

LESSON ONE

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- FOOTNOTES OF LESSON SIX:

START OF LESSON ONE

Topics: - HOW THE WORLD BEGAN

In the beginning, God created the universe.{1} The earth was not organized and it was without structure. Darkness blanketed the deep. God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the water.

Then God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light. God could see that the light was good.{2}

After that God said, "Let there be a space{3} in the water; let it separate!" and it took place. God named the space "sky." {4}
Next, God said, "Let the water below the sky be brought together into one place, and let the dry land appear!" and it happened. {5}
Then God said, "Let the earth produce all kinds of plant life!" and it occurred. {6}
And God said, "Let there be lights in space (the sky), {7} and, let these lights shine upon the earth!" and so it was. {8}
Then God said, "Let the water abound with all kinds of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the sky!" God blessed them all. He said to the marine life, "Be fertile, increase in number, and spread throughout the ocean!" God also said, "And let the birds multiply over the earth." {9}
After that God said, "Let the land bring out all types of animal life: livestock, reptiles, {10} and every kind of wild animal. Each will reproduce after its own kind!" and it was done. God made every kind of wild animal, livestock, and crawling thing. And God could see that this was good. {11}

Topics: - GOD MADE MAN

God said, "Let us now make people in our image; they will be like us! And let them have authority over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the wild land animals, and over everything that crawls on the earth!" {12}
Then the LORD {13} God took some dirt from the earth, and from it He shaped a man. Into the man's nose God breathed life. And the man became a living person.
The LORD God then planted a garden in Eden in the East. There He placed the man whom He had formed. The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow there. Some were good to look at and some were good for food. The Tree of Life {14} was in the center of the garden. Another tree was there -- the tree that caused people to know the difference between right and wrong. {15}
The LORD God put the man in the garden of Eden to work in it and to take care of it. The LORD God gave him this command: "You are allowed to eat fruit from every tree in the garden -- except one. Do not eat anything from the tree that causes people to know the difference between right and wrong. You must never eat the fruit of that tree. If you ever do, you will most certainly die!"
After this the Lord God said, "It's not good for the man to be alone. I will make a matching helper for him." The man gave names to all the livestock, to all the birds of the air, and to every wild animal. But he did not find a matching partner for himself, a human being. {16}
So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a very deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, God took out one of the man's ribs. Then God closed up his body. The LORD God used the rib to construct a woman. Then He brought her to the man.
The man and the woman were both naked, but they felt no shame. {17}
So, God created people in His own image. In the image of God He created mankind. God created them male and female. He blessed them, saying, "Have lots of children. Increase in number. Spread throughout the earth. Conquer the world and take authority over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every creature that crawls on the face of the earth." {18}

Topics: - SOMETHING WENT WRONG

Now the snake (Satan, the Devil) {19} was the most clever creature {20} that the LORD God had made. The snake asked the woman, "Did God actually say to you that you could not eat from any tree in the garden?" The woman answered, "We are allowed to eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, but not from a particular tree near the center of the garden. God told us not to eat any fruit from that tree -- we can't even touch it. If we do, we will die!"
The snake said to the woman, "That's not true! You will not die. God knows that whenever you do eat some of it, then your eyes will be opened. You will become like Him, knowing the difference between right and wrong."
The woman could see that the tree was good for food, that the tree was beautiful to look at, and could make her wise. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, too. And, he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened; they realized that they were naked. So, they sewed together the leaves of a fig tree to make clothes for themselves.
When they heard the LORD God walking in the garden that evening, {21} they hid themselves from Him among the trees. But the LORD God called out to the man, "Where are you?"
The man answered, "I heard You in the garden, but, because I was naked, I was afraid and hid myself." The LORD asked, "Who informed you that you were naked? Did you eat some of the fruit which I commanded you not to eat?"
The man answered, "It was the woman whom You put here with me -- she gave it to me. So I ate!"
The LORD God asked the woman, "What's this you've done?"
She answered, "The snake tricked me. So I ate!"
Then the LORD God said to the snake, "Because you have done this thing, you are banished from all livestock and all wild animals. From now on, you will crawl on your belly, and you will have to eat dirt as long as you live. I will put hostility between you and the woman, between your children and her child. Although her child will crush your head, {22} you will bite his heel."
Then God said to the woman, "I will surely increase your problems in having children; you will give birth in great pain. You will still yearn for your husband and he will rule over you."
And God said to Adam, {23} "Because you listened to your wife and you ate some of the fruit which I commanded you not to eat, the earth is now condemned. It is your fault! As long as you live, you'll have to work hard to make it produce enough food for you. It will sprout weeds and thorns instead. You will have to eat wild plants. The food you do eat will only come to you through hard

work until you go back to the earth from which you came, because you were taken from the ground. You are dirt and you will return to the dirt!"

The man named his wife "Eve,"{24} because she was to become the mother of every human being.

Then the LORD God made clothes out of animal skins{25} for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them.

After this the LORD God said, "Look, the man has become like us; the man now knows the difference between right and wrong. He must no longer be allowed to reach out and take fruit from the Tree of Life and continue to live forever!" So the LORD God sent him away from the garden of Eden to plow the ground from which he had been taken. And God drove out the man and his wife. On the east side of the garden of Eden, God posted heavenly guards and a flaming, lashing sword to protect the Tree of Life.{26}

Topics: - SIN CAUSES DEATH

Every person who sins is breaking God's law. Sin is breaking God's law.{27} Since the beginning, the Devil has been sinning.{28} Satan fell, as lightning falls from the sky.{29} The Devil was a murderer from the very beginning. He does not stand with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he is only talking naturally, because he is a liar and the father of lies.{30}

The person who continues to sin belongs to the Devil.{31} Everyone has sinned and is far away from God's glory.{32} Sin came into the world through one man. And, death came into the world through sin. In this way, death spread to all men, because all sinned.{33} Every person who continues to sin is a slave of sin.{34} The pay you get for sinning is death.{35}

Don't be fooled! You cannot mock God.{36} It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!{37} Our God is like a fire which destroys everything.{38}

God is faithful.{39} Even though every man is a liar, God will be true.{40} God is dependable.{41} We can trust God; He does what is right.{42}

The LORD our God is one LORD.{43} He is the Highest God,{44} the Most High God.{45} Turn to the living God. He is the One who made the land, the sea, the sky, and everything which is in them. In the past, God let all the nations do what they wanted. But God did things to prove that he is real: He does good things for you. He gives you rain from the sky and good harvests at the right times. He gives you plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.{46} God's sun shines{47} upon good people and bad people. It rains upon the people who do right and upon those who do wrong.{48} We know that false gods really don't exist. There is only one true God. There are "gods" in heaven and on earth -- many "gods" and many "lords" -- but they are not real. To us, there is only one God - the Father. He is the Source of everything. We live for Him.{49}

Topics: - GOD'S PROMISE

Many years later, the LORD said to Abram (Abraham), "Leave your native land, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a country which I am about to show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make your name famous, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but I will condemn those who condemn you. And, through you, I will bless all nations on earth."{50}

The LORD took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky now and try to count the stars. Can you count them all? Of course not. Well, you will have just as many descendants!"

Abram believed the LORD, and so the LORD declared him a righteous man.

Then the Lord said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from the city of Ur in the land of Babylonia to give you this land to own."{51}

Topics: - SLAVERY

But God did not give Abram any of this land -- not even a foot of it! God promised that He would give this land to Abram and his descendants; it would belong to them. (This was before Abram had any children.) This is what God said to him: "Your descendants will live as strangers in another country. The people there will make them slaves and do evil things to them for 400 years{52} I will judge that nation which will make them slaves." And God also said, "After those things happen, your children will come out of that country to worship Me in this place."{53}

Topics: - THE AGREEMENT

When Abram was 99 years old, the LORD appeared and said to him, "I am God Almighty.{54} If you will live your life in such a way that you are always aware that I am near, and you are pure, then I will enter into an agreement -- My agreement -- between you and Me: I will cause you to reproduce; you will have many, many children." Then Abram bowed his face to the ground.{55}

Topics: - CIRCUMCISION

Then God said to Abraham, "You and your descendants must abide by My agreement in each generation. This is My agreement which you and your descendants must agree to; this is your side of My contract: From now on, every male among you must

be circumcised. You also, Abraham, must be circumcised, in the flesh of your foreskin. This will become a symbol of the agreement between us. Generation after generation, each boy among you must be circumcised when he is eight days old.”{56}

And God said, “Your wife Sarah will indeed give birth to your son, and you will name him `Isaac.’{57} I will confirm My agreement with him as a permanent agreement for his descendants, too.”{58}

When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, just as God had ordered him to do. Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born to him.{59}

Topics: - JACOB AND ESAU

When Isaac was 40 years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Because Rebekah could have no children, Isaac prayed to the LORD for her. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer. Rebekah became pregnant.{60}

When the time came for Rebekah to give birth, she had twins! The first baby was completely reddish brown, like a coat of fur. They named him `Esau.’{61} After that, his baby brother came out. He was hanging onto Esau's heel. So he was named `Jacob.’{62}

Topics: - THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS

Isaac circumcised his son Jacob, and Jacob did the same for his sons.{63} Jacob had twelve sons. The sons who came from Leah{64} were: Reuben (Jacob's oldest son), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun. The sons who came from Rachel{65} were: Joseph, Benjamin. The sons who came from Bilhah, Rachel's slave, were: Dan, Naphtali. The sons who came from Zilpah, Leah's slave, were: Gad, Asher.{66}

Topics: - THEY HATED JOSEPH

Because Joseph had been born to Jacob{67} when Jacob was old, Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his other sons. Jacob made him a full-length coat. When Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than he loved any of them, they hated Joseph.{68}

Joseph's brothers were jealous of him.{69} They made up evil plans against him and decided to kill him.

