

*Great Chapters
of the
BIBLE*

13 Lessons

**Prepared by:
PAUL E. CANTRELL**

2007

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Lesson One

The Beginnings

(Genesis 1:1-31)

Genesis is the foundation upon which the rest of the Bible is based. It is a book of beginnings. Bible believers have given the title to this book from the first phrase in this chapter: **"In the beginning."** Chapter one of Genesis deals with the origin of the universe and everything in it. It tells in a very brief way the following:

- a) It assumes the existence of God without trying to give reasons for believing;
- b) It tells how God brought matter into existence;
- c) It tells how He formed this matter into the heavens and the earth;
- d) It describes the formation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars;
- e) It tells about the beginning of plant life for food;
- f) It tells of the beginning of animal life;
- g) And finally, the crowning of that creation, the human family—male and female.

Take just a moment and reflect upon what is covered in this chapter! It is plainly stating that our universe had a beginning, which means it is not eternal. It clearly states that God (the Eternal One) planned and created it according to His design.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. When was this beginning according to the information in the chapter? (1:1)

- a) A man who claimed to believe in the Bible as God's Word made an effort to try to trace back to a starting date for creation.
- b) He came up with 4004 B.C.
- c) However, the information found in the Greek Translation of the Bible comes up with a longer date of over 5000 B.C.
- d) We really do not know for sure!

2. What was the condition of matter when first created by God and for how long did it remain in this condition? (1:1-5)

- a) The Hebrew word "Bara" is translated "to create."
- b) The word carries with it the idea of bringing something into existence that did not exist before. (See Heb. 11:3).
- c) Inspiration states that the condition of matter was: *It was without form and void.*
- d) There were things still to be done to the universe before living things could be put on the earth.
- e) There was darkness and water everywhere around the earth.
- f) We are not specifically told of any duration of time since there was nothing that was formed yet to measure time.
- g) God began working to bring the earth into a place for life—He created light!
- h) He separated the two from each other—thus, giving a concept of time—Day one.

3. What did God then do to make the earth livable for man? (1:6-10)

- a) He began to make the earth distinct from the rest of the universe.
- b) He separated the waters by an expanse—called it "heavens."
- c) This term is used in three ways in Scripture:
 - ◇ The expanse above the earth, where the clouds form (Gen. 1:20).
 - ◇ The outer space where all of the planetary bodies are (Gen. 1:17; Isa. 13:10).
 - ◇ The dwelling place of God (Heb. 9:24).
- d) He then caused the waters below the expanse to become oceans on our earth.
- e) Our universe now has three layers: One for the oceans, one for the sky, and one for the waters above the sky.
- f) This change resulted in sufficient dry land for man's existence.

4. How did our earth come to have vegetation, plants, and trees? (1:11-13)

- a) God caused them to sprout forth!
- b) God used a mist to form each day to provide sufficient water for these things.
- c) God provided for their continued existence by seeds that produced after their "kind."
- d) These provided food for both animals, birds, and humans.

5. What reason did God give for creating the Sun, Moon, and Stars? (1:14-19)

- a) "To separate the day from the night"
- b) "To be for signs and for seasons and for days and years"
- c) "To give light on the earth"
- d) "To separate the light from the darkness"
- e) The exactness of how all of these operate is what makes a calendar possible and dependable.
- f) But it also makes life possible on the earth.

6. Is it significant that God created the birds and the living things in the ocean at the same time?

- a) I do not know of any significance.

7. What special phrase is used to show that animals can bring forth only within God-given bounds? (1:24-25)

- a) "Bring forth after their kind."
- b) Man's classification and God's classification may be somewhat different, but everyone knows that this is talking about species can only reproduce within God's boundary-line!

8. What special privilege is given to man in his creation as well as his power? (1:26-31)

- a) "Make man in our image, according to our likeness"
- b) "Let them rule over fish, birds, cattle, etc."
- c) "Given you plants, trees for food"

9. What phrases indicate a plural idea in the Godhead? (1:2, 26, 27)

- a) "Spirit moved over the surface of the waters"
- b) "Let **us** make man after **our** image"

- c) The Hebrew word for God is "Elohim"
 - ◇ This is a plural word.
 - ◇ But it has a single verb.
- c) Christ in creation also (John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16-17).

**10. What is the difference in "making (forming) something" and "creating something?"
(1:1, 7, 16, 21, 25, 26, 27)**

- a) To create is to bring something into existence from nothing.
- b) To make or form is to make something from existing things—or, to fashion that which is already in existence in some form.
- c) "Bara"—Create.
- d) "Asah"—Make.
- e) "Yatzar"—Form.

Lesson Two

The Flood

(Genesis 6:1-22)

This chapter records a great incident—the destruction of all mankind from off the face of the earth—except for eight persons. We normally refer to this event as the great flood, while some use the term "the deluge in Noah's day." This event is fully covered in three additional chapters (7, 8, 9). In order to get a quick "bird's eye view" of the chronology of the flood, Sir William Dawson listed the following:

"Noah's Log Book"

Month	day		Number of Days
2	17	All enter the ark. God shuts the door. Rains fall. Floods pour in from the sea. Ark floats. Ark sails swiftly.	40
3	27	Rain stops. Floods keep pouring in and water rising	110
7	17	Ark touches bottom on top of high mountains and stays there. Waters stop rising. Water stationary.	40
8	27	Waters begin to settle. Settle fifteen cubits.	34
10	1	Ark left on dry land. Waters continue to settle. Noah waits.	40
11	11	Noah sends out a raven. It returns not. Waters settle. Noah waits.	7
11	18	Noah sends out a dove. It returns. Water settles. Noah waits.	7
11	25	Noah sends out dove again. Dove brings an olive leaf just grown. Waters settle. Noah waits.	7
12	2	Noah sends out dove again. It returns not. Waters settle. Noah waits.	29
1	1	Noah removes covering, looks all around. No water can be seen. Ground dries up. Noah waits.	50
2	27	God opens the door, and says, "God forth." Total time of flood.	370

It is interesting to note that there are ancient traditions of a great flood or deluge among many peoples of the earth: Egyptian, India, Chinese, Greek, British, American Indian, Babylonian, etc. In comparison to these stories, the Bible account stands out as very believable. According to the Bible account it seems that man had scattered on the earth and that the flood was universal in its destruction of all mankind (except for 8 people). One writer expressed the thought: *"If we disbelieve in the Biblical Deluge it is not because we know too much Geology, but too little."* The evidence for a universal flooding has more and more come to light from the findings of the men of science.

One of the reasons for the importance of this chapter is that it is a new beginning for mankind on the face of the earth. All genealogies start over with "four living families." All humans have descended from Noah's three sons: Ham, Shem, and Japheth.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**1. Can a person not believe in such a flood and still believe in Jesus? (Matt. 24:37-39)**

- a) I do not believe such is possible!
- b) For if there was no universal flood, as described in the Genesis' account, then Jesus is not the Son of God.
- c) Why? Because Jesus makes reference to such—as an historical event. If he was mistaken about the flood, what else was He mistaken about???

2. Was the Apostle Peter inspired? (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5)

- a) I believe that he was!
- b) If so, then he was guided by God's Spirit to refer to this great event as an historical fact.

3. Who were the "daughters of men" and the "sons of God?" (6:1, 2, 4)

- a) The expression is probably making a distinction between the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth.
- b) These are designations naturally given in the Bible to distinguish between those who believe in and follow God and those who do not.
 - ◇ Believers—Gen. 4:26
- c) We do not believe it has references to angels for the following reasons:
 - ◇ Bad angels would not be called sons of God.
 - ◇ Good angels would not be guilty of such actions.
 - ◇ Punishment was upon men, not bad angels.

4. What was the basis for marrying? (6:2)

- a) "Saw they were fair (beautiful)."
- b) They made their decision for marriage on the "outward beauty " rather than their spiritual qualities.

5. What does the 120 years have reference to? (6:3)

- a) From the Genesis account, it could have reference to how long God would allow men to live—since they had been living into the hundreds of years.
 - ◇ Man's age did drastically cut down after the flood.
- b) But, it could also have reference to 120 years before the destruction would come.
 - ◇ This is generally how this expression has been understood.
 - ◇ Peter's statement indicates that Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5).
 - ◇ Noah preached by the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead.
 - ◇ He preached to the imprisoned people who were ungodly.

