

*How to be a
Godly
Man or Woman*

12 Lessons

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2009

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Lesson One

"Job: The Ideal Man"

INTRODUCTION

- 1) Living righteously is important because:
 - a) It has the promise of life (Prov. 12:28).
 - b) It means security (Prov. 13:6).
 - c) It brings peace (Isa. 32:17).
 - d) It is the only way to enter the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5:20).
- 2) We need to understand whom God says is righteous, or is walking in the way of righteousness in order to have the benefits of such.
 - a) Through obedience to the gospel, we become servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18)
 - b) As a servant, we live as God decrees.
 - c) We must avoid trying to substitute our own ways for God's ways (Rom. 10:1-3).
- 3) Job becomes a good example of one who was righteous before God.

DISCUSSION

I. THE REWARDS OF LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY

A. His home conditions were very pleasant (Job 29:1-6)

- 1) God had greatly preserved him.
- 2) God's light had been shed down upon him in great blessings.
 - a) Constant contact with God through worship and service.
 - b) Whatever he put his hand to—it prospered.
- 3) He attributes these all to God.
- 4) Note especially the phrase: ***"When my children were about me..."***
 - a) No greater blessing to a man (after the fellowship with God).....
 - b) Than, a home life filled with Joy, pleasant Memories, and Pleasures to the soul.
 - c) Than, to have a loyal mate with which to share life.
 - d) Than, to have loving and obedient children with which to share all you have and are.

B. He was greatly respected in the community in which he lived also (Job 29:7-11).

- 1) Background:
 - a) Job was evidently father of a large family.
 - b) He had much possessions.
 - c) He served not only as head, but as chief magistrate in his clan.
- 2) He was highly respected by the young.
 - a) They were very courteous toward him.
 - b) They were conscious of his greatness and retired into the background in his presence.
- 3) Even older men showed courteous respect to him.
 - a) Dignity shown to one of high esteem or position.
 - b) They stood as he entered.

- 4) Well-to-do showed respect also.
 - a) Silence shows respect.
 - b) They would stop their talking in his presence.
- 5) General response of all (verse 11).
- 6) Job had a sense of usefulness and respect that all men seek.

II. REASONS FOR THEIR HIGH ESTEEM....JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A. He delivered the poor and needy (verses 12-13).

- 1) He heard the poor man cry for help when oppressed by his neighbor.
- 2) He listened attentively to the orphan who was in distress.
- 3) He heard the broken-hearted widow in her dire distress.
- 4) His ear was not turned even away from the outcast when cold, naked, and hungry.
- 5) He had:
 - a) An ear for every cry of injustice and need.
 - b) A heart open to every sorrow.
 - c) A hand to reach out to the needy.
- 6) His compassion was poured out to the defenseless and poor.
- 7) In all of these matters, he was a good and just man.
- 8) No wonder, the people esteemed him so highly.

B. No effort was too great to see justice done (verses 14-17).

- 1) He took pains to understand their complaint.
- 2) If not satisfied, he persisted until wrongs had been made right.
- 3) He was thorough, and therefore successful.
 - a) In delivering the poor, fatherless, widow.....
 - b) And helping the mistreated who cried to him.
- 4) All knew he stood for justice and fairness!
 - a) Whether a man was rich or poor, all knew where he stood.
- 5) So just had been his decisions....He had gained the good opinion and high respect of all.

CONCLUSION

- 1) Jas. 1:27
- 2) Job's example of righteousness shall not have been recorded in vain.
 - a) Surely we can take courage from such a man.
 - b) Such a life deserves to be placed in a sacred place to be a strong motivation to us all.
- 3) What about your life or mine:
 - a) Have we become a servant of righteousness through obedience?
 - b) Are we continuing to walk in God's way of righteousness day by day?

Questions for Discussion

1. How would you define righteousness?

2. What did God say about Job that impresses you?

3. What are some blessings of having a home and children?

4. What causes people to respect a man like Job?

5. How did Job show his righteousness?

6. Was Job a Jew and under the Law of Moses?

7. Why will the righteous go to Heaven?

8. Was Job a perfect man?

9. Did Job say that he had done no wrong to be punished like he had been?

Lesson Two

"Noah: The One Righteous Man"

INTRODUCTION

1. At one time in the history of the world:
 - a) The wickedness of man had become great.
 - b) His evilness & violence filled the earth.
 - c) His thoughts were only evil continually. (Gen. 6:5-7, 11-13)
2. God's reaction:
 - a) He was greatly grieved by His sinful creatures.
 - b) He had feelings of deep regret for having created man.
 - c) He made a decision to destroy man from the earth.
3. But in the midst of this sin-filled earth was a Righteous man, Noah!
 - a) He was the 10th generation from Adam.
 - Born approximately 126 years after Adam's death.
 - A contemporary of Enoch for approximately 84 years.
 - The son of Lamech.
 - Father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
 - b) He is described as:
 - Just, Perfect in his generation, and walked with God (Gen. 6:9)
 - Righteous. (Gen. 7:1)
 - Ezek. 14: 12-15, 17
4. God's Decision:
 - a) He chose Noah to save man & beast from extinction.
 - b) To save Noah and his family—and certain animals.
 - c) The rest to be wiped off the face of the earth.
5. The Hebrew writer mentions Noah in Heb. 11:7.
 - a) It is in a long list of great men & women of faith.
 - b) This verse says much for us to think about.
 - c) Especially Noah's great obedience.

DISCUSSION

I. HE TELLS US THAT OBEDIENCE COMES OUT OF FAITH.

A. "Noah being warned of God"

- 1) God warned Noah of the impending destruction.
- 2) The basis of Noah's faith was NOT:
 - a) On something from his own mind.
 - b) Nor a leap in the dark with no reason or evidence to go on.
- 3) But, it was based on God's Reliable Word!
- 4) God said:
 - a) Gen. 6:13—***"The end of all flesh is come before me....I will destroy them from the earth."***

b) Gen. 6:17—***“I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”***

c) And Noah believed God.

B. “being warned of things not seen as yet.”

1) God said He would do something never seen before.

a) Noah had no such experience to fortify his faith.

b) In fact, his lack of such would dictate against believing such.

2) If Noah believed, he would have to accept it because God said so.

a) Heb. 11:1—***“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”***

b) Faith is the basis of receiving our Hope.

c) Basis of our faith—the word of God.

d) Rom. 10:17

C. “moved with godly fear”

1) When one believes God, he has to act!

2) Noah was moved to act out of Awe, Reverence, and even terror of what God said He would do.

3) He respected the Word of God and acted upon it as directed.

D. “Prepared an ark”

1) Noah got busy carrying out God’s command to build an ark.

a) God gave instructions on how the Ark was to be built.

b) Gen. 6:22—***“Thus Noah did according to all that God commanded him, so he did.”***

2) Noah started on a gigantic undertaking.

a) A boat—525 feet long----87 feet wide----52 feet high.

b) What an undertaking for a handful of people.

3) Noah’s work was of long duration.

a) Take a long time to gather all the materials needed.

b) Possibly 120 years.

c) His faith did not waver.

4) Noah’s work would involve great expense.

a) Just imagine the great cost of such.

b) Yet....Noah willingly paid the price.

5) Noah’s faith was seen in action!

6) James 2:18—***“Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”***

II. OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSINGS.

A. “To the saving of his house.”

1) His obedient faith saved him & his family.

2) All others perished.

3) 1 Pet. 3:20—***“...wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”***

4) Noah was already righteous before the flood.

5) But his continued faithfulness saved him & his family.

B. “became heir of righteousness which is according to faith.”

- 1) Man’s righteousness comes from a faith that conforms to God’s righteousness.
- 2) Not by a dead faith.

III. OBEDIENCE CONDEMNS THE DISOBEDIENT.

A. “By which he condemned the world”

- 1) Noah believed God and told others—he warned them.
- 2) Noah obeyed God—others did not.
- 3) His obedient faith condemned the world’s disbelief.

