand to Abram. "Now your father is dead. Now keep on going. Get yourself into the land which I will show you." Now He makes a promise. Verse 2: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." Abram had no children. He was now quite old and yet the Lord says that He will make him a great nation and he would be a blessing to others. Verse 3: "And I will bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." People who will say, "Blessed is Abram" are blessed themselves. People who love the servants of the Lord will be honored. Whatever one does in good, he will become a partaker in that same good. The Lord also says that He will curse them who curse Abram. Don't ever give a malediction or criticize anyone. You must pray for them but be silent. Let us only bless. If we cannot bless, then let us be silent.

Verse 4: "So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." Was it necessary to give such emphasis? He finally got the lesson and he was determined to go. He departed as the Lord had spoken. Now it was no more a half obedience but a complete obedience. Verse 5: "And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." He buried the old man, then moved westward toward Canaan. Before, we read that they were traveling toward Canaan also but they still had the old man with them. The old man must have been quite a reasoner. He must have said, "Let us stay here in Haran." Abram answers, "But we had a revelation." The old man then says, "Forget the revelation; we are out of the land of

Ur. Let us not be hasty.” However, now that the old man had died, they began moving again. This time they arrived there. The word of God is beautifully written. There are no exclamatory points, etc. It is plain: “And unto Canaan they came.” Now that Abram arrived what did he do? Verse 6: “And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.: There were people already inhabiting the land. Later on we read that there were giants in this land. Verse 7: “And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.” The Lord again appears to Abram. The Lord says, “Unto your seed...” He did not say, “Unto you...” “I will give this land to your children.” What did Abram do when the Lord spoke to him? Did he build a tabernacle? He built an altar, and then he kept on going. He had no house; he always dwelled in tents. We too have an altar, which is Christ. Only when the sacrifice is done on or through the altar is it accepted. Verse 8: “And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.” Abram was a pilgrim; he never settled in any one place. Now he built another altar and called upon the name of the Lord. It shows a special reverence. There are two words that can define the life of Abram and they are TENT and ALTAR. Tent representing the fact that he was a pilgrim, and altar, showing that he was a worshipper of God. He did not live in a palace; he was satisfied with not having any one place as his home. He was satisfied with packing and moving again and again. Abram was so used to looking upward, that the Lord once said to him, “Count the stars; you are used to looking upward.”

Lesson 14
Genesis 13

The main actors in this chapter are Abram and Lot. What is the relationship between these two men? One was the uncle and the other was the nephew. We have to go back to a previous chapter to understand the relationship between these two men of God. They were both men of God; however, they were not in the same measure. Genesis 11:26-28: "And Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees." Ur was the town where Abram was born. Haran was the father of Lot and brother of Abram, and when Haran died, Lot remained an orphan. Verse 31: "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there." They left Ur and went toward Canaan but they did not reach their destination. Genesis 12:4: "So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." What do you see in this verse? The nephew clung to his uncle. When Abram left the wicked city, Lot followed. Many people will follow you for a long time and through many situations in life but does that mean that they will follow you to the end? Take the life of Jesus, for an example. He had multitudes following Him in His life, but not all of them followed Him to the cross. There is a lesson in this. Did all of the people who left Egypt reach Canaan? Many of them died in the wilderness. Because people follow you for many years, does it mean that they will follow you till you die? There are many sad lessons to be learned in this book. These men

seemed to be two in one, but now we see something in the 13th chapter. Abram had no children and he took the orphan, Lot, like a child. Did Abram make Lot like a servant or did Lot have a pocketbook of his own? Time is a great tester of characters. We never know people unless we deal with them for a long time and unless we have a spiritual intuition. Especially the young people; you have a long life before you; learn early in life so that you won't be disappointed later on. Never expect too much from any human being; we are all flesh.

There has been a little of Egypt in the life of Abram. Now he is out of Egypt and going to Canaan. Was Abram a poor man? Many people think that the Lord took only the poor people. There are many rich people in the church also. We may be rich and still be great Christians. Abram was very rich in cattle, silver, gold, etc. but he had no palace or house. He was rich but he was situated everywhere and nowhere. What is meant by this seemingly contradictory statement? Abram did not settle in any one place. He had an abundance of camels, asses, oxen, sheep, and had plenty of money and yet he never settled down. Why was he satisfied to do this? Was it because he was looking for a city with a very nice climate? Was he looking for a residence in which he could enjoy himself, or was he looking for an eternal city? One night as I was preaching of St. Paul when he was before King Agrippa, I saw a vision of him; he was thin and sickly when he said, "I am noble too." I heard Paul's voice when he said, "I have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision." Now we see Abram before us. He was not looking for anything permanent. We have a lesson here, that there is nothing permanent. In this life, nothing will remain. You will see the circle change again and again. Very few people will remain your friends ten years from now. Very few people will walk with you to the last mile of the way. However, with Christ, it is different. Christ is the same

yesterday, today, and forever. Did Abram pay a salary to the nephew and make him as a servant or did Lot have property of his own? Did Abram give Lot a chance to become a rich man himself? Was the uncle rich and the nephew poor? They were both rich; not in the same measure, but both were well-to-do. Abram was not greedy; he wanted Lot to have property of his own also. The old man helped the young man with land, cattle, etc., and perhaps also advice.

Abram came out of the land of Egypt, which was a land of mistakes, and came out with everything and everybody. When this great old man of God came out of Egypt, where did he go? Which place did he visit first? When he came from the place of trouble he must have said, "I made a mistake by going to Egypt. I went to Egypt because I was afraid that I would go hungry, but I made a mistake." This was the reason. There was a famine in the land and so he went to Egypt. The bread question is always a temptation. People will run here and there because they are afraid that they will have nothing to eat. Abram came back a little depressed but where did he go? Verses 3 & 4: "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord." He left Egypt and did not stop at any place on the way. He said, "I must visit the place where I built my first altar in this land." Genesis 12:8: "And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent having Bethel on the west; and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord." This is Abram's first altar. He made this altar and put a sacrifice on it. Then he called on the name of the Lord. Now when he left Egypt he went to this same place and again he called upon the name of the Lord. He began anew. Now comes something about Lot.

Verse 5: “And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.” Now the scriptures give a little picture of the nephew. Up to now we have nothing against Lot. Abram was an old man when he left Haran, so the nephew must have been a man of 40 or more. He was not a boy; he should have known better by now. He, too, was a well-to-do man and could not complain. He was independent, but now something happened. Verses 6 & 7: “And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram’s cattle and the herdmen of Lot’s cattle; and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.” We don’t have the background of this happening, but the Holy Spirit gives some information. The land could not bear these two rich men. Now that they were rich, a little separation began between the two; or, rather, the separation began to manifest itself. Things do not appear a second after they start. They don’t spring up in one night like a mushroom. When they begin to be manifest, the root is already quite big. When people are poor, they cling together, but when they become rich, they become envious. If it was the fault of Abram or of Lot we don’t know yet, but we will soon discover it. When two families live near each other and they become envious of each other, trouble begins to show first in the children. There is a separation between the parents too, but they keep it secret, but the children begin to fight. This is life. The trouble began to show among the servants. The scriptures do not give any details regarding the trouble.

Now there is a little information, which seems to be out of place. The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land. They were fighting among themselves and near them there were these two strangers. What a scandal! These strangers were heathen. They did not know the real God and

were scandalized. This trouble did not set a good example to the others, so the old man did something. Abram stepped in now. He must have surmised something before this but now he put a stop to it. Verse 8: “And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.” Did Abram say, “Please let us patch this affair. Call your servants and give them a good lesson and I will call my servants and I will lecture them?” Did he blame Lot? It would be no use. You may correct people when you are not in the game yourself, but if you are in the game yourself, you may not correct them even if you are right. He did not go to the nephew and start to accuse him. He was a gentleman through and through. Did he say, “Let there be no strife between your servants and my servants?” He said, “Let there be no strife between you and me.” He went to the root of the matter. “My dear nephew, the trouble is with *us*. The trouble is between you and me.” Abram spoke as if he were the cause of the strife. Why didn’t he want any strife? “Because we are brethren.” Did Abram say, “I have been your second father?” Did he say anything at all like this? He put himself on the same level with the young man and said, “We are brethren.” The more you consider, the more you see how princely Abram was. Lot did *not* answer, “I am like a son to you and am not worthy to be your brother.”

Now Abram had the medicine ready. There is no use in correcting when you do not have the medicine ready. Verse 9: “Is not the whole land before you? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.” There is an unwritten story here. “Separate thyself from me. You want to be independent; please *be* independent. Separate yourself; don’t be bashful; it is all right. If you go right, I will go left. You choose in what direction you want to go. You don’t need me anymore;

you are rich. Separate yourself.” There is not a word of resentment. Abram said to him, “We must separate. We are surrounded by many eyes, and the people will say, ‘These are the people who worship the true God.’ Be free, my dear boy.” Did Lot cry or say, “It is a shame that I should choose?” There is nothing like this. Instead, there is a sad picture. He lifted up his eyes. He began to look around and grabbed with his eyes. In the original version it says that he spied. He was a schemer. He spied the plain of Jordan which was like a garden. After he spied, what did he do? Verse 11: “Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.” He chose the plain and said, “All right; we will separate. You want to chase me out, so I’ll go.” Then they separated and Lot pitched his tent and began to go toward Sodom, the most wicked city of olden times. Lot not only chose the big plain of Jordan, but also, this garden was a big market for buying and selling; and Abram remained far away from all.

Verse 13: “But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.” The scriptures are rich. Sodom was a wealthy city. There was plenty of business but there was plenty of sin too. The people of that city were wicked and sinners before God. Before men, they must have been very nice, but before God, they were wicked. “Don’t you understand, Lot, that you are going toward hell just to make business?” Lot chose and Abram remained in a secondary position. No plain, no big market for Abram and he said nothing; but I imagine that he went walking sad and afflicted many times. He was not afflicted because he was left with nothing, but because of the attitude that his nephew had taken. Do you read of any altar being built by Lot? When he looked for the best of everything, did he raise some altar? You don’t read of anything. He must have had a big laugh with his servants and said, “We fooled him; we got the

best.” Abram must have remained a little mortified to see what the son of his heart had done. After all that Abram had done for him, he was ungrateful.

However, God steps in at the proper time. When we need a consolation, God steps in. Lot was no more in the picture now. He will appear later on, but in a very different picture. The Lord says to Abram, “Now lift up your eyes.” The Lord says, “Now.” Let us compare the lifting of the eyes in the 10th and 14th verses. Verse 10: “And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.” Verse 14: “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward.” When Abram said, “You choose,” the eyes of Lot began to look and grab, but the eyes of Abram were sober. Now the Lord says, “Now, Abram, *you* lift your eyes.” It was a command of the Lord. When Lot lifted his eyes, it was his own desire but when Abram lifted his eyes, it was the command of the Lord. Verse 15: “For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it; and to thy seed for ever.” Abram had no children. Imagine what these words meant to this old man. Now the Lord promises something. Verse 16: “And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.” Only God will be able to count his seed. There are two descendants of Abram—the earthly and the heavenly. The earthly descendants are compared to the dust. No one knows how many Hebrews there are. Later on, the Lord says, “Count the stars. So shall be thy seed.”

Verse 17: “Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.”

Palestine is a land of plains, valleys, hills, etc. What is the meaning of this walking up and down and all over the land? It means a variety of experiences. Change your climate; see different faces. What you walk now will be your experience in the future.

Then what did Abram do? Verse 18: “Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.” The Lord had said to Abram, “Look around from where you are, Abram. There are no cattle, there is no plain, no marketplace, but I will bless you just from this little place. I will give you a long line of descendants. Keep moving.” Abram obeyed the Lord and removed his tent. Again the pilgrim packed up and moved and dwelt in Hebron, which is a very interesting place later on. Many things of importance happened here. Now when Abram reached this place, he built another altar to the Lord. Again we see the two symbols of Abram: the tent of the pilgrim and the altar of the worshipper of the Lord.

Lesson 15

Genesis 14:11-24

The scriptures are a witness of Jesus Christ but they aren't the only witness. Suppose we had no Bible, could you destroy Jesus Christ? Many people never saw or read the Book, but Christ is superior to the Bible. The Protestants build only on the Bible. This, in general, is the failure of the Protestant theory. John 5:39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The Jews were searchers of the scriptures, and because they depended on the scriptures, they failed. The Protestant Church has been too literal and is slowly failing. While the Pentecostals were led mainly by the Holy Spirit, they were a success but, little by little, it is falling off. We should do this; we should do that like the others but then, we will fail like the others also. In every age, the Lord had a remnant. These few kept alert for the voice of the Spirit. One movement fails, and He raises another. The Pentecostal movement is slowly failing but He is raising a people, which is called "Kingdom People." Christ is their king. No movement has lasted more than forty to fifty years. The Lord already has prepared His new movement. Some of us had this revelation years ago. There has not been a complete failure because there are still many people who have kept themselves strong in the Lord, but we must go back. Now the Bible is only a witness and a witness is only one of the many elements that go toward making up a courtroom. The Jews were cavilers of the scriptures; they knew them. They knew the letter and were involved with studying the letter; and when Jesus came, they rejected Him because they did not understand the scriptures. The Lord said to them, "Why are you always searching the scriptures? You imagine that in them you have eternal life but you are mistaken. They are only a witness of me." Put the scriptures in the proper place and be dependent upon the presence of the Almighty. The

Holy Spirit is a living witness of Christ. May the Lord put in you such a hunger for the Holy Spirit that you say, "I cannot live without the Holy Spirit." Then you will receive it.

The city of Sodom is spoken about because Lot dwelt there. The men of Sodom were great sinners but for Lot, Sodom was a great place of business. He could sell his wool, flocks, etc. and could also make a name for himself. Now Lot became an important man in Sodom. He changed his profession. He had been a shepherd but in Sodom, he was no more a shepherd. We don't know after which profession he went, but he must have been very important. He was so important that when the war broke out, he was in the war. Perhaps he was some general or captain. However, during the war, they got into some trouble and became prisoners. Abram, on the other hand, remained in his old profession and was a free man.

The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were captured and Lot was with these kings. Verse 11: "And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way," They took also Lot and confiscated all his property. He had no sheep or cattle in Sodom, but he had other possessions. He was a rich and important man. Captain Lot was now taken prisoner. Later on, we find that the people insulted him and said, "You were a stranger and you became a judge in this city." He really suffered in Sodom because he knew the Lord. Even though he had no peace in that city, he remained there for a long time. Verse 12: "And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed." They made him a prisoner and went away. Abram was a free man and had many friends. He also had a large family. They were not his own children but they were all from his own house. How did Abram find out that his nephew was a prisoner? Verse 13: "And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the

Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.” One escaped and went to the old man. He must have known something about Abram. When Abram heard the news, did he say, “He deserves that now; he got his reward. He knew that there were sinners in Sodom and yet he stayed there.” Did Abram say something like this? Verse 14: “And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own home. They were all like children to him. There were only 318 of them and they pursued the enemy.” It was the hand of God! The Lord gave him understanding and skill. Verses 15 & 16: “And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.” He himself could not be everywhere, but these 318 were devoted to Abram. They divided themselves and pursued the enemy and brought back everything which was connected with Lot. Now comes something else. When is a man more in danger, when he is in trouble or when he has had some success? Was Abram now in danger? He had been like a big victorious general. He accomplished what kings could not accomplish. He did this for Lot. Abram loved Lot, but we cannot say that Lot loved Abram. The king of Sodom said, “We must do something for this big general; he saved us and we must honor him. We must make a banquet for him. We must show him some gratitude.” The people of Sodom were very polite but they were great sinners.