6. How is man's sinfulness described? (6:5, 11, 12, 13).

- a) "Wickedness of man was great on the earth"
- b) "Every intent of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually."

- c) "Corrupt in the sight of God"
- d) "Earth was filled with violence"
- e) "Corrupt—had corrupted their way upon the earth."
- f) "Filled with violence because of them"
- g) There seems to have been no reason for men's continued existence upon the earth.
 - ◇ They were so evil and unrepentant.
 - ◇ They were past feeling.
 - ◇ So indifferent to God.

7. What does it mean that "It repented the Lord that He had made man?" (6:6, 7)

- a) The NASV states that "The Lord was sorry.....He was grieved in His heart."
- b) God did not hate man, but grieved, lamented over him.
- c) So, God changed His actions toward man.
- d) 2 Pet. 3:9

8. Why did Noah find favor with God? (6:8-9)

- a) Because he was "just," "righteous," "blameless," and walked with God.
- b) Enoch also walked with God. (Gen. 5:22).
- c) Heb. 11:7

9. How did Noah show his faith in God? (6:13-22)

- a) Noah did according to all that God had commanded him.
- b) Instructions about the Ark:
 - ◇ Built of Gopher wood (14).
 - ◇ Many rooms (14)
 - ◇ Sealed with pitch (14)
 - ◇ Length—300 cubits (15)
 - ◇ Breadth—50 cubits (15)
 - ◇ Height—30 cubits (15)
 - ◇ One window (all way around?)—1 cubit (16)
 - ◇ One door—(16)
 - ◇ Three stories—(16)

10. How was the animal world saved from destruction? (6:19-20)

- a) Two of each kind—male and female.
- b) They will come to you to keep them alive.

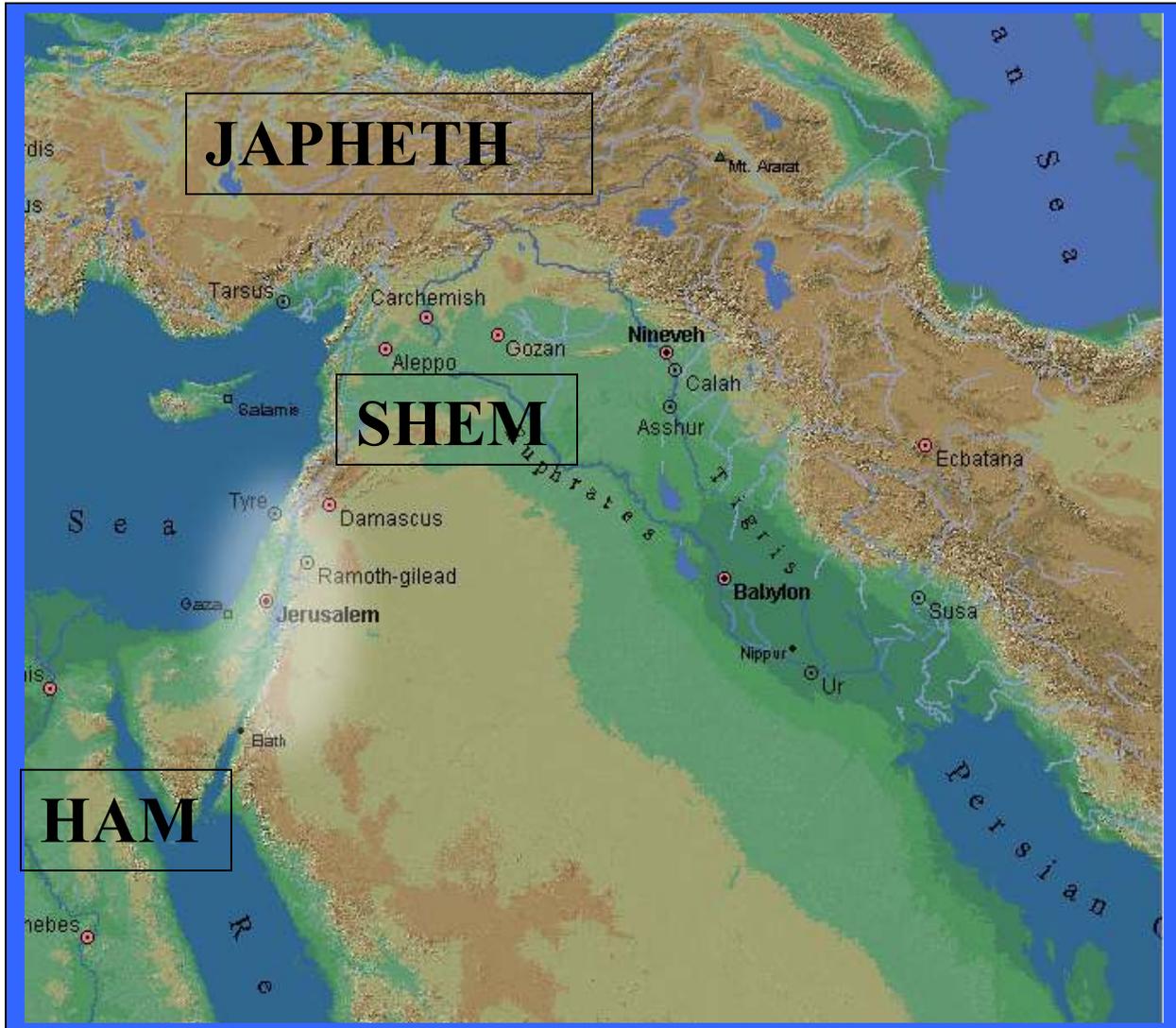
11. In what way did the Ark show God's grace?

- a) It was the place where God saved those who believed and obeyed Him.
- b) The unbelieving and disobedient were destroyed by His wrath.

Lesson Three

The Nations

(Genesis 10:1-32)



At the end of chapter eight of Genesis, Noah and his family had left the ark and offered a sacrifice unto God in thanksgiving. He makes a promise to Noah and to all mankind in verses 21-22. In chapter nine, God allowed man not only to eat plants, but flesh of animals as well. He made a covenant with man concerning the rainbow as a sign that He would not again destroy mankind by a universal flood. At the end of the chapter (vs. 25-27), Noah, presumably by the inspiration of God, pronounces a curse on Ham's descendants, but a blessing on Shem and Japheth's descendants. Noah lived to be 950 years old (v. 29).

In Chapter ten, the descendants of Noah are given (through his sons) and the nations that they began or established. The map on the previous page will help give an idea of about where these various descendants settled. An interesting side-line for us today is that the country now known as **IRAQ** is located in the heart of this area. The following things have been suggested by David L. Brown:

Early Bible names for this location seem to be Babylon, Land of Shinar, or Mesopotamia. The word Mesopotamia means "between the two rivers"—the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The name Iraq means the country with deep roots. The following will help to see why the name:

1. The Garden of Eden was in Iraq (Gen. 2:10-14).
2. Adam and Eve were created in Iraq (Gen. 2:7-8).
3. Satan made his first recorded appearance in Iraq (Gen. 3:1-6).
4. Nimrod established Babylon, and the Tower of Babel was built in Iraq (Gen. 10:8-9; 11:1-4).
5. The confusion of the languages took place in Iraq (Gen. 11:5-11).
6. Abraham came from a city in Iraq (Gen. 11:31; Acts 7:2-4).
7. Isaac's bride came from Iraq (Gen. 24:3-4, 10).
8. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq (Gen. 27:42-45; 31:38).
9. The first world empire was in Iraq (Dan. 1:1-2; 2:36-38).
10. The greatest revival in history was in a city in Iraq (Jonah 3)
11. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq.
12. The book of Nahum was a prophecy against a city in Iraq.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Who were the sons of Japheth? (10:2)

- | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|
| a) Gomer | d) Javan | g) Tiras |
| b) Magog | e) Tubal | |
| c) Madai | f) Meshech | |

2. What basic nations do we believe have come from Japheth?

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|
| a) Greeks | d) Teutons | g) Hindus |
| b) Latins | e) Celts | h) Persians |
| c) Germans | f) Slavonians | |

3. Who were the sons of Ham? (10:6)

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| a) Cush | c) Phut |
| b) Mizraim | d) Canaan |

4. What well-known person came out of Cush and what cities did he rule over? (10:8-10)

- a) Nimrod
- b) Cities: Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh.