They said to each other, “Here comes that dreamer! Come on, let's kill him now and throw his body into one of the dry wells. We could say, `A wild animal has eaten him!’”{70}

But when Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue Joseph from them by saying, “No! There is no need for us to kill him. Let there be no bloodshed. Throw him into this hole. It's in the desert. Don't hurt him. (He wanted to rescue Joseph from them and give him back to his father later.) When Joseph arrived, they stripped off his coat (his full-length coat which he was wearing at the time). Then they grabbed him and threw him into the hole. This pit was empty; there was no water in it.{71}

Topics: - JOSEPH IS SOLD INTO SLAVERY

Joseph's brothers sat down to eat. They looked up and saw a caravan of some of the descendants of Ishmael.{72} They were coming from the land of Gilead. They were headed for Egypt. Their camels were carrying a load of spices, oils, and perfumes. Judah said to his brothers, “How much is a dead brother worth to us? Could we hide his blood? Come on, let's sell him to the men of Ishmael. Let us not be the ones who hurt him. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh.” And they listened to Judah.

Later Midianite traders passed by. They pulled up Joseph up out of the hole and sold him to the Ishmaelites for 20 pieces of silver. And they carried away Joseph away to Egypt.{73}

Topics: - JOSEPH IN EGYPT

But God was with Joseph. Although Joseph had many troubles there, God rescued him from them all. God gave Joseph wisdom.{74} The Lord was with Joseph and made him successful.{75}

The king (Pharaoh) gave Joseph the job of being governor of Egypt. He even allowed Joseph to rule over all the people in his own house. But the whole land of Egypt and the land of Canaan became dry. It became so dry that crops couldn't grow there. This made the people suffer terribly. Our ancestors could find nothing to eat. But Jacob heard that there was wheat stored in Egypt. So he sent our ancestors there. (This was their first trip to Egypt.) Then they went there a second time. On this visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was.{76}

This is what Joseph said to his brothers: “God sent me ahead of you to make sure that your race continues on the earth and to save your lives in an extraordinary way. It was not you who sent me here; God did it. God has made me the Prime Minister to the king, a master over all his house, and a ruler over all the land of Egypt!

“Hurry, go north to my father and tell him this: `This is a message from Joseph, your son: “God has made me master over all of Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay.” “{77}

Topics: - GOD SPEAKS TO JACOB

And Jacob{78} took everything he owned with him on the trip. When Jacob came to the city of Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father, Isaac. There God spoke to Jacob{79} in a vision of the night, "Jacob! Jacob!"

And Jacob answered, "I'm here."

God said, "I am the true God, the God of your fathers. Don't be afraid to go down into Egypt. I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down with you into Egypt, but I will surely bring you back again, too!{80}

Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years. So, the total length of Jacob's life was 147 years.{81}

Joseph continued to live in Egypt, he and his father's family. Joseph lived to be 110 years old.{82} Joseph said to his brothers, "I am dying now, but God will surely take care of you. He will bring forth you forth from this land to the land which He promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph made the descendants of Jacob{83} take an oath. He said, "God will surely take care of you and you must carry up my bones from here." Then Joseph died at the age of 110. They embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.{84}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES FOR LESSON ONE:

{1} literally, the heavens and the earth

{2} Genesis 1:1-4

{3} or, expanse

{4} Genesis 1:6-8

{5} Genesis 1:9

{6} Genesis 1:11

{7} referring to the sun and the moon

{8} Genesis 1:14-15

{9} Genesis 1:20,22

{10} literally, crawlers; a general term for small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects

{11} Genesis 1:24-25

{12} Genesis 1:26

{13} Yahweh is the name of God in the Hebrew language, the language in which the Old Testament was first written.

{14} See Revelation 22:2.

{15} Genesis 2:7-9

{16} Genesis 2:15-18,20

{17} Genesis 2:21-22,25

{18} Genesis 1:27-28

{19} See Revelation 12:9; Matthew 13:39; 1 Peter 5:8.

{20} See 2 Corinthians 11:14.

{21} literally, during the breeze of the day

{22} See Romans 16:20; Revelation 20:2.

{23} a word which is like the Hebrew word for "dirt," 'adamah

{24} a name which is similar to the Hebrew word for "life"

{25} Some animals had to die (give their blood) for the sake of these people.

{26} Genesis 3:1-24

{27} 1 John 3:4

{28} 1 John 3:8

{29} Luke 10:18

{30} John 8:44

{31} 1 John 3:8

{32} Romans 3:23

{33} Romans 5:12

{34} John 8:34

{35} Romans 6:23

{36} Galatians 6:7

{37} Hebrews 10:31

{38} Hebrews 12:29

{39} 1 Corinthians 1:9

{40} Romans 3:4

{41} 2 Corinthians 1:18

{42} 1 John 1:9

{43} Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29

{44} Acts 16:17

{45} Mark 5:7; Hebrews 7:1

{46} Acts 14:15-17

{47} literally, rises

- {48} Matthew 5:45
- {49} 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- {50} Genesis 12:1-3
- {51} Genesis 15:5-7
- {52} an approximate number. The total time was actually 430 years. See Exodus 12:40-41.
- {53} Acts 7:5-7; See Exodus 3:12.
- {54} El Shaddai
- {55} This was the way he showed deep respect for God.
- {56} Genesis 17:1-12
- {57} A Hebrew name which means "laughing."
- {58} Genesis 17:19; See Luke 1:55.
- {59} Genesis 21:4-5
- {60} Genesis 25:20-21
- {61} This word was associated with being hairy.
- {62} This Hebrew name sounds like the word for "heel" in Hebrew, 'aceb. Genesis 25:24-26
- {63} Acts 7:8
- {64} See Genesis 29:15-35; 30:1-21.
- {65} See Genesis 30:22-24; 35:15-21.
- {66} Genesis 35:22-26
- {67} literally, Israel
- {68} Genesis 37:3-4
- {69} Genesis 37:11
- {70} Genesis 37:18-20
- {71} Genesis 37:21-24
- {72} See Genesis 16:1-16; 17:18,20-27; 21:9-21; 25:12-18.
- {73} Genesis 37:25-28
- {74} Acts 7:9-10
- {75} Genesis 39:2
- {76} Acts 7:10-13
- {77} Genesis 45:7-9
- {78} literally, Israel
- {79} literally, Israel
- {80} Genesis 46:1-4
- {81} Genesis 47:28
- {82} Genesis 50:22
- {83} literally, Israel
- {84} Genesis 50:24-26

START OF LESSON TWO

Topics: - BONDAGE IN EGYPT

Joseph and all of his brothers died in Egypt. So did that whole generation.{1} God made His people great during the time that they lived in Egypt as strangers.{2} In Egypt the Jewish people grew larger in number. (The promise which God made to Abraham was soon to come true.){3} The sons of Israel were fertile. They became very large in number. They multiplied and became very strong. The land was filled with them.

Then a new king came to power in Egypt. He had no political ties with Joseph. This king said to his people, "Look, the sons of Israel outnumber us, and they are becoming more powerful than we are. Come on, let's outsmart them, or they will soon get out of hand. In case of war, they might join our enemies and fight against us. Then they would escape."

So the Egyptians rulers put slave-drivers over them to make them work very hard. They built Pithom and Raamses, storage cities for the king. But the more the slave-drivers worked them, the more of them there were. The sons of Israel were everywhere. The Egyptians felt very uneasy about them.

The Egyptians made the sons of Israel work even harder. The Egyptians made their lives miserable; as slaves they had to work very hard with clay and bricks, in all kinds of field work. Whatever it was, the Egyptians forced them to labor at it.{4}

Topics: - MOSES IS BORN

But the people continued to multiply, and they were very large in number. The king gave this order to all of his people: "You must throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the river! Let the girls live."{5}

During this time, a man from the tribe of Levi married a Levite girl. The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that it was a very beautiful baby, she hid the child for three months.{6} But, when she could no longer hide the baby,

she made a basket of papyrus{7} for him, and smeared it with tar and caulking to shut out the water. Then she placed the baby inside and put the basket among the reeds by the edge of the river.