Abram freed Lot and Lot returned to Sodom. He did not go with Abram. Did Abram say, “Now my son, you must remember this lesson!” If people are to be your friends, they will *be* your friends. Lot had a wife and children in Sodom.

He belonged there. He must have had some very nice dresses in Sodom, and he returned. He said, "Thank you" to his uncle and they separated again. Now something happens. Abram is in danger, but there was someone who was looking down upon him from the throne. God almighty was protecting him. There are some snakes that hypnotize birds and, if nothing comes between the snake and the bird, the bird is drawn downward and is lost. Now there is a snake coming toward the man of God but something happens. A new man enters the picture. The ministry of Melchizedek typifies that of Christ. Verse 18: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God." Besides Christ, Melchizedek was the only man who was king and priest at the same time, and he is brought into the picture without any introduction. Any other writer would have said that he was born in such and such a country and would go on to give his ancestry, but the Scriptures present him abruptly. He went forth to meet Abram. Verses 19 & 20: "And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek. Melchizedek was far superior; he was a picture of Christ. Melchizedek brought something to Abram. Abram was not hungry, but he was brought bread and wine. These are symbolic of the Holy Communion. Melchizedek said, "You need some strength. You are a little weak; you need to be calm. Eat something." This is the thought of Melchizedek. In reality, he did not say much. Between two people who both love God, a long speech is not necessary. Then he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." This is the first that this name is given. Can you say these words and look earthward? Abram must have had his head high in the skies. Forget the war and everything and look upward. "Blessed be

the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. It has not been your own ability. It was the grace of God that delivered your enemies into your hands.” He gave Abram no chance of becoming proud. He did not come right out and say, “Don’t become proud;” it was not necessary to do so. POSSESSOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. Everything belongs to God. Didn’t Abram know this? He knew it, but in that moment he needed a reminder. Now Abram gave a tenth of his things and made an offering to Melchizedek, and Melchizedek went away without saying anything else. He did not say, “Look out! The king of Sodom will come to meet you.” He did not say one more word. Why? It was not necessary. He just blessed Abram in the name of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; he blessed the most high God and he disappeared. Abram was left all alone repeating the same words of the message. “The most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.” How can you tell whether or not a person benefits by a message? When he prays with the same words. I can imagine Abram walking along full of joy just repeating the words of the message over and over. He had forgotten everything and was repeating the same words. He was preaching to himself.

Now appeared the king of Sodom but the snake had no more power because something had come between the tempted and the tempter and had broken the charm of the snake. Verse 21: “And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.” Right after Abram had received the blessing, the king of Sodom came and said, “If you have any persons who belong to Sodom, give them to me, and I will make a present of the goods.” Did Abram fall into this trap? What was his answer? Verses 22 & 23: “And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take from a

thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.” “Everything that you rescued, I will give to you as a gift. You deserve that. All I want is the people.” Did Abram say, “I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord?” He knew that the name was LORD, but he had learned a new name and said, “I have lifted up my hand to the MOST HIGH GOD that I will not take anything from Sodom. What I have done, I have done. I don’t want your goods because those goods were contaminated.” If you put something belonging to a prince in your home, little by little your home is not adapted and you must change everything else in the house also. It is the same here. It was a terrible temptation but Abram refused everything.

Melchizedek was not the one who helped Abram in the first incident but he was used to protect him in this incident. Hebrews 7:25: “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” It was a ministry to the throne. It was no more the shedding of blood but He protects you and me by some mysterious actions: some preaching, sometimes by some sickness, by things which may seem a misfortune, but in the eyes of the Lord, these things are for your own protection.

Lesson 16

St. John 14:1-18

Verse 1: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” The Lord speaks to his eleven disciples. Judas Iscariot was not present to hear these words. Here the Lord speaks only to those who really believe in Him. The Jews pretended to believe in God but they killed His Son. Do you think that a man can believe in God and refuse Jesus? That is the meaning of this verse. There are many people who say that they believe in Jesus and sincerely so, but they don’t believe in the Holy Spirit. Can anyone believe in Jesus and refuse the Holy Spirit? It is an automatic proposition. If you believe in one, you automatically accept the other. Now the Lord continues about the Holy Sprit.

Verse 12: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” Of what works does it speak here? The disciples would perform greater miracles than Jesus did. The Lord performed many marvelous miracles. When has there been any saint who did greater miracles than Jesus? The baptism of the Holy Spirit is greater than any other miracle ever performed. No miracle can compare with the baptism. Jesus performed many miracles but He never saw anyone baptized while He was on this earth. This was because He had not yet ascended unto His Father. The disciples laid hands on people and they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Suppose that because of some necessity, the President of The United States would come to stay at this humble place for a week or two; this little place would become of paramount importance. Policemen would be stationed around, traffic would be stopped in the vicinity, the neighbors would be investigated, the place would be kept quiet, etc., just because

the president was here. For a moment, this place would become a palace. Now suppose that in one of you the Holy Spirit comes to abide. You become the temple of the Holy Spirit. You become sacred. When the Holy Spirit comes, the Father and Son come together with it. The Trinity is one. When people are newly baptized, we should warn others not to go molesting them. They will become confused. When they are baptized, don't go to them saying whether or not they are baptized, etc. Be reverent. In the past we have been imprudent. I remember when I was baptized, the people saw fire in the house. I did not see it but others did. I was not even looking for the baptism because I thought I already had it. I had preached for ten years in the Baptist Church. I thought I had everything, but when I *was* baptized, I saw His presence coming in me. His presence can actually be felt. I could feel the liquid fire pouring in me; my body was enlarged and His presence came in me. My throat was thrilled, my tongue was moved, and I sang a great song. In the same room with me was a man who had backslid a little, but when he saw the movement that had begun in me, he began to jump around and started to shout. It was like hearing some beautiful violin music and then someone comes around and starts making noise on a tin can. It was exactly the same, and I said, "Does the Lord need this man to give these words?" I was very afflicted. Then the sisters began to pour into my house. Some were violent, making strange motions. There is much mixture in the Pentecostal work. However, there is also the part that is genuine. When I was baptized, for many days I did not even want to see or speak to anyone. I was closed within myself and was like a stranger on an island. Therefore, I respect people who are baptized with the Holy Spirit and say, "Let them be alone." Give them time to become adapted to their new territory. It is something very marvelous. However, the Holy Spirit is not appreciated enough in the Pentecostal work. For the first few days after baptism, we may not even like to hear

preaching. No human voice seems to appeal to us because we are hearing the voice of God. After that begins the fight between flesh and spirit and you will understand the temptation of the enemy. The Lord allows you to be tempted in order that you can be fortified. When the Lord was baptized, He was tempted in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights.

Verses 16 & 17: “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” The Lord promised the Holy Spirit. Many churches preach, but there is no power in their preaching unless the Holy Spirit puts that something that cannot be defined in the hearts of the people. “You will do greater things than I did because I will ascend unto my Father and He will give you another Comforter.” The first title given to the Holy Spirit is COMFORTER. It comforts; it medicates; it is a balm pouring into your soul; it gives you rest. What is the meaning of the Lord’s saying that He will send “another” comforter? This suggests that there are at least two comforters. Jesus had been the other one. Simeon had been waiting for the consolation of Israel. Jesus was a comfort to the disciples when He was with them. Now that the Lord is about to ascend, He says, “My Father will send another Comforter which will dwell in you forever.” When you receive the Holy Spirit, it stays with you forever. It will never abandon you unless you chase it out. The Holy Spirit, which is a spirit of truth, is the other Comforter of which the Lord was speaking. If you went to all the colleges of the United States and Europe and did not possess the spirit of truth in you, could you have the truth? It is impossible. No Bible school can give you the full truth unless you are sitting at the feet of the Master, the teacher of the truth. There is no

truth without the Holy Spirit. Suppose someone accuses you of some crime and all the appearances are against you; you cannot defend yourself. However, suppose someone who knows the Lord goes to Him and prays and says that you are innocent, the Holy Spirit will give you truth notwithstanding all the things that seem contrary. Hence, it is called the Spirit of Truth. It first comforts you and then becomes a teacher in your life.

“...whom the world cannot receive...” If you approach a sinner, you must not preach of the Holy Spirit. Preach the Savior. Preach Christ. If the person is not first saved, he cannot desire the Holy Spirit. First he must accept the blood of Christ, then he can accept the Holy Spirit. People must first be forgiven of their sins and then they can receive the Holy Spirit. The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit because it does not know the Holy Spirit. How is it that we know the Holy Spirit? “For He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” What is the difference? When the Lord was on this earth, the disciples were under the influence of the Holy Spirit and Jesus said, “The Holy Spirit now dwells *with* you but He shall dwell *in* you.”

Verse 18: “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” There is a marginal note for the word COMFORTLESS. He will not leave you like “orphans.” Hence, without the Holy Spirit, the disciples were like orphans. An orphan is one who has lost his dear ones. Once, in Boston, we had an English meeting in which the congregation was asked how many desired to be baptized. Several raised their hands, Then another question came asking why they desired to be baptized. Some answered one thing and some another but none quoted this verse. Some said that they would be in rapture. Some said that they would be able to preach with power, etc., but the Lord here gives the condition in which the disciples were when they

were waiting for the baptism. They were left desolate like orphans. It was a condition of life not of power in preaching, etc. When Jesus left them, their hearts remained empty and they needed a refilling. When people are in such a condition, they will be baptized. Don't ask to be baptized for the reason that you want to preach. If you love Jesus, you desire to see and meet Him and He will come into your life and He will be real in you. The Lord said, "It is necessary for me to go away. It is good that I go because if I don't go, the Holy Spirit will not come." How can you explain this? The meaning is, "I am near you but not near enough. If I go, my living presence will come in you and you will have me nearer than you ever had me before." I never imagined that I could travel across the seas and see many terrible storms without any fear. I was just closed in myself and someone was moving in me. When you are in some terrible danger you will see how it moves within you. Christ sleeps in the storm. It seems that He is not there. You don't feel His presence at all, but when some danger appears, that something moves within you. He awakens and rebukes the sea and wind and then, the calm comes. The Lord says, "Don't cry because I am going; I am with you but He shall be in you." People don't know what they miss by not desiring the Holy Spirit. For two years in New York, I was always looking in the streets for some beggar who could have been Christ in disguise. My heart was burning for Him. However, you must not listen to people who say that if you are not baptized, this and this will happen to you. Be tranquil. You will receive the Holy Spirit. He is more desirous to give you the Holy Spirit than you are to receive it; but the love of Christ must be burning in you. It is as if you are burying your own son; your breath leaves you. When you are in that condition, the Holy Spirit will come. The Lord will not leave you desolate; He will come in you.

Lesson 17

Hebrews 6:18-20 & 7:1-4

Psalm 110:4: “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” God the Father is speaking to God the Son and says, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” Melchizedek offered no blood as Aaron did, but he offered bread and wine to Abram. The Lord also is priest and King before the throne protecting the best man who was on earth at that time: Abram. God called Melchizedek and said, “Look there, the snake is going to meet my son, Abram. Go and help him.” God was there sooner than the enemies. The king of Sodom was going to put Abram in a trap but the Lord sent a protector. He sent one who was king and priest at the same time. When he appeared, he blessed Abram and Abram offered the tenth of all his goods. Melchizedek did not say, “Beware! Look out! etc.” It was not necessary to make a sermon. A speech was not necessary. A blessing was enough. He gave him bread and wine. He gave him strength to go on and then went his way. Abram then remained under the influence of that mighty message. Probably he was not even touching earth for gladness and was repeating the new name of God: MOST HIGH GOD, POSSESSOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Lo, the king of Sodom comes to meet Abram with some very nice words and offers to make a gift of the enemy’s goods. Abram answers, “No! No! I have raised my hand to the MOST HIGH GOD, POSSESSOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,” the same words of the message, “that I will not take from you not even a shoe latchet because I don’t want you to have the honor of saying that you made me rich. I have my Father who can take care of me. I don’t want anything from Sodom.” Lot had been trapped in Sodom but

old Abram liberated him. Then Lot returned again to Sodom but Abram returned to the mountains just the same.

The Holy Spirit teaches us that it is impossible for God to say a lie. His nature is truth. Would it be possible for some of you to take a knife and stab somebody? You would say that it is impossible. In proportion that you become like Jesus, in that proportion there are things that are impossible for you to do. Little by little we enter into God's impossibilities and into His possibilities. Hebrews 6:18: "By two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." These immutable things do not change. Which are the qualities in God which make you sure of your destiny? Is He a weak or powerless God? He is the Almighty; He can do all things. God is strength; no one can defeat Him. However, what good would it do if He were only strong and would not care for you? He sends the earthquake; He stills the storm; He created the earth. This would do us no good if He didn't love us. However, *He does love us*. These are His qualities: He loves us because He is our Father and He is strong. He sent His Son to the cross for us. God's love and His power are the two immutable things that make us sure of Him. There are many mothers and fathers present who love their children but, God forbid that some sickness comes upon your child, you love your child but you are powerless. However, with God, it is different; He loves and is powerful.

Verse 19: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." We have a hope that is based on God, not on man. The anchor is chained to the ship and holds it steady. This anchor enters our very soul. The sea is our soul. That big piece of iron enters our soul and the other end must be attached somewhere also. Suppose you are anchored

somewhere and you are in some storm, but the chain is not strong, or the anchor is not well fixed; you will perish together with the anchor. However, here we read of an anchor which is chained within the veil; it is beyond the heavens. Verse 20: "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." What is the meaning of forerunner? It is one who runs ahead of another. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus; Jesus is the forerunner of the Church; and we will be the forerunner later on. Can you be sure that you will reach heaven just because you were saved ten years ago? We need a protection. Just as Melchizedek was dispatched by God to protect Abram, Jesus Christ protects you and me if we are simple and sincere. He protects that which has been purchased. Saul was full of hatred against the Christians and was on his way to Damascus to persecute and imprison them, but someone stopped him. It was the Lord: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He does not ask him why he persecutes the Church. He includes Himself. He protected the Church and still protects the Church, those who are the children of Abram. Those who are false will fall either today or tomorrow, but those who are true will be taken care of.

Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abram. The man of God had the spiritual provision but he also had some material provision. Bread and wine is a symbol of the Holy Supper. Melchizedek was king of Salem, king of righteousness and peace. Justice and peace go together. Righteousness and peace will kiss each other in Jesus. Melchizedek was far greater than Abram. He was the one who blessed; he was the one who received the tenth; but Christ is superior to Melchizedek. We have a description of Melchizedek in the following verse: Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the

Son of God; abideth a priest continually.” Christ, too, was without any father in the flesh, and without mother in the Spirit. He was, before the world was created. He had no descendants. When Melchizedek appeared before Abram, did he introduce himself by some card and say, “I am Rev. Melchizedek. My ancestors were born in such and such a city. My family is this and that.” He is a silent figure. He appears and is occupied of one business only, to protect Abram; he is not occupied about himself at all. He is a figure that crosses the path of Abram only once but leaves an eternal imprint. The words that influence your life are few. One message was enough for Abram. Without father, without mother, without children, with no history at all. He appeared and disappeared like the old prophets. He gave the message and vanished. It is a mistake when the preacher remains too long in the presence of the people. The Lord sent a prophet to anoint a new king over Israel and gave him instructions that he was to enter the room, anoint the king and leave immediately. The things of the Lord are quick. “Without descent.” He must have had a father and mother, but we do not know anything about them. All is silent about Melchizedek except that he introduced God with a new name and that he protected Abram. It was a short but mighty work. When his message was over, he left and Abram never saw him again. That is as it should be in our lives. When we do some good, disappear! Try to be unknown. The Lord is correcting me. Many say to me, “Brother, come and anoint these people who need prayer.” I answer, “No! The Lord wants to use others.” The less you show your face, the better it is. Leave people alone with God. Abram was not repeating, “Melchizedek, Melchizedek,” but he was repeating the name of the MOST HIGH GOD. The real servant seeks only God’s glory and the benefit of Abram. We know nothing about Melchizedek but he was made like unto the Son of God. Jesus is the fulfillment of the ministry of Melchizedek and Jesus remains.