5. What country is identified with Cush now? Why the emphasis upon the Cushites being in the Mesopotamia valley?

- a) Ethiopia
- b) Possibly before the great dividing of the languages.

Lesson Four

The Law of Moses

(Exodus 20:1-26)

The Hebrew word for "Law" is "Torah." The Greek word for "Law" is "Nomos." Where the Old Testament uses the word "Torah," the New Testament uses the word "Nomos." Both Old and New Testaments have many terms that identify with the concept of "Law," such as: **righteousness, unrighteousness, judge, judgment, condemnation, punishment, etc.** The Law is primarily dealing with man's relationship to God and to his fellowman—showing us how we should conduct ourselves towards both, and the penalty if we do not. For centuries, mankind did not have a written Law given to them by God. Inspiration tells us that they had the work of the Law written in their hearts; and, therefore were responsible to God for what we would like to call "Generic Law." (Rom. 2:13-15). Centuries passed before God gave a written Law, and this was given to a special nation of People called "Israelites." The earliest date for the giving of this Law would be around 1500 BC—while some estimate around 1300 BC. The exactness of the date is not important, but the fact that this Law was only given to the Israelite people (Deut. 4:5-8; Ps. 147:19-20) is very important to understand.

The term "Law" is used in various ways in the Old Testament: (1) With reference to the Ten Commandments (Exo. 24:12); (2) With reference to the "Penteteuch" (the first five books of Moses) that would include all of the Laws that God gave to the Israelites (Deut. 4:8); or (3) With reference to the entire inspired Old Testament (John 12:44). Jesus used the expression that the Jews were accustomed to using to describe the Old Testament books—The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44).

If you would like to see a brief over-view of the Law of Moses, see the appendix to this lesson. Some have broken the Laws down into what could be called: (1) Religious Laws, and (2) Civil Laws. The outline will give a flavoring of what was covered in the Law of Moses.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**1. List the 10 commandments in brief form (Exo. 20:2-17).**

- a) No other gods (sole recognition of the True God of heaven).
- b) No graven images of Him (He is a spirit, not physical).
- c) Not to take the Name of God in vain (Show reverence, respect for Him).
- d) Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy (A day of rest).
- e) Honor Your parents (Respect and obey them).
- f) Not to kill (murder) an innocent person.
- g) Not to Commit Adultery (divorce and re-marry).
- h) Not to Steal (take what does not belong to you).
- i) Not to bear false witness (Not to lie against someone).
- j) Not to covet (desire what belongs to another).

2. What two major divisions of responsibility can be seen in the Ten Commandments?

- a) Commands 1-4 are responsibilities to _____.
- b) Commands 5-10 are responsibilities to _____.

3. In what sense is God a jealous God? (20:5)

- a) He alone wants and deserves our worship and obedience.
- b) Punishment must follow otherwise.

4. To whom does God show mercy? (20:6)

- a) Those who love and keep His commands.

5. Why was the Sabbath to be observed by the Jewish people as holy? (20:11)

- a) God had worked for 6 days and rested on the seventh.
- b) This was a special way for the Jewish people to show respect for God.

6. What blessing comes to those who honor their parents? (20:12)

- a) Long life (generally).

7. What is the distinction between kill and murder? (20:13)

- a) To kill—to shed innocent blood accidentally or because a person is being punished for wrong-doing by Law.
- b) To murder—To shed innocent blood without cause—unjustified!

8. What is adultery? (20:14)

- a) To take another man's wife as your wife unlawfully; or to divorce your wife and marry another with just cause.

9. What kind of manifestation did God use to make his presence known to the people? (20:18-21)

- a) Thundering, lightening, noises of trumpets, mountain smoking;
- b) Thick darkness.

10. Why did God speak these commands to the people Himself? (20:20)

- a) To prove them, so that His fear would be before their faces, that they would not break His Law.

11. What special prohibition was given about building altars for sacrifices? (20:24-26)

- a) Only where God records His Name.
- b) No tool to be used to make it.
- c) No steps up to it.

12. Give a New Testament passage for each of the Ten Commandments to show which are still in force for us today.

- a) 1 Cor. 8:4-6—There is no other gods, but ONE.
- b) 1 Cor. 6:9—No idolatry will inherit the kingdom of God.
- c) Matt. 5:33-37—Do not swear at all.

- d) _____
- e) Eph. 6:1-2—Obey & honor parents.
- f) Rev. 21:8—All liars will have their part in the lake of fire.
- g) 1 Cor. 6:9—No adulterers will inherit the kingdom of God.
- h) 1 Cor. 6:10—No thieves will inherit the kingdom of God.
- i) Eph. 4:25—Put away lying....speak truth.
- j) 1 Cor. 6:10—No covetous person will inherit the kingdom of God.

Appendix

THE LAW OF MOSES

I. THE RELIGIOUS CODE:

A. The Law of Sacrifice.

1. Regulations common to all animal offerings (Exo. 20:24; Lev. 1:5, 10, 14, 15; 3:1-2; 4:3-4, 6-7, 13-15).
2. Where sacrifices were to be offered (Exo. 20:24; Lev. 17:1-9; Deut. 12:13).
3. The several kinds of offerings (Exo. 29:38-42; Lev. 1:1-6, 13; 6:19-30; 7:1-21, 28-38; Num. 15:1-11; 28:11-15).
4. The Sin offering (Lev. 4:1-6, 7, 24-30; 7:1-10).
5. The order of the offerings:
 - a) Sin offering is for atonement.
 - b) Burnt offering is for consecration.
 - c) Peace offering is for harmony and peace.
 - d) Meal offering is for special occasions.

B. The Priesthood.

1. The family and their vestments (Exo. 28:1-43; 39:1-43).
2. Consecration of the Priests (Exo. 29:1-37; Lev. 8:1-36).
3. The support of the Priesthood (Num. 18:8-20; Lev. 7:8).
4. Law of Holiness for the Priesthood (Lev. 21:1-22:33).

C. The Law of the Levite.

1. Place of encampment and employment (Num. 3:1-51; 4:15, 25, 31-32).
2. Their means of support (Num. 18:21-24; Deut. 13:22-29; 26:12-13; Deut. 14:27-29).

D. Ceremonial Uncleanness.

1. Uncleanness from childbirth (Lev. 12:1-8).
2. Uncleanness from leprosy (Lev. 13:1-14).
3. Uncleanness from Bodily Secretion (Lev. 13:1-33).
4. Uncleanness from a Dead Body (Num. 19:1-22).

E. Holy Days.

1. The feast of the Passover (Exo. 12:14, 20, 25, 28, 43, 51; 13:3-10; 23:14-15; Lev. 23:4-15; Num. 9:1-12; 28:16-24; Deut. 16:1-8).
2. Feast of Weeks or Harvest (Exo. 23:15-17; Lev. 23:15-21).
3. The Day of Trumpets (Lev. 23:23-25).
4. The Annual Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1-34; Num. 29:7-11).
5. The Feast of Tabernacles (Exo. 23:14-17; Lev. 23:33-36, 39-44; Num. 29:12-40).

6. The Sabbath (Exo. 16:23; 28:11; Deut. 5:12-15).

F. Sacred Vows.

1. The Nazarite Vow (Num. 6:1-21).
2. The Vows of Women (Num. 30:1-16).
3. Redemption from Vows (Lev. 27:1-34).

G. Witchcraft and Idolatry.

1. The Law against Witchcraft (Lev. 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:9-14).
2. Molech worship prohibited (Lev. 20:1-5).
3. Enticing persons to idolatry (Deut. 13:1-18).

H. Articles of Animal Food.

1. Fat and blood prohibited (Lev. 7:23-27).
2. Flesh that dies a natural death (Lev. 17:15-16).
3. Clean and unclean Beasts (Lev. 11:1-47; Deut. 14:1-29).