B. 2 Pet. 2:4-9

CONCLUSION

1. God announced the coming destruction on the world in Noah’s day.
2. He has also announced the destruction of this present heavens & earth.
3. Will we be like Noah:
 - a) Be moved by godly fear to believe the Word of God....
 - b) And act upon it by obeying God.
4. Or, will we be like the wicked people in Noah’s day?
 - a) Continue with life as usual....
 - b) Ignoring the warnings...
 - c) Refusing to believe and obey the Lord?
5. What kind of "character" are we building within us?

Questions for Discussion

- 1. How widespread was evil in Noah's Day?**

- 2. How did God feel about His creatures' wickedness?**

- 3. Was Noah able to talk directly to Adam and Eve?**
 - a) If yes—then what should they have told Noah?**

 - b) If no—then how would he know that God would punish man's wickedness?**

- 4. What is meant by the expression: "Noah was perfect in his generation?"**

- 5. Did God appear in some form for Noah to see Him?**

6. Had man witnessed a world-wide flood, or any kind of a flood?

7. What does it mean—*"things not seen as yet?"*

8. Who all would be involved in the building of the Ark?

9. What would be the expense involved in building the Ark?

10. How large was the Ark?

11. How would you describe Noah's character?

Lesson Three

"Abraham: Spiritual Leadership"

INTRODUCTION

1. QUESTIONS:
 - a) Why are families having so many problems today?
 - b) What are some underlying reasons for these problems?
 - c) What makes a good father in your sight?
 - d) What motivates a man to be a good father?
 - e) Why are fathers important to the family?
2. These and other questions need to be asked and answer from the Word of God.
3. Recent surveys are emphasizing the importance of the father in the home.
 - a) *"The personality and background of the husband, not the wife, were the important factors in the success of a marriage."*
 - b) *"Studies of delinquency repeatedly indicate that fathers are more influential than mothers in the development of delinquent behavior in their children."*
 - c) *"If the father attends church regularly, the children will be more likely to attend regularly—regardless of the mother's attendance record."*
 - d) *"Dad is destiny. More than virtually any other factor, a biological father's presence in the family will determine a child's success and happiness."*
4. We often emphasize the importance of mothers in the home, but fail to emphasize strongly enough the importance of fathers as well.
5. God gave Abraham a great compliment when He said:
"I know he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment...." (Gen. 18:16-22)
 - a) This compliment was in regards to his spiritual leadership of his family.
 - b) That he will teach, instruct, train his children in the Lord's way.
6. This lesson—See the Value of Spiritual Leadership in the Home!

DISCUSSION

I. SHOWN BY PROPER ATTITUDES!

A. Abraham's attitudes:

- 1) Towards God—Fear, Respect, Faith, Submissive.
- 2) Towards himself—Humility before God & others.
- 3) Towards others—Concern & care (Lot illustrates)

B. N.T. qualifications for spiritual leadership in church:

- 1) 1 Tim. 3:2—Temperate (patient), Hospitable to others
- 2) 1 Tim. 3:3—Not a brawler, not violent, not greedy for money, not quarrelsome.
- 3) 1 Tim. 3:6—Not prideful
- 4) Tit. 1:7—Not self-willed, not quick-tempered
- 5) Tit. 1:9—A lover of what is good, sober-minded, self-controlled

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) He should be the spiritual leader of the family.
- 2) His attitudes toward God, himself, and others should be correct.

- 3) To be a true spiritual leader—he must cleanse his heart of the wrong attitudes that undermine that leadership.
- 4) *“To lead without loving can be cruel, and to love without leading is a ‘cop out.’”*
- 5) A spiritual leader in the home should feel the weight of that responsibility.

II. SHOWN BY SETTING THE PROPER EXAMPLES IN HIS LIFE!

A. Abraham’s example:

- 1) He had proven himself to God in this regard.
- 2) God complimented his life (his example)
- 3) He was an example in his **faith, righteousness, integrity, devotion to God, and giving security to his family.**
- 4) What an impact Abraham’s faith must have had on Isaac when he was ready to offer him as a sacrifice unto God!

B. Needed examples of Spiritual Leaders in the church:

- 1) 1 Pet. 5:3—(Elders) *“nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock...”*
- 2) 1 Tim. 4:12—(Timothy) *“be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*
- 3) 1 Tim. 3:7—*“must have a good testimony among those who are outside....”*
- 4) Tit. 1:6—*“Blameless...”*
- 5) One who practices what he teaches.

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) A father cannot go wrong being a proper example to his family.
- 2) He should be a role model for his children.
- 3) To be a proper example requires:
 - a) Knowing who he is & where he is going (first & foremost).
 - b) To have definite goals that are considered important for all his family.
 - c) Instability in the home is directly related to the instability of the father.
- 4) The way a son treats his mother or sisters is learned from observing the example of the father.
- 5) Vital questions:
 - a) How courteous am I to my family?
 - b) What do I convey by my tone of voice?
 - c) Do I use crude language before others?
 - d) Do I talk disparagingly of others before your family?
 - e) Do I want my children to be like I am?
 - f) Do I lead my children or preach at them?
- 6) What an impact a good example can have!

III. SHOWN BY RULING WELL.

A. Abraham’s example:

- 1) *“I know he will command his children & household....”*
- 2) He certainly succeeded well in ruling his family.
- 3) Isaac followed in the footsteps of his father.

B. Qualifications of Spiritual Leaders in church:

- 1) 1 Tim. 3:4—**“One who rules his own house well...”**
 - a) He has his children in submission with all reverence.
- 2) Tit. 1:6—**“Having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.”**
- 3) Neither the church, nor the home, needs dictators like Diotrephes. (3 John 9-10)

C. Application to Fathers:

- 1) They need to be Spiritual Leaders in the home.
- 2) They need to rule out of love, consideration, and concern for the well-being of his family.
- 3) Poem—**Why did God Make Fathers?**
*God knew that children all would need someone secure and strong
 To shelter and protect them, and to teach them right from wrong....
 Someone to take pride in, and look up to as a guide,
 Someone they could count on, and in whom they could confide....
 He knew as children grew up, they'd need the reassurance of someone
 With faith and trust in them,
 Who would always give them love; and that is why God made fathers.*
- 4) The father adds his part to the home to make it a place of:
 - a) Love, Joy, and Security.....
 - b) Not a place of Fear, Bruises, and Nightmares.
- 5) **“The best thing fathers can do for their children is to love their mother.”**
- 6) It emphasizes that all is right—all is well!

IV. SHOWN BY PROPER TRAINING & DISCIPLINE!**A. Abraham's training & discipline:**

- 1) God knew that he would do this work well.
- 2) He would teach and train his children in the way of the Lord.
- 3) Eli (High Priest in the time of Samuel) failed. (1 Sam. 3:13-14)

B. Qualifications of Spiritual Leaders in church:

- 1) Tit. 1:9-11 (Whole households can be led astray without proper spiritual leaders).
- 2) 1 Tim. 3:2—**“Able to teach.”**

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) Fathers must be involved deeply in training & discipline.
- 2) Eph. 6:4—**“bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”**
- 3) The book of Proverbs is full of this emphasis on the importance of training & discipline of children.
- 4) Spiritual Leadership in the home is a must!

CONCLUSION

1. Such a man will be honored by his family & friends.
2. When we appoint elders & deacons—we are giving recognition to fathers and the job they are doing or have done.
3. Are you a spiritual leader in your home?

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is a father important in the family?