Lesson 18

Genesis 15:1-7

Verse 1: “After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.” After what things does it speak of here? The last lesson was about Melchizedek and Abram. Abram was faithful to the Lord and made a sacrifice. He refused all the gifts of the king of Sodom. So, this means, “After the sacrifice,” the Lord stepped in. After any sacrifice in our lives, the Lord will always step in. The Lord will not step in during the sacrifice but after it has been done. Genesis 13:14: “And the Lord said unto Abram after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward.” Here it speaks of another “after.” Abram had received much ingratitude from Lot and then the Lord says, “Now *you* look.” Here again Abram refused the gifts of the king of Sodom and the Lord stepped in once again. After the cross comes the glory. This is God’s method. “Fear not.” The devil always brings fear but the Lord says, “Fear not. I am your shield and great reward.” This is the first message. Why did the Lord say, “Fear not?” It means that there must have been some fear in Abram. Abram had done something like a general and in wars, there are reverses. Today you win and tomorrow you may lose. These kings may come against Abram some day and some fear must have come into Abram. Hence, the Lord said, “Fear not, I am your shield.” Shield is for protection against enemies. Abram then could have said, “Yes, Lord, but who paid me for my work? I put my life at a risk.” Abram did not say anything but the Lord anticipates any doubts which may arise. “About being paid for what you did, don’t expect to be paid from Lot. I will pay you; I am your reward.” Now what did Abram say? He gave a very bold answer. It was almost a litigation. Verse 2: “And

Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" This was a lamentation with the Lord. When the Lord called Abram out of his native land, He promised him children and as yet, he had not had any children. Both he and his wife were getting old and their lives were concentrated on one desire: to see the promise of the Lord fulfilled. He had such a heavy problem in his life. We have many crosses but there is one heavy one. The Lord may give you this or that gift but if you are not saved on that special problem, it is useless. The main problem in the life of Abram was that he had no children. Servants would become heirs in his house. Abram could have said, "I left my native land; I obeyed your word, and you promised me that I would have children and I don't have any children yet. Now you make another promise. What can you give me?" He went to the main point in his life. Verse 3: "And Abram said, Behold to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born n my house is mine heir." He opened his heart in litigation with the Lord. Could you litigate with man? Don't try to do it! You will pay the price. However, you *can* litigate with God; He allows this. You can say anything to God and He will not be offended. Have a good litigation with God once in a while; you will feel better, but don't try to do it with man. Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Let us litigate together." Now what happened when the Lord spoke?

Verses 4 & 5: "And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." The Lord said,

“I am your reward.” And Abram said, “What can you give me?” Suppose your only child is dying and someone says, “Don’t worry, I will give you \$1,000.” You will say, “What can you give me; my child is dying.” However, the Lord said, “A servant shall not be your heir. Your own child will be your heir.”

Now the Lord does something which shows that He can trust Abram. He brought him forth. Many times we live in a small circle, doing the same things day in and day out and the Lord says, “Come out now. Take a walk with me and forget the difficulties.” We look too much at the difficulties. Look upward. The Lord invited Abram to look to heaven. He takes us out of our condition and tells us to look and count the stars. Can any man count the stars? The more stars you count, the more stars you see. There are millions and millions of stars and no one can count them. The Lord promised Abram that his descendants would be without number, like the stars. This promise can be made only by God Himself or by a fool. First He took Abram forth saying, “Get away from your difficulties.” Now He says, “Now try to count the stars if you can. So shall your seed be, without number.” No one can limit God. Can you count Abram’s heirs? He not only has earthly heirs but he also has spiritual heirs. All of us are children of Abram. The Jews boasted that they were children of Abram but the Lord said that they were not. They were earthly children of Abram but not spiritual children. Now what did Abram do when he heard the Lord give such a great promise? Verse 6: “And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” In this verse there are two “he’s.” The first “he” was Abram and the second “he” was God. Abram believed and the Lord counted it to him for righteousness. This promise was impossible according to human reasoning. He could begin to laugh about it. “I am old now. Even if I do have one child, how can I have so many children that I

cannot count them? Are you trying to fool me?" Abram did not doubt one bit. When you love a person, you believe the word of that person. Abram said, "You are God. You have spoken and cannot lie." Abram did not discuss the promise but looked to the One who made the promise. He had faith. He said, "I believe, Amen. You say that I will have so many descendants that I will not be able to count them; it is so." Then the Lord smiled and counted it to him as righteousness.

Is there anyone in this world who is just? Could you meet God's justice today and be weighed and say that you have obeyed all the law night and day? Could you meet such a test? Not I. We are all unjust. But the Lord says to Abram, "Your palace is clean. You are a just man. Because you believe, you are just." Abram did not say of himself that he was just, but the Lord called him so. Habakkuk 2:4: "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." The soul that keeps doubting is not straight, but the just man shall live by his faith; he shall receive grace after grace through believing. You have to believe in God's word. Faith is not by sight; Abram was not given a demonstration. Even in this world when you ask a question and the clerk gives you an answer, you must believe his advice. It is written in Isaiah that if you don't trust, you cannot be trusted. That is the original translation. If you trust people, you will win their hearts. Trust is stronger than belief. Romans 1:17: "For therein is the righteousness Of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." When you acquire something by faith, then it is yours. We go from faith to faith until we die by faith. We are climbing a stairway from earth to heaven and you see only one step at a time. You see the steps that you have passed but you don't see any before you. You must put your foot forward by faith and the step will appear. Looking back is history but to look ahead is faith. Peter said, "To whom shall we go? We believed and

we know that you are the Son of God.” We believed at first but now we have knowledge. The things which we believe today, shall be a reality tomorrow. Let us believe God. The one who believes God, pleases Him. A little girl in London was afraid to cross the street and she looked around for a face that she could trust. Then she saw an old gentleman and ran to him and said, “Take me across the street.” Then the old man said, “Tell me, why did you appeal to me?” The little girl answered, “Your face was so kind that I felt I could trust you.” Do you think that the old man disliked these words? He must have become like a father to the little girl for that moment. So Abram believed the Lord and the Lord called him righteous. The one who believes in God will become a saint. Keep believing and the Lord will keep working. The more you believe, the more the Lord will work in you. What is the difference between trust and belief? Suppose one of you must leave for Australia and you don’t know whether or not you will come back, and you have some money and jewels to deposit. You believe that there are some honest people here but when you actually take your treasures and give them to someone, you need a special trust. Trust is belief in action. We believe that God is powerful and we put our case in His hands. This is trust. We read that the devil believes but we never read that the devil trusts. He believes that God is powerful but he doesn’t put his trust in Him. Trust implies confidence. Confidence implies love. We should love and trust God.

Verse 7: “And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.” “I am the same Lord of many years ago when I spoke to you and called you out. I have not changed. I brought you here to give this territory to you; I will fulfill my promise.”

Lesson 19

Genesis 15:7-18

Verse 7: “And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.” What is meant in this repetition of the promise? After a few years that we serve the Lord, we need a repetition because we are apt to forget. So the Lord says, “I am the same Lord; I have not changed. I took you out of Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land.”

Now there is a question of Abram. Verse 18: “And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” When the Lord repeated the promise to Abram, Abram turned to the Lord with a question. It is a very bold question but the Lord likes a certain boldness in His children. What is the meaning of “Lord God?” Can anyone say “Lord” if he is not guided by the Holy Spirit? St. Paul says that no man can say “Lord” with his inner being except by the Holy Spirit. “Lord” means absolute owner, master. Abram says, “My Boss, give me some assurance so I can know that I will inherit this land,” and the Lord commanded him to do something else. There is a deep answer given by the Lord. Verse 9: “And he said unto him, Take an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” The Lord requested five sacrifices from Abram. And Abram asked the Lord to assure him that he would inherit the land and instead of giving an answer, He asked Abram for something else. He said, “Give me this.” It is a strange way of answering. What do you see in this? What is the first proof that you belong to the Lord? Is it when you give something to the Lord or when the Lord gives *you* something? Which act is more important? When a man is really converted, what is his first step? Let us take Zacchaeus as an example. When he was converted, did he

receive any material thing from the Lord? What was the proof that he belonged to the kingdom of God? He did not go to the Lord and say, "Now, Lord, I received you into my house and have been saved. Give me \$1,000." Rather, he took something of his own and gave it to the Lord. So Abram said, "How will I know that I will inherit this land?" And the Lord said, "Give me something." Readiness to give is proof in your life. When you can say, "I was very stingy but now I am ready to do anything for God," you are already in the kingdom of God.

Romans 5:5: "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." It speaks of a hope that will not put you to shame. You may have many hopes. You may have hopes of becoming a governor or the president, etc. For some people it may be a foolish hope but the Lord asks you where you base your hope of belonging to heaven. Paul could have said, "I am a great preacher. The Lord used me in many miracles." He did not mention anything like this but only that the love of God is shed in our hearts. Where do we establish our hope that we belong to the kingdom of God? We are sure of it because we are filled with the love of God. The love of God is different from any love of this world. Any earthly love, even the love of parents, has something selfish in it, but the Love of God is an unselfish love and is always ready to do anything. Hence, the Lord said, "Bring me five sacrifices: a heifer three years old, etc." The number three is a picture of the Trinity. Turtledove is a picture of the Church. Verse 10: "And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not." Abram divided these things but did not divide the birds. We must be one and go flying heavenward. After this, did Abram say, "Well, I gave the sacrifice to the Lord; now I will go home." He remained by the sacrifice. Verse 11: "And when the

fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.” Five sacrifices were brought to the Lord and Abram remained to watch them. And I tell you that we have to watch. We have to watch our prayers and everything else because the enemy is always ready. Here the enemy is pictured as fowls. They were birds of prey. They were flying around and smelled the fresh meat and as soon as the sacrifice was presented, they were ready to jump upon it and destroy everything. However Abram was watching. Did he have any sword or any gun? There were no guns in those days. He simply drove them away. In the Italian version, this incident is expressed better. It says that he gave a heavy breath. Did you ever see anyone fight his enemy with his breath? It seems a prophecy. He breathed against those animals and they ran away. How do you explain this? 2nd Thessalonians 2:8: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” The Lord does not fight in any way except by the Holy Spirit. The breath of the Lord affects in two ways. His breath can give life and it can also destroy an adversary. How many times we feel downhearted and weak and we begin to breathe; the breath of the Lord gives us power. The same breath will chase enemies. There are some very bold animals in these countries. They can even take a child, but Abram did not use any weapon but he just breathed upon them. These birds represent demons. There is power in the mouth of the Lord. There is power to give strength and power to put an enemy in his place. Many times people will come against you to kill you but the Lord will put such a force in your mouth that they will reach you to a certain distance, then they will have to run away.

Now something happened after he breathed. Verse 12: “And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.”

Any time we offer a sacrifice, we will go through a test. Now Abram went through a test. First these demons came and he drove them away, but then, a deep sleep fell upon him and darkness came. Every one of us must go through some darkness, some temptation. "An horror of great darkness." In the life of Jesus, we read that He went to Jerusalem determined and the disciples were going after Him afraid. Perhaps some of you are going through some darkness right now. Then what did the Lord say? Verses 13 & 14: "And he said unto Abram, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them 400 years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." There are two lessons to learn. One is the lesson of blessing and another is the lesson of crucifixion. The lesson of blessing is very easy to listen to, but that of the crucifixion is not welcome. The Lord promised children to Abram but before they should possess the land, they should go through some experience. They would be strangers in a strange land. We too should be strangers in this land. The children of Abram were strangers in the land of Egypt for 400 years. Egypt will afflict them. We have to know two masters. Man ill-treats man but God is good. Before they know God as their master, they must know what is meant by serving man. These Egyptians shall afflict them for 400 years. It is a long time. None of us lives 400 years but these things will happen spiritually in our lives. People will afflict and abuse you but what will happen afterward? Will the Lord leave Egypt unpunished? The 400 years may be only four months. Your time will soon be over and then the Lord will judge your enemies. The descendants of Abram could not do anything against the people who afflicted them; the Egyptians were stronger than they, but the time will come when the Lord will judge them. You cannot do anything against the people who abuse you, but the Lord will come down sooner or later and will judge your enemies

and you will come out of your temptation richer. When you see our boys coming back, you will see how much richer their families will be. After each temptation, you will become richer but you must leave your case in God's hands. Don't defend yourself; don't do evil for evil; leave everything in God's hands and some day you will be richer, not poorer.

Now what was the promise to Abram? Verse 15: "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Who are these fathers? We will consider this when we study the death of Abram. "You will be buried in a good old age." You will be satisfied with days and death will not be a horror to you. When you die, you will be happy to die. That is the promise. Now what about when the descendants will come back from Egypt? Verse 16: "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." I must give your enemies an opportunity to do their worst. They must go to the limit of their iniquity. There is a measure of iniquity. You will be persecuted by your enemies until their iniquity is complete; then they must stop.

Now what happens to Abram: Verses 17 & 18: "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passeth between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." The sun went down and there appeared a smoking furnace, meaning a tremendous affliction. A furnace of fire went through the pieces. It was a prophecy that the descendants of Abram would go through terrible tests in Egypt. However, with the smoke was something else also, a burning lamp. The Lord considered John the Baptist a burning and shining lamp. In order to shine, one must

burn. In order to give light, we must be consumed. Luke 2:35: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Simeon said these words to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The more the sword shall pierce you, the more you suffer, the more light you will have. Mary had a sword piercing her soul and she had discernment of spirits. She understood characters. So Abram saw a smoking furnace but also a lamp. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105). When do you discover this great lamp? Only when you go through some sorrow. Light comes through sorrow. Jesus is the great light and the church is called to be a light to others, but this light comes after much suffering.

Lesson 20

Genesis 17:1-9

References: Acts 4:13-20; Hebrews 11:23-27; Psalm 16:8

Acts 4:19 & 20: “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” The priests were trying to frighten Peter and John so that they would not speak in the name of Jesus anymore. Both Peter and John answered but Peter did the talking. How did Peter answer the priests? Did he answer with arrogance or bad manners? There are no bad manners in Christians. Peter made a very diplomatic answer. You don’t picture him as a fisherman now, but as a great saint. He answered with great ability. What do you see in Peter’s answer? The priests practically said, “Don’t preach in the name of Jesus anymore. You can preach anything but don’t mention that name.” Why this? It is because ultimately there are two spirits: Christ and the antichrist. These two spirits are parallel. The more we know Christ, the more we understand the devil; and vice versa. Now why were the priests irritated when they heard the name of Jesus? They were irritated because they were serving the other spirit, but what did Peter answer? This has much to do with the lesson of Abram. Later on you will see the connection. The magistrates could not answer Peter because they were religious men and were supposed to believe in God. I can imagine Peter with a broad smile saying, “You are religious people. You be the judges; we are in the presence of God.” The main point in his answer is “in the presence of God.” “We see God and we see you. God commands us to speak and you say, ‘Don’t speak.’ Now you tell me whether we should obey you or God since we are in the presence of God. You be the judge, if in the presence of God we should obey you or Him.” What an answer! The

lesson tonight is in these three words: IN HIS PRESENCE. These words make a big difference. So the judges could not say anything. “We have to speak the things of the Lord; we are His witnesses and are obliged to speak of His things.”