I. Personal and Domestic Laws.

1. Laws of Dress (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:11).
2. Of personal disfigurement (Lev. 19:27-28)

J. Ethical precepts.

1. Love of truth (Exo. 23:1, 2, 7; Lev. 19:16).
2. Inflexible justice (Exo. 23:3, 6, 8; Lev. 19:15).
3. Kindness to enemy (Exo. 23:4-5; Lev. 19:17-18).
4. Kindness to strangers (Exo. 23:9; Lev. 19:33-34).
5. Treatment of the blind and deaf (Lev. 19:14).
6. Honor to the aged (Lev. 19:32).
7. Just weights and measures (Lev. 19:35, 37; Deut. 25:13-16).
8. What to do with animals astray or lost articles found (Deut. 22:1-4).
9. Kindness to mother birds (Deut. 22:6-7).
10. Battlements on the roof of safety (Deut. 22:8).
11. Yoking an ox and ass (Deut. 22:10).
12. Muzzling (Deut. 15:4).

II. THE CIVIL CODE:

A. Sexual Relations.

1. Unlawful marriages (Lev. 18:1-18; 20:11-21).
2. Unlawful intercourse (Lev. 18:19; 20:18; 19:20-22; Deut. 22:22-29; Exo. 26:16-17; Deut. 23:17; Lev. 21:9; 29:13, 15-16).
3. Lawful marriages (Deut. 21:10-14; 25:5-10).
4. Law of Jealousy (Num. 5:11-31; 22:13; 23:1-2).
5. Divorce (Deut. 22:9, 28-29; 24:1-4; Matt. 19:3-9).

B. Law of Inheritance.

1. The general Law and its origin (Num. 27:1-11; Deut. 21:15-71).

C. Provisions for the Poor.

1. Minor provisions (Lev. 19:9; 25:35-38; Deut. 23:19-20; 24:6, 10-15, 17, 19-22; Exo. 22:26-27).
2. The Sabbatical Year (Exo. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-8; Deut. 15:1-11).
3. The Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-55).

D. The Law of Servitude.

1. As given in the book of the Covenant (Exo. 21:2-11, 16, 20-21; 22:14; Deut. 15:12-17; 24:7).
2. As given in Leviticus (Lev. 25:35-55).
3. Provisions made for freed men (Deut. 15:12-18).
4. Rights of Foreign Bondmen (Exo. 21:20-21, 26, 28; Lev. 25:44, 46; Deut. 23:15-16).

E. Crimes and Punishment.

1. Capital Crimes (Exo. 21:12-14; 1 Kings 1:50; 2:28; Lev. 24:14; Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; Heb. 10:28-29; Exo. 21:20-32; 21:16; Deut. 13:1-18; Lev. 24:10-16; Deut. 18:20-22; 1 Kings 18:40; Deut. 22:13-29; Jn. 8:1-11; Lev. 21:9; 20:11-16; Deut. 21:18-21; 17:8-13; 19:16-21).
2. Manslaughter (Num. 35:9-15; Deut. 19:1-13).
3. Maiming (Exo. 21:18-19, 22-27; Lev. 24:17-22).
4. Other Crimes and Penalties (Exo. 22:1-15; Num. 35:31-34; Deut. 19:14; 21:1-9; 25:1-3).

F. Military and Judicial Laws.

1. Exemption from military service (Deut. 20:1-9; 24:5).
2. Conduct of sieges (Deut. 20:10-20).
3. League with the Canaanites forbidden (Deut. 7:1-5).
4. The Judiciary (Deut. 15:18-20; 17:8-13).
5. Laws concerning the King (Deut. 17:15, 18-20).

Lesson Five

Disbelief

(Numbers 13:1-33)

When God called His people out of Egypt, He intended for them to relocate in the land of Canaan. This was a promise that God had made to Abraham; that He would give this land to his seed or descendants (Gen. 12:1-7). After many long and hard years in Egypt, the descendants of Abraham had become a large nation of people that needed their own land. God raised up Moses and Aaron to lead them out of Egyptian bondage into freedom. Great miracles were performed that finally led to their release from slavery. They came to Mount Sinai where God gave them His Law to govern the people (Exo. 20). After some time in their journey they came to the land that had been promised to them—but they had to conquer it in order to possess it. Spies were sent out to spy out the land and bring back a report. The thirteenth chapter of Numbers deals with this event. It was a great turning event for those people that came out of Egypt. A great number of valuable lessons can be and were learned from what was recorded in this chapter.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why were 12 men chosen to spy out the land? (13:2, 180-20)

- a) They were to search out the land to see whether the people were strong or weak and few or many.
- b) They wanted to know if the land was good or bad.
- c) They wanted to know about the cities, tents, strong holds where the people lived.
- d) To find out if the land was fat or lean, wooded or not.

2. How long were they gone? (13:24)

- a) 40 days.

3. What was the report of the 10 spies? (13:27-28)

- a) The land flows with milk and honey.
- b) But, the people are strong.
- c) Their cities are walled and very great.
- d) And the children of Anak are there.

4. What was Caleb's opinion about the situation? (13:30)

- a) We need to go up at once and take the land.
- b) We are well able to possess it and overcome it.

5. What refutation did the 10 spies give? (13:31-32)

- a) We are not able.
- b) They are stronger than we are—there are giants in the land—men of great stature.
- c) The land eats up the inhabitants—we are as grasshoppers in their sight.

6. What important lessons can we learn from this chapter?

- a) What was wrong with the report of the 10 spies?
 - ◇ The report was factual, but not faithful.
 - ◇ They looked at the problem from purely a human view.
- b) Why was Caleb able to give the opinion that they could take the land?
 - ◇ He saw the same facts, but he also saw God's promises.
 - ◇ Num. 14:8-9
 - ◇ He had vision and faith in God's promise.
- c) In what way can we make an application today for us?
 - ◇ Mark 16:15-16
 - ◇ Which side are we on—doubt or faith?
- d) The people were discouraged by the report, but didn't look to the promises of God.
 - ◇ Rom. 8:28, 31, 37
 - ◇ Phil. 4:13, 19
- e) God allowed the people to see the land—it was what He claimed it to be.
 - ◇ We can see heaven as described by inspiration.
 - ◇ Will we miss our promised land because of unbelief. (Heb. 3:12-19).
- f) This new land was better than Egypt—plus they would be free.
 - ◇ God promises us that the Christian life is better than a life of sin and bondage.
 - ◇ Will we go back into bondage?
- g) Jesus has nowhere indicated that getting into heaven would be without difficulty (Mark 8:32; Lk. 13:24; Rev. 2:26).
- h) Faithless, cowardly men magnify the obstacles out of proportion.
 - ◇ Some men do this so they will not have to give up their sinful ways to do right.
 - ◇ They claim it is too hard!

Lesson Six

Obedience versus Disobedience

(Deuteronomy 28:1-68)

Israel's disbelief brought about their failure to enter into the Promised Land. However, there was a new generation coming on that would believe God and would go in and conquer and settle in the land of Canaan. This new generation was to be made up of either those who were 20 years old or under at the time of Israel's disbelief or those yet to be born. This generation had spent part or all of their lives (40 years) in what is called "wilderness wanderings." Toward the end of the 40 years, it was time for this new generation to hear anew the Law of God from Moses. This great event is recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. The name of the book means: "second giving of the Law." Moses not only talked to them about the Law of God, but historically why they had not already gone into Canaan, and how important it was for them to trust in the promises of God. The book ends with the famous and well-known blessings and cursing to come upon those who were obedient or disobedient to God. Most of this lesson is to list these promises and cursings so that we will not be found guilty of disobedience to God.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**1. What are the blessings of obedience found in Deut. 28:1-14?**

- a) V. 1—Set thee high above all nations of the earth.
- b) V. 3—Blessed in city and in field.
- c) V. 4—Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, of the ground, your cattle, kind, and flock.
- d) V. 5—Blessed shall be your basket, and your storehouse.
- e) V. 6—Blessed will be your coming in and going out.
- f) V. 7—Your enemies will be smitten and flee 7 ways.
- g) V. 8—Your storehouses and all you set your hands to do will be blessed.
- h) V. 9—You will be a holy people unto the Lord.
- i) V. 10—All people shall see you are called by the name of the Lord and be afraid of you.
- j) V. 11—There will be plenty of goods, fruit of your body, cattle, and fruit of your ground.
- k) V. 12—God will open unto you good treasure—five rain in season, bless the work of your hands, and you will lend to nations, not borrow.
- l) V. 13—You will be the head, not the tail....above, and not below.