The baby's sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to the baby. The king's daughter came down to the river to take a bath. She noticed the basket among the reeds. She sent one of her slave-girls to get it. (They were already walking along beside the river.) She opened it and saw the child. And, look, the baby was crying. She felt sorry for the child. She thought, "This is one of the children of those Hebrews."

Then the sister of the baby asked the king's daughter, "Do you want me to go and find a Hebrew nurse so that she may nurse the child for you?"

The king's daughter said to her, "Yes, go."

So the little girl went and called for the child's mother. And the king's daughter said to the baby's mother, "Take this child away and nurse it for me. I will pay you. So the woman took the child and nursed it.

The boy grew. His mother brought him to the king's daughter. The boy became the king's daughter's son.{8} She named him "Moses,"{9} because, she said, "I drew him out of the water."{10}

Topics: - MOSES BECOMES A MAN

When Moses was about 40 years old, he thought it would be good to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel.{11} One day Moses saw an Egyptian man doing wrong to a Hebrew brother. So, he defended him. Moses punished the Egyptian for hurting that brother. Moses hit the Egyptian so hard that the man died. Moses was thinking his brothers would understand that God was using him to save them, but they did not understand. The next day Moses saw two of the sons of Israel fighting. He tried to make peace between them. He said, "Men, you are brothers! Why are you doing wrong to one another?"

The man who was doing wrong to the other man pushed Moses away. He said to Moses, "Who made you our ruler and judge? Do you want to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian man yesterday?" When Moses heard him say this, he ran away from Egypt.{12} He went to live in the land of Midian where he was a stranger. While he lived there he had two sons.{13}

After a long time, that particular king of Egypt died. Because the work was so hard, the sons of Israel cried out for help, and their plea went up to God because of the slavery. And God heard their moaning. God did not forget His agreement with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God watched the sons of Israel; He knew what was going on.{14}

Topics: - MOSES IN THE DESERT

After forty years, Moses was in the desert on Mount Sinai. An angel appeared to him in the flame of a burning bush. When Moses saw this, he was amazed. He went nearer to look at it more closely. He heard a Voice; it was the Lord's. The Lord God said, "I am the same God of your ancestors -- the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." Moses began to shake with fear. He was afraid to look at the bush. The LORD said to him, "Take off your shoes, because the place where you are standing is holy ground. I have seen My people suffer much in Egypt. I have heard My people moaning. I have come down to rescue them. And now, Moses, I am sending you back to Egypt.{15} Now I send you to the king of Egypt, so that you can lead My people out of his country.{16}

"Tell the sons of Israel that I, the LORD,{17} the God of their ancestors -- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I have sent you to them. Go and gather together the elders of Israel. Tell them that I, the LORD, the God of their ancestors -- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob -- I have appeared to you. Tell them that I have come to them and have seen how the Egyptians are treating them. I have decided that I will bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt, where they are being treated so badly. I will take them to a rich, fruitful land. My people will listen to what you say to them.

"Then you and the leaders of Israel must go to the king of Egypt. I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, unless he is forced to do it. But I will use My power and I will punish Egypt by doing awesome things there. After that he will let you go."{18}

God told Moses, "Go back to Egypt, because all those who were trying to kill you are dead." So Moses took his wife and his sons, and put them on a donkey. Then he began to travel toward Egypt with them. He was carrying God's walking cane.{19}

Topics: - GOD PUNISHES THE EGYPTIANS

Then Moses went to the king of Egypt and said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, says, `Let My people go!'"

The king demanded, "Who is the LORD? Why should I listen to Him and let the people of Israel go? I don't acknowledge the LORD. No! I won't let them go!"{20}

So, God told Moses to have Aaron hold out the walking cane over the waters of Egypt. All the bodies of water changed to blood. The fish died. The water which had turned into blood smelled so bad that the Egyptians couldn't drink it. There was blood everywhere! This lasted for seven days. But the king refused to listen to Moses.{21}

Then Moses was told by God to say: "If you refuse to let My people go, then I will punish your land; I will cover you up with frogs! The king would not listen. So God made frogs come up from the Nile River. They were everywhere. They were jumping all over the people. Finally, the king had enough, and he begged Moses to pray to the LORD to take the frogs away. The king said he would let the Hebrew people go. Moses prayed and it stopped, but the king changed his mind and would not let the people go.{22}

The LORD told Moses to tell Aaron to hit the ground with the walking cane. The dust became gnats.{23} The gnats covered people and animals. It was terrible. But the king was stubborn; he still would not listen to Moses.{24}

The LORD ordered Moses to send large swarms of flies all over Egypt, especially where the king lived. But no flies were sent to the Goshen area, where the people of Israel lived. Soon the king called for Moses. The king wanted to allow the Hebrew people to worship God inside Egypt, not in the desert, where God commanded them to go. The king said he wouldn't let them go. Therefore, Moses prayed to God to get rid of the flies. The flies left. Then the king changed his mind again; he did not let the people go.{25}

Then God sent animal diseases,{26} boils,{27} heavy hail,{28} swarms of grasshoppers,{29} and three days of darkness.{30}

Topics: - DEATH

Then the LORD said to Moses, "There is still one more disaster that I will bring upon the king of Egypt and his people. After that he will let you go away from this place. In fact, he will force all of you to leave here.{31} About midnight I will pass throughout Egypt, and every firstborn son in Egypt will die -- from the king's son (the heir to the throne) to the son of the grain-grinding slave woman. The firstborn of all the cattle will also die."{32}

This is what you must tell the whole congregation of Israel: On the tenth day of this month, each of you must provide either a sheep or a goat (one per family). However, it must be a one-year-old male lamb{33} or a male kid. It must have no defects. Then, on the evening of the fourteenth day of this month, the entire congregation of Israel will kill their sheep or their goats. The people are to take some of the blood and smear it on the two side doorposts and on the upper doorframe of their homes.

"The animals must be eaten inside their houses. On that particular night, the meat will be roasted. It will be served with bitter herbs and bread which contains no yeast. Don't eat any raw or boiled meat. No, you must eat all of it roasted (including its head, its legs, and inside parts). Leave none of it for the next morning. If any meat is still left, it must be burned."

Topics: - BLOOD

Moses continued, "You must eat the meal in a hurry. Dress for traveling. You must have sandals on your feet and your walking canes in your hands. This is the Passover feast for Me, the LORD. On that night I will pass throughout the land of Egypt, striking down every firstborn male human or animal. I will sit in judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. The blood on the doorposts will be a sign to mark the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. When I punish the land of Egypt, I will not harm you with the disaster.{34} You must celebrate this day with a festival to remind you of what I, the LORD, have done. Celebrate it for all time to come."{35}

At midnight the LORD did kill all the firstborn sons in the land of Egypt -- from the king's own son (the heir to the throne), to the sons of all the prisoners in jail. All the firstborn of the animals were killed, too. That night the king, his officers, and all Egyptians got no sleep. Throughout all Egypt, people were crying loudly. Every home had a dead son. The king sent for Moses that very night. He said, "Get out! You and the sons of Israel must leave my country. Go, worship the Lord. Take your sheep, goats, cattle . . . and get out!"

The Egyptians begged the people to hurry up and get out of the country. They said, "If you don't leave, we will all end up dead!"{36}

Topics: - FREEDOM

There were about 600,000 men of Israel (not counting their women and children.){37} The sons of Israel had lived in Egypt for 430 years. It was on the very last day of the 430th year that all the ranks of the LORD's people left Egypt.{38}

Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, the day you were slaves. The LORD is bringing you out of this place by His great power on this day!{39} The LORD will take you into the land of the people of Canaan. God gave His word to you and to your ancestors that He would do this."{40} God turned them in the direction of the desert toward the Red Sea (the long way).{41}

Topics: - GOING TO THE PROMISED LAND

Moses took Joseph's bones with him. Joseph had made the descendants of Jacob{42} take a vow to do this. Joseph had said, "When God sets you free, you must carry my bones with you from this place."{43}

Topics: - GOD VERSUS THE EGYPTIANS

When the king of Egypt was informed that the people had all gone, he and his officers thought differently. They said, "What have we done? We let them get away. We've lost our slaves!"

The king readied his war chariot and his army. He took off with all of his chariots. (This included 600 of his best chariots under the command of their officers.) The LORD made the king more determined; the king chased the sons of Israel who were leaving Egypt in triumph. The whole Egyptian army -- all of its horses, chariots, and drivers -- pursued the sons of Israel and finally caught up with them near Pi-Hahiroth and Baal-Zephon. That is beside the Red Sea, where they were camping.

When the sons of Israel looked up and saw the king and his army closing in on them, they were terrified. They cried out to the LORD for help, but they said to Moses, "Were there no graves in Egypt? Did you have to bring us out here in the desert to die?"