Hebrews 11:23-27: This also speaks of being IN HIS PRESENCE. Here it speaks of Moses. Let us mark the 27th verse. Moses was going to and fro in the court of Egypt. Imagine the poor old man without any authority; he had absolutely no influence in those days. He was a poor old man going before the king of Egypt. Try to go before a king today. So you can imagine how it was in those days. Kings were like gods, and here this poor stranger goes before the king with no fear. They tried to deceive and they menaced him. Verse 27: “By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.” He endured. They tried his patience that he might give up the enterprise. They tried everything in order to destroy the plan of Moses, which was the Lord’s plan too, but how did Moses endure it? He had no army or power. His secret was BY FAITH, and by SEEING THE INVISIBLE. There were two kings in that court. There was Pharaoh who was sitting with all his pomp with his generals, etc. and Moses looked to the king and no doubt, he bowed to him; but above that court, Moses looked up and saw another court and saw a greater king before whom all the kings of this earth are nothing. While the others saw nothing, Moses saw the invisible and said, “You can say what you please, I see my God.” It is beautiful. If you see God, you will see man just how he is: dust. Moses remained firm because he was in the presence of God by faith. Psalm 16:8: “I have set the Lord before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Now it is David. It is all in the same subject. Two or three references are enough. To choose too many references would not be wise. Don’t forget this verse. David said, “I have set.” Something which is set is

established and you have it before you always. So we have these three references. Peter and John had victory because they were IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. Moses was firm because He saw the invisible; he was IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. Also, David was always an overcomer because he had the Lord always before him; he too, was IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Now let us go to Abram. We can understand him better now. Genesis 17:1-9. In this reading there are only two people: Abram and God. The word "I" is mentioned eight times. The Lord speaks to Abram and says, "I will, I will, I will." Verses 1 & 2: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." Abram was ninety-nine years old, but let us not excuse ourselves and say, "When we are ninety-nine years old, we will walk perfect." The Lord is patient and we too must be patient one with another. So when Abram was ninety-nine, the Lord called him to be perfect. Abram was not entirely old because he died seventy-six years later at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years. The Lord appealed to him and revealed himself by a name: ALMIGHTY GOD. Any time the Lord wants to help you, He reveals Himself with a name. He is known by many names: JESUS, SAVIOR, REDEEMER, COUNSELOR, and PRINCE OF PEACE. According to your need, the Lord will reveal Himself by some name. To Abram He calls Himself the Almighty God, meaning, "I can do everything; I am the Omnipotent." Many of us may ask, "How can the Lord do this or that?" But the Lord says, "I can do anything IF...Walk before me and be thou perfect." There is a marginal note on the word "perfect," meaning upright and sincere. There is no mixture. "Walk in my presence and everything will be o.k. in your life." Again the

message is IN HIS PRESENCE. Remember these three words for tonight's lesson. When some enemy wants to frighten you, just close your eyes and remember God and you will see how men will melt and disappear before God. In God, things change. "Walk in my presence and you will be perfect." The Lord did not say, "Be perfect and then walk in my presence." You could never become perfect that way. The Lord said, "Walk in my presence and then you will be all right. If you walk in my presence, you will become sincere, no mixture." What does this mean? This implies that before this, Abram had been mixed. When the Lord says, "Walk before me and you will become sincere," it is clear that before, Abram had not been upright and sincere.

Now the Lord makes a pact in verse two. The pact had been made long ago but He was repeating it. Now what did Abram do? Did he say, "Thank you, Father. You spoke and it will be so." Verse 3: "And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying..." Did he kneel down slowly? The presence of God made him fall on his face. No one can see God and remain standing. Because he fell on his face, God continued to speak to him, to the one who made himself dust. We have to fall on our faces. God continued to speak to Abram like a father would to a child. Verses 4 & 5: "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." "I will give you a new name." There comes a time in your life that the Lord will give you a new name. Verse 6: "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." The descendants of Abram included many kings. Verse 7: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." "I will bless you and your

family, generation after generation.” Verse 8: “And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” What is the meaning here? The Lord promised the land of Canaan but Abram did not have even a foot of land there. However, the Lord says, “I will give you the land wherein you have been a pilgrim.” We will receive in the Beyond only the places where we remained a pilgrim. “I will be their God.” He will be your God and the God of your children. Verse 9: “And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.” “One generation after generation will remember my contract. Today we draw up a contract; obey me and everything will be all right.”

Lesson 21

Genesis 18:1-10

This reading is about Abraham's meeting three strangers. He was not indifferent to these three men but invited them to remain, refresh themselves and to eat. How do we know that Abraham did not know these men? Hebrews 13:1 & 2: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." What is the meaning of these words? Everyone would entertain an angel if he knew that he was an angel. Everyone would entertain Jesus Christ if he knew that he was Christ; but He travels incognito many times. Life is not made of big things but it is made of small things. Zechariah 4:10: "For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice." Not every day do we have an opportunity to do big things but we do have an opportunity to do small things. David was a youngster and he was out in the fields while his brothers were feasting. The prophet asked, "Have you any other sons?" And the father said, "Yes, but he is only a young boy tending the sheep." However, the prophet would not sit down at the table unless the young boy was called. Let us not despise the day of small things. Luke 16:10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Let us be faithful in little economies, pennies, place a chair in its place. Life is made up of small things.

Now about the laughing of Abraham. Genesis 17:17: "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" When the Lord said that Sarah would be a mother of nations, Abraham laughed. Did he remain standing? He fell! He was used to falling on his face and again, he fell on his face

and laughed. What kind of laugh was this? Was it a laugh of incredulity, or was it a laugh of joy? Psalm 126:2: “Then was our mouth filled with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.” The mouth and the tongue shall feast in the Lord. Abraham had a good laugh of joy and said, “Both I and my wife are old and we shall have a baby in the house.” Now let us see something about someone else who laughed. Genesis 18:13 & 14: “And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” The laugh of Sarah was not the laugh of the Spirit; it was a laugh of incredulity. She thought, “We are dying people. How can we have a child? It is too late now.” And the Lord said, “Is anything too difficult for the Lord? Nothing is impossible for Him.” That is the difference between the laugh of Abraham and that of his wife, Sarah.

Now for the kernel of the lesson. The promise says that after one year he would come back and Sarah would have a child. This is a conspicuous lesson. Abraham did not know who these three men were; this is positive. Verse 1: “And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day.” It was in the heat of the day. If you go in some countries at that hour and you go through the streets, you will see no one. It is the time for their siesta; they stop all work. The heat is intense and all the people are resting and Abraham is sitting by the tent door in that hour of the day. There is a reason for mentioning this. The Lord never says anything superfluous. Every word has value. It was in a time when people were lazy and did not care for anything or anyone and Abraham was an old man of 100, but what did he do? Verse 2: “And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he

saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.” He was not sleeping. He lifted his eyes and looked. We cannot penetrate this lifting of the eyes and looking. Many times people lift their eyes but they have a far-away look; a very blank look. They lift their eyes but don’t look. However, Abraham looked with expectation. He was a man of the Beyond. He was living in another world. When the Lord said, “Look up and see if you can count the stars,” Abram was used to looking up. Now three men stood by him and what happened? Anyone else would have kept on resting and would have said, “This is not the proper hour to travel.” It was an unusual hour of the day but what did Abraham do? When he saw them, did he limp to them slowly? Don’t forget that he was an old gentleman of 100 years. He ran to meet them and when he came to them, he bowed himself down toward the ground. I think this man was always expecting God and saw the Lord in everything and everybody. The time will come that you too will see God in everybody and in everything. I have a picture of Abraham before me. He must have been a tall, thin man with a white beard. He was used to bowing himself. There were three people before him and he addressed one only. It is a mystery. Many people stumble here and say, “See, it was the Lord, Himself.” Even Jacob said, “I have seen the face of the Lord.” He was facing his brother but saw the face of the Lord in his brother. There are things that may seem incredible but they will not be incredible to you if you are in the presence of God. Abraham had received a lesson before, that he should keep himself in the presence of God. Three people were before him and he addressed them as one. Whatever he did, he did it in God’s name. That is the reason why Jesus called Himself the Son of Man. Anything we do in God’s name is never lost. Abraham saw God in everything and in everybody. May we do the same. He then said to them, “My Lord, my boss, you are the owners of this tent; you are

my owners. If now I have found favor in your sight, pass not away from thy servant.” Whenever we do some service to people, should we think that it is a burden or a cross? Abraham called it an opportunity. He was looking for opportunities to serve God. It is worth imitating. Abraham said, “Give me a chance to serve the Lord.” Whenever you see anything worthwhile, don’t pass on. Just pray and say, “I want this too.” You have to earnestly desire the things of the Lord. “Pass not away...” They were traveling and in a few moments they would have been gone. In the New Testament you find that Jesus was passing through Jericho and Zacchaeus ran to meet Him. Also blind Bartemius cried after Jesus for Him to come and heal him. We must run after Him and say, “Pass me not, my Lord.” Misery or no misery, depression or no depression, happen what may, we have an assurance for eternity.

Now Abraham said something else. Did he say, “You are tired and need a rest. I will give you some charity; I will prepare a big dinner for you.” When a person has been with Jesus for five or ten years and has not learned to be gentle, he has not learned anything of Jesus. Mark how Abraham spoke to these strangers. He said something after he bowed himself. He bowed and said, “Pass me not. You will do me a favor if you remain.” Verse 4: “Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.” Now while they are resting he will do something else. Verse 5: “And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as you have said.” Abraham said, “I don’t promise to make a dinner. It is just something so that you can have soul and body together for a while.” Then they said, “Do as you have said.” Don’t say one thing and then do another. Keep your word. Do what you say. Now did this gentleman go to find some hard piece of bread in some corner, saying,

“These poor men will take this hard bread, or else they don’t have to take anything.” Verses 6-8: “And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter and milk, and the calf that he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.” You could preach on these three verses. Did Abraham go slowly? He hastened. First he began to speak to his wife. Possibly the poor old woman was sleeping but Abraham told her to quickly make ready three measures of fine meal. She wasn’t to use any meal at all but it had to be fine meal. Then she should knead it and make cakes; something fresh for the day. He went and gave instructions to his wife and now what else? He then went and fetched a tender calf. Everything was moving quickly and without noise. We make people pay for what we do for them with noise and questions. “Who are you? Who is your father?” We ask too many questions. The calf was not a limping or blind one but it was the best. He took it to a young man to prepare it and this young man hasted too. This old man was moving with some haste and he communicated the haste to everybody else. Everyone was moving like a clock. Abraham was a man of order; he was not a dreamer. He looked to the heavens but he knew how to do his duty too. He then took butter and milk and the calf and set it all before the strangers. His wife prepared the cakes, and the servant prepared the calf. Wasn’t that enough now? However, Abraham also brought butter and milk. He promised only a piece of bread but he gave such a big dinner. It makes your mouth water. Then after setting the dinner, did he sit down with them and start asking them questions? When you have a stranger in your house, don’t look in his face and don’t ask questions while he is eating. He will not be able to eat; he will have to stop eating

to answer your questions. Abraham served the dinner, then he sat down under the tree and the strangers ate. He was there ready to serve. He did not introduce himself too much; he was not obliging too much, and was not talking. He did not preach anything to these people. He simply served the dinner.

Now something happened. Verse 9: “And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.” They knew Sarah’s name. One was the Son of God, Himself. Verse 10: “And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.” The old woman was all ears in the tent door. The Lord always promises to return. We don’t mean His final return but we need His return on this earth quite often. He promised that He would return one year from that time. He “certainly” would return. The promise now is sealed forever. The Lord had been promising but now was the end and He said, “You have been waiting long enough. Next year your wife shall have a child.” Abraham was always alert. He looked for the Lord and found the Lord. We find what we look for. If we look for the Lord, we will find the Lord. If we look for evil, we will find evil.

Lesson 22

Genesis 18:16-33

This lesson is about the intercession of Abraham. Verse 16: "And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way." There are three points in this lesson. When the three strangers had finished, Abraham went in their company for a little way; he saw them on their way. He did not say "Goodbye" from the tent door. Then the Lord asked a question within Himself. Verse 17: "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" He gives a reason to Himself. He is always looking for noble excuses in order to shower upon us some blessing. Verses 18 & 19: "Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." This is the reason. The Lord said, "Abraham will be faithful. He will teach his family after him to do justice to others and judgment for themselves." Abraham did teach his family; he taught Isaac, Jacob, on down the line. The Lord was looking for a reason to confide His secret with Abraham. Now the Lord reveals the secret.

Verses 20 & 21: "And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." The Lord is going to visit Sodom and Gomorrah to see, but the Lord *knew* whether or not the sin had reached its completion. He knew that it had reached it already. Did Abraham doubt that the sin of those cities was great? He did not expect to be able to do anything

in that respect, but he did do something. Verse 22: "And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord." There were three men present. One was the boss, the Lord, and the other two were servants, angels. When the two angels left, did Abraham disappear too? He stood! What do you see in this? The Lord probably was going to go along with the two angels but Abraham put himself before the Lord as if to hold Him back and he begins to intercede for the cities. Now let us go back to the beginning.

The three strangers were going away after making a promise that by the next year, the child would come in the family. Abraham, as a gentleman, went in company with the strangers. He treated them very princely. Even though it was an improper hour of the day to do any work, Abraham forgot about himself entirely and accompanied the strangers. While in their company, he gained something. One of the strangers was the Lord Himself. While Abraham was walking with them, the Lord said to Himself, "Shall I hide from this good man the thing which I am about to do?" He desired to reveal something to Abraham. The Lord reveals His secrets. Amos 3:7: "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto His servants the prophets." The Lord does not reveal His secrets to people who go parading around saying they are prophets but only to His prophets. He likes to open His heart. He always looks for some good reason to confide His secrets with His servants who are prophets, not to all servants. You may ask if Abraham was a prophet. I just pointed out that the Lord reveals His secrets only to His prophets, but there is another place in the scriptures that points out that Abraham was a prophet. Genesis 20:7: "Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet. The Lord Himself is saying this about Abraham; Abraham did not say it. Abraham never said that he was a prophet but the Lord said it. Abraham was

a prophet; hence, the Lord revealed His secret to Him. Did the Lord force His way when Abraham stood before Him? He is the Almighty but He is also condescending. People are afraid of Him because they don't know Him. If we knew God, our hearts would melt. The two angels went away and Abraham and the Lord remained alone. Now the Lord said, "I will go and see if the time has come. I will see if they have reached the height of their sinning." Abraham now knows the secret. We would have said, "They deserve this destruction." Abraham could have said, "I saved my nephew once and he went back to the same place again, so let them all be destroyed." He did not say anything like this. He loved even the heathens.

Verse 23: "And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Abraham drew near. He was near the Lord but he got nearer. I can see this old man drawing nearer. He had to say something very intimate to the Lord and began with a question. Can you speak the way Abraham did to a king of this earth? Abraham began to question the Lord with a kind of accusation. "Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked?" If we had been asked such a question, we would have said, "Measure your words. Don't you realize to whom you are speaking?" Oh! the tenderness of the Lord. I am not able to express how condescending the Lord is. Abraham's question was almost an insult. "Do you go to destroy two cities and destroy all the righteous together with the evil?" After asking this question he got courage because he saw that the Lord was not angry, and he added something more to his prayer. Verse 24: "Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" At first Abraham was trying to save only the good people. He said, "Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked? At least save the righteous." Now He considers the patience of the

Lord and became courageous and said, “Perhaps there are fifty righteous people in the city. Will you spare the city for the fifty?” He is now pleading for the whole city. “In this big city,” thought Abraham, “you will find at least fifty who are righteous.” Abraham thought it would be very easy to find fifty righteous people there, and was lecturing to the Lord. We would have been offended but the Lord is patient.