2. Why did God say about Abraham in regards to his being a father?

4. What was Abraham's attitude towards God, others, and himself?

5. What are some vital questions a Father should ask himself?

6. What is the best thing fathers can do for their children?

Lesson Four

"Joshua: The Optimist"

We first meet up with Joshua in Scripture in Exodus 17:8 that was shortly after the exodus from Egypt by the Israelites. In Numbers 13:8, he is referred to as "Hoshea, the son of Nun." In other places it is "Joshua." However, there are various spellings for his name, such as: "Jehoshua" or "Jeshua" which means "Jehovah saves or delivers" (Num. 13:16). The New Testament person with the equivalent name is of course, Jesus—which means savior. The wilderness wanderings lasted for forty years and Joshua lived during this time and afterwards also. Joshua began to be known as a prominent person as he led the battle against Amalek. He was also one of the two spies that brought back a good report for taking the land of Canaan. As a result, he was allowed (along with Caleb) to go into the promise land, while the rest of that generation died in the wilderness. He succeeded Moses upon his death and became the one to lead Israel in the conquering of the land of Canaan and the settling of the land. He died at the age of 110 years old (Josh. 24:29). His life can be looked at from various standpoints, as follows:

JOSHUA: THE SLAVE. He was born during the weary years of bondage of his people in Egypt. He probably was familiar with the whip across his back. He had heard and knew of the deep signs for freedom from among his people. He had also seen what idolatry had done to the people as well. These were some of his years of preparation to succeed Moses as the leader of God's chosen nation.

JOSHUA: THE SOLDIER. He was successful in his first leadership of his people against the Amalekites. And his military strategy in conquering the land of Canaan has been highly praised. He had a commission from God to lead the people into Canaan and conquer and settle it—which he did (Deut. 1:38). The people seem to have respected Joshua and followed his leadership (Joshua 1:16).

JOSHUA: THE SPY. The fact that he was chosen as one of the twelve spies is significant (Num. 13:1-16). It was at this time that Moses changed his name from "Hoshea" to "Joshua." He and Caleb brought back a good report—going against the negative report of the other ten spies. His pleas before the people seemed to have fallen on deaf ears at that time. He was blessed to survive the 40 years wandering and lived to go into the promised land.

JOSHUA: THE STATESMAN. Under his leadership, Israel conquered and settled the land of Canaan. After dividing the land up according to their inheritance, he set about to set up the "Tabernacle," appoint the cities of refuge, and arranged the Levitical order and service at the Tabernacle. All was done with thoroughness as he had done as a soldier.

JOSHUA: THE SERVANT. Before he succeeded Moses in the leadership of the people, he was a close companion and helper to Moses. He showed respect for Moses' leadership—backing him all the way (Num. 11:27-29). He seemed to have been willing to serve in anyway to help God's cause and His people.

JOSHUA: THE SAVIOR. His name signified that Jehovah was Savior. He truly believed in and relied upon God. As a result, he did save his people by willingly serving God's plan and purpose. He helped to take away Israel's reproach of the 40 years of wandering. He then led his people into Canaan—the land that God had promised them some 400 years earlier as a people. He was probably about 85 years old when he was given leadership over the nation of Israel. He was God's appointed successor to Moses (Num. 27:18-23).

JOSHUA; THE CHILD OF GOD. We know of no blot on the character of Joshua. His nearest fault was letting the Gibeonites deceive him into a treaty. He is best known for his challenge to God's people in his last address to them (Josh. 24:14-15). From all indications, he was a righteous person. He was one in whom is the Spirit (Num. 27:18). He was filled with the spirit of wisdom (Deut. 34:9). He was one who followed the Lord fully (Num. 32:12). He was one who had the continual presence of God in his life (Josh. 1:5; 6:27). He was deeply mourned at his death and the people continued to serve God all the days of Joshua and the elders that outlived Joshua (Josh. 24:3).

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM JOSHUA

1. He was a good man behind the scenes before he became a good leader of people.
2. His faith in God's promise made him one of the most optimistic persons in the Old Testament.
3. His great courage came from his trust in God.
4. He strove to live up to his name that was given him by Moses.

HOMEWORK

1. What two things is Joshua best known for?
2. How did he become the successor to Moses?
3. What were some factors that made Joshua a good leader?
4. What was the relationship of Joshua with Moses at first? (Exo. 24:13)

Lesson Five

"David: The Measuring Stick for Kings"

The appointing of Saul king over Israel served God's purposes, but he was not to be the pattern for succeeding kings to follow. God wanted another man for that position—being the "measuring stick" for all succeeding kings. Solomon succeeded David and God told him that he needed to walk in the ways of his father, David, who was obedient to God (1 Kings 3:14). The kings that followed in Israel were compared to David (1 Kings 11:6; 2 Kings 14:3), etc. While David was certainly not a perfect man, he was identified by God as ***"a man after God's own heart."*** (1 Samuel 13:14; 1 Kings 15:5). David's life was full and very eventful, but because of his grievous sin with Bathsheba, he had a great deal of problems in his family relationships—the sword did not depart from his house! David served in the following ways:

- 1) As a courageous fighter and soldier (1 Sam. 17:40; 2 Sam. 5:7).
- 2) As a musician (playing to soothe Saul's evil spirit) (1 Sam. 16:16-23).
- 3) As a Poet (he was a writer of most of the Psalms).
- 4) As a Prophet of God (foretelling of the coming of the Messiah).
- 5) As a king over God's people.
- 6) As a type of Christ to sit on "David's throne."

DAVID'S LIFE

1. David's life as a young man. (1 Samuel 16:1-17:58). He was a younger son of Jesse and helped to see after the sheep of his father. God had Samuel the Prophet to anoint David as being the next king to follow King Saul. He was chosen to be a musician in the court of King Saul to help soothe the king's evil spirit. He also became Saul's armor bearer. His early claim came with his slaying of the giant, Goliath.

2. David's life in the Court of King Saul. (1 Sam. 18:1-20:42). Jonathan and David early became very close friends. Because of David's conduct and popularity, he was placed over the men of war and was very successful. His popularity led to Saul's envy and jealousy and his efforts to slay David. Jonathan protected David until Saul made it clear that David had to die. Jonathan sent David away with his blessing.

3. David's life on the Run from King Saul. (1 Sam. 21:1-31:13). Samuel's death occurs shortly after David fled for his life. He had a band of men who stayed with him and helped to protect the borders of Israel from intruders. David had an incident with Nabal and Abigail. David spares Saul's life more than once and finally flees to live among the Philistines. Saul and Jonathan dies in battle with the Philistines.

4. David's life as King over Judah and later over all Israel. (2 Sam. 1:1-5:25). After Saul's death David was made king over only Judah at first, where he reigned about seven years. Then, he became king over all Israel and reign for some thirty-three years.

5. David's Later Years as King. (2 Sam. 6:1-1 Kings 2:12). The Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem. David reveals his plans to build God's Temple, but was not allowed by God. His triumphs in battle are listed and the expansion of his kingdom is described. The affair with Bathsheba is recorded that became a shame in his life, but he was restored again to God's favor. The rebellion of Absalom, his son, is recorded and how his rebellion was dealt with. David was again restored as king over Israel. The story of David ends with the appointing of his successor as king—his son, Solomon.

A GREAT LESSON FROM DAVID

While David has served as a great lesson for youth in his great faith in God that made it possible to slay the giant, Goliath; yet, he has a greater lesson (if possible) for adults in how to deal with sin in one's life. While the army was out in the field of battle, David was at home and was walking on the roof top of his house when he saw a beautiful woman bathing. The following outline will serve as a guide to this great lesson from David.

1. **David in the clutches of Satan.**
 - a) **The enticement (2 Sam. 11:2)**
 - b) **The yielding to lust (Jas. 1:12)**
 - c) **The sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:3-4; Exo. 10:14, 17).**
 - d) **The reaping (2 Sam. 11:5-10).**
2. **God faces David with his sins.**
 - a) **His displeasure with David (2 Sam. 11:11-25).**
 - b) **God sends the Prophet Nathan to face David with his sins (2 Sam. 12:1-12).**
3. **David's reaction to the accusation. (Psalm 32, 51).**
 - a) ***"I have sinned against the Lord."* (Why men do not confess their sins).**
 - b) **David Speaks of the burden of his sin.**
 - **Ps. 51:3; 32:3-4**
 - **What happens when men keep silent about their sins.**
 - c) **David saw the need to acknowledge and confess his sins.**
 - **Prov. 28:13**
 - **Ps. 51:3, 4**
 - d) **David's confession.**
 - **Ps. 51:1-12**
 - **His confession recognized what God wanted (Ps. 51:17; 32:10)**
 - e) **The blessedness of forgiveness (Ps. 32:1-2).**
 - f) **The outcome (Ps. 51:13-14; 32:8-9).**

One of the great values of the Bible's recording of the lives of men and women of the past is that it gives both the good and the bad. However, it shows that even the great men and women of God had some weaknesses that they had to deal with at some time in their lives. No one is perfect—all have sinned and fallen short of being like God! We need to be thankful that God has done this with such a good man as David seems to have been. That way, we can all identify with him and be encouraged by his efforts.