Look what you have done by bringing us out of Egypt! Before we left, we told you this was going to happen. We told you to leave us alone and let us go on being slaves to the Egyptians. It would be better for us to be slaves than to die here in the desert!"

Moses answered, "Don't be afraid! Stand your ground, and you will see what the LORD will do today to save you. What about these Egyptians? You will never see them again. The LORD will fight for you. Just be still!"

Topics: - CROSSING THE RED SEA

The LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me for help? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. Lift up your walking cane and hold it out over the sea. Divide the sea! The sons of Israel will walk through the sea on dry ground! I will make the Egyptians so determined that they will go in after them. I will gain glory by My victory over the king, his army, his chariots, and his drivers. After I have defeated them, the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord!

An angel of God (who had been in front of Israel's camp) pulled out and went around to the back of the camp. The pillar-like cloud also moved until it was positioned at the rear of the camp, between the Egyptians and the sons of Israel. The cloud made it dark for the Egyptians but it gave light to the people of Israel. And so, the two groups were separated from each other all night.

Moses did hold out his hand over the sea, and the LORD used a strong east wind to drive back the sea. It blew all night and changed the sea to dry ground. The water was now divided. Then the sons of Israel went through the sea on dry ground. There were walls of water on both sides of them. After this, the Egyptians with all their chariots, horses, and drivers chased them into the sea. {44}

Just before dawn, the LORD looked down at the Egyptian army from the column of fire and cloud. He confused the Egyptians. He caused the wheels of their chariots to sink down, so that they could hardly move. The Egyptians said, "The Lord is fighting for the people of Israel against us. Let's get out of here!"

The LORD said to Moses, "Hold out your hand over the sea again, and the water will overwhelm the Egyptians, their chariots, and their drivers." So Moses held out his hand over the sea again, and at daybreak, the water went back to where it was before. The Egyptians tried to escape from the water, but the LORD threw back them back into the sea. The water rushed together and covered the chariots, the drivers, and the whole Egyptian army who had followed the sons of Israel into the sea. None of the Egyptians remained, but the sons of Israel had walked through the sea on dry ground! There were walls of water on both sides of them!

On that day the LORD saved the people of Israel from the Egyptians. {45} Later the sons of Israel saw some of their dead bodies washed up on the shore. The sons of Israel had witnessed some of the great power which the LORD used to defeat the Egyptians. They revered the Lord. They put their trust in the LORD and in Moses, the LORD's servant. {46}

Topics: - THE LORD IS THE TRUE GOD

Later Moses said to the people of Israel, "There is no god in heaven or on earth who can do the mighty things that the LORD has done! {47} Has any god ever dared to go and take a people from another nation to make them his own, as the LORD did for you in Egypt? Before your very eyes, the LORD uses His great power and strength. He brought on plagues and war. He worked miracles and wonders. He caused awesome things to happen. The Lord has shown this to you to prove to you that He alone is the true God. There is no other! He allowed you to hear His voice from the sky, so that He could teach you. He let you see His great fire here on earth; you heard His words come from the fire. He chose you because of His love for your ancestors. {48} Using His mighty power, He personally brought you out of Egypt. {49}

Moses continued to speak to them, "You saw the Lord's greatness, His power, His might, and His miracles. You saw what He did to the king of Egypt and to the king's entire country. You saw how the LORD completely wiped out the Egyptian army, their horses, and their chariots. When the Egyptians chased you, the Lord drowned them in the Red Sea." {50}

Topics: - FORGETTING GOD

However, they soon forgot what God had done for them. Instead of waiting to hear what He had to say, they went ahead and did things on their own. They put God to the test in the desert. So, He had to send a disease upon them. {51} They were jealous of Moses and Aaron. {52} One time the earth opened up and swallowed Dathan. It buried Abiram and his family. Fire came down on their followers and burned up those evil people. {53}

But most of the Jewish people didn't want to obey Moses. They rejected him. In their hearts, they wanted to go back to Egypt. They said to Aaron, "Make us some gods to lead us! Moses brought us out of Egypt, but we don't know what has happened to him." So, the people made an idol which looked like a calf. They were happy with what they had made with their own hands! {54} They worshiped this false god. They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an animal that eats grass! They forgot about God who had saved them by His powerful deeds in Egypt. What miracles He did there! What amazing things He did at the Red Sea! {55}

Topics: - AT MOUNT SINAI

At Mount Sinai, Moses received commands from God which still live. Moses gave these commands to the Jews. {56} Mount Sinai was on fire. There were storms. It was dark and gloomy. There was a blast from a trumpet and a Voice speaking words. The people who heard this Voice begged Moses that nothing be said to them. They could not stand what was ordered. This was such a terrible sight that even Moses said, "I am so afraid that I'm trembling." {57}

Once God said to Moses that He would destroy His people. But Moses, God's chosen servant, argued with God. Moses prevented God's anger from destroying them.{58}

The good land was not good enough for them; they did not believe in God's promise. They sat around in their tents and complained. They wouldn't listen to the LORD. So He gave them a stern warning that He would let them die in the desert{59} and scatter their descendants among the people who were without God, and disperse them throughout many foreign countries.{60}

Topics: - NEARING THE PROMISED LAND

After the people of Israel had come to the land of Canaan, Moses told them, "As you went forward, God drove out nations that were greater and more powerful than you were. God wanted to bring you in and give you their land. So, remember this today and never forget it: In heaven and on earth, the LORD is God. There is no other god. If you obey all of God's laws which I have given you today, then everything will go well with you and your descendants. You will continue to live in the land which the LORD, your God, is giving to you permanently.{61}

"The LORD, your God, will give you this land, just as He promised to your ancestors -- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This land already has large and prosperous cities which you have not had to build. But, when the LORD brings you into this land and you have had all you can eat, be sure that you don't forget the LORD. He rescued you from Egypt. There you were slaves.{62}

Topics: - SEVEN NATIONS

Moses told the young men of Israel to enter the land of Canaan and to drive out seven nations which were larger and more powerful than they.{63} Moses said, "Destroy every nation that the LORD, your God, puts under your control. Don't show them any mercy. Do not worship their gods!{64} The LORD, your God, is with you. He is a great God. He is the One to be feared.{65} No one will be able to stop you. He will destroy everyone.{66}

Topics: - MOSES DIES

Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Mount Pisgah. (It was east of the city of Jericho.) There the LORD showed Moses the view of the entire land of Canaan.{67} (Moses was as strong as ever; his eyesight was still good.){68}

Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land which I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I am allowing you to see it."

Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab. The LORD buried him. No one knows the exact place where he was buried. Moses was 120 years old when he died.{69} There has never been a prophet in Israel like Moses.

Moses had done powerful things and miracles in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the desert for forty years.{70}

Topics: - JOSHUA

After the death of Moses, the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Moses' helper, Joshua. The LORD said, "My servant Moses is dead now. You and all the people must get ready immediately and cross the Jordan River into the land which I am giving to the people of Israel.{71} Joshua, as long as you live, no one will be able to defeat you. Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you. I will always be with you; I will never leave you alone. You must be determined and confident. You will be the leader of these people as they occupy this land which I promised their ancestors. Make sure that you obey the entire law which Moses, My servant, gave to you. If you don't neglect any part of it, you will succeed wherever you go. Be sure that the book of the law is always read aloud when all of you worship together. Study it day and night, and make sure that you obey everything written in the law. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Don't be afraid or discouraged, because I, the LORD, your God, I am with you wherever you go."{72}

Everyone in Canaan was terrified of the LORD's people. They had heard how the LORD had dried up the Red Sea when they left Egypt.{73} Joshua led them to capture the land. They went in and God drove those people out.{74} God destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, giving their land to His people. All of this happened in about 450 years.{75}

Topics: - THEY FELL INTO SIN

But God's people did not kill all of the ungodly people, as the LORD had told them to do. No, they married some of them and started living the same way! They worshiped idols; and this is what destroyed them.{76} They offered their own sons and daughters as sacrifices to the false gods of Canaan.{77} They killed those innocent children, and the land was polluted by those murders.{78} They made themselves impure by their own actions. They were unfaithful to God.

So, the LORD was angry with His people; He was very unhappy with them. He allowed the ungodly people to overpower them. Their enemies ruled over them. They were crushed by their enemies and were under their control. The LORD saved His people many times, but they chose to rebel against Him. They sank deeper into sin.{79}

Topics: - KING DAVID

God gave special leaders to His people until the time of Samuel, the prophet. Then the people asked for a king. God gave them Saul, the son of Kish. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. He was king for forty years. After God removed Saul, God made David their king.{80} God had spoken in a special tent to His people; it was with the people in the desert. God had commanded Moses how to make this tent. Moses made it like the pattern which God showed him.{81} When God's people went into the new land, they took this same tent with them. They had received it from their ancestors. They kept it until the time of David. God was very pleased with David.{82} God vouched for David: "David, the son of Jesse, is the man I like. He will do all the things I want him to do."{83} David asked God to allow him to build a house{84} for Him, the God of Jacob, but Solomon{85} was the one who actually built it.