Verse 25: “That be far from thee to do after this manner to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Go and speak in this manner to Hitler or any man at all. “That be far from thee to slay...” The word “slay” is terrible. It is connected with a criminal. “That be far from thee.” Abraham was exhorting the Lord. See the confidence of Abraham with the Lord. You can litigate with the Lord. It seems that he was insulting the Lord, but he wasn’t. The Lord was his father. Did the Lord answer anything to these questions of Abraham? Did He say, “Abraham, you must think who I am.” The Lord simply ignored this and went to the essential point. I imagine the Lord was calm and serene and answered Abraham with a smile.

Verse 26: “And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.” The Lord did not answer the arguments of Abraham; he ignored everything. We must learn this lesson. The Lord said, “If I find fifty righteous, I will spare the city.” Then Abraham began to make a better count. Now Abraham began to tremble and said, “I thought fifty was a very small figure. Maybe I made a mistake in counting.” And again, he spoke to the Lord. Verses 27 & 28: “And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt

thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it." Abraham said, "I have taken upon myself this great responsibility," and he began to tremble thinking that he had made too poor a counting. "I am but dust and ashes." Very well now, Abraham, you have stopped teaching and you took your place. "Perhaps five lack from the fifty. I said fifty, but maybe there are forty-five. Will you destroy the city if there shall lack five of the fifty?" The Lord did not get angry but said, "If there are forty-five, I will spare the city." But now Abraham began to doubt. The more lenient the Lord was, the more Abraham began to doubt and he thought, "Perhaps I made another mistake," and he continued.

Verse 29: "And he spake unto Him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And He said, I will not do it for forty's sake." To what man of this earth could we have spoken so many times in this way? Now Abraham says, "Perhaps there are forty," and the Lord says, "I'll let it go for forty." At first, Abraham thought that fifty was a considerate number but now he began to go down. Verse 30: "And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for thirty's sake." Abraham said something new here: "Be not angry." Was the Lord angry? Not at all. It was Abraham who was doubting. Oh, that we may know the heart of God. "Be not angry; I am abusing your patience. Perhaps there are thirty," and the Lord said, "O.K., for thirty." Abraham continues. Verse 31: "And he said, "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake." He was always excusing himself; he thought he was abusing the patience of the Lord. He said, "I have taken upon myself to speak and I will keep on speaking now." The Lord said, "I will consider twenty." The number was still going down.

Abraham must have thought, "This must be a terrible city," and he spoke for the last time. Verse 32: "And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake." This is the end. Abraham got tired. "Don't be angry; I am abusing your patience too much. I know that I have been imposing upon you; I will limit myself and speak only this once." Did God or man limit the Lord's mercy? Did God stop giving or did man stop asking? The mercy of the Lord is more than we can imagine. The Lord had not been angry. Abraham limited himself. He put a wall before himself. "Perhaps there will be ten," and the Lord said, "If I find ten I will not destroy the city." There were not even ten. Just the poor greedy Lot who looked one eye to the mountains and another to the plains like many half-Christians do. Abraham stopped so the Lord stopped too. When the widow had no more empty vessels, the oil stopped. We say, "Lord give us this and give us that," and the Lord says, "Where is the empty vessel?" If we have empty vessels, He will pour the oil.

Verse 32: "And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place." The Lord went His way and Abraham, with his head hanging down, returned to his place and the cities were destroyed, but Lot was saved.

Lesson 23
Genesis 21:5-20

The lesson of tonight concerns the two sons of Abraham. One of them was of the Egyptian woman and the other was of Sarah. The Egyptian woman's son, Ishmael, was a boy of perhaps twelve or thirteen at the time of this reading and now, something happens between the two. In life, which comes first, the carnal or the spiritual? Which came upon this earth first: Adam or Christ, Esau or Jacob? The carnal comes first but it does not last. Although Abraham was very fond of Ishmael, the day came when Ishmael had to leave the house but Isaac remained. For a long time these two will fight but the day will come when Ishmael must pack his suitcase and go away. These two cannot live together.

What is the kernel of this lesson? If you go preaching verse after verse, you will tire your congregation. Try to concentrate your preaching to a few points. The meaning of Isaac means "laughter" because both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they received the promise. The laugh of Abraham was a laugh of joy while the laugh of Sarah was of unbelief. Now then, the boys are in the same house and Abraham was more fond of Ishmael. It is strange that man is more fond of those children that are most lively. Later on you will find that Isaac was more fond of Esau than of Jacob. Of course, Abraham loved the small child but he was more fond of Ishmael. I know some gentleman who was more fond of his son who was a rascal than of the one who was very studious and quiet. The mother, however, was more fond of the quiet one.

Ishmael represents the world and Isaac represents the church of the Lord. Now where is the main point of the lesson? I imagine Ishmael was a lively boy, jumping here and there, and may have many times carried the little boy, Isaac. He

probably loved the child at first, but now something happens. It is a short lesson but very interesting in human life.

How many classes of people do you see in this reading? There are two boys; consequently, there are two classes of people. Apparently, Ishmael was the stronger of the two. He could have killed Isaac many times. Isaac was a little child while Ishmael was quite a boy. He must have been a beautiful, strong, healthy boy. One represents the world and one represents the church, the kingdom of God. People judge the world and send everyone to hell just because they don't come to their church. That is wrong. There are some people whose destiny is earthly. You cannot expect sacrifices from the people of the world. Let us not exaggerate. The Lord never sent messages to Ishmael or Esau, but He loved them just the same. No creator hates his own creation. You don't hate anything you do with your own hands. God loves all mankind. This is one of the mistakes of some Protestants. They speak of the outsiders with some sort of aloofness. We must love all creatures. Why? You have something in common with all creatures; we all have the same creator, the same God. He created the people of the world and He created His church. Moreover, the church is responsible because the plan of God is to reach the world through the church. Israel was called the firstborn. What is the duty of the firstborn? Is it that he slaps the other children? He should help and work for them. Was it the plan of God that Israel should call the outsiders "dogs?" They should have helped them. We must love everyone and everything, even the stones of the streets. Don't be deceived by theories. A real Christian loves all. Of course, we don't mingle with the outsiders to partake with them, but we must love them. Let us have a generous heart; love everyone in Christ. Ishmael represents two nations. Galatians is Paul's letter of grace. Paul spoke of grace that God has chosen a people but because God has chosen you, you must not judge

others. Why did Israel fail? It was because she despised the others. Nowadays the church is failing for the same reason. The Lord has blessed the Pentecostals in that we must not despise others; we must serve them. We must be their example. We are more responsible than others because we have received more than they. On this point you either stand or fall. Galatians 4:21-31 is Paul's message but we will mark only the 29th verse: "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The one who was born after the flesh will persecute the one who is born after the Spirit. There are two Jerusalems. There is an earthly Jerusalem but there is one which comes from heaven. It was the earthly Jerusalem that crucified Jesus. That which is earthly, will in time persecute that which is spiritual. If the church is not persecuted, it means that it is not spiritual. If we are not persecuted, let us not rejoice. If we are led by the Spirit, some day our best friends will turn against us unless they, too, walk in the Spirit. Some day there will come a separation in your own families. We should not hate anyone; nevertheless, the church must be hated. When people threw stones at Jesus, did He throw stones back at them? Never! The earthly Jerusalem persecuted and killed Jesus but He never rose up against them. So it must be with the church. Ishmael turned against Isaac. Ishmael was a very lively boy but in many boys there is something of the devil working. At this time, Ishmael is stronger than Isaac; Isaac never was a great man according to this earth. He was neither like his father, Abraham, nor like the son, Ishmael. He was a rather submissive and quiet character. Now we see that the slave, the flesh, cannot always remain in the same house with the spiritual. We have the two inhabiting in us. For a time, the Lord allows the two to be together but suppose some misfortune comes in your life: could you carry that misfortune and still go with God? One of the two has to go out. Ishmael must go.

In this picture there are also two women. One is Hagar who represents earthly things, and the other is Sarah, the mother of Isaac who represents the heavenly Jerusalem. The little child is now in the house and Sarah said, "Now I can laugh." Her first laugh was of unbelief and the Lord reprimanded her. She laughed again when the boy arrived but it was a laugh of joy, a laugh of gratitude. There is such in the Christian life as a laugh of joy. Let us continue. Verses 8 & 9: "And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking." This is not something foolish; it comes in each of our lives. The boy grew. If we had no other information, we would not know how old he was. It could have been 10, 15, 20 years, but we have some information here. Abraham made a great feast at a certain age of the child. It was when the child was weaned. What is the meaning of this word in this case? He could now eat everything. Till now, he was nourished only with milk, but now his diet changed. When he reached this age, someone said, "This child now can have some solid food." At this time, a feast was made. It was a symbol. Who told him to make a feast? You had a feast when you were baptized with the Holy Spirit. You have a feast when you go from simple things to the deeper things of the Lord. While you are a baby, no one will despise you. However, let the day come when your diet is changed to some more solid food, the deeper things of the Lord, you will see the persecution come from your own household. Paul said that the one who was born of the bondwoman persecuted Isaac. In Genesis it is not written like this but the Holy Spirit disclosed to Paul that the rascal, Ishmael, began to nurse some hatred against Isaac. Before the coming of Isaac, all attention was on Ishmael, but now that the little child has come in the family, the older brother began to look on with envy. He looked on in silence

till now but when they made a feast for the child, then Ishmael began to mock. But there was someone watching. Abraham had two boys. After all, he was impartial, but there was someone who had only one boy and she was watching after him all the time, and discovered the envy in Ishmael and she said, "My child needs some protection. Some day, Ishmael will give him a pinch." Ishmael began by mocking. People will begin by saying, "Don't pray so long. Don't go to church so many times. Don't be so fanatical. Don't exaggerate. Try to be broad-minded." They are so broad-minded that they don't have any mind at all. Ishmael was a willful man. Later on it says that he was a wild ass. He did as he pleased. He began by mocking. The little child was too young to be able to resent anything but the old woman could. Sarah must have noticed something in Ishmael before, and when he began to mock, she resented it and called Abraham.

Verse 10: "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." Don't be scandalized; the two cannot live together. Was Abraham very happy when he heard this? Let us see. Verse 11: "And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son." The old man felt terrible and thought, "Must I send this nice boy out of my house? There are so many others in my household and I must send just this one away?" Abraham had a large family. He had many servants and children of servants so that he could arm 318 men when he rescued Lot. He had such a large household and this one boy could not remain. He was very grieved. He did not say anything to Sarah, but someone else stepped in. He would never have obeyed Sarah. Abraham was a pretty tough person. Verses 12 & 13: "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee,

hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.” God stepped in. Who knows how long the fight went on in the old man’s heart. We don’t marvel. Just because you love one more than another, does it mean that you should cast out the other? The old man was grieved but God stepped in and said, “Be not grieved. Obey Sarah because Ishmael cannot remain with Isaac. They must be separated.” Was Abraham used to separating? Had he ever separated before? He separated from Lot but to separate from a nephew is far different from separating from a son. However, the separation from one thing today prepares you for another separation tomorrow. Abraham separated from his native country; he separated from a second country; he separated from a nephew, and now he has to separate from a son. But the Lord said, “Be not grieved. Don’t expect anything from Ishmael. The church will never come through Ishmael, but I will also have compassion on him. He belongs to you too. He will become a nation but he will not become a church.” Abraham did not disobey. Verse 14: “And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.” The noble Sarah did not appear. When the two pilgrims went away, the old woman did not appear to make the scene more tragic. She had the decency to keep away. Abraham arose early. If you don’t do something early, you will never do it. The Lord spoke to him in the night and he got up early in the morning. He woke up Hagar and Ishmael. I can imagine the young boy looked up with wide eyes. Probably there were tears in the eyes of Hagar and Abraham was looking on. He then gave them bread and water, put the child on her shoulders, and sent them away into the wilderness. What a sad picture! Soon the water was finished and the child began to cry. The mother put the child

under a shrub and she sat at a distance because she did not want to see her child die. There seemed to be no hope, but God made a promise to Abraham that something would become of this boy. Then an angel appeared to Hagar and said, "Fear not, for God has heard the cry of the boy. Arise, pick up the lad, for I will make him a great nation." He did become a great nation; his descendants were the Arabs. Then God opened her eyes and she saw water close by. She filled the bottle and gave water to the boy, and he grew and what did he become? Was he a preacher? He grew and became an archer, a warrior. The two boys met again at the funeral of the old man, Abraham. When Abraham died, someone sent the news to the now old Ishmael. Abraham died more than seventy years after this incident and the two gray-haired sons embraced each other at his grave. Such is life!

Lesson 24

Genesis 22:1-8

In this lesson, Abraham is called to sacrifice his only son. Did he disobey? He obeyed! Now some considerations: We cannot hurry this beautiful chapter. Verse 1: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said, Abraham; and he said, Behold, here I am." What do you see in this verse? It is an introduction to a new section. "...after..." There is some misfortune in our lives. After something, there is something else. After these things, God did tempt Abraham. In some versions of the Bible, it says that God *tried* Abraham. Satan is the real tempter; God is not a tempter. God tries, not tempts. There is a difference. When a father begins to examine his boy to see if he is a good boy, what is his intention? His intention is to improve the boy. Tempting is to destroy the good qualities. God tries us but the devil tempts us. The trying of God is so that we may distrust ourselves and trust God. The enemy tempts us so that we may trust ourselves and distrust God. The enemy tempted Job in order to destroy him. The Lord tried Job in order to advance him. Suffering has two scopes. In the hands of Satan, it means destruction, but in the hands of God, it means discipline. Let us see how the Lord tries His people and then we will compare and see how Satan tries.

Matthew 3:12: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat in the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." John the Baptist is saying these words about Jesus. Jesus has the fan in His hand. We old people have seen in Italy the way wheat is processed. The peasants fan the wheat. The chaff blows away and the wheat stays at the feet of the owner. So the Lord is fanning His people. Why? So that He may purge His floor. The wheat falls is a safe place and the chaff blows away. In this case the wheat gains

because it is purged. This fanning brings about a separation of the chaff from the wheat. The wheat is gathered into the garner but the chaff is burned. This is the work, not of the devil, but of Christ. Christ fans your life; He agitates you; He shakes you in order to purge the wheat from the chaff. He takes care of the wheat but the chaff disappears. The Lord's intention is good, but let us see if the enemy's intention is the same.

Luke 22:31 & 32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." The Lord is speaking to Simon Peter warning him about some big trial. What was Satan's scope in tempting Peter? Was it to make him some great apostle? He wanted to destroy Peter. What was his method? Did he use the fan or did he use some other device? He used the sieve. When the sieve is used, the wheat goes on the ground and the chaff remains in the machine. So the devil says, "You can have all the chaff you want provided you lose all the wheat." Of course, we must understand this comparison. God's plan is to fan you but Satan's method is to leave all the chaff to you and get the wheat for himself. God shakes you; He sends trials, but His scope is to strengthen you. We think too much of ourselves, but we are disappointed. God is love—wisdom. There is no evil in God. We may suffer but His scope is that it will be for our good in the end.

Now let us go back to the chapter. We grow step by step—from one experience to another. Every experience leaves you strengthened. So, "...after these things..." the Lord again put His hand upon Abraham and tried him and called him by name, and Abraham said, "Behold, here I am." "Because you have obeyed my voice..." What is the law of the Holy Spirit? You must obey the voice—not paper. What

about the sheep? They obey the voice of the good shepherd. Hebrews 11:17-19: “By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promise offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence he received him also in a figure.” What force sustained Abraham in this great, great trial? It was faith. Don’t make the mistake that many people make when they say that Abraham was sure that God would interfere and would not let him kill his son. The word does not say this. Abraham believed something else. He believed that God would raise Isaac. He had to kill the boy but after his boy was dead, then God would resurrect him. Some people make a bargain with God. Abraham was ready to kill his boy. He expected a resurrection but he did not expect God to stop him from killing the boy. Some people say that Abraham knew that the three strangers were the Lord. Then it would have no merit because everybody would accept the Lord. In this case, Abraham was ready to kill Isaac and in his heart he had already killed him. I can imagine Abraham during the three days he traveled with his son. He was probably thinking, “One more day, one more hour, one more minute and I’ll have to kill my son.”