HOMEWORK

- 1. What are some things that David is best known for?**
- 2. How did David use his musical skills?**
- 3. What happened to David after he slew Goliath?**
- 4. Why did David have to flee from Saul?**
- 5. What did Saul finally conclude about his pursuing of David?**
- 6. Where did David finally go to get away from Saul?**
- 7. When did Jerusalem become the capital?**
- 8. What was the terrible incident about the Ark of the Covenant?**
- 9. How did God punish David and Bathsheba?**
- 10. What kind of problems did David have with his children?**

Lesson Six

"Joseph: The Dreamer and Forgiver"

The story of Joseph covers some 20 chapters (from his birth to his death) and is one of the better known stories of the Bible. It has been preserved by God for the benefit of His people who believe in Him (both Old and New Testament people) (Romans 15:4). His story has the ability to hold our attention because of so many unusual things that happened in his life.

Joseph was truly a remarkable man—especially for his age and surroundings. He is known for his ability to deal with unusual problems in his life and come out ahead at the end. He rose from being a slave in Potiphar's house to be the caretaker of all that Potiphar owned. He also rose from prison to be next to the Pharaoh in power in Egypt. He never seemed to give up, but made the best of his situation. His life can easily be divided into four sections—as follows:

I - HIS EARLY YEARS

(Genesis 30:24; 35:24; 37:1-24)

His parents were Jacob and Rachel (35:24; 35:24). He was born (along with Benjamin) in Jacob's older years and were special to his parents. In fact, they may have been part of the reason for the resentment of his older brothers. Two incidents are given that help to cause the problem: (a) Being given a coat of many colors; and (2) the dreams that he had. His brothers came to despise him (37:5-11). They plotted against him to put him to death (37:12-20).

2 - SLAVERY AND IMPRISONMENT

(Genesis 37:25-40:23)

Instead of slaying him, the brothers placed him in a pit and later sold him to some traveling merchants going into Egypt. They in turn sold him to Potiphar, who was the captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard (37:25-36). Because of God's blessing and his diligence as a slave, he rose to a prominent position over Potiphar's house (39:1-6). Joseph was constantly being tempted by Potiphar's wife to have sexual relations with her. Finally on one occasion, the temptation was so strong that he had to flee. Being rejected, she falsely accused Joseph—causing him to be put in the jail where the king's prisoners were confined (39:7-20). Joseph found favor with the chief jailer by God's blessings and was placed over all the prisoners. His help to two of the king's prisoners enabled him to make a request of them. After he had interpreted the two men's dreams, he only requested that they remember him to the authorities (40:14-15). But he was forgotten for a period of time. But God had a plan and it was just a matter of time when that plan would unfold to help save Joseph from his false imprisonment.

3 - JOSEPH'S ELEVATION

(Genesis 41:1-57)

God gave the king of Egypt (Pharaoh) two dreams—one was about fat and lean cows and the other about fat and lean ears of corn (41:1-8). His dreams bothered him constantly and he wanted someone that could "interpret" or give an understanding of his dreams. It was at this time that one of the men Joseph had helped in jail remembered that he had interpreted the dreams of the two men and they came to pass just like he had said. So, he told the king about Joseph (41:9-13). He interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh satisfactorily and was greatly blessed—being put in charge of all the land under the king. (41:38-44). He is given the daughter of the high priest to be his wife and has two children by her (41:45-57). He prospers and is beloved in Egypt.

4 - HIS REUNION WITH FAMILY

(Genesis 42:1-50:26)

Just as Joseph had foretold there were seven years of plenty and then followed by seven years of famine. Joseph had supervised the storing of grain in large storehouses and as a result Egypt had grain to sell to peoples from other lands as well as their own people. It was when the famine began to weigh heavily upon the family of Jacob that he sent his sons to Egypt to secure grain (42:1-5). As Joseph observed the people as they came for purchasing grain, he noticed his ten brothers and realized that they did not recognize him (42:6-8). He remembered his dreams that his brothers had laughed off and could see them coming to pass just as he had dreamed them. He tested his brothers on this occasion, but sold them food. He kept Simeon as a prisoner until they returned with Benjamin. Upon their return with Benjamin, he was about to keep Benjamin and send the other nine brothers back home—but they were afraid that it would kill their father. They pled for Benjamin's release—and Judah asked to be kept in his place. (42:9-43:15). It was too much for Joseph, he broke down and wept—and afterwards revealed himself to his brothers. There was much gladness and rejoicing, and fears relieved by Joseph promising not to take vengeance upon them (43:16-45:28). He later sends the brothers back to bring his father and the rest of the people to Egypt (46:1-47:31). Both Jacob and Joseph died in Egypt (48:1-50:21). And Joseph made his brothers promise to take his bones back to Canaan because he was sure God would carry out his promise to give the land to Israel (50:22-26).

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

1. Deal with circumstances in life (good or bad) with faith in God. He strongly illustrated his faith in God. (Heb. 11:22)
2. One way to deal with temptation is to flee from it.
3. Forgiveness is better than being filled with hatred and enmity against others.
4. Love for an elderly father is illustrated in the lives of all of Jacob's children (finally).
5. Joseph's moral conduct, goodness, purity of life, self-control, devotion to duty, and wisdom makes him one of the best persons to emulate in the Old Testament.
6. Joseph was a model prisoner.
7. He gave God the glory for his interpretation of the dreams.
8. Joseph illustrates the providential care of God in His peoples' lives.

9. Joseph seems to have had a good attitude whether in bad circumstances or good.
10. What good work is God preparing us to do?

HOMEWORK

- 1. Why would God have had so much written about Joseph in the Old Testament?**
- 2. List some of the problems in life that Joseph had to deal with.**
- 3. What was it about the one dream of Joseph that caused his brothers to resent him so?**
- 4. What kind of an attitude would you have if your family sold you into slavery?**
- 5. Are all dreams that we have given to us by God for a purpose?**
- 6. How well could you handle being exalted to a high position?**
- 7. Was it right for Joseph to marry the High Priest's daughter?**
- 8. Why wouldn't Joseph's brothers have recognized him?**
- 9. How important is family to you?**
- 10. Why did Joseph want his body buried back in Canaan?**

Lesson Seven

"Motherhood at its best"

(Matt. 15:21-28)

INTRODUCTION

1. Society has set aside a special day to give honor to mothers.
 - a) It is not only fitting to do so on such a day—but also every day!
 - b) Because God decreed such long before man did—to honor mothers.
 - c) Exo. 20:12—***"Honor your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives thee."***
 - d) The same injunction is repeated in the New Testament—Eph. 6:1-3!
 - e) Those who respect God & His Word will honor their mothers!
2. In this lesson:
 - a) We want to look at a special and unusual story about a mother & daughter.
 - b) The mother was greatly concerned about her daughter who was ill.
 - c) We want to see how Jesus brought out a most beautiful expression of motherhood at its best!

DISCUSSION**I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WOMAN:*****A. She was a Canaanite woman.***

- 1) Mark said she was a Greek (or Gentile). (Mk. 7:24)
- 2) More specifically, she was a Syrophenician by nationality.

B. What was significant about this?

- 1) She was not a Jew, nor a Jewish proselyte.
- 2) Yet, she had characteristics of LOVE & FAITH that are greatly to be praised.