2. How many times does God repeat the need to be obedient in these verses? (28:1-14)

- a) 5 times—vs. 1, 2, 9, 13, 14.

3. What are the cursings of disobedience found in Deut. 28:15-68?

- a) V. 16—Cursed in the city and in the field.
- b) V. 17—Your basket and store will be cursed.
- c) V. 18—The fruit of your body, land, kine, flock shall be cursed.

- d) V. 19—You will be cursed when you go out and come in.
- e) V. 20—All you set your hand to do will be cursed and you will be vexed and rebuked.
- f) V. 21—Pestilence will cleave unto you until you are consumed off the land.
- g) V. 22—You will be smitten with consumption, fever, inflammation, extreme burning, the sword, mildew and pursued until you perish.
- h) V. 23—The heavens will be as brass over you...the land like iron.
- i) V. 24—Rain will be like powder and dust.
- j) V. 25—You will be smitten before your enemies and flee 7 ways and you will be removed into all kingdoms of the earth.
- k) V. 26—Your carcass will be meat for fowls and beasts.
- l) V. 27—You will be smitten with the botch of Egypt, emeralds, scab, itch, and you cannot be healed.
- m) V. 28—You will be smitten with madness and astonishment of heart.
- n) V. 29—You will grope at mid-day and not prosper, but only oppressed and spoiled.
- o) V. 30—You will be betroth to a wife and another will have her. You will build a house and another will live in it. You will plant a vineyard and another will gather the grapes.
- p) V. 31—Your ox will be slain before your eyes and you will not eat of it. Your ass will be taken away violently and will not be restored to you.
- q) V. 32—Your sons and daughters will be given to another people and your eyes shall fail with longing for them.
- r) V. 33—The fruit of all your labors will be eaten by another nation. You will be only oppressed and cursed.
- s) V. 34—You will be driven to distraction (mad).
- t) V. 35—You will be smitten in the knees, legs, and with botch that cannot be healed.
- u) V. 36—You and your king will serve another nation not known and you will serve other gods.
- v) V. 37—You shall become an astonishment, a proverb, a byword among all nations.
- w) V. 38—You will carry much seed out, but gather little; for the locust shall consume it.
- x) V. 39—You will plant vineyards, dress them, but neither drink of the wine, nor father grapes; the worms shall consume them.
- y) V. 40—Your olive trees shall cast its fruit before time—and give no oil.
- z) V. 41—You will beget children who will be taken into captivity.
- a) V. 42—The locust will consume your fruit of the trees and the land.
- b) V. 43—Strangers shall be over you.
- c) V. 44—They shall lend to you and you shall be the tail and not the head.
- d) V. 45—Curses will pursue you until you are destroyed.
- e) V. 46—You shall be for a sign and wonder upon you and your seed forever.
- f) V. 47—You shall serve enemies, if not God.
- g) V. 48—God will bring nations against you whose language you do not know.
- h) V. 51—Nations will eat the fruit of your cattle and land until destroyed. They will not leave wine, corn, oil, kine, or flocks.
- i) V. 52—Your gates will be besieged until they are overthrown.
- j) V. 53-57—You shall eat the fruit of your body—the flesh of your children.
- k) V. 59—Your plagues will be wonderful—of seed, great plagues of long continuance, and sore sickness of long continuance.

- l) V. 60—God will bring the distress of Egypt.
- m) V. 61—Every plague and sickness not written in the book will be brought against you.
- n) V. 62—You will be left few in numbers.
- o) V. 63—The Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to naught.
- p) V. 64—You will be scatter among all peoples to the end of the earth and serve other gods.
- q) V. 65—You will find no ease, but rather a trembling heart, failing eyes, and sorrow of mind.
- r) V. 66—Your life will hang in doubt; there will be fear day and night and no assurance of your life to be spared.
- s) V. 67—You will long for the night when it is day; and long for the day when it is night.
- t) V. 68—God will bring you into Egypt again in ships and sold as bondmen—and none will want you.

4. What are some vital lessons to be learned?

- a) The greatness of the blessings upon obedience.
- b) The horribleness of the cursings upon disobedience.
- c) Exaltation over their enemies if they are obedient.
- d) Servitude under their enemies if they were disobedient.
- e) The depths to which disobedience leads—to eat your own children's flesh.

5. What are some key verses?

- a) vs. 1, 9, 10, 37, 46, 47-48, 68

6. What is one good way to know God's curse was upon them?

- a) They are scattered among the nations.
- b) The destruction of Jerusalem, Temple, Worship.
- c) Fear for their life even up until 1900s.
- d) Even back in Palestine—fear for their life.

Lesson Seven

The Beginning of the Church

(Acts 2:1-47)

In the Old Testament books there were two great promises (among many) that affect all mankind today: (1) The coming of a **Redeemer** (Messiah, Christ, Anointed One); and (2) The coming of the **kingdom of God** (the church, the Lord's House). Two great chapters in the Old Testament illustrate these promises: Isaiah 53 and Daniel 2. The gospels open up with the announcement that this Messiah has come and the Kingdom of God would soon be set up among men (Matt. 1:18-23; 3:1-2). Jesus of Nazareth is stated to have been God in the flesh (John 1:1, 14). He taught, performed miracles to prove who He was and that His message was from the Father in heaven (John 5:19-23; Acts 2:22). After about three years, He allowed Himself to be taken, scourged, and crucified "for the sins of the world" (John 3:14-15; 1:29). Upon His resurrection from the dead on the third day, and after 40 days appearing and talking with and encouraging His close disciples, He ascended up on high—returning to His Father. He then, as promised (John 16:13), sent the Holy Spirit to His Apostles so that the church or kingdom of God could begin. The second chapter of Acts becomes the turning point of the history of mankind. When the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles, they began their mission of preaching the Gospel (Good News of Salvation) to all nations beginning at Jerusalem (Acts 1:4, 8). Let's look closely at this chapter and learn some very important and critical lessons.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What was the Day of Pentecost? (2:1)

- a) Pentekostes is a Greek word that has not been translated but taken directly over from the Greek into English characters. It basically means 50 days after the Passover Sabbath.
- b) The Passover Feast was important to the Jewish people celebrating their deliverance from the death of the first born in Egypt—and their deliverance from bondage.
- c) The Feast of Pentecost followed this up. This is also referred to as "the Feast of Weeks" (2 Chron. 8:13) and "the Feast of Ingatherings" (Exo. 23:16).
- d) The 50th day would be our Sunday (the 1st day after the 7th Sabbath).
- e) So, we know that the Holy Spirit came on the Apostles on Sunday (the first day of the week).
- f) God planned His timing well—for there were devout Jews that had come to Jerusalem from their homeland to worship and made a good audience for the Apostles to preach to.

2. What was done by the Holy Spirit in order to get the attention of this large group of devout Jews? (2:2-4)

- a) A strong and mighty wind filled the house where the Apostles were waiting for the Holy Spirit to come upon them.
- b) Tongues, like as of fire, sat upon each of the Apostles and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

- c) They began to speak with other tongues (languages) as the Spirit gave them utterance.

3. What was the crowd's reaction to what they were seeing and hearing? (2: 5-13)

- a) At first, they were confused, because each person was hearing in their own language.
- b) They could not explain it—it was not normal.
- c) Then, they were amazed and marveled that "mere" Galileans could do such things
- d) They were perplexed and asked "what could this mean?"
- e) But some mocked saying "these men are full of new wine."

4. What was Peter's explanation for this marvelous event happening? (2:14-21)

- a) He first pointed out that it was too early in the morning for drunkenness.
 - ◇ It was only 9:00 in the morning.
 - ◇ He did not spend much time on trying to convince the foolish.
- b) But this is fulfilling what the Prophet Joel spoke about 800 years ago.
 - ◇ God promised that in the last days He would pour out of His Spirit upon "all flesh."
 - ◇ Before this time, He had given his Spirit to be on certain Jewish persons in order to carry out His plan for mankind.
 - ◇ Now, His Spirit would be poured out upon both Jew and Gentile.
- c) The outcome of this outpouring would be:
 - ◇ People would prophesy, see visions, dream dreams.
 - ◇ God would show great powers.
- d) And people would see their need to turn to the Lord for salvation.