Did Abraham know himself as well as he did after this trial? There are some grand qualities in ourselves but we don’t know them until after some trial. If Abraham had been told that eventually he would have to kill his son, probably he would think that he was not able to go through such a trial; but when the moment came, then the strength came also. We do not know ourselves until we come to the crucial point in our lives. This incident was the crucial test in the life of Abraham. He was used to sacrifices. He had been trained in the school of God in the lesson of separation. He began with the first separation from his native land. After his father

died, he separated from that country. Then he separated from Lot. Later he was commanded to send away the bondwoman and her son; and now, his crucial test was to separate from his only son.

In the way the Lord speaks to Abraham, we can see that He was anticipating the possible answers that Abraham could have given. Abraham could have said, "Father, this is my son, my only son, whom I love. You promised that I should have an inheritance." The Lord anticipates the possibility of Abraham's saying these words and says something. Verse 2: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." "Take now thy son. Yes, I know he is your only son and that you love him...and get thee into the land of Moriah and sacrifice him for an ascending sacrifice." The smoke goes toward heaven—"upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." He told him the territory but did not tell him the spot where the sacrifice was to be offered. There were amongst the heathen, sacrifices of human beings. They offered men, children, virgins to their gods. God never asked this. Rather, He warned His people not do this. He never permitted such sacrificing.

Now comes the most incredible command: a human sacrifice of a boy who had been predestined to be the forefather of Jesus Christ. It was an incredible command. Abraham had a thousand reasons for saying "no." Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born and we have something in this reading that gives us an idea of his probable age at this time. Isaac carried quite a bundle of wood on his shoulders up hill. Up to now, the ass had carried the wood. So Isaac must have been quite a boy—probably thirteen or fourteen years old. Hence, Abraham was quite an old man. Imagine this command; but what did

what did he do? Did he answer the Lord, “Wait, I will ask the old woman to see what she says!” If he had asked Sarah, the son would never have been offered. He did not even wait for sunrise. If you don’t do some things quickly, you will never do them. He probably couldn’t even sleep all night. He was waiting to wake the servants to prepare the ass. Verse 3: “And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place which God had told him.” He rose up early and went to wake the boy. I imagine that Sarah was awake by now and Abraham probably told her that he had to go for some sacrifice but did not tell her what kind of sacrifice, and the old woman did not ask. She was used to keeping quiet. They took the wood and put it on the ass and went to the place which God had told him of. It took three days to get there. Each step was carrying this old man nearer to the most cruel experience of his life. I imagine after the first day was spent, the boy lay down to sleep and the old man walked around and looked at that face and wept. This probably happened the second night too; and now on the third day, something happened. Many things happened on the third day in the scriptures. It is a symbolical figure of the Trinity.

He lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off and he acted. So far, he has been in the company of the servants and the ass, but now he did something. Verse 5: “And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here now with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” There must be some secret meaning why the ass was not allowed to take the wood up the mountain. The ass cannot climb the Mountain of the Lord. There are many asses that can trot in the plains but when you have to climb the Hill of the Lord, the ass has to remain. The ass stands for unredeemed human nature. It is stubborn. It can serve for a

time, but cannot go up the Mountain. Exodus 13:13: “And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.” There are two creatures spoken of in this verse: the firstling of an ass and the firstborn of man. Both must be redeemed and the price of redemption was the lamb. “Kill the lamb that the ass might live.” Sacrifice the innocent lamb in order for the stubborn ass to live. Suppose the owner of the ass did not want to sacrifice the lamb—then the neck of the ass must be broken. Why the neck? The neck stands for obstinacy. In the Bible, some people were called stiff-necked. Study the ass and you will find a big lesson. It seems to be a very nice animal. Many people also seem to be very nice but go near them and touch them and you will see their colors. The Lord says, “Either sacrifice the lamb or break the neck of the ass.” The neck must be pliable; it must not be stiff. Now when they saw the spot from afar, the old man said, “Remain here with the ass. We two must climb the Mountain of Sacrifice.” Both the old man and the son were used to sacrifices. “We will come again unto you.” After the tragedy, God would raise the boy again. He had faith in the resurrection. Now he did something else. What about the wood? Should he go cutting some wood in the mountain? The wood was already prepared. The cross was already prepared for Christ and He carried it Himself.

Verse 6: “And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.” He laid the wood on the shoulders of the boy and took the fire and the knife and both climbed the mountain together. Now something pathetic happens. Verses 7& 8: “And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son, And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-

offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.” These verses will close our lesson because there is such a lesson in the last part when the Lord said, “Now I know...” The infidel says, “Is that the knowledge of the Lord that He knows today and not yesterday?” We will study this later. Imagine the heart of the old man when Isaac asked this question! When he said, “My father...” it probably pierced Abraham’s heart. “Behold the fire and the wood but where is the animal?” Abraham said, “My son, God will provide Himself a lamb.” The boy did not say anything else and the father added no more. So, silently they climbed until they reached the spot of the sacrifice. “The God of Providence will provide Himself a lamb.” This is a new name of God. I imagine during the three days the old man kept saying within himself, “God will provide; God will provide. He will fix this situation.” We have to learn to depend on God’s providence during the darkest hour.

Lesson 25
Genesis 22:1-14

The key word in tonight's lesson is "idol" and the collateral verses are 1st John 5:21 and Matthew 18:8 & 9. These verses will help you to understand the subject. 1st John 5:21: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." In writing to this church, St. John concludes with this admonition which seems childish but is not. Before St. John they were all little children. What is an idol? It is anything that separates you from God.

Matthew 18:8 & 9: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." See how extreme this comparison is. It says to deprive yourself of your foot, your hand, or eye. How cruel this is. If we don't understand this, we cannot understand the sacrifice of Abraham. Do you think that John was speaking of statues when he told them to beware of idols? He was speaking to mature Christians. Imagine if a preacher said to a group of Pentecostal people, "Beware of idols." It does not mean pictures or statues. There are two kinds of idols. There are things that are wrong in themselves, such as murder, sin, theft, etc. These things are absolutely bad, but St. John did not mean these things. Jesus in speaking in Matthew, and John in speaking in 1st John mean things which, in themselves, are not bad. Is your hand bad in itself? Your hands, your feet, or your eyes are not bad in themselves, but they might be misused and then they become bad. A child, or a husband, or a wife may become idols. Money may become an idol. If we worship books to such an extent that

we forget God, or even a church service may become an idol if we think of it as only a service and forget God. Anything at all that distracts from Jesus Christ is an idol. Anything we give more attention to than Jesus is an idol.

Now let us go to Abraham. Isaac was his idol. It is easily understood now. Abraham had suffered much and had sacrificed many things: honor, privileges, gifts, etc. He had a son, Ishmael, whom he had to send away but in his place, Isaac was shooting up, nice Isaac, the son of his old age. He was to be the forefather of many. This old man, Abraham, was perhaps 115 to 116 years old and kept looking at his magnificent son and was in danger of putting God second and the boy first. Isaac was becoming an idol for Abraham. Now we can understand the lesson. Even the best in your life may become an idol. While speaking with a brother about some nice things of the Lord, he was always looking at his watch. He was in such a hurry because he had to go here and he had to go there because he thought that without him, the people would be lost.

Anything we make more important than Jesus will become an idol. There is only one thing that cannot become an idol: Jesus. Cling to nothing; no church, no place, no people, no gifts, nothing. Everything we cling to will become an idol. At the end of a deep spiritual letter, John comes back and speaks of something very elementary. "Little children! You are very little children." This is important. There is a danger that we are more interested in the program of a service than in Jesus Christ. Revivals, and "Come to our church and we will pray for you, etc." There is too much churchism and not enough Christ. The secret of success in life is to know a few principles but very clearly. Apply this in everything in life, also in the Book. Discover the main principles of this Book and have them clear before you. Among these "little children" to whom St. John was

speaking, there were old men too. So let us all beware of idols. Hebrews 11:17-19: “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promise offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” This is the New Testament’s interpretation concerning the sacrifice of Isaac. Do you see here that Abraham supposed that the Lord would interfere and not have Isaac killed? Some people think that Abraham was sure that the Lord would stop him from killing the boy. This verse does not say that. He expected the resurrection—a revival after death. It took a lot of courage to have such a hope. In a sense, he did get Isaac from a resurrection because in his heart, he had already killed him. The moment you decide to do something, it is just as well as done. He walked three days with the boy continually before his eyes. In three days the enemy could have put many questions in his mind but he was determined to kill his boy. Now let us go to the lesson. Abraham said, “Here I am” three times. The first time was in the first verse. The second time was when the boy asked the papa something in the seventh verse. The son called him and he answered, “Here am I.” This old man became like a baby. There is a second childhood in a spiritual sense that old people have to become like children. The third time is in the eleventh verse. Abraham always answered the same way. The old man was always ready.

In the second verse we have an unwritten history: “And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah: and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” What do you see in this verse? You don’t read of any idol. It isn’t written. If you want everything written, you will never know the Bible. There are some things that you must discover by the Holy Spirit. The old

man was fond of Isaac. Through him he was to have descendants. The Messiah was to come from Isaac and now the Lord said, "Take now thy son." Why now? Why couldn't the Lord have commanded this the year before? We have to reach a certain stage of maturity. The Lord waits His time. "Take now thy son." Abraham could have said, "I have only one son now. You commanded me to send the other boy away and we have only one boy now." Did the Lord expect Abraham to answer that? He anticipated the answers and said, "Take now your *only* son." Abraham could have said, "Do I understand you to say to take Isaac, the son of the promise?" The Lord continues and says, "Yes, I mean Isaac, the son whom you love. You love him a little too much. You are in danger of forgetting God. He may become an idol. You always look at him and your thoughts are always Isaac, Isaac, Isaac. I know he is your only son. I know you love him. I know everything." God knows the extent of our tears and sufferings. Now Abraham was to take his son and offer him upon one of the mountains for a burnt offering. The offering was first killed, then laid on the altar and burned. It was also called an ascending sacrifice. Where must Abraham offer it? "Upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Was Abraham used to such obscurity in directions? Many years ago, more than half a century before this event, the Lord said to him, "Come out from your native land and go to a land which I will tell thee." This teaches that we must be led by the Lord like blind people. He leads the blind by a way they know not. (Isaiah 42:16).

If we don't stop reasoning with God, we will never enter the life of faith. In our lives, we never know what will come next. Abraham did not begin to doubt and go to ask counsel of his wife. He could have said, "This child is not only mine but is also Sarah's. If I kill him, with what courage could I face my poor old wife?" *He* was responsible to God's

command, not Sarah. God would take care of Sarah later. So Abraham rose up early, saddled the ass, took two servants, and prepared the wood. See how determined he was that he prepared before the time. He traveled three days and slept with the boy two nights. Imagine whether or not the old man could sleep. Then on the third day he lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. The Lord said, "That is the place" and Abraham did something. Verse 5: "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Why didn't Abraham reveal everything to the young men? There are things that we must not reveal to everyone until they come to pass. The young men would not understand the thinking of Abraham. Perhaps they would have tried to stop him. So, he left the men and the ass. The material things must remain and only Abraham and his son may climb the mountain. What did Abraham say to the young men? He made a very bold promise. "I and the lad will go and worship and come again to you." Did he mean that he wasn't going to kill the boy? He believed that the Lord would resurrect Isaac. It is beautiful. Abraham then took the wood off the ass and put it on Isaac's shoulders. This proves that Isaac was not a little child but must have been quite a boy. They were climbing the mountain and the son said, "My father" and Abraham answered, "Here am I, my son," and Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb? Where is the sacrifice?" To that, Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt offering." So they went together silently.

Verse 9: "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood." Make a picture of this before you. Was Isaac a weakling? Was he so weak that an old man could grab him and do with him what he pleased? Isaac was a

strong boy because he carried the wood on his shoulders uphill. It required strength. When they reached the spot, Isaac placed the wood on the ground and papa prepared the altar and called the boy and said, "Come here, Isaac, I must kill you. You are the 'lamb'," In an operation nowadays, some anesthetic is used but in those days they didn't have any. Abraham tied Isaac with ropes so that he would not run away from the knife. What about the boy? We are praising only Abraham but what about Isaac? He was submissive. He put himself in the hands of his papa like a lamb, a picture of Jesus. Did he resist? He could have run away from the old man and say, "Catch me now. You are trying to kill me; are you crazy?" But did he do anything of the kind? So you see the first picture in the life of this young boy. He put himself in the hands of the father with great submission. Killing cannot be compared with a slap on the face. His father was going to kill him. You see here a beautiful picture of Isaac.

Now what happened? Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to kill his son and the Lord interfered. The angel was invisible and all at once, the cloud was taken away and Abraham heard the angel's voice. He did not see the angel because he was intent on killing his son. Verses 11 & 12: "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." The angel is the greatest messenger in heaven. So the angel called from heaven and said, "Don't do anything to your son for now I know..." This is a big verse. We cannot cover it tonight. Now what happened? Verse 13: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a

burnt offering in the stead of his son.” They used to have animals for offerings. Then he stopped and turned and saw the ram which was caught in a thicket, otherwise, it would have run away. The son did not run away but the animal would have. So he called the place Jehovah-jireh, which means, “In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen, it shall be provided.” Can all people say, “The Lord will provide” if they don’t love Him? Only those who love Him can say it. In the mount of the Lord, not in all places, God will provide. The rest of the reading will be covered in another lesson for two reasons. One is the repetition of the promise of the Lord to Abraham. The Lord confirms for the last time His promise. The second reason is that Abraham is called the Friend of God. We will consider this big word “Friend.” We will also go over another subject. The infidel could sneer at verse 12. There seems to be a leakage in the verse when it says, “Now I know.” Suppose a philosopher who did not believe in God and who knows the catechism would stop you and ask you concerning this verse. Didn’t the Lord know it before? Has the Holy Spirit any answer for the infidel? Come next week and the answer will be given. Don’t shrink from difficulties. If it is the truth, we have no fear. We are serving a Lord who is Truth.

Lesson 26

Genesis 22:12-19

Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” My point is this—the Lord said, “...now I know.” Hebrews says that we know that the Lord has compassion on us because He suffered also. We won’t discuss the meaning of high priest, but our point is the NOW I KNOW. We have to find out that the Lord knew *before*. Here it speaks of Jesus, the High Priest. The point is that He was, as we are, tempted. Suppose He had not gone through the same things as we do, would He have been ignorant of our infirmities? He would not have been ignorant, but it makes it clearer before us. 2nd Samuel 7:12-16: “I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.” Here you find something in a different line that God the Father would chastise His son if he sinned. It is something strange. Was the Lord speaking of the children of David such as Solomon and Rehoboam that they would have an everlasting kingdom? It speaks of Jesus because according to the flesh, Jesus descended from David. Now the Lord promises that David’s descent would have the kingdom and if this king commits iniquity, He would chastise Him. Which king does it speak of? It is Jesus. Was it possible that God was ignorant of the fact that His son would not commit iniquity? He says, “If my son commits iniquity...” It is something that cannot be explained with the logic of man. We will touch another verse about another point in our lesson. Numbers 14:9: “Only rebel not ye

against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.” The ten spies had gone into the land of Canaan and returned with the evil report. They said the cities were fortified and its inhabitants were giants. They discouraged the people saying, “It is not a land which we can go in.” They began to cry and repent that they ever had left Egypt, but among them were two other spies, Joshua and Caleb, who were faithful. The ten spies did not believe and said, “We cannot go in the land because it is too strong for us. We are unable to conquer it.” Then Caleb encouraged the people and said, “Don’t be afraid of the giants.” These verses will point out the promise that “Thy seed shall possess the door of its enemies.” If you possess the door of the enemy, it means that the enemy is your prisoner. You are an overcomer. Caleb laughed at the thought that these enemies were giants. He said, “They are food for us.” The more enemies we have, the more food we have. Our enemies become food; they don’t destroy us. If we trust in the Lord, our enemies will become our bread. What a nice picture!