C. She lived along the coasts (border) between Galilee & Tyre & Sidon.

- 1) We do not know that Jesus actually went into the Gentile settlements.
- 2) He came close to the borders where they lived.
- 3) The woman ***"came out of the same coast"***—possibly indicating she left her village to go into a more Jewish village.

II. THE WOMAN'S GREAT EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY, LOVE, & FAITH***A. She cried to Jesus for mercy!***

- 1) Living this close to the Jewish settlements:
 - a) She was probably aware of the Jewish hope of a Messiah;
 - b) That He would be a Son of David.....
 - c) Mark 3:8—***"(great multitudes) followed from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard what great things He did, came unto Him."***
 - d) She obviously had had some exposure to what Jesus was doing.
- 2) Her cry: ***"Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a demon."***
 - a) She was asking for mercy upon herself!
 - b) Reason—She was hurting because her daughter was hurting.

- c) Love deeply identifies with its object!
- 3) Condition of her daughter:
 - a) Mark 7:25—"**Had an unclean spirit**"
 - b) Matt. 15:22—"**grievously vexed with a demon.**"
 - c) She wanted Jesus to cast the evil spirit (Demon) out of her daughter.
 - d) Demon-possession, as described in the Gospels, was a very pitiful sight.
 - e) This terrible condition of her daughter helped her to:
 - Overcome the PREJUDICE of her neighbors;
 - Overcome the INSULTS of the Jewish people;
 - Overcome the PRIDE of her heart.

B. The response of Jesus and His Apostles.

- 1) Jesus ignored her—said nothing—silent.
 - a) It isn't very pleasant to be ignored!
 - b) It hurts our pride—we are SOMEBODY!
 - c) Such can be humiliating.
 - d) But Jesus had a purpose—to bring out her great Faith & Perseverance.
- 2) The Apostles were "put out" with her.
 - a) They had come to this area for privacy—but she was messing it up.
 - b) The Apostles wanted Jesus to send her away.
 - Either by totally refusing her;
 - Or, by healing her daughter and get rid of her.
- 3) Jesus' reply to the Apostles (which the woman probably heard):
 - a) "**I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"
 - b) Jesus did not come to work among the Gentiles—but Jews.
 - c) Gentiles were not in Jesus' plans at this time.
 - d) What a blow—enough to send most people away!

C. But not this woman!

- 1) She cries again for help: "**Lord, help me.**"
 - a) She was persistent.
 - b) She shamelessly kept asking for help.
 - c) She even fell at his feet to pay homage to him—appealing to His compassion.
- 2) Jesus talks to her, now!
 - a) But, oh how different from what she wanted to hear!
 - b) "**It is not fitting to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.**"
 - The Jews were the children of God.
 - The Gentiles were the outcasts—the dogs.
 - c) This was a very humiliating statement.
 - d) And yet, it did not stop this woman!
 - Just how much more can this woman take?
 - Just how great was her love for her daughter?
- 3) Her response was remarkable!
 - a) That which could have been taken as a great insult—she turned around.
 - b) Yes, Lord:
 - I know you don't take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs;
 - That would not be fitting!

- But, even the dogs are allowed to eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table;
- That takes nothing away from the children!
- c) Whatever scraps Jesus had left—she would accept!
- d) Anything to help her daughter!

D. Her great reward!

- 1) Jesus remarked about how great her faith was!
 - a) She had caught a true glimpse of her sinful life in God's eyes.
 - b) She, as well as we all, are all unworthy in God's sight.
 - c) Matt. 18:4—"**Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**"
- 2) Was it worth the great humiliation she went through?
 - a) Yes! It was all worth it!
 - b) She had been victorious!
 - c) She had found the mercy & blessings of God for her life!
- 3) Jesus said: "**Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.**"
- 4) The Demon was cast out—without Jesus having to be there.
- 5) What great HUMILITY, LOVE, FAITH!

III. LESSONS:

A. Why shouldn't mothers be honored who would do what this woman did?

- 1) Illustration:
 - a) A mother wanted to spend Saturday afternoon downtown, shopping.
 - b) Her husband reluctantly agreed to give up his golf and spend the afternoon with the children.
 - c) Upon the mother's return, the husband handed her the following report:
 - Dried tears—9 times.
 - Tied shoes—13 times.
 - Toy balloons purchased—3 per child.
 - Average life of balloon—13 seconds.
 - Cautioned children not to cross street—21 times.
 - Children crossed street—21 times.
 - Number of Saturdays I will do this again—0 times.
- 2) No stronger human love known than the love of a mother for her child.
- 3) No segment of our society that is more fitting to be honored.

B. What an example for daughters to emulate!

- 1) To witness such love & devotion is worthy of emulation.
- 2) To see the willingness to shamelessly humble one's self to gain help for her child is a great challenge for all.
- 3) TV interview of 1983 "Mother of the Year."
 - a) Asked, "What do you think is God's greatest gift to women?"
 - "The ability to bear a child."
 - b) Asked, "What do you think is your greatest responsibility?"
 - "The rearing of that child."
- 4) University of Michigan made a survey among 11-18 yr. old girls.
 - a) Asked, "What would you like to be when you grow up?"

- b) 80% said: "Like my mother!"
- 5) The rewards of Motherhood can be great!
 - a) But it will have its times of agony, trial, frustration, sorrow.
 - b) But it will also have its great times of joy & gladness.
 - c) True loving Motherhood pays a great dividend in the lives of children.
- C. *Children need to be reminded of the need to honor their mothers.***
 - 1) God has commanded it for a reason.
 - 2) It causes us to look back and be reminded of our great dependency upon them.
 - a) They cared for us when we couldn't care for ourselves.
 - b) They tried to help us mature enough to care for ourselves.
 - c) They tried to help us be independent.
 - 3) As we get out on our own and begin to become parents:
 - a) We begin to understand even better what God has commanded.
 - b) We begin to appreciate them more & more.
 - c) We need to let them know that!
 - 4) Illustration:
 - a) Some older men were talking about things that helped to lead to their success in life.
 - b) One man remarked about a teacher of his that really helped him.
 - c) One listener asked—"Have you told her?"
 - d) "No—I just haven't gotten around to it."
 - e) "Write her and let her know."
 - f) He did!
 - g) He even received an answer back:
"Dear Willie....
"I can't tell you how much your note meant to me. I am in my eighties, living alone in a small room, cooking my own meals, lonely and like the last leaf of fall lingering behind. You will be interested to know that I taught school for fifty years and yours is the first note of appreciation I ever received. It came on a blue, cold morning, and it cheered me as nothing has in years."
 - h) I wonder—how much joy we might bring to our mothers by telling them how much we appreciate their unselfish service to us?

CONCLUSION

- 1. ***"Honor thy mother."*** (The rewards are great!)
- 2. Young men—respect young girls—hold them in high esteem—for some day they may be some child's MOTHER!

Lesson Eight

"Sarah: A Worthy Wife"

INTRODUCTION

1. Rom. 15:4—***“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”***
2. We need to look for the Great Principles in the lives of God's Saints!
3. The one we have chosen for this Lesson is “Sarah.” (1 Peter 3:1-7)
 - a) What can we learn from her?
 - b) What is she known for?

DISCUSSION

I. BASIC INFORMATION ON SARAH:

A. Her original home & family situation:

- 1) Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11:31)
- 2) She lived with her father, Tereh. (Gen. 20:12)
- 3) Her name at first was, “Sarai” (contentious)
- 4) Abraham was a half-brother to Sarah. (Gen. 20:12)
- 5) They had the same father, but not the same mother. (Gen. 20:12)
- 6) She was 10 years younger than Abraham. (Gen. 17:17)

B. Her new home & family situation:

- 1) ***She was married to Abraham before leaving Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11:31)***
- 2) She was 65 as they came into Canaan.
- 3) She was said to be barren—unable to bear children.