However, the Highest One{86} does not live in houses which men build with their hands.{87}

Topics: - THEY TURNED AWAY FROM GOD

But God turned against them. He stopped trying to change their hearts. They were worshiping the sun, the moon, and the stars. This is what the prophet Amos wrote: "God says, `People of Israel, you killed animals and offered sacrifices in the desert for forty years, but these sacrifices were not for Me. You carried with you the tent for Moloch{88} and the image of the star of your god, Rephan. So, I will send you away beyond Babylon.'" {89}

The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent warnings to them through His prophets again and again. God felt sorry for them; He also wanted to spare His temple. But they made fun of God's prophets, they paid no attention to God's words, and they laughed at His prophets. Finally, the LORD became very angry with His people. There was no cure!{90}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES OF LESSON TWO:

{1} Exodus 1:6

{2} Acts 13:17

{3} Acts 7:17

{4} Exodus 1:6-14

{5} Exodus 1:20,22

{6} See Hebrews 11:23.

{7} a plant which grows along the Nile River. The word "paper" comes from this word. When papyrus plants were cut into strips and criss-crossed, they could be pressed together to make a crude form of paper. Early copies of the New Testament were written on this material and still exist today.

{8} Hebrews 11:24: By faith, when Moses had grown up, he said no to being called "Pharaoh's daughter's son."

{9} This name is very similar to the Hebrew verb which means "drawn out."

{10} Exodus 2:1-10

{11} Hebrews 11:25-26: God's people were being mistreated. Moses chose to be mistreated also, instead of having fun for a while doing sinful things. Suffering shame for the Messiah was more important to Moses than the rich treasures of Egypt. He was looking ahead to the reward.

{12} Hebrews 11:27: By faith, Moses left Egypt behind. He was not afraid of making the king angry. Moses kept going toward the unseen One, as though he could see Him.

{13} Acts 7:23-29; See Exodus 2:11-16.

{14} Exodus 2:23-25

{15} Acts 7:30-34; See Exodus 3:1-9.

{16} Exodus 3:10

{17} Yahweh, the Hebrew name of God

{18} Exodus 3:15-20

{19} Exodus 4:19-20

{20} Exodus 5:1-2

{21} See Exodus 7:14-25.

{22} See Exodus 8:1-15.

{23} a small insect that bites

{24} See Exodus 8:16-19.

{25} See Exodus 8:20-32.

{26} See Exodus 9:1-7.

{27} See Exodus 9:8-12.

{28} See Exodus 9:13-35.

{29} See Exodus 10:1-20.

{30} See Exodus 10:21-29.

{31} Exodus 11:1

{32} Exodus 11:4-5; There is a reason why God allowed Pharaoh to become a leader. God wanted to show His own power through Pharaoh. God wanted His name to spread to the whole world. See Romans 9:17.

{33} 1 Corinthians 5:7: Christ, our Passover lamb, was sacrificed.

- {34} Hebrews 11:28: By faith, Moses ate the Passover meal. He made them put blood over their doors. Then the destroyer would pass over their houses and not kill their oldest sons.
- {35} Exodus 12:3,5-14
- {36} Exodus 12:29-33
- {37} Exodus 12:37
- {38} Exodus 12:40-41
- {39} Exodus 13:3
- {40} Exodus 13:11
- {41} Exodus 13:18
- {42} literally, Israel
- {43} See Genesis 50:24-25.
- {44} See Hebrews 11:29
- {45} See 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.
- {46} Exodus 14:5-31
- {47} Deuteronomy 3:24
- {48} Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others
- {49} Deuteronomy 4:34-37
- {50} Deuteronomy 11:2-4
- {51} See Numbers 11:4-34.
- {52} the brother of Moses
- {53} Psalm 106:13-18; See Numbers 16:1-35.
- {54} Acts 7:39-41
- {55} Psalm 106:19-22
- {56} Acts 7:38
- {57} Hebrews 12:18-21; See Deuteronomy 9:19.
- {58} Psalm 106:23; See Exodus 32:1-14.
- {59} See Numbers 14:1-35.
- {60} See Leviticus 26:33.
- {61} Deuteronomy 4:38-40
- {62} Deuteronomy 6:10-12
- {63} Deuteronomy 7:1
- {64} Deuteronomy 7:16
- {65} Deuteronomy 7:21
- {66} Deuteronomy 7:24
- {67} Deuteronomy 34:1
- {68} Deuteronomy 34:7
- {69} Deuteronomy 34:4-7
- {70} Acts 7:36
- {71} Joshua 1:1-2
- {72} Joshua 1:5-9
- {73} Joshua 2:9-10
- {74} Acts 7:45; Hebrews 11:30-31: By faith, the walls of the city of Jericho fell down, after it had been surrounded for seven days. By faith, Rahab gladly welcomed the spies. She was not killed along with the people who did not obey. See Joshua 6:15-25.
- {75} Acts 13:19-20
- {76} See Judges 2:1-3; 3:5-6.
- {77} See 2 Kings 17:17.
- {78} See Numbers 35:33.
- {79} Psalm 106:34-43; See Judges 2:14-18.
- {80} Acts 13:20-22
- {81} Acts 7:44
- {82} Acts 7:45-46
- {83} Acts 13:22
- {84} temple
- {85} David's son
- {86} God
- {87} Acts 7:46-48
- {88} a false god
- {89} Acts 7:42-43; See Amos 5:25-27.
- {90} 2 Chronicles 36:15-16; See also Matthew 21:33-46.

START OF LESSON THREE

Topics: - GOD PROMISED DAVID

About one thousand years before Jesus was born, God had promised this to David: “After you are dead and buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your sons to be King and I will establish his kingdom. He will be the one to build a house{1} for Me.{2} I will make sure that the throne of his kingdom continues forever. You will always have descendants, and I will cause your kingdom to last forever. Your rule will never end.”{3}

When the right time came, God sent His Son.{4} Though the law was given through Moses, gracious love and truth have come through Jesus Christ.{5}

Topics: - HOW JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ occurred:{6} The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin who lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee. The virgin girl was engaged to marry a man named Joseph, from the family of David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Greetings! The Lord God is with you. He has blessed you.”

But Mary was very disturbed about what the angel said. She wondered, “What does this mean?”

The angel said to her, “Don't be afraid, Mary, because God has blessed you. Listen! You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. And you will name him Jesus. He will be great. People will call him the Son of the Highest One. The Lord God will give him the authority of King David, his ancestor. Jesus will rule over the people of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never end.”

Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen? I have no sexual relations with any man.”

The angel said to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest One will cover you. The holy baby will be called God's Son. With God, nothing is impossible!”{7}

Topics: - JOSEPH

Before Joseph and Mary were married, it was discovered that she was pregnant (by the Holy Spirit)! However, Joseph, her husband to be, was a fair man; he did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to quietly call off the marriage. He was thinking deeply upon these things when, suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, descendant of David, don't be afraid to take to be your wife Mary. The baby inside her comes from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. You will name him Jesus,{8} because he will save his people from their sins. The Lord spoke about this through the prophet Isaiah. All these things occurred to make this come true: ‘Listen! The virgin will be pregnant and give birth to a son. They will name him Emmanuel{9} (which means, God is with us).’“{10}

When Joseph woke up from sleeping, he did as the angel of the Lord had ordered him to do; he took to be his wife Mary. He did not have sexual relations with her, until she gave birth to the little boy.{11}

When the baby was eight days old, he was circumcised.{12} Then he was named Jesus. (This name was given by the angel before the baby began to grow inside Mary's womb.){13}

Topics: - WHEN JESUS WAS TWELVE

Every year Jesus' parents traveled to Jerusalem{14} for the Passover Festival.{15} When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem to the feast, as they always did. When the feast days were over, they were returning home, but the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't know about it. Joseph and Mary traveled for a whole day. They thought that Jesus was with them in the caravan. They began to look for him among their relatives and close friends, but Joseph and Mary didn't find Jesus. So, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him there. After three days, they found him. Jesus was sitting in the temple courtyard among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone heard him. They were amazed at his understanding and wise answers. When Jesus' parents saw him, they were very surprised. His mother said to him, “Son, why did you treat us like this? Your father and I were very worried about you. We were looking everywhere for you.”

Jesus asked them, “Why did you have to look for me? You should have known that I must be where my Father's house is!” But they did not understand the meaning of what he said to them.

Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth. He always obeyed them. His mother was still thinking about all of these things. Jesus grew taller and continued to learn more and more. People liked him, and he pleased God.{16}

Topics: - 18 YEARS LATER

This is how the Good News about Jesus Christ, God's Son, began:{17} It was like what Isaiah the prophet wrote: “Listen! I am sending My messenger{18} to go ahead of you. He will prepare the way for you.”{19} “There is a voice crying out in the desert: ‘Prepare the Lord's road. Make His paths straight.’“{20}

In the desert, John was immersing people. He was preaching this message: “Change your hearts and be immersed for the forgiveness of sins!” Everyone in Jerusalem and from the land of Judea was going out to John. They were admitting that they had sinned. Then he was immersing them in the Jordan River. John always wore clothes made of camel hair.{21} He had a leather belt

around his waist. He ate grasshoppers and wild honey. John preached, "I immersed you in water, but there is one coming later who is more important than I am. I'm not worthy to bend down to untie his shoelace. He will immerse you in the Holy Spirit." {22}

At that time, Jesus came down from the town of Nazareth in Galilee. {23} John saw Jesus coming toward him. John said, "Look, God's Lamb who will take away the world's sin! This is the one I was talking about: 'The man who is coming behind me has been ahead of me, because he was alive before I was.' I didn't know him. Why did I come, immersing people in water? To show him to the people of Israel. {24}

John immersed him in the Jordan River. Suddenly, as Jesus was coming up from the water, he saw the sky separate. The Spirit was like a dove coming down to Jesus. A Voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him!"

Immediately, the Spirit made Jesus go into the desert. Satan was testing Jesus for forty days in the desert. Jesus was with the wild animals, but the angels were helping him. {25}

Topics: - JESUS BEGINS TO PREACH

Jesus went to the land of Galilee. {26} He was preaching the Good News about God: "The time is ripe. The kingdom of God is very near! Change your hearts and believe in the Good News!"

While Jesus was walking beside Lake Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon's brother. They were fishermen. They were throwing their nets into the lake. Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishermen -- of people!" Immediately, they left their nets and followed him.

Jesus went a little farther and saw James and his brother, John. They were in a boat preparing their nets. They were sons of Zebedee. Suddenly, Jesus invited them, too. They left their father, Zebedee, in the boat with the hired workers. And they followed Jesus. {27}

Topics: - JESUS AMONG THE PEOPLE

Jesus traveled to a place to be alone. The people were looking for Jesus. When they found him, they wouldn't let him leave. But Jesus said to them, "I must tell the Good News about God's kingdom to other towns, too. This is why I was sent." {28} But the news about Jesus was spreading more and more. Many people were coming to listen to him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Often Jesus went away to other places to be alone, so that he could pray. {29}

Jesus went into a synagogue. {30} A man with a crippled hand was there. Some Jewish leaders were waiting to see if Jesus would heal the man on the Sabbath day. {31} They wanted to see Jesus do something wrong, so that they could accuse him. Jesus said to the man with the crippled hand, "Stand in the middle." Then Jesus said to the Jewish leaders, "I ask you, which is right on the Sabbath day, to do good or to do evil? Is it right to save a life or to destroy one?" But they wouldn't answer. Jesus looked around at all of them. He was angry, but he was sad, too, because their hearts were hard. He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" The man stretched it out. His hand was restored. Immediately, the Pharisees {32} and the followers of Herod Antipas {33} left. They began to make a plot to kill Jesus. {34}

Topics: - JESUS QUIETS A STORM

After teaching the people, Jesus said to his apostles, "Let us go across Lake Galilee." Jesus was in the boat. They took him and left the crowd. Other boats went with him. Suddenly, there was a storm -- a strong wind. The waves were getting into the boat; it was about to be filled with water. But Jesus was in the back of the boat, asleep on a pillow. They woke him up, saying, "Teacher, we are going to die; don't you care?"

Jesus woke up and gave an order to the wind and the waves of the lake, "Be still! Stop!" The wind stopped blowing; it was very calm. Jesus said to them, "Why were you so afraid? Do you not yet have faith?"

They were very frightened. They continued to say to one another, "What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the lake obey him!" {35}

Topics: - JESUS RAISES THE DEAD

On another day Jesus went to a town called Nain. His followers and a large group of people were traveling with him. When Jesus came near the town gate, he saw a funeral procession. A mother had lost her only son. She was also a widow. A large crowd from the town was there with the mother while the dead son was being carried out. When the Lord Jesus saw her, he felt very sorry for her. He said to her, "Don't cry." Jesus came near the coffin and touched it. The men who were carrying it stopped. Jesus said, "Young man, I tell you, get up!" Then the dead son sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him to his mother.

All of the people felt much respect. They were praising God. They said, "A great prophet has come to us!" and, "God is taking care of His people."

This news about Jesus spread into all Judea and throughout all the places around there. {36}

Topics: - JESUS AND THE PEOPLE

Another time Jesus knew that some Jewish people were about to come and take him, so that they could make him a king. So, he left again for the mountains to be alone. {37}

Jesus came to his hometown. His followers went along behind him. When the Sabbath day came, Jesus began to teach in the synagogue. Many people were listening; they were amazed. They said, "Where did Jesus get all these things? Who gave him this wisdom? How do such miracles happen by his hands? He is the one who works with wood. He is the son of Mary. His brothers are: James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. His sisters are here with us, too." They were ashamed of Jesus.

Jesus said this to them: "A prophet is not accepted in his own hometown, or among his relatives, or in his own family." {38}

Topics: - HUMAN TRADITION

Some teachers of the law and some Pharisees came from Jerusalem to get together with Jesus. They saw that some of Jesus' followers were eating with unholy (that is, unwashed) hands. (The Pharisees and all the Jewish people wouldn't eat unless they had washed their hands with a ceremony. They carefully obeyed the old rules of the elders. They wouldn't eat anything from the marketplace, unless they had washed it. They had received many other rules about washing cups, pots, and copper bowls which they had to obey.) The Pharisees and the teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why are your followers breaking the old rules of the elders? They are eating bread with unholy hands!"

Jesus said to them, "How right Isaiah was when he prophesied about you hypocrites. {39} As it is written: 'These people honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. It does no good for them to worship Me. They teach rules made by men, not God!' {40} You have forgotten about God's command and you are obeying the old rules of man!" Jesus continued to speak to them, "You have a clever way of rejecting God's command, so that you may keep your traditions. {41} You are taking away the authority of God's teaching by using the traditions you have received. And you are doing many other things like this." {42}

Topics: - SIN

Again, Jesus called for the crowd. He said to them, "Listen and understand! What goes into the mouth from the outside is not able to make a person unholy. No, the things which come out of the mouth make a person unholy."

Jesus went into a house away from the crowd. His followers began asking him about the story.

Jesus said to them, "Do you still not understand? You know that everything which goes into a person from the outside is not able to make him unholy. It does not go into his heart. No, it enters his stomach. Then it comes out as waste. (Here Jesus was saying that all foods are clean.) But, what comes out of the mouth of a person makes him unholy. These things come from the inside of man's heart: evil thoughts, sexual sin, stealing, murder, adultery, greed, all kinds of evil things, treachery, sensuality, jealousy, slander, bragging, foolishness, etc. All these evil things come from the inside; they make a person unholy." {43}

Topics: - HELPING PEOPLE

Then a teacher of the law stood up. (He was trying to test Jesus.) He asked Jesus, "Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?"

Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?"

The man answered, "'You must love the Lord your God from all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.' {44} Also, 'You must love your neighbor {45} the same way you love yourself.'" {46}

Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you will have life forever."

But the man wanted to make himself look good. So, he said to Jesus, "But . . . who is my neighbor?"

Jesus understood what the man meant. So, Jesus said, "A Jewish man was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Some bandits surrounded him. They tore off his clothes and beat him up. Then they left him lying there on the ground. He was almost dead. By chance, a Jewish priest was going down that same road. When the priest saw the man, he didn't stop to help him; he just walked away. Next, a Levite {47} came to the spot, too. The Levite saw him, but he went around him. He wouldn't stop to help him either; he also walked away. A Samaritan man {48} was traveling down the road. He came to the place where the man was lying. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. The Samaritan went to him and poured olive oil and wine on his wounds. Then he bandaged the man's wounds. The Samaritan had a donkey. He put the man on his donkey and took him to a hotel where he took care of him. The next day, the Samaritan brought out two silver coins and gave them to the person who worked at the hotel. The Samaritan said, 'Take care of this man. If you spend any more money on him than this, I'll pay you back when I return.'"

Then Jesus said, "Which one of these three men do you think was a real neighbor to the one who was hurt by the thieves?"

The teacher of the law answered, "The one who showed mercy to him."

Jesus said to him, "Then you go and do the same thing!" {49}

Topics: - COMMITMENT

God loved the people of the world so much that He gave up His only Son. Every person who commits himself to Jesus will not be destroyed. Instead, that person will have eternal life. God did not send His Son into the world to judge it. God sent Jesus, so that

the people of the world could be saved through him. The person who commits himself to Jesus is not condemned, but the one who does not commit himself to Jesus has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of God's only Son.