Now for the lesson. The key to the sacrifice of Abraham is in Hebrews. Did Abraham expect that God would spare his killing his son? Abraham’s faith was that after he killed his son, then the Lord would resurrect him. Our points in tonight’s lesson are these: “Now I know that you fear seeing that you have not withheld from me your only son.” The name that Abraham put on the place, Jehovah-jireh, means “The Lord shall provide.” The providence of the Lord comes in the time of need. When we reach our extremity, then God comes. Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity. Many times we have to reach our extremity in order to see God’s hand working some mighty act of providence. The point I want to bring out is the verse, “In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars

of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore.” The stars represent the heavenly seed and the sand represents the earthly seed. From Abraham there are two issues. One like the sand which is earthly: Hebrews, Arabs, Jews. The other like the stars which is heavenly: the Church. Now then, Christ will possess the door of the enemy but the Church is the bride of Christ and she enters in all the promises of Christ. Not only Christ but also the Church will possess the door of the enemy. Psalm 76:10: “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” The wrath of man praises God. Your enemies cannot harm you if you are in Christ. Caleb encouraged the people and said, “Be not afraid for these giants are our food.” Any time you have enemies or persecutions, those enemies or persecutions will turn out to become your food. You will feel better after.

Verse 18: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because thou hast obeyed my voice.” The Lord said, “My sheep know my voice.” There is a difference between the voice and the words. Must we obey only the voice? For instance, your son says, “I want to go to California,” and you say, “No!” But he begins to cry and make himself sick and you finally say, “Go.” The word says to go but the voice says not to go. Let us distinguish the voice from the word. Another instance is when a judge speaks to a criminal, he says, “Come up, gentleman.” The word says “gentleman” but the voice says “assassin.” You call your child and say, “Come here, little rascal, I want to kill you.” The words are “rascal” and “kill” but the voice speaks of love. We must understand the heart of God. That is the reason why the Holy Spirit has come. Anyone can read the letter and not get anything out of it. The voice represents the heart. When the prodigal son said, “I am capable enough to handle my affairs; I want to be independent;” the father said, “Go.” The words said “Go”

but the voice said, "Look out, my boy. You are crucifying my heart." The Lord said to Abraham, "You have obeyed my voice." Abraham said, "You knew that I was in danger of making Isaac an idol and I understood your big heart. I understood the meaning of what seemed to be a cruel command." Understanding the voice means understanding the heart.

There is another point that I wish to call your attention to. The Lord said that through Abraham others would be blessed. You are used by the Lord like a pipe to carry water to someone else. If you were asked why the Jewish nation suffers, what would you answer? The Jewish nation despised others. Don't hate the Jews but it is true that they called the outsiders "dogs." Just because certain people don't go to our church, must we call them infidels? If we do, we will fail. Let us go back to the main point. Verse 12: "And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." We must not hide that here we find one of the greatest difficulties in the scriptures about the eternal knowledge of God. He knows everything. *We* are taken by surprise, but not God. These words seem to be a mistake. It also seems to be a mistake when it says that because Jesus has suffered, He can have compassion on us. It seems to insinuate that before suffering, He had no compassion. There are many points in the Old Testament that say that He knows our nature. (Psalm 139). I did not read any book concerning this; the Holy Spirit has revealed it to me directly. The Lord said, "I discovered something in you, Abraham. Before I was ignorant of your qualities. You really love me. Yesterday I was not sure that you loved me so much. Now I know." In the book of Samuel, God says He would chastise the king if he committed iniquity. Would Jesus commit iniquity? We could say this of anybody else

but not of Jesus. There is no “if” with Him. It isn’t His iniquity but ours. Jesus pays for our iniquity. But now let us continue with this “know.” Hebrews says that since He suffered, He can have compassion on those who are tempted. If He had not been tempted, He would have had no consideration for our temptations. This seems clear. To Abraham, He said, “I know now.” God comes down and makes Himself like a baby among babies. He speaks a human language because we are human. For example: a physician is treating a patient and the patient gets better. The physician then says, “We feel much better now. We’re all right.” A lawyer will say, “We won the case. We’re out of prison.” They put themselves in the same position as their patient or client. There is in the scriptures an inverted language. What is an inverted language? What one should say, another says. For instance, it is an inverted language when the parents call their child and say, “Come here, mama; come here, papa.” What the child should say, the parents say. So it is in this case. What man should say, God says. When the Lord says to the church, “Because Jesus suffered, He can have compassion on you” the meaning is: “You finally get the point. You had the prophets but you finally saw God on the cross.” The people thought, “We saw Jesus on the cross; now we believe that He loves us.” It is an inverted language. We thought God was too distant. We knew He was powerful but thought that He did not care for us. But because He suffered, we believe. We don’t say this, but God says it for us. Of course, the Holy Spirit must enlarge this point in our hearts. No human philosophy can give this to you because spiritual things are discerned spiritually. You cannot understand spiritual things with the human mind. The Big Papa speaks to the Little Papa and says, “Now I know that you love me.” It means that when Abraham was traveling three days with Isaac to offer him on some mountain, he had a fight within himself. He had to decide between two wishes. He either had to keep silent

with God or say, “I am through with God.” He was in a very difficult position. If God had asked for cattle, sheep, etc., Abraham would have done it easily, but he was in a difficult position. He had to renounce one of the two and he said, “Well, Isaac must go. I cannot say ‘no’ to my God.” Then Abraham went walking saying, “I never suspected that I loved God so much. I never imagined that I was capable of doing such a thing.” Has this ever happened in your life? Perhaps you are too young but when you go through some terrible sacrifices in life, then you say, “I never imagined that there was so much love in me.” You discover your own condition. It wasn’t God who came to know Abraham but it was Abraham who came to know himself. It is an inverted language.

After this, God called Abraham, “My friend.” The word “friend” is one of the most beautiful words in the human language. This word has become too familiar. We don’t appreciate it. The Lord said to His disciples, “I don’t call you servants; I’ll call you friends.” A friend is one in whom you can place your trust. You can tell him your secrets. Abraham was not only a servant but he was God’s friend. The word “friend” is a big word in the scriptures. In Isaiah 44 and in James 2 we find that Abraham was called the friend of God. Friends know each others’ secrets mutually. Not only was Abraham the friend of God but in that occasion Abraham had the revelation that the Lord was coming. He had the revelation of the coming of the Lord. In St. John 8 it says, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day in the distance.”

Lesson 27

Genesis 23:1-20

This lesson is of the death of Sarah, the noble wife of Abraham. Let us read something of her in 1st Peter 3:3-6: “Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” She must have been a very modest, noble woman. She never made any rebellion against Abraham and she had a long life full of affliction. What kind of adornment should women have? It says that some women of those days tried to have some kind of adornment. I don’t know whether or not they had lipstick or nail polish but anyway, Sarah was different. Does this adornment make people look beautiful? The more we try to make things artificial, the worse we are. I don’t usually speak of these things but we have the funeral of Sarah tonight and at a funeral something is always said of the person. What was the adornment of this holy woman? All women here want to be holy women. Was her adornment something exterior or artificial? It was something of a meek and quiet spirit. Real beauty comes from the soul. It is not something exterior. Of course, a good exterior counts in life; we cannot deny that, but real beauty comes from within. Sarah was a humble woman.

Let us read about the providing of a sepulcher for Sarah. Do you see anything important in this chapter? Seemingly it is a tedious chapter but it has a deep lesson for us. Abraham

said, "I want to take my dead body out of my sight." He wept and wept but then he said, "I want to take the dead body out of my sight."

Verse 6: "Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchers bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulcher, but that thou mayest bury thy dead." These people were heathens yet they had a great respect for Abraham. People may not be Christians or Pentecostals but they must see that we are respectable people. To have a good reputation among people is a great thing. Abraham commanded a great respect.

When the Lord called Abraham out of his native country, He promised a country to him and to his seed but now we find Abraham in his old age. His wife was 127 years old when she died and Abraham was ten years older than his wife; hence, he was 137 years old at this time. In Babylon there were cemeteries but not in Canaan. Each family and each tribe or clan had its own sepulchers, but Abraham had no sepulchers of his own. Did he have any real estate in Canaan? What kind of property did he have? In a sense he was rich, but he had no palace or farm. Acts 7:1-5: "Then said the high priest, Are these things so? And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him no inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." St. Stephen was before the priests in Jerusalem and began his speech with the life of Abraham. What can you

see in this record given by St. Stephen? The Lord called Abraham out of his native country to another country and promised that the new country would be his and his descendants', and here we see him with not even a square foot of ground. He had no land where he could stop and say, "I am old now and am entitled to have a place where I can end my days in peace." Did the Lord give him any place like that? He had plenty of cattle, etc., but no house or property. Why this? He was a pilgrim, always ready at God's command: "Come here; come here; come here." There are two symbols in Abraham's life which are the altar and the tent; the tent for the earthly. When the Lord wanted him to move, he simply folded his tent and moved. Also, whenever he moved, he always built an altar. Abraham was a type of the Church, which is a pilgrim in this life. The trouble with Christians is that we like to settle down and think of our old age. We must be pilgrims, ready to move at once. This is the life of Abraham. How much there is in these few words when dictated by the Holy Spirit! The Lord gave Abraham no real estate, not even enough land to put his foot on. Did Abraham complain and say, "You never gave me a farm." He never complained. It isn't easy to be a pilgrim all your life. There is a lesson in this for the Church. We become accustomed to things and want an easy life. We want to settle down but we must be ready at any command of the Lord.

Now we see Abraham looking for a sepulcher for Sarah. He did not take care of it before time. When the time comes, the Lord will provide. I would never have thought that the Holy Spirit would bear such a long record on this transaction. About many mighty incidents on which I would have written a book, the Bible gives only a few words, and this incident, which seems insignificant, is related in full. There is a reason. Many times, we are cheated by the people of the world. When some people are in some great joy, they lose

their head and become entangled with the people of the world, but Abraham did not lose his head. He was calm, a self-possessed man. No one could fool him; no one could buy him out with a gift. We have to leave this body on this earth. The earth belongs to the children of men. To the children of God belongs the kingdom of God. So Abraham had to bury his dead. Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." When Sarah died, Abraham wept for a while but then the body had to go in the sepulcher. It is a good verse to use at funerals. There is a separation at death. Something goes up and something goes down. When a Christian dies, there is a separation: earth goes to earth and the spirit, eternal life, goes to the Lord. Sarah's body belonged to this earth and Abraham gave it to the earth; but her spirit belonged to the Lord. So Sarah's body was buried among strangers. The only thing that the strangers could get out of the family of Abraham was the burial of Sarah.

When Sarah died, Abraham wept. Sometimes people criticize when we cry at funerals. It is proper to do it. Weep with those who are weeping. The people of the land must have gathered around to comfort him and he stood up before his dead and spoke to them. He was a stranger among them and he remained a stranger. He did not try to excite pity and say, "If anyone of you will receive me in your house, I will pay you as a boarder." He said, "I am a stranger," and then asked a favor of them: "Give me a possession for a burying place that I may bury my dead out of my sight." We must cling to nothing. The day will come when we must separate. This body will not live forever. We must not become attached too much to one another because this body must be left on this earth. Abraham cried but the time came when he had to separate. We do our duty to the dead, but then we must bury them out of our sight. They remain in our memory but their body must go. Last week we had to

separate from one of our members. He was kept a few days at home and he was in church, but then he was buried out of our sight. This day must come for everybody. Abraham dried his eyes and spoke with courage to the children of the land. He said, "I wept enough now and I must go to the next step." The children of the land answered, "You are a prince of God." What a witness from strangers! Wherever you move, people will say that you are a noble person. Never mind that they might not go to your church. Let us be diligent. Let us pay our bills. It pays to be respected by everybody.

They offered something to Abraham. I would have been caught in this snare and would have said, "It seems improper to refuse this offer. They made a nice offer." The people said, "It is a great privilege for us to have the dead of your family buried in one of our sepulchers. It is an honor; you are a prince. We will become important. You choose a sepulcher. You don't have to ask; you are a mighty prince." You or I would have said, "It seems improper to refuse. They called me a prince and they made me a nice offer." But what did this fine man of God do? Verses 7-9: "And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth. And he communed with them saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Sohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth, he shall give it me for a possession of a burying place amongst you." I want you to note the difference between the speech of the inhabitants of the land and Abraham's answer. He does not have the same line as the offerers but answers in a very diligent and gentle but firm way. A Christian must have two qualities. He must be strong and gentle, strong in his goal, but the way of doing it must be smooth. Did Abraham roughly say, "No! I am a

saint. I cannot have the burial place of my wife among you people.” There is a nice way of saying “No.” Let me give an incident that happened in England. There was a gentleman named Manning to whom Queen Victoria offered a high position in the court. The position was a dangerous one and he did not want to accept it but he did not want to say “no” to the Queen and asked advice of a friend, Gladstone. Gladstone advised him saying, “Don’t say No, let your NO come out of your Yes.” It means, instead of saying “No,” present your conditions before the Queen and she will say “No” for you. It is a gentle way of dealing with people. Now make a picture of Abraham before you when he was told to choose any sepulcher he wanted. What did he do? He stood up before them and made a big bow. He could have held a position in any court. He met many kings in his days and dealt with them with great dignity. He had attended the school of the King of kings. He knew how to act with all kinds of people. He did not refuse this offer but went around the subject: “If it be your mind that I bury my dead out of my sight, do me a favor.” He did not want to be in the middle of the field but at the border. He was touching only the borderline of the strangers. He didn’t ask for it as a gift but said that he would pay as much money for it as it was worth.

Now what happened? The owner of the field was right there. They were very lazy people and were all at the entrance of the city much of the day. Such a transaction! Verses 10 & 11: “And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my pople give I it thee; bury thy dead.” The owner said, “I will give it to you as a gift so that you may bury your dead.” He did not say that he was giving it to him

as a possession but said that he was giving it for a sepulcher. Abraham did not lose his head. Verse 12: “And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.” Again Abraham made a bow; he was used to it. Abraham was a stranger and remained a stranger. He was courteous with the others but never mixed himself with them. Oil and water never mix. They touch but are not familiar. Familiarity breeds contempt.

Verse 13: “And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there.” Abraham said, “I have to pay you for it; I don’t want anything for nothing.” This is a big lesson in our lives. The owner then understood that he wanted to pay for it and said something. Verses 14 & 15: “And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is betwixt me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead.” This is Abraham’s contract with the undertaker. I don’t know why this man spoke in this way because it is not easy to read people’s minds. We don’t have the history of these people. They may have been full of ceremonies but Abraham was skillful. Verse 16: “And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.” I think that Abraham must have had some servant with him and when the owner said, “After all, this cave is worth only 400 shekels of silver; forget about the money,” I think the servant had already counted the money. So Abraham paid for the cave and it became his for a sepulcher. He had only a sepulcher among the heathen, nothing else, and he did not accept it as a gift. He paid the price for it. We too must pay the price for everything in this life. Beware of the things that we get very cheap; you will pay a higher price for them.

When things are cheap, we will pay more. Abraham did not discuss the price but immediately he gave the money and became the owner of the place. He had no land with the exception of this sepulcher among strangers. We should have nothing in this life except a sepulcher. As for the rest, we must not set our eyes and hearts on them. Cling to nothing. Be free from all men but be tied to the Lord!