5. What was Peter's three main points in His sermon and what proof did he offer to his listeners concerning Jesus' resurrection? (2:22-32)

- a) Jesus was attested to by God—by miracles, wonders, and signs—as they well knew.
- b) You have tried Him and pronounced the death penalty so that the Romans crucified Him.
 - ◇ But this was God's plan from the beginning for Jesus to be put to death.
- c) But God raised Him up the third day.
 - ◇ He offered two proofs.
 - ◇ David foretold of His death and resurrection (Ps. 16:8-11).
 - ◇ We, Apostles, have witnessed this resurrection.

6. What additional great thought did he preach about? (2:33-35)

- a) That Jesus has ascended back to the Father and has been exalted.
- b) Jesus received the promised Holy Spirit to send to the Apostles.
- c) These things you are seeing and hearing are the teachings and work of the Holy Spirit.
- d) David also foretold of this as well exaltation (Ps. 68:18; Ps. 110:1).

7. What was the reaction of people to Peter's sermon? (2:36-37)

- a) Peter wanted this Jewish people to know that God had made Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ.
- b) Many of the people were cut to the heart.
- c) They wanted to know what God would have them do to be forgiven.

8. What did Peter tell these people they had to do to receive remission of sins? (2:38-40)

- a) They were told to repent (change your mind and be obedient to God).
- b) Be baptized (immersed in water) (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 6:3-4).
- c) Receive remission of sins.
- d) Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- e) He testified and exhorted them to save themselves by obeying the commands of God.

9. What was the results of this preaching? (2:41-47)

- a) 3,000 gladly received his words and were baptized.
- b) They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.
- c) Many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles that caused fear to come upon every soul who believed.
- d) They showed their repentance by sharing with one another where there was a need.
- e) They continued to meet together for study and eating with one another.
- f) The Lord continued to add to their number those who were being saved.

10. When did the church have its beginning?

- a) On the Day of Pentecost, Sunday, about AD 29.
- b) The First converts were added to the Apostles to compose the first church of Christ.

Lesson Eight

*Love***(1 Corinthians 13:1-13)**

This thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians is placed in the middle of two chapters that deal with miraculous gifts in the early church. The reason for it being placed here becomes obvious to the discerning reader—they needed it! What? Divine Love! They seem to have had all nine of the miraculous gifts to be used in their midst, but didn't know how to use them correctly. Their problem is pointed out early in the book:

- 1) *"there are contentions among you."* (1:11)
- 2) *"for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?"* (3:3)
- 3) *"that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other."* (4:6)
- 4) *"brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!"* (6:6)

It seems that they were having problems getting along with one another. They needed to grow in their understanding and expression of God's love towards each other. Having access to and using miraculous gifts was certainly **needed** and **very helpful** in the early church before the New Testament was written down for their use. But how they were used and with what attitude they were used became vital to the advancement of the kingdom of God. So, inspiration could say simply.....there is something greater than these gifts!

THE IMPORTANCE OF USING THE GIFTS IN LOVE

These miraculous gifts were to be used to build up the church, not tear it down. If they were used correctly, much good could come. Dan Winkler, in an article on chapter 13, states the importance of love in these words:

1. "If (Love) is applied, it could revolutionize society—putting an end to divorce, spousal abuse, child abuse, neglect, and the misguided priorities that create an unhealthy reliance on child care (Eph. 5:25; Tit. 2:3-4)."
2. "If (Love) is applied, it could help us preempt the cynicism and suspicion that contribute to extremism, politics, and brotherhood schism (1 Pet. 1:22; 2:15)."
3. "If (Love) is applied, it could even help us be more attractive to the (unsaved) and more effective in our efforts to reach them (Jn. 13:34, 35; 17:20-23)."

I am sure that we all agree wholeheartedly with the above remarks. The Apostle shows **LOVE'S** importance in different ways in verses 1-3:

1. Love is more important than supreme eloquence. While great speaking ability can sway many people—it can be used for good or evil. Many have used it for evil, while others for good. Love is the governing factor if it is used for good. The Apostle Paul pointed this out also in the Ephesian Letter.

Eph. 4:14-15 _____

2. Love is more important than being able to speak by direct revelation from God. There is no question of Prophecy's importance, but it can be done with the wrong motive or wrong attitude and wind up doing more harm than good. All the gifts need to be used showing a real concern for others.

3. Love is more important than giving. Paul spoke of giving all we have to the poor or even giving our bodies to be sacrificed for the cause of Christ—if they are done without love, it does not profit. Jesus criticized the religious leaders for this very thing.

Matt. 23:23 _____

LOVE IN ACTION

Verse 4. Love causes us to live in peace with one another. We will be longsuffering with one another; kind to one another; and we will not envy one another. We will not seek harm to others, but show kindness and concern.

Verse 4. Love helps us to deal with pride. Our ego is satisfied with the greatness of being a servant (Matt. 20:26-28). We do not push ourselves or seek for the praise of men (Matt. 23:5-7).

Verse 5. Love helps to keep us in control. We are not rude to others, but courteous, kind, thoughtful, thinking and wanting the best for others.

Phil. 2:3-4 _____

Verse 6. Love helps us to see the great value of truth over error. Sin degrades, brings low, and gradually destroys a person, while truth builds up, strengthens, and is able to save our souls when obeyed.

1 Pet. 1:22 _____

Verse 7. Love helps us to build strong relationships with others. We overlook others mistakes, we want to believe the very best about others, we hope for the best outcome for others, and we show patience with others in all of this.

Jas. 1:2-4 _____

LOVE WILL OUTLIVE THE GIFTS

The gifts are temporary, but love is enduring! The purpose of the gifts was to reveal the full message of the Gospel and to confirm it as being a message from God.

Mark 16:20 _____

Heb. 2:1-4

When the last book of the New Testament was written, the message was complete and confirmed; then, the gifts would no longer be needed. The gifts were revealing God's message a little at a time, but when all had been given and confirmed the gifts would then cease. This is compared to a child that grows into a full-grown man—just so, God's Word grows from one book to 27 books.

The Apostle ends this short chapter with a comparison of Love with Faith and Hope. While both Faith and Hope are very important and necessary to Love, yet Love is superior because it will last throughout eternity, while Faith and Hope will end as we enjoy that eternal home with God.

Lesson Nine

Things Lost for Gaining Christ

(Philippians 3:1-21)

After looking briefly at the church at Corinth with all of their problems, it is a joy to turn and read about the church at Philippi. This letter is basically encouraging and motivating on to higher ground. In the midst of this most encouraging letter can be found in Chapter Three—not only motivation—but a revealing of things about the Apostle Paul. It probably would be of value to remember that this Letter and three others (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon) were written from prison in Rome and sent to them by special messengers. Unfortunately, the "Judaizers" had tried to pervert several of the churches that had been established and Paul wanted to warn the church at Philippi that they needed to be on their guard. Inspiration chose to use some very strong terms to identify these false teachers: "*dogs*," "*evil workers*," and "*mutilators*." (3:2). These teachers were emphasizing the necessity of the Gentiles to be circumcised in order to be right with God. But Christians were the "true" circumcised! The emphasis is upon spiritual circumcism and not fleshly circumcism. Christian are those who worship God in the spirit, that rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (3:3).

ZEAL COMPARED

Paul points out that if these "Judaizers" want to try to impress people with their zeal for serving God, He can do an even better job of showing His zeal.....especially before becoming a Christian. He gives his credentials:

Verse 5 _____

Verse 6 _____

But the Apostle points out that all of what he had done and been recognized for by men, he was willing to give all of that up in order to gain Christ for his life.