II. THINGS FOR WHICH SHE WAS KNOWN:

A. Her Beauty.

- 1) ***Gen. 12:11***—“And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, ‘Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.’”
- 2) ***Even at the age of 65 plus, she was considered beautiful outwardly.***
 - a) ***This was approximately mid-life for her.***
 - b) ***Two different kings desired her because of her beauty.***
- 3) ***But there is no indication that her beauty “went to her head!”***
 - a) ***In fact, the opposite seems to be the case!***
- 4) ***Challenge for women today:***
 - a) ***Don’t let your God-given beauty go to your head!***
 - b) ***Let your beauty be an inner beauty.***
 - c) ***1 Pet. 3:2-4***
 - ***Do not let your adornment be merely outward!***
 - ***Put your emphasis where it should be on the inner person.***
 - ***Have that true beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.***

B. Her Respect for her Husband:

- 1) **1 Pet. 3:6**—“As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord....”
 - 2) **She obeyed him!**
 - a) *Two times Abraham asked her to pose as his sister, not his wife.*
 - b) *He seemed to have had a lack of faith in God’s protection.*
 - c) *So, he compromised his wife’s honor to save his life.*
 - d) *God had to intervene in both cases to save further embarrassment or to Sarah.*
 - e) *But—she obeyed his wishes—even when undesirable.*
 - f) *She is held up as a model for godly women to follow.*
 - g) **God’s admonition to Christian women:**
 - **1 Pet. 3:1**—“be submissive to your own husbands...”
 - **Eph. 5:24**—“Just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”
 - 3) **She called him lord!**
 - a) *This was a respectful term that denoted their relationship.*
 - b) *She recognized, respected, and encouraged his headship in their home.*
 - c) *The male ego is fragile & needs a woman’s help!*
 - 4) **God’s challenge to women today:**
 - a) **1 Pet. 3:5**—“For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.”
 - b) **Both the holy women of old set this example;**
 - c) **As well as Sarah!**
- C. Her faith in God!
- 1) **God’s promise to Abraham & Sarah of descendants is repeated several times.**
 - a) **Gen. 12:2**—“I will make you a great nation...”
 - b) **Gen. 12:7**—“To your descendants I will give this land....”
 - c) **Gen. 15:5**—“Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them....so shall your descendants be.”
 - d) **But 10 years later—no child! (Gen. 16:3)**
 - 2) **Sarah worked out a plan to fulfill God’s promise.**
 - a) **For Abraham to have a child by her handmaid (Hagar).**
 - b) **Abraham went along with the idea.**
 - c) **When Hagar was with child, she despised Sarah.**
 - d) **This caused Sarah to be jealous & resentful towards Hagar.**
 - e) **She treated her harshly & caused her to leave.**
 - f) **God called her back & she was submissive to Sarah.**
 - g) **Note: Sarah’s actions showed some faith in God’s promise.**
 - 3) **God repeats his promise to Abraham & Sarah.**
 - a) **Abraham is 99 years old & Sarah is 89.**
 - b) **Gen. 17:19**—“Then God said: ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.’”

- c) *Their reaction:*
 - *Abraham fell on his face and laughed. (v. 17)*
 - *Sarah also laughed in her heart, later, when she overheard the angels tell Abraham she would bear a son in 9 months. (18:12)*
- d) *God also changed their names:*
 - *Abram to Abraham—Father of many nations. (Gen. 17:5)*
 - *Sarai to Sarah—Mother of nations. (Gen. 17:16)*
- 4) *The promise of a son was fulfilled—Isaac was born.*
 - a) *She was 90 years old.*
 - b) *Her reaction, “God has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me.” (Gen. 21:6)*
- 5) *Her faith was enlarged.*
 - a) *In God’s own time, the promise was fulfilled.*
 - b) *Faith is built with patience—waiting on God’s time.*
 - c) *Heb. 11:11—“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.”*
 - d) *She shared Abraham’s hope in God & his faith in the promises of God.*
 - e) *Through testing—her faith also became stronger in God.*

CONCLUSION

1. *Sarah is held up as an example to women in particular:*
 - a) *She had not only an outer beauty, but more important an inner beauty.*
 - b) *She was respectful of God’s arrangement of husband and wife.*
 - c) *God gave her time for her faith to grow strong like her husband’s.*
2. *How are you known:*
 - a) *By your husband?*
 - b) *By your children?*
 - c) *By your neighbors?*
3. *Great principles in the lives of God’s saints are held up as examples for us today.*

Lesson Nine

"Rehab: Blessed by God"

(Joshua 2:1-24; 6:22-25; Matthew 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:30-31)

One of the more fascinating persons of the Old Testament is a woman by the name of Rahab. She is introduced to the reader at the time of Israel's beginning the overthrow of the land of Canaan. She and her family resided in the city of Jericho, which was west of the Jordan River, and north of the "Dead Sea." Israel had already destroyed the two Amorite kings on the East side of the Jordan River (Sihon and Og) and was ready to cross the Jordan and begin the overthrow of Canaan. Moses had died and Joshua had succeeded him. God promised to strengthen his leadership, to be with him wherever he goes, and He will begin to exalt him in the sight of all Israel so that the people will know that God is with him like he was with Moses.

We are also introduced to Rahab right in the midst of two unusual miracles of the Old Testament: (1) The drying up of the Jordan River to allow Israel to cross over into Canaan; and (2) The walls of Jericho collapsing without fighting, but by faith of the people that was put into action.

Joshua sent two spies to look over the land and to especially evaluate the city of Jericho. So the two men, seeking to find lodging, came to the house of Rahab (who was referred to as a "harlot."). She evidently provided a living by such means, but seems to have had some respect of the people of Jericho. When she learned why the men were there, she immediately let them know how she felt about them.

- 1) I know that the Lord has given you the land.
- 2) The terror of you has fallen on us and has caused the inhabitants to melt away before you.
- 3) We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea when you left Egypt.
- 4) We also know what happened to the two Amorite kings on the East of Jordan.
- 5) Our hearts melted and no courage remained in any one.
- 6) The Lord your God is the true God in heaven.

She requested of the two spies to promise her that she and her family would not perish when they came to destroy the city—since she had been so kind to them to hide them from the officials who were hunting for them. The promise was given, but with some conditions—which she and her family were perfectly willing to meet. When the city fell, she and all her house were saved from the destruction.

But this was not the end of the story of Rahab. She was allowed to live in the midst of Israel as one of them from then on. She also married Salmon and from this union came Boaz. Boaz married Ruth (who had been a Moabite, but she also became a believer in the true God of heaven). From this union came Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, who became king over Israel. All of which means that she was in the lineage of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. She is also listed among those who showed great faith in God recorded in Hebrews 11:30-31.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

1. **Rahab's faith was an obedient faith!** It was demonstrated by what she did. She did what she was told to do (James 2:17-26).
 - a) She gathered her family together.
 - b) She placed the scarlet cord in the window.
 - c) She did not prepare to fight.
 - d) She did not try to flee.
 - e) She did by faith as she was instructed.Her faith saved her and her family from destruction.
2. **The saving of Rahab shows the universality of God's mercy.** She was a Gentile—not a Jew. Yet God saved her because of her faith (Romans 2:14-15).
3. **Rahab also illustrates that no sinner is beyond the reach of God's saving Grace.** God does not save us against our will, but He is willing to save anyone who will turn to Him in faithful obedience to His Will. If Rahab could be saved and used by God, why cannot anyone who will turn to Him in humble faith (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
4. **Rahab had to choose between her country and friends or God.** Some choices that we must make may not be easy, but they must be made if we are to be acceptable to God. This same choice has to be made by many people even today (Josh. 24:15).
5. **Rahab also had to choose between the religion of those around her or the religion of the Jewish people (John 14:6).** She chose the religion of the true God of heaven over the idolatrous gods of mankind.