Lesson 28

Genesis 24:1-67

Sarah was 90 years old when Isaac was born and was 127 when she died. So Sarah died when Isaac was 37 years old; and now, Isaac is probably 40. Now his father, Abraham, sent his servant to find a bride for him. Who selected those who must be the bride of Jesus? It is God the Father. What was the name of the servant who was sent by Abraham? Genesis 15:2: “And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?” Here you have the name of the steward in the house of Abraham. This man, Eliezer, was the steward in Abraham’s house but in the twenty-fourth chapter you don’t find the name of the servant. There is a reason. The servant must disappear. The servant does his errand but then must disappear. Do the work and don’t give your card: I AM SO AND SO. Forget your own name and remember the name of Jesus. Abraham put the servant under an oath that Isaac must not marry any of the Canaanite girls but the servant had to go among his relations and bring the girl to him. The servant was very faithful; he was entrusted with everything in the house. So he took ten camels and started out. When he reached a certain city, he stopped.

Verse 11: “And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.” After this, he made a prayer. Verses 12-14: “And he said, O Lord God of my master, Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou

hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.” Study the prayers of the Bible and compare them with many babbling prayers in some of our services. Some people begin to narrate everything to God. This shows that they don’t know God. If you need ten dollars from a friend and you have to start giving him a long story, it means that he is not your friend. Abraham’s servant knew how to pray. He was used to hearing the prayers of Abraham who was like a father to him. Here you see the sobriety of his prayer. It is short but it covers everything. Before the servant left, he received a blessing from Abraham. Verse 7: “The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father’s house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spoke unto me, and that swore unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.” You see here the blessing of the old man. Behind the errand of the servant was Abraham praying. We must not forget the prayers of the one who sent him. How brief and beautiful is Abraham’s prayer. He began by recalling the mercy that the Lord had shown toward him, then gave Godspeed to the servant, and the servant went his way full of confidence in God. He stopped by the well and made a prayer. He said, “Some damsels will come to take water and I will address one of them and say, ‘Please let down your pitcher and give me a drink.’ If she will give a drink to me and to all the camels, let her be the one.” Camels drink quite a bit of water. It takes quite a long time to draw water for ten camels.

Now a beautiful girl came and the servant did what he had planned. Verse 17: “And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.” The servant saw several girls. Rebekah was not the only girl at the well, but the servant was attracted to that one girl. God leads the blind by a way which they know not. He was

attracted to Rebekah and asked her for a drink from her pitcher, and she answered. Verse 18: “And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.” From things which are insignificant come some tremendous issues. This young woman was the great, great grandmother of Jesus Christ. She could have been nasty in this incident and say, “Who are you?” to the servant, but she was meek and said, “Drink, my Lord.” The Lord said, “Let your meekness be shown to all men.” Now this religious young woman hasted to give him water. She held the pitcher and the servant drank and when he finished, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also.” She wasn’t in a hurry to go. I don’t know just how much water a camel can drink but I am sure that it takes several pitchers of water to satisfy him. This girl ran up and down to the well many times. Now what about the servant?

Verse 21: “And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.” Did this unnamed servant begin to speak immediately? We have a picture of some woman in the New Testament who was sparing in her words but deep in her considering things. She was Mary, the mother of Jesus. She heard things and pondered them in her heart. It is a beautiful type. Now this servant did not speak right away. He was considering whether or not the Lord had prospered his journey. After this, the servant gave a gift to the girl. He was not stingy. When Abraham sent his servant away on this journey he did not say, “Here are so many pennies.” Abraham trusted his servant and the servant himself took whatever was needed for the trip. Trust people. If you don’t trust, you cannot be trusted. Abraham did not say, “You must spend so much and no more.” The servant took whatsoever was necessary and was well provided. It is a picture of the Holy Spirit. Verses 22 & 23: “And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel

of weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold. And said, Whose daughter art thou? Tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" If this man had been stingy, he would have said, "I risk all these jewels to a strange girl and maybe I make a mistake." If you begin to philosophize with God, you will never prosper. God will not permit that we will be deceived when we are sincere. The servant gave these jewels to the girl and asked if there was any room in her house for them to lodge and she answered more. She had given more water than he had asked for and now she gave more of an answer. Verses 24 & 25: "And she said, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in." The servant asked only if there was room to lodge in; that was all, but this girl answered more: "We have both straw and room enough to lodge in. We will not only lodge you but there is an abundance of food also." She is a beautiful type.

Now you see the servant. Verse 26: "And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord." Here you see the man of God, a man of few words. Men like this are giants compared to us. We are pygmies. This servant must have been quite old and had followed Abraham for many years. This serious servant was worthy of Abraham. You must select your own assistants. Abraham knew how to select men. It is difficult to select people. When this girl answered this way, the servant had nothing else to do but to bow himself down and worship the Lord. Now he said something. Verse 27: "And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." First he gave an adoration unto the Lord and then he spoke to the girl. When he prayed before, he did not appeal to the Lord in

his own name; he never mentioned himself. He said "The Lord of my master, Abraham." He loved Abraham. Now what did the girl do? Verses 28 & 29: "And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well." She did not go slowly to the house but she ran. Everything was done quickly; it shows action. As a rule, Orientals are not very active; they are lazy, but this girl was not Oriental in character. She also had a brother who ran out to meet the man and saw the bracelets on his sister's hands and invited the servant into the house. Then they unburdened the camels and placed food before the servant.

Verse 33: "And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on." This verse is worth considering. He would not touch food until his errand was told. Here you see a very faithful servant. How did he begin narrating his story? Did he begin by saying, "My name is so and so and I have been a very faithful servant, etc." There is not a word of himself. He simply said, "I am Abraham's servant; I am nobody. I belong to Abraham and the Lord blessed my master greatly and a son was born to him in his old age and my master gave everything to this son. Now my master has sent me here." He gave such a narrative in order to gain confidence in them. They could have said, "You just made up that story," but he said something. Verse 40: "And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house." There is no doubt in Abraham's words; he was the Father of Faith. "The Lord will send His angel before you and you will be prosperous." Then the servant said, "When I reached this well, I made a prayer. Verse 42: "And I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now thou do

prosper my ways which I go..." Then he told them of the sign which he asked of the Lord and narrated the whole story. He never forgot to pray and never forgot to mention that he had prayed at each step. "I have prayed; I have prayed; I have prayed." Verse 48: "And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son." Here ends the narrative. He stood by the well, made a prayer, asked for a sign, and the girl came, the sign is given, the narrative ends; and then he goes in a very clear-cut manner to the conclusion. Verse 49: "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left." He spoke in a very frank way. A stranger was saying such bold words: "God has done His part. I don't know if you will obey God or not." He puts no doubt in God. Someone else may have said it in a different way not to hurt their feelings, "If I am not mistaken, if the thing is from God..." This servant said nothing like this. He said, "I am sure that the thing is from God and it is up to you now if you want to obey or not. Tell me one way or the other. I will not eat your dinner. Let me know either way so I will turn to the right or to the left. I will disappear from this place. This thing is from God. The girl came according to the sign which I asked of God. Answer either 'yes' or 'no.' If you say 'no' I will go away." Now let us see what the father and brother answered and said to these words.

Verses 50 & 51: "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." They said, "We have nothing to say. We are sure that the hand of the Lord is in this. Take Rebekah and go." What did he do now? Verse 52: "And it

came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth." I wish that I could be a servant like him. He was used to worshipping the Lord. When he heard the answer of the father and brother, he prostrated himself and then gave gifts. He had given some little gifts at first but now he gave gifts in profusion. He always had one aim in mind. Verse 54: "And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him and tarried all night; and they arose in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master." He wanted quick business. "I have to go now." Rebekah's mother and brother asked that she stay for at least ten more days but the servant answered something. Verse 56: "And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master." When we know that something is from the Lord, we must act quickly. Then they called Rebekah and asked her if she would go and she answered that she would. God was in this; do not misjudge Rebekah. Everything was moved by God's plan. She answered with heartless simplicity, "I will go." So, together they went away and she became the wife of Abraham's son, Isaac.

Lesson 29
Genesis 25:7-11

Matthew 23:15: “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” A proselyte is a follower; one who belongs to a party or sect. For instance, suppose you open a church and go around and say to people, “Come to our church. That minister is no good, etc.” When you try to grab people and try to make them your disciples, not disciples of Christ, you are proselytizing. It is one of the greatest sins that has been branded by the mouth of Jesus Christ. When you say that the Lord has baptized in this place, say it with all humility. It is terrible to proselytize. You try to grab people to yourselves and you may even use the name of Jesus. They compassed sea and land and said, “Come in our midst, etc.” The Lord speaks to the Scribes and Pharisees and warns them of their proselytizing. May this spirit be far from you and me. Many times we proselytize, but not in this church. In this church there is a banner: NO PROSELYTIZING. People must be attracted to Jesus Christ. The moment we cannot present Jesus, we are out of business. I insist on this. I remember that in the beginning of my Protestant life many years ago, I was impressed by the preaching in a church. I had been a Baptist minister many years and most of the preaching was attacking the priests and the Pope. Also, if some scandal happened in some Catholic church, someone came in church with a paper and said, “Read this; read this.” I sensed that it was wrong. We must not criticize others. If we have 100 members and we want 150, we go around spying and start to criticize other ministers and try to take their people to our church. Then comes a fight. We must present only Jesus Christ and ask the Lord that He should send those people who are destined to be served in this place. It is a sin to proselytize because

people must be disciples of Christ, not of us. Never boast of your church. Never say that we are any better than others. If you find someone who isn't satisfied, then you may make an invitation in a gentle way. Don't promise that the Lord heals all the sick, etc. It isn't true. Not all people are healed. Don't exaggerate. Exaggeration is the enemy of truth. A proselytizing spirit has been the spirit of almost all the Protestant people. But in order to keep one who has been proselytized you have to use some artificial methods and you come to criticism. By proselytizing, we instill hatred in people instead of love. Let us bring people to *Christ*. While in Brazil, I did not preach any church. I asked the people to accept Christ as their Savior and then He would guide them as to the church they should go to.

Now, before going into our lesson, we will review the life of Abraham in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 11:8-10: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive as an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." This is a synthesis in a few words of the life of Abraham. Abraham's secret was faith. Faith means belief in the word of somebody else. Abraham believed God's word. He trusted God. There is a difference between belief and trust. Trust is belief in action. Suppose you should leave this country tomorrow and you have a substantial amount, which you want to entrust to someone. You look around and believe that everyone around you is honest, but when it comes to actually entrusting someone with your valuables, you have to go to someone you trust. Everyone says that God heals and forgives, but when you actually put your case in His hands, then it is trust. Abraham leaned on God; he

trusted God; he obeyed by faith. He left his country not knowing where he was headed . If you went to a station and didn't know where you were going, people would call you crazy. Abraham moved around like the Wise Men who had no schedule or map. Only a star guided them. It requires faith. Try to possess this faith. We have to see the beauty in the life of this old man. He went out not knowing where he should stop. This is incredible, humanly speaking, but Abraham did it. Do you marvel that God loved him so much? Now when Abraham reached the land, did he say, "I have reached the land; now I will build a castle." We see one marvel more marvelous than the other. When he arrived, he did not build any house but simply pitched his tent like a gypsy. Today he was here; tomorrow he was there. Although the land was his territory by promise, he never located himself anywhere because he was a pilgrim. As we learned in our previous lesson, the only land he owned was a sepulcher. Why this? He looked; he was a great looker; he looked far in the distance. For what? For a city which hath foundation. Does this mean that Jersey City or New York doesn't have any foundation? They do have some foundation, but it can be shaken by earthquakes, etc. But Abraham was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. It isn't a city that is planned by one and then the architect might make a mistake, because the builder and maker are the same person—God. Have these few points clear in your mind. Abraham was called out of his native land not knowing where he should go. When he reached the place, he did not make himself comfortable, but remained a pilgrim. He was a few months here and a few months in another place as the Lord commanded him, because he was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 11:17-19: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That

in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” You have a full history of Abraham in these few verses. By faith, when he was tried by God Himself, Abraham offered Isaac. He who had received the promise offered his only son. How strange! He could have said, “What is this about, Lord? You promised me a son. I waited so many years for him and now you ask me to kill him?” He did not say anything. He was sure that God could resurrect his son. He said, “I will kill my boy but when he is lifeless, God will raise him up.” Would we have done this? Abraham had gone through all the steps of killing his son. For three days he walked with the boy, they climbed the mountain together; then he raised his arm to kill the boy. In his heart, he had already killed Isaac, so in a sense, he did receive his son from the dead. This is Abraham!

Now our lesson is of the death of this great man. Genesis 25:7: “And these are the days of the years of Abraham’s life.” Does anyone count this way? It is strange. Why doesn’t it simply say, “These are the years of Abraham’s life?” Why does it mention days? We live day by day, not year by year. Every day counts. We must learn to count the days. Psalm 90:12: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Some people say, “Some other time.” Count your days. We have one day to live and that is TODAY. Abraham had a long life but he counted every day. Days make months, months make years, and years make centuries. Verse 8: “Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.” Was he in terrible agony? How is his death presented here? Death is a universal affair. Willing or unwilling, we must study death. You can write a book on this verse. When he was 170 years old, he gave up the ghost. He died in a good old age and full of years; he was satisfied. Once I was waiting at a train

station ready to leave a city where I was treated very well, but I could not wait to see the moment to leave. I was asked if I would remain any more but I said, "No, I have to go." So it is in life. When your time comes, you don't want to stay one day more. When Abraham reached his limit, he would not stay a day longer. That is the way with the death of saints.

Now when Abraham died he went with his people. Where were his people? Were they in the ground with the worms? Of course, his body was buried there. When we have to put on that new suit, we must discard this old one. This body is susceptible to so many things that we are almost ashamed of it, but some day we will leave this body to accept another. When saints leave this earth, angels take care of them. An angel took care of Lazarus when he died. He was a poor beggar, full of misery, but when he died, he went with the angels. The rich man had a big funeral with no angels. I don't know how many angels were around when Abraham died. Oh, if I could see the death of Abraham in a vision. Abraham was gathered to his people. You know your company. It is a great unhappiness in life to have to do with uncongenial people. When Abraham died, he was gathered to his people, to a people who understood each other. All of us need friends. We all need our own company. There is a family in heaven and on earth. Ephesians 3:14 & 15: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Your best family is in heaven. The song, LIFE IS LIKE A MOUNTAIN RAILROAD ends with the words, "We are people welcomed home." St. Peter said that when saints die, they are received in heaven with a symphony. So Abraham was welcomed to his family in the Great Beyond!

Now what happened? Verse 9: "And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of

Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre.” This same field had been purchased by Abraham when he buried his wife and now that he has died, Isaac becomes the boss. There is order in God. Isaac is honored now because Abraham has disappeared. Till now it has always been Abraham, Abraham, Abraham; but now, Isaac comes to the foreground. Now that the father, Abraham died, Isaac and Ishmael met. Remember when Ishmael was cast out of the house? He was sent away but he prospered anyway. How old was he at this time? Isaac was 75 years old now and Ishmael was about 15 years older, so they were two old men. Probably Ishmael said to Isaac, “When you were a wee child, I laughed at you.” What usually happens at funerals? You meet people whom you have not seen for years. Funerals reunite people. At the funeral of Abraham, the two old brothers met. I imagine that many times Abraham would say to Isaac, “Don’t be too cruel with Ishmael; he is a good man too.” So the two brothers buried the old father. There is a great meaning in this. At the death of Christ, we have been united. People have so many differences but when we meet at the sepulcher of Jesus Christ, we forget all of them. After this, Isaac, who was next in line, was blessed and from him descended Jesus Christ.

THE END