Verse 8 _____

What Paul had thought of as being so very important before no longer have that place of any longer. He willingly counted them as rubbish in order to become a follower of Christ. Paul said he wanted to be in Christ and have the righteousness that comes from and through Him, rather than the "righteousness" that comes by keeping the Law of Moses. Paul stated that he wanted four things in order that he may attain to the resurrection from the dead:

Verse 10 _____

Paul's willingness to give up all of those former things in his life is easy to understand when you realize what he was gaining. The zeal of the Judiazers was in their heritage and traditions that had been around for about 1500 years, and they did not want to give them up. But the Apostle points out the necessity of giving such up in order to be a Christian. But religious people today struggle with this problem. They need to look at the example of the Apostle Paul and what he was willing to give up in order to be right with God. Paul, by inspiration, is making it very clear that you cannot have Christ and hold on to past doctrinal errors!

STRIVING FOR THE PRIZE

The Apostle was striving for the prize that Jesus offered. In order to do that it was necessary to:

1. Forget past achievements (Phil. 3:13) _____

2. Reach out for those things ahead (Phil. 3:13) _____

3. Press toward the goal (Phil. 3:14) _____

4. Walk by the same rule (Phil. 3:16) _____

5. Follow the right examples (Phil. 3:17) _____

THOSE WHO WILL MISS THE PRIZE

Paul goes back again to those false teachers who are not walking the same walk that the Apostles was walking—with Jesus!

What terms does he use to identify these people?

Phil. 3:18 _____

Phil. 3:19 _____

Where does Paul say our citizenship is to be found?

Phil. 3:20 _____

When Jesus comes, what will he do with our bodies?

Phil. 3:21 _____

Our bodies are not vile in the sense of being evil, but in its limitations and mortality while here on earth. In heaven, we will not have such a body, but a new one that is more fit for our eternal reward.

1 Cor. 15:51 _____

1 John 3:2 _____

Jesus is able to carry out His promises!

Lesson Ten

The End in Sight

(2 Timothy 4:1-22)

Paul, the "Apostle to the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:9), was given the privilege of writing, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, some thirteen or fourteen books of the New Testament. The first was believed to have been written to the Thessalonian church in 52 AD, and the final letter was written to Timothy in about the year of 67-68 AD. God allowed Paul to know that his "end was in sight!" It is fitting that this last letter be sent to Timothy since he had been Paul's constant companion, friend, and helper in the missionary efforts to evangelize the world. But Paul was also deeply concerned about his leaving this world because of the many dangers that lay ahead for the Lord's church. A great deal of encouragement and admonitions are addressed to Timothy that he will be a faithful worker and unashamed of the Gospel of Christ. The Apostle ends this second letter to Timothy, and his last inspired letter to be written, with a solemn charge.

PAUL'S CHARGE IN VIEW OF HIS DEATH (VS. 1-5)

1. What makes this charge so solemn? (4:1) _____

When a person goes into court, he is impressed with the need for proper respect for the one who will be the Judge, as well as, the whole proceedings of such an important event. Some day all men will be brought into judgment before the great and august presence of the ruler of this universe—Jehovah God!

2 Cor. 5:10-11 _____

2. What was the charge given to Timothy? (4-2-5)

a) Vs. 2 _____

b) Vs. 2 _____

c) Vs. 2 _____

d) Vs. 5 _____

3. What were the reasons given for this solemn charge? (4:3-4)

a) Vs. 3 _____

b) Vs. 3 _____

c) Vs. 3 _____

d) Vs. 4 _____

e) Vs. 4 _____

The purpose of a warning is to prepare people ahead of time for what they could face. Some times the danger is on the outside and some times on the inside. The danger that Paul was warning about was from the inside of the church—the danger of people going away from Christ,

the Truth, and the church. But what could cause people to do this? He had already shown how that some were no longer preaching truth (2 Tim. 2:16-19; 3:8-9). But there was another big factor involved in this warning charge—the constant threat of persecution and death for just believing in Jesus! Paul, himself, was facing "sure" death because of being a follower of Christ. Others had already suffered much persecution and some even death that was brought on by the Roman Emperor earlier. For the next 200 plus years, persecution of Christians would continue and become stronger and stronger. Persecution often encourages people to compromise their beliefs and actions to the point where they will not be persecuted. So, the preaching that is done needs to be filled with messages that will stabilize, encourage, and re-convincing God's people of God's Truth! And, when necessary, to openly rebuke those who are turning from the Truth. It was important that Timothy serve as an example to all other preachers of the Gospel (2 Tim. 2:15).

4. Is there a difference between doing the work of an evangelist and fulfilling your ministry? (Vs. 5) _____

5. Should a preacher desire to please those who whom he is speaking? _____

PAUL STATES HIS READINESS FOR DEATH (Vs. 6-8)

There is within each of us, generally speaking, a strong desire to live. As we get older and the *"evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no delight in them';"* we tend to weaken some in the desire to live. One of the factors in facing death is the dread of the pain and agony that is often connected with it. This could be one of the "stings" of death that Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 15:55.

5. What can Paul teach us about facing death in these verses (6-8)?

a) Vs. 7 _____

b) Vs. 8 _____

c) Vs. 8 _____

6. If you had no hope of something to look forward to after death, would you be ready for death to come? _____

7. Why was the Apostle Paul ready for death? _____

8. Does every Christian have to "fight the good fight," "finish the race," and "keep the faith?" _____

9. If so, how do you know that to be true? _____

PAUL'S PERSONAL CONCERNS (Vs. 9-18)

The Holy Spirit allowed the Apostle to express personal concerns about people that he was acquainted with or had worked with. The following questions will help to point out what those concerns were?

10. Why did he want Timothy to come to Rome quickly?

- a) Vs. 9-10 _____
- b) Vs. 10 _____
- c) Vs. 10 _____
- d) Vs. 11 _____
- e) Vs. 12 _____

11. What special requests did Paul make to Timothy?

- a) Vs. 11 _____
- b) Vs. 13 _____

12. What warning was given concerning Alexander, the coppersmith? (Vs. 14-15) _____

13. What happened at Paul's last trial that he went through that was disappointing to him? (Vs. 16) _____

14. Where did Paul get the strength to preach to the Gentiles during this trial? (Vs. 17-18)

PAUL'S FINAL GREETINGS (Vs. 19-22)

When a person faces death, his words usually carry more weight—taken seriously. Paul knew that death was not far off and wanted to see and have his close friends around him if possible. Some that he would like to have had stay in Rome were leaving—which sadden him. But he wanted others to come so that he could see them before he died. Others, he wanted to send greetings to.

15. Who is Prisca and Aquila? _____

16. Who was Onesiphorus? _____

17. Who also sent greetings to Timothy? _____

18. His final words to Timothy _____

Lesson Eleven

Control of the Tongue

(James 3:1-18)

Chapter one of the book of James is a mini-review of what the rest of the book talks about. It is possible that this could have been the first inspired book, or one of the first, of the New Testament. Some date it as early as 48-50 AD. The death of James, believed to be the Lord's brother, occurred in 62 AD. It is a very practical book, logical, easy to understand, and straight to the point of what is needed by children of God. We want to pull James 1:26 into our discussion of this chapter, and look at three major points that are brought out in this very important chapter of the Bible.

DANGER OF DESTROYING ONE'S RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE

(James 1:26; 3:2-12)

The Psalmists gives us a great challenge: *"Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit."* (34:13). There is possibly no easier or quicker way to loose our influence with others than to let our tongue fly loose!

1. What does James say that such will do to his religion? (1:26) _____

But who among us can perfectly control his tongue? James observes that all of stumble in many things, but a person who does not stumble with his tongue is perfect. Such a person can literally bridle his whole body if he could do this. Who wants to step forward to claim perfection with his or her tongue? Controlling one's tongue is one of the greatest challenges that we face in life.

2. How does James illustrate the need for bridling the tongue?

- a) Vs. 3 _____
 b) Vs. 4 _____
 c) Vs. 5 _____

3. How does James describe the tongue?

- a) Vs. 6 _____
 b) Vs. 6 _____
 c) Vs. 6 _____
 d) Vs. 6 _____
 e) Vs. 7-8 _____

The tongue is small, but has great power and can be used to do great harm or great good.

Prov. 18:21 _____

The tongue can speak words that have the power to:

- a) Deceive an honest heart;
- b) Discourage the spirit of a good person;
- c) or, Destroy a reputation.

But the tongue can also have the power to:

- a) Enlighten minds with God's truth;
- b) Encourage those who are doing good;
- c) and, Enhance the reputation of a servant of God.