HOMEWORK

1. **Did Rahab have to make any changes in her lifestyle in order to live as an Israelite?**
2. **List some changes that you think she may have had to make.**
3. **What kind of a heart did she have to have in order to come to believe in God?**
4. **Why would Salmon want to marry a "harlot?"**
5. **Why was Rahab willing to risk her life in order to save the two spies?**

Lesson Ten

"Ruth: Great Respect for In-Laws"

INTRODUCTION

1. Brief story of Ruth (Ruth 1:8-18).
 - a) It was the time of the Judges, about 1300-1400 BC
 - b) A famine had struck in the land of Israel.
 - c) Elimelech & Naomi, with two sons, left and went into Moab.
 - d) While there—Elimelech died.
 - e) The two sons married Moabitish women: Orpah & Ruth.
 - f) And then, the two sons died.
 - g) Naomi decided to go back home, since the famine had ceased.
 - h) She encouraged her two daughters-in-laws to go back to their parents.
 - 1) Orpah reluctantly did return to her family.
 - 2) Ruth would not—was determined to stay with Naomi.
2. Ruth must have been an important person to God.
 - a) The whole book is written to extol her.
 - b) She is shown to be in the lineage of David—thus, Jesus also.
 - c) The book shows many good virtues of Ruth.
 - d) But the one we want to look at is her **RESPECT**.
3. God's people need to be characterized as respectful people.

DISCUSSION

I. SOME WAYS RUTH SHOWED RESPECT.

A. She wanted to stay with her mother-in-law.

- 1) Her husband had died.
- 2) Orpah reluctantly went back home. **(1:14)**
- 3) But Ruth was adamant about not leaving her. **(1:16-17)**

B. She listened to the advice of her mother-in-law.

- 1) **(2:22)**
 - a) The advice was for her safety and her virtue.
 - b) She listened and obeyed!
- 2) **(3:1-4)**
 - a) Naomi wanted to find a husband for her.
 - b) She told her what to do in order for that to be possible.
 - c) She listened and obeyed.

C. She was respectful of the customs & laws of Israel.

- 1) **(3:5)**
 - a) She recognized that this was the correct way among Jews.
 - b) She willingly conformed to their customs & laws.

D. She was respectful of God's Laws of Marriage & Moral purity.

- 1) **(3:8-11)**
 - a) She conformed to God's Law and was praised & blessed.

II. AREAS IN WHICH WE NEED TO SHOW RESPECT.

A. To the Divine & Divine things.

- 1) 1 Tim. 1:17—*“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”*
- 2) 2 Pet. 1:17—*“For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”*
- 3) Isa. 42:21—*“The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law and make it honorable.”*

B. Human authorities.

- 1) Human Governments (Rom. 13:1)
- 2) Employers (1 Tim. 6:1).
- 3) Husbands (Eph. 5:33).
- 4) Elders (1 Thess. 5:12-13).
- 5) Rom. 13:7—*“Honor to whom honor is due.”*

C. Humans specifically and in general.

- 1) Rom. 12:10—*“...in honor preferring one another.”*
- 2) 1 Pet. 2:17—*“Honor all men.”*
- 3) 1 Pet. 3:7—*“Giving honor unto the wife.”*
- 4) Lev. 19:32—*“Thou shalt rise up before the aged, and honor the face of the old man.”*
- 5) 1 Tim. 5:3—*“Honor widows that are widows indeed.”*

III. REWARDS PROMISED TO THE RESPECTFUL.

A. Ruth:

- 1) She found a very desirable home.
- 2) She found the true God of heaven to worship & serve.
- 3) She found a husband who would care for her.
- 4) She was blessed to have the son that was in the lineage of Jesus.

B. For us today:

- 1) We can be vessel unto honor. (2 Tim. 2:20-21)
- 2) God honors those who honor Him. (Ps. 15:4)
- 3) God honors those who honor His Son by serving Him. (Jn. 12:26)
- 4) Those who show respect for wisdom will be honored. (Prov. 4:8)

CONCLUSION

1. How much we need to have a society where there is RESPECT:
 - a) For one another;
 - b) For what belongs to others.
2. A society that:
 - a) Ceases to show respect **of** persons;
 - b) And shows respect **for** all persons.
3. The church needs to set the example before the world of such.
4. Do we show respect for God, His Son, and His word?
5. We show it by our actions!

Lesson Eleven

"Esther: For Such a Time as This"

The 2nd book of Kings ended with the Babylonian captivity of Judah and Jerusalem in about 606 BC. At this time only a few were carried to Babylon. After the next two rebellions that had to be put down, most of the people were carried into Babylon—with only a poor remnant of people left. The city was leveled, walls torn down, and the Temple destroyed in 586 BC. Later, some of the people fled to Egypt. Judah was no more—as a nation! The captivity was to last for 70 years (Jere. 25:11-12), which would mean that around 536 BC the people would be allowed to return to rebuild the city, the temple, and the nation. The book of Ezra records the first efforts at returning to Jerusalem. It was not easy for them to rebuild the Temple, the city, nor their houses; and, to add further discouragement, some of the people around them were constantly trying to stop them or defeat their efforts. Zerubbabel led about 50,000 people back in this first return. Many Jews still remained in Babylon. The second effort at return did not occur until the time of Ezra in 457 BC. It was between the time of these two returns that a very important event occurred that could have affected the Jewish people drastically—but for the effort of two people in particular: Esther and her uncle Mordecai.

ESTHER BECOMES A QUEEN

In 538 BC, the Medes and Persians had joined forces and came against the city of Babylon and overthrew the city. By 536 King Cyrus allowed the return of some of the Jews to rebuild their Temple and city. About 50 years later, a new king came to power over the Medo-Persian Empire—Ahasuerus (485-465). The important event occurred about half-way through this king's reign (about 473 BC).

King Ahasuerus made a great feast in 483 BC and invited people from everywhere to attend. It was at this feast that his queen disobeyed him and he decided to dethrone her and choose another queen. Esther was chosen because she found favor with the king. About ten years later, Haman planned to try to get rid of Mordecai and all the Jews in the Empire of the Medes and Persians. The date was set and the king's signature had been put on the document that on the 13th day of the 12th month (473 BC) all Jews were to be slain.

Mordecai convinces Esther that she has to go into the king and reveal this evil plot and who it would affect (even the queen herself). He reminded her: ***"For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?"*** She decides to go into the king and states: ***"...and if I perish, I perish."*** Esther plans a banquet and invites the king and Haman to attend. During the meal, she requested that they come again the next day to a banquet and at that time she would reveal her request. The next day she made a request for her life and the life of her people to be spared. She told the king that if she and her people had been made slaves she would not have bothered him; but, the plan was to annihilate her people. The king wanted to know the person responsible for such an atrocity. She told him...HAMAN! The king had him taken out and hung on the very gallows that Haman had wanted Mordecai hung on. The king could not undo the decree, but he did provide means for

the Jews to protect themselves from destruction and with any other persons who wanted to help the Jews. Mordecai was promoted in the kingdom of Ahasuerus and Esther was held in high esteem.

A feast was begun by the Jewish people on the 14th & 15th day of the 12th month (Adar). This is during our February & March months. The feast is called the "feast of Purim."

SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS

1. God's providence becomes very obvious as these events are taking place:

- a) The plot overheard by Mordecai that saved the king's life—but Mordecai was not rewarded at that time.
 - b) The plot of Haman to slay the Jewish people.
 - c) The king not able to sleep at night and asked for records to be read. He discovered that Mordecai had not been rewarded and desired to do so.
 - d) The Gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai were turned to be used on him.
 - e) God caused the people to fear the Jews and helped to save the Jewish people.
 - f) The exalting of Mordecai.
 - g) Esther becoming queen when she did.
- 2. She was the kind of woman that caused her to be chosen above all the other women.**
- 3. She conducted herself wisely.**
- 4. She was willing to lay down her life for her people.**
- 5. She did not forget her benefactor—Mordecai.**

HOMEWORK

- 1. When did the events in the book of Esther take place?**

- 2. What kind of homelife did Esther have?**

- 3. What was Mordecai's relationship to her?**

- 4. Where did she grow up?**

- 5. What is your evaluation of queen Vashti's response to the king's request?**

- 6. Should Esther have married someone that was not a Jew?**

Lesson Twelve

"God's Design for Women"Introduction

1. The terrible conditions in Isaiah's day is also true in our day!
2. The decay in America's morals is obvious.
 - a) Terrible changes are taking place.
 - b) Lawlessness, crime, moral disintegration & violence is threatening the very fiber of our nation.
 - c) A generation is coming on that:
 - Have no fear of God;
 - No respect for the church;
 - No love for family;
 - No desire to obey the laws of the land.
 - d) The breakdown of the home & its proper function is obvious to all.
 - e) Unless this trend is reversed—there is no hope for us as a nation!
3. Society has recognized for centuries the important role that women play in the stability and effectiveness of the home.
 - a) *"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."*
 - b) The saying is obviously true!
 - c) When women fulfil their God-given roles well—society will be blessed.
 - d) When they abdicate them—society will be cursed.
 - e) The cradle that she will not rock, will have its affect on our world.
4. Obviously, man has a role in all of this too.
5. But we want to encourage you young ladies in this lesson!
 - a) To fulfil your great, God-given roles in life.
 - b) Let God direct your life, not the world.
 - c) Rom. 12:2—***"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***
6. Let's look at God's arrangement.

Discussion**I. WOMAN IS DESIGNED TO BE A WIFE & COMPANION TO MAN.**

- A. ***Gen. 2:18—"It is not good that the man be alone; I will make him a help meet for him."***
 - 1) Man needed someone to be by his side.
 - 2) Not as an inferior, but as a helper.
 - 3) She is a loyal supporter & enricher of his life.
- B. ***Gen. 2:22, 24—"And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.....Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."***
 - 1) God ordained the marital relationship between man & woman.
 - 2) The woman was created to be a wife—not a husband!

- 3) God made a special point to emphasize how she is to adorn herself as a wife & woman:
 - a) 1 Pet. 3:3-4—***"Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God."***
 - KJV uses meekness instead of gentleness.
 - Meekness is not mousiness—but power under control.
 - A quiet spirit is not a silent voice, but an attitude of gentleness and respect toward others.
 - b) 1 Tim. 2:9-10—***"In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."***
 - Her beauty is seen in her actions, not just her outward dress.
 - There is nothing wrong with proper outward dress—if not overdone.
 - c) Gen. 3:16—***"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."***
 - Tit. 2:5—***"...Obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."***
 - God decreed this from the beginning—God's arrangement!
 - Woman is:
 - a) Equal in standing before God;
 - b) Equal in preciousness to Christ;
 - c) Equal in their continuing need of mercy & grace;
 - d) Equal in worth, love, loyalty, prospects of heaven....
 - e) But different in roles!
 - So, young ladies—be very careful to whom you commit yourself.
 - A woman is a blessing to **Herself**, her **Husband**, her **Family**, the **Church**, and the **Community** who respects God's arrangement.
 - Her nature & spirit will add a tenderness, gentleness, kindness to man's life.
 - Remember—This arrangement has been planned by a wise & caring God.

II. SHE IS DESIGNED TO BE A MOTHER.

A. 1 Tim. 2:15—"Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control."

- 1) This is stated in contrast to the man's role of leadership in the home.
- 2) She has a special area of work unique to her also.
 - a) It is important.
 - b) It is fulfilling.
 - c) It has its own special glory & honor for her.
- 3) Mothers have been a tremendous blessing to the world thru their children.
 - a) Mother of Moses—Gave us the "Meekest man"
 - b) Mother of John the Baptist—"Not a greater prophet than...."

- c) Mother of Jesus—"Shall call me blessed." Gave the world a Savior
 - 4) See the great men & women taught & trained at their mother's knee.
 - 5) She gave them the start in life that has blessed society & the church.
 - 6) Mothers are needed in the home.
 - a) She is designed to give tender, loving care needed by infants.
 - b) Her emotional nature is what makes her a good mother & nurse.
 - c) They can give children a sense of **protection, security & love** that is basic to forming their lives.
- B. Gen. 2:24—"Therefore shall a man leave his father & mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."**
- 1) To be a wife, she has to be willing to leave father & mother.
 - 2) To be a good mother, she has to be willing to let her children go—both physically & emotionally.
 - 3) Mother-in-law trouble comes when Mothers will not cut the apron strings.
 - 4) A mother's great gift to her children—a sense of independence & responsibility as an adult.
 - 5) Illustrated in Jesus & Mary:
 - a) At age 12:
 - Jesus expressing his first efforts at independence.
 - **"Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business."**
 - b) At age 30:
 - Wedding feast—ran out of wine.
 - Mary said, **"Son, they have run out of wine, do something."**
 - The time for cutting the apron strings has come!
 - **"Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."**
 - He must begin on His public ministry.
 - c) During His public ministry;
 - Mother & family were seeking for Him.
 - **"Who is my mother, or my brethren? Those who do the will of God."**
 - Let go, I am my own man!
 - 6) What a blessing Mothers are—when they can let their children go.

III. SHE IS DESIGNED TO BE A HOMEMAKER.

A. Tit. 2:3-5

- 1) "Keepers at home"—"Workers at home"—"A homemaker"—"Lovers of home".
- 2) Someone has to be concerned about having a desirable home—not just a house!
 - a) A home is where there is love, cleanliness, and purity.
 - b) A home is a training ground for life.
 - Teaching God's Word;
 - Teaching how to be a good wife or husband;
 - But as well—serving as an example to re-enforce that teaching.
 - It can be the greatest training ground for life a person can receive.
- 3) Prov. 14:1—**"Every wise woman builds her house: but the foolish pulls it down with her hands."**

- 4) The woman has a lot to do with making the home what it is.
- 5) 1 Tim. 5:14—*"Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully."*

B. Homemaking should not be a burden, but a blessing.

- 1) There is meaning & purpose in being a *"keeper at home."* *"Homemaker"*
- 2) It is a matter of attitude towards such.
- 3) How we accept God's instructions are critical.
- 4) Obviously, the world will not accept God's instruction because they do not respect Christ, nor His Word.
- 5) Such should not be said of God's people.

IV. SHE IS DESIGNED TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

A. Gal. 3:28—*"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

- 1) It is obvious that these distinctions are still among us.
- 2) But, they do not & must not keep one out of the church.
- 3) All have the same right to become Christians—male or female, etc.
- 4) We all become a part of the body of Christ.
- 5) 1 Pet. 3:7—*"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."*

B. As a Christian, the woman has all the blessings of being a Christian.

- 1) She has same access to all spiritual blessings in Christ. (Eph. 1:3)
- 2) Her life should be filled with good works, just like the men. (Tit. 3:8)
- 3) She has the right of prayer to God thru Christ.

C. But God has placed a limitation on her in the assembly.

- 1) She is not allowed to get up before the assembly to address it. (1 Cor. 14:34).
- 2) She is not allowed to take a teaching, authoritative role over the man. (1 Tim. 2:11-12)
- 3) Whether we understand why God has decreed this is not the real issue.
- 4) We can know it is for the best for all concerned.

CONCLUSION

1. There is no greater work on earth than being a good wife & mother.
2. Men have given recognition to this fact by setting aside a special day to remind us of the great work of mothers.
3. George Cooper wrote a poem to remind us of a great truth also:

Hundreds of stars in the pretty sky,
Hundreds of shells on the shore together,
Hundreds of birds that go singing by,
Hundreds of lambs in the sunny weather.
Hundreds of dewdrops to greet the dawn,
Hundreds of bees in the purple clover,
Hundreds of butterflies on the lawn,
But only one mother the wide world over.

4. What a blessing it will be to mothers in the day of judgment to hear those very desirable words from God: "***Well done, good and faithful (mothers).***"
5. Let's do honor to that one mother today—and every day.
6. The greatest honor we owe is to God.
 - a) To respect Him
 - b) To respect His Word
 - c) To believe and obey it.