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness{50} more than they loved light{51} because the things which they were doing were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light. He does not come toward the light. He doesn't want his evil deeds to be exposed. But the person who is living the truth comes toward the light. He wants his actions to become clear, because he did them for God.{52}

Topics: - THE JEWISH LEADERS OPPOSE JESUS

Jesus said to some Jesus leaders, "You are always searching the Scriptures, because you think you will find eternal life in them. But the Scriptures are giving proof about me! You don't want to come to me, so that you may have eternal life. I don't accept praise from men, but I know you -- you don't have love for God in your hearts. I have come with the authority of my Father and you are not accepting me. If someone else comes with his own authority, you will accept him. How can you believe? You accept praise from one another. You are not looking for praise from the only true God. Don't think that I will accuse you to your father. Moses is the one you trust. He is accusing you! If you believed Moses, you would have believed me because he wrote about me.{53} If you won't believe in what he wrote, how can you believe in my words?"{54}

Topics: - WHO IS JESUS?

When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he began to ask his followers, "Who do people say I{55} am?"

They answered, "Some people say you are John (the one who immerses people). Other people say you are Elijah. And some people say you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!"

"Upon this rock foundation,"{56} Jesus answered, "I will build my community -- those called out by God. Death{57} will not overpower them. Blessed are you, Simon, son of John. My Father in heaven, not man, showed that to you. You are Peter.{58} I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.{59}

Topics: - JESUS PREDICTS HIS OWN DEATH

From then on, Jesus began to show his followers that he must go away to Jerusalem; that the Jewish elders, the most important priests, and the teachers of the law would make him suffer many things; that he would be killed, but on the third day, he would rise from death.{60}

Topics: - LOVING JESUS

Jesus said, "The person who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. The person who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. The person who does not accept his cross{61} and follow me is not worthy of me. The person who finds his life will lose it, but the person who gives his life away because of me will find it.{62} Every person who has left his home, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, or fields (because of me and because of the Good News) will surely be rewarded 100 times more now, in this time, with houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, fields -- with persecutions! However, he will get eternal life in the next age."{63}

Then some people brought their small children to Jesus, so that he could touch them, but his followers told the people to stop doing that. When Jesus saw this, it bothered him. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to people who are like these little children. I am telling you the truth: You must accept God's kingdom as a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it!" Jesus put his arms around the children. He put his hands on them and blessed them.{64}

Many people were traveling with Jesus. He turned around and said to them, "If someone comes to me, yet that person loves his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters more than he loves me, he cannot be my follower. A person must love me more than he loves himself! The person who does not carry his own cross{65} cannot be my follower.{66}

Topics: - THE JEWISH LEADERS TRY TO CAPTURE JESUS

The most important priests and the Pharisees sent some guards to arrest Jesus. Some of the people in the crowd were saying, "Surely he is the prophet!"

Other people said, "This man is the Messiah!"

Still others said, "The Messiah does not come from the land of Galilee! The Scripture said that the coming Messiah would be from David's family and from Bethlehem, the village where David lived." So, the people in the crowd were divided because of Jesus. Some of them were wanting to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him.

Later the guards came back to the most important priests and Pharisees. They asked the guards, "Why didn't you bring back Jesus?"

The guards answered, "No man ever spoke like this!"{67}

Topics: - THEY WANT TO KILL JESUS

The most important priests and the Pharisees called a meeting. They asked each other, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many miracles! If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and take us away -- our holy place and our nation." One of them was Caiaphas. He was the high priest that year. He said to them, "You know nothing! Don't you think it would be better for one man to die for the people, than for the whole nation to be destroyed?" (Caiaphas did not say this on his own. But, since he was the high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the Jewish nation. And not only for them, but also so that all God's scattered children might be gathered together into one people.) From that day forward, they plotted to kill Jesus.{68}

Many people, even some of the leaders, believed in Jesus. But they would not say that they believed, because they were afraid of the Pharisees. They didn't want to be thrown out of the synagogues. They loved praise from man more than praise from God.{69}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES OF LESSON THREE:

{1} or, temple

{2} See John 2:18-22.

{3} 2 Samuel 7:12-13,16; See Isaiah 11:10; 55:3; Amos 9:11-12/Acts 15:16-17; Daniel 2:44; Jeremiah 23:5; Romans 1:3-4; Revelation 5:5

{4} Galatians 4:4

{5} John 1:17

{6} Matthew 1:18

{7} Luke 1:26-35,37

{8} "Jesus" (Yeshua) comes from a Hebrew word which means "Yahweh (God) is salvation."

{9} Isaiah 7:14

[10] Isaiah 8:8

[11] Matthew 1:18-25

[12] They cut off the foreskin of the male sex organ of every Jewish baby boy. It was a sign of God's agreement with Abraham and his descendants. See Genesis 17:9-14.

[13] See Luke 2:1-21.

[14] This was the city of David, the capitol of the Jewish nation. God's temple was there. It was also called Zion.

[15] a yearly feast which reminded Jews of the time when the death angel "passed over" their homes in Egypt. See Exodus 12:21-28.

[16] Luke 2:41-52

[17] Mark 1:1

[18] John the Immerser

[19] Malachi 3:1

[20] Isaiah 40:3

[21] This is the way a prophet dressed. See 1 Kings 19:19.

[22] Mark 1:1-8

[23] Mark 1:9

[24] John 1:29-31

[25] Mark 1:9-13

[26] See Isaiah 9:1-2; Compare Matthew 4:12,16,23.

[27] Mark 1:14-20

[28] Luke 4:42-43

[29] Luke 5:15-16

[30] a religious building where Jews gather to read the law of Moses and the writings of the prophets, and to worship God

[31] the Jewish day of rest, a very holy day to them

[32] The name means "separated ones." This was an influential Jewish sect at that time. They were very strict in their interpretation of the law of Moses.

[33] literally, the Herodians. They were a Jewish political group who favored Roman rule.

[34] Mark 3:1-6

[35] Mark 4:35-41

[36] Luke 7:11-17

[37] John 6:15

[38] Mark 6:1-4

[39] Mark 7:1-6

[40] Isaiah 29:13

[41] Mark 7:8-9

- [42] Mark 7:13
- [43] Mark 7:14-23
- [44] Deuteronomy 6:5
- [45] other people
- [46] Leviticus 19:18
- [47] Levites helped Jewish priests. Both were from the tribe of Levi. See 1 Chronicles 23:28-32.
- [48] Samaritans and Jews hated each other. Samaritans, who were partly Jewish, had become mixed with non-Jews in marriage, custom, and religion.
- [49] Luke 10:25-37
- [50] sin
- [51] what is good
- [52] John 3:16-21
- [53] See Deuteronomy 18:15,16,19: "The Lord your God will raise up a prophet for you who is like me. He will come from among your own people. You must obey everything he tells you. If any person does not obey that prophet, he will die, cut off from God's people."
- [54] John 5:39-46
- [55] literally, the Son of Man
- [56] The Greek word is *petra*, feminine gender.
- [57] literally, the gates of Hades
- [58] The Greek word is *petros*, masculine gender.
- [59] Matthew 16:13-19; See Acts 2:14-42.
- [60] Matthew 16:21
- [61] responsibility from God
- [62] Matthew 10:37-39
- [63] Mark 10:29-30
- [64] Mark 10:13-16
- [65] suffering
- [66] Luke 14:25-27
- [67] John 7:32,40-46
- [68] John 11:47-53; See Genesis 12:1-3 and 1 John 2:2.
- [69] John 12:42-43

START OF LESSON FOUR

Topics: - JESUS WILL DIE IN JERUSALEM

Jesus and his followers were on the road, going up to Jerusalem. Jesus was walking ahead of them. This surprised them. Those who were following were afraid. Then Jesus took the twelve apostles aside. He began to tell them what was about to happen to him. "Listen! We are going up to Jerusalem. The most important priests and the teachers of the law will turn against me. {1} They will condemn me to death. Then they will give me to non-Jewish men. Those people will laugh at me, spit on me, beat me with whips, and kill me, but I will rise from death on the third day." {2}

When Jesus and his followers were coming near to Jerusalem, close to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany at Olive Mountain, Jesus sent two of his followers on ahead. They brought a young donkey to Jesus and threw their clothes on top of it. Jesus sat on it. Many people spread their clothes on the road. Other people cut down branches in the fields, and spread them on the road, too. The people in front and in back were shouting, "Hosanna! {3} Give praise to this one who is coming by the authority of the Lord God. {4} Give praise to the future kingdom of our ancestor, David. Hosanna to God!" {5}

Topics: - AT THE TEMPLE

They came into Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple courtyard and he began to throw out all the people who were selling pigeons. Jesus was not allowing anyone to carry a jar through the temple courtyard. {6} Jesus was teaching them, "It is written in the Scriptures, 'My house will be called a place of prayer for all nations.' {7} But you have changed it into a hiding place for thieves!" When the most important priests and teachers of the law heard this, they continued trying to find a way to kill Jesus. They were afraid of Jesus, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching. {8}