Eph. 4:29 _____

4. What is the origin of a tongue used for evil? (3:6) _____

5. How does James illustrate the inconsistency of good and evil coming from the same tongue? (3:8-12) _____

THE TONGUE AND TEACHING

(3:1)

To stand before others to teach or to speak is a privilege and honor. Some do it to be seen and heard of men—for the applause of men (Matt. 23:3-5), while others do it with different wrong motives (Phil. 1:15-17). Our motivation for wanting to teach is very important. The souls of mankind are at stake and there is only one message that can save that soul—God's message (Rom. 1:16; James 1:21). God does not want to discourage those who desire to teach His message, but he does want those who teach to realize fully the gravity of what they are doing.

6. How does James emphasize the gravity of teaching? (3:1) _____

It would seem, as justly so, that teachers will be judged more strictly than those who have not been teachers. Teachers will give an accounting for what he has taught to God (Gal. 1:6-9).

Matt. 18:6-7 _____

SHOWING TRUE WISDOM

(3:13-18)

What we say with the tongue comes from the heart (mind) and indicates what is on the inside (James 3:11-12; Matt. 12:34). But also our actions, our lives, and activities indicate whether we are following the Wisdom from above or the wisdom from beneath.

7. How does James describe the outcome of the wisdom that is from beneath?

- a) Vs. 14 _____

- b) Vs. 15 _____

- c) Vs. 16 _____

When a person is driven by earthly wisdom, envy and self-seeking, he will do whatever serves his personal desires and interests—no matter what it may cost others or the cause of Christ. Such a person is carnal, sensual, and causes all kinds of evil things.

8. How does James describe the outcome of the wisdom that is from above?

- a) Vs. 17 _____

James concludes that the outcome of righteous living that comes from a peaceful heart right with God will produce peace and not strife.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

What a challenge we have to allow God's wisdom not only to help control our tongue, but that we can also live and speak about this wisdom that comes from God and its great value to us all. We need to strive to reach a state of full spiritual growth so that we will not sin with our tongue. But if we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous (1 John 2:1-2).

Chapter Twelve

The Virtuous Life

(2 Peter 1:1-21)

Why live the virtuous life? What is the point? What is the value? Why not live anyway that I want to live while I can? Why not enjoy what I want to enjoy while I have this life? If there is no existence after this one, and if there is no punishment or reward based on how we live in this life—then, obviously, it would not really matter how we lived! It is because of our belief in an after-life, judgment, and punishment or reward that we must be concerned with how we live. The Apostle Peter begins his second letter with an emphasis upon God giving us all things that pertain to life and godliness through Jesus (1:3). He reminds us of the precious promises that God has given to His people through Christ (1:4). And on the basis of these things, we should live Godly lives—no longer living according to the lust of this world. But why is he writing such things to Christians? Don't they know these things? Don't they know how they ought to conduct their lives in the world? Yes, they know, but Peter knew the need of constantly reminding us of our responsibilities in this regard (1:12). In fact, by his writing these things down, they will serve as a constant reminder each time we read them (1:15).

THE CHALLENGE OF THE VIRTUOUS LIFE
(1:5-11)

Peter stated that because we have escaped the corruption that is in the world and have become partakers of the divine nature, these are the virtues that should be in our lives. We need to be diligent in being sure they are there. Define each:

1. FAITH _____
a) Heb. 11:6 _____
2. VIRTUE _____
a) Acts 10:38 _____
3. KNOWLEDGE _____
a) 2 Pet. 3:18 _____
4. SELF-CONTROL _____
a) James 1:26 _____
5. PERSEVERANCE _____
a) James 1:2-4 _____
6. GODLINESS _____
a) 1 John 4:20 _____
7. BROTHERLY KINDNESS _____
a) Rom. 12:10 _____
8. LOVE _____
a) Col. 3:14 _____

QUESTONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do we need to be diligent to add these virtues in our lives?

a) Vs. 8 _____

b) Vs. 9 _____

c) Vs. 10 _____

d) Vs. 11 _____

2. Who profits when these virtues are a definite part of our lives? _____

THE CERTAINTY OF THESE THINGS

(1:16-21)

There are times of testing of everyone's faith! When we face these times, we need to turn to the pages of Holy Writ to give greater confidence and certainty to what we believe. It is quite obvious that Peter, as well as all of the other writers of the New Testament, was concerned about false teachers that were already plaguing the church with their false teachings. We all need reminding every so often of the certainty of the things that we believe and why we believe them.

3. What evidences does Peter offer to the surety of his message being from God?

a) Vs. 16 _____

b) Vs. 17 _____

c) Vs. 18 _____

d) Vs. 19 _____

4. How does he say that prophetic Scriptures were given?

a) Vs. 20 _____

b) Vs. 21 _____

5. How does one refute the testimony of an "eye-witness?" _____

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

One's faith needs to be based on evidences that are sure and steadfast! (Heb. 11:1). If one's faith is based on wishful thinking, it will not stand the test of time or testing. A strong faith based on strong factual evidences can carry us through whatever life may bring our way.

Lesson Thirteen

The Ultimate Reward

(Revelations 22:1-20)

No studies on "Great Chapters of the Bible" would be complete without looking at the ultimate reward held out to the obedient and faithful child of God. Chapter 22 of Revelation not only ends the book of Revelation, but ends once and for all the giving of God's Word. The Apostles were to be guided into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13) and the last Apostle alive wrote the last book of God's Truth to mankind before he died. But contained in this chapter in particular is the visualization of what the whole Bible is all about—the ultimate redemption of mankind to be with God forever. Chapter 21 had already given some beautiful descriptions of the "New Jerusalem" and the "wife" of the Lamb of God (21:9-10). The description is obviously couched in physical terms which we can fully appreciate. The desirability of such a place is obvious to all who will read these words.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF GOD

(22:1-7)

1. What is significant about the river that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb? _____

2. What is significant about having the tree of life in this city? _____

3. Why will there be no more curse and no more night in this city? _____

4. What is significant about "seeing" the face of God? _____

5. Why stress that these words are faithful and true? _____

6. Who has a blessing pronounced upon them? _____

There should be no doubt about the desirability of Heaven in the hearts of mankind. Every effort should be put forth to be sure that we make it to that holy city. What a joy it will be to someday hear these welcomed words: *"Enter into the joy of your Lord."* (Matt. 25:21). An interesting side-line here is that in survey after survey, when people are asked about their belief in Heaven and Hell—overwhelmingly, people say they believe in Heaven, but to the other extreme they do not believe in Hell. It is one thing to believe that there is a Hell awaiting the unrighteous, but quite another to believe that I, personally, am going there. But how can there be a Heaven to gain if there is no Hell to miss?

**RESPECT versus WORSHIP
(22:8-11)**

John had already been rebuked for offering worship to an angel (messenger from God) in Rev. 19:10, but now he is so overwhelmed at what he has seen that he does it again to this angel. Again, he is encouraged to only worship God! This has been God's will from the beginning. But when He gave the Law of Moses, He emphasized that no images of any kind were to be worshipped in His place (Exo. 20:3-5). Jesus repeated this emphasis in His rebuke of Satan (Matt. 4:10). Respect certainly should be shown to an Angel from God, but not worship! Men still today have their false gods that they worship instead of the True and Living God of Heaven:

1. **Hedonism—the worship of pleasure.**
2. **Materialism—the worship of mammon.**
3. **Paternalism—the worship of parents or family.**
4. **Intellectualism—the worship of man's knowledge.**
5. **Paganism—the worship of images.**
6. **Satanism—the worship of Satan.**

If we become like the god that we worship (Ps. 115:8), it would seem to be important to examine to see who our god is.

HONORING JESUS

The ending of this chapter and of the inspired Bible, chooses to give great honor to the One that has made all of the blessings offered to mankind—JESUS!

1. How is He honored?

- a) Vs. 12 _____
- b) Vs. 13 _____
- c) Vs. 14 _____
- d) Vs. 16 _____
- e) Vs. 17 _____

2. Who can have a right to the tree of life and to the holy city?

- a) Vs. 12 _____
- b) Vs. 14 _____
- c) Vs. 17 _____

3. What strong warning is giving concerning this book? (vs. 18-19) _____