Topics: - JUDAS BETRAYS JESUS

The most important priests and the teachers of the law were trying to find a way to kill Jesus. They planned to use a trick to arrest him. They were saying this: "Let us not begin during the Passover Festival, so that there will be no trouble among the people." {9}

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, went away to talk to the most important priests. He had turned against Jesus; he wanted to give Jesus to them. When they heard this, they were pleased. They promised to give Judas some money, if he would do what he planned. Judas was waiting for the best way to give Jesus to them. {10}

Topics: - THE LORD'S SUPPER

While they were eating, Jesus took bread and gave thanks. He broke off some of it and gave it to them. He said, "Take it. This bread is {11} my body." Then he took a cup. He gave thanks to God for it and gave it to them. He said, "All of you, drink from it. This is my blood for the agreement. It is being poured out for many people. I am telling you the truth: I will never drink the fruit of the vine again, until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Then they sang a song of praise and went out to Olive Mountain. {12}

Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be ashamed of me. This is written: 'I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.' {13} But after I rise from death, I will go ahead of you to the land of Galilee." {14}

Topics: - JESUS PRAYS

Then they went to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to his followers, "Sit here while I go pray." He took Peter, James, and John along with him. He began to feel very sad and depressed. Then he said to them, "My soul is full of sorrow; I am going to die. Stay here and be watchful." Then Jesus went ahead a short distance and fell down on the ground. He was praying that, if possible, this time might pass away from him. He continued to pray, "Father, dear Father, all things are possible for You. Take away this cup of suffering away from me, but what You want is more important than what I want."

Then Jesus came and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, "Are you asleep, Simon? Were you not strong enough to watch one hour? Watch and pray for strength against temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Again Jesus went away. He prayed the same prayer. Once more, Jesus came and found them sleeping. Their eyes were very tired. They didn't know what to say to him. Jesus came back the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? That's enough! The time has come. Listen! {15} I am being handed over to sinful men. Get up, we must go. Look! The one who turned against me is near!" {16}

Topics: - JESUS IS ARRESTED

And, immediately, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve apostles, came. There was a crowd with him. They had come from the most important priests, the teachers of the law, and the Jewish elders. They had sticks and swords. Judas had given them a signal: "Arrest the man whom I kiss; {17} lead him away carefully." Immediately Judas came to Jesus and said to him, "Rabbi!" {18} Then Judas kissed him.

Then they reached out and grabbed Jesus. One of the men standing nearby pulled out his sword. He struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Jesus asked them, "Why did you come out here with swords and sticks? Do you think I am a criminal? I was teaching in the temple courtyard every day. You did not arrest me there. No, this occurred to make the Scriptures come true." Then all of Jesus' followers left him. They ran away. {19}

Topics: - THE MOCK TRIAL

They brought Jesus to the high priest. All of the important priests, the teachers of the law, and the Jewish elders came together. Peter followed Jesus from a distance. He came as far as the high priest's courtyard. He was sitting with the servants, warming himself by the fire.

The most important priests in the whole Jewish Council wanted to find some men who would give evidence against Jesus, so that they could kill him. But, they did not find any real proof. Many people were telling lies against Jesus, but their testimony did not match. Some men stood up and told lies against Jesus, "We heard this man say, 'I will destroy this temple sanctuary built by men and build another one in three days without human hands!'" Their testimony still did not agree. The high priest stood up in the center and asked Jesus, "Aren't you going to answer? What they are saying against you is it true?" Jesus continued to be silent; he gave no answers.

Again, the high priest asked Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Jesus said, "I am! You will see the Son of Man {20} sitting at the right side of God. {21} 'He will be coming with the clouds of the sky!'" {22}

Then the high priest ripped his own clothes. {23} He said, "Why do we need any more witnesses? You heard the evil thing that Jesus said. How does it look to you?"

They all condemned him, saying, "He is guilty! He should be killed!" Some of them began to spit on Jesus. They covered his face and hit him with their fists. They said to him, "Prophecy!" And when the guards took charge of him, they started beating him up. {24}

Topics: - JESUS IS TAKEN TO PILATE

It was early in the morning. The most important priests, the teachers of the law, and the Jewish elders -- the whole council -- were soon ready. They tied-up Jesus, took him, and gave him to Pilate. {25} Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Yes." {26} There were many important priests there accusing Jesus. Again, Pilate asked him, "Won't you say something? Look at how many charges they are bringing against you!"

But Jesus gave no answers. Pilate was surprised. {27}

At each Passover Feast, Pilate always set one prisoner free, the one whom the people wanted. A man named Barabbas was arrested with some rebels. They had committed murder during a riot. The crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do the same he always did for them.

Pilate answered them, "Do you want me to release the King of the Jews for you?" (Pilate knew they had turned over Jesus over to him because they were jealous of Jesus.)

The most important priests made the people excited. They wanted Pilate to set Barabbas free for them, instead of Jesus.

Again, Pilate asked them, "What should I do with Jesus, the one you call 'King of the Jews'?"

They yelled again, "Nail him to a cross!"

Pilate said to them, "Why? What crime has Jesus done?"

But they continued to yell even more, "Nail him to a cross!"

Pilate wanted to please the people. So, he set Barabbas free for them. After beating Jesus with whips, Pilate handed over him over to be nailed to the cross. {28}

Topics: - JESUS NAILED TO THE CROSS

The soldiers took Jesus inside the courtyard of the Roman fortress. The whole group gathered around Jesus. They dressed him with a purple robe. They used thorny branches to make a crown. Then they began to salute Jesus, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They hit Jesus many times on the head with a stick and they were spitting on him. They kneeled down and acted as though they were worshiping him. When they finished making fun of him, they took off the purple robe and dressed him with his own clothes. Then they led him away to nail him to the cross. {29}

There was a man coming into the city from the fields. He was Simon, from the city of Cyrene. (He was the father of Alexander and Rufus. {30}) They forced him to carry Jesus' cross. {31}

They brought Jesus to the place of Golgotha. (This means "The Place of the Skull.") They gave him some wine mixed with myrrh, {32} but Jesus didn't drink it. Then they nailed him to the cross. The soldiers gambled to see who would get Jesus' clothes. It was about nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed Jesus to the cross. At the top of the cross they nailed up his crime with these words: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Along with Jesus, two criminals were nailed to crosses. One was on his right side. The other was on his left. The people who were passing by shook their heads and said terrible things to Jesus. They said, "Bah! You were the one who was going to destroy the temple sanctuary and build it again in three days! Save yourself! Come on down from the cross!"

The most important priests, together with the teachers of the law, made fun of Jesus in the same way. They continued to say, "He saved other people, but he cannot save himself! He is the King of Israel, the Messiah; let him come down from the cross now, so that we can see and believe."

Even the men who were nailed to other crosses were insulting Jesus. {33}

Topics: - DARKNESS

From noon until three o'clock in the afternoon, there was darkness over the whole land. About three o'clock, Jesus cried out loudly, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabakthani?" (This means: "My God, my God, why did You abandon me?")

Some of the men standing there heard this. They said, "Look! He is calling Elijah." {34} Someone ran and soaked a sponge in some sour wine. Then he put it on the end of a long stick {35} and gave Jesus a drink. Someone said, "Leave him alone! Let us see if Elijah will come down for him!"

The soldiers said, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!"

One of the criminals who was hanging there began to say awful things to Jesus: "Aren't you the Messiah? Then save yourself! And save us, too!"

But the other criminal stopped him. He said, "You should fear God! All of us are about to die! You and I are guilty; we should be killed, because we did wrong. But this man Jesus has done nothing wrong!" Then he said to Jesus, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!"

Then Jesus said to him, "I am telling you the truth: Today you will be with me in Paradise!"

There was no sun! The curtain hanging between The Holy Place and The Most Holy Place in the temple was torn right down the middle. Jesus shouted, "Father, I put my spirit into Your hands." After Jesus said this, he died. {36}

There was a Roman army officer standing there in front of Jesus. When he saw the way Jesus died, he said, "This man really was God's Son!" {37}

Topics: - JESUS IS BURIED

It was already getting late. It was Preparation Day,{38} the day before the Sabbath. Joseph came. He was from the town of Arimathea. He was a very important member of the Jewish Council. He was expecting the kingdom of God, too. He dared to go to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised that Jesus had already died. He called for the army officer to ask him whether Jesus had been dead for a long time. When Pilate found out from the officer that Jesus was dead, he gave the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a sheet. He took down the body down from the cross and wrapped it in the sheet. Then he put Jesus' body into a tomb which he had cut out of solid rock. He rolled a stone in front of the doorway of the tomb. Mary (the one from the town of Magdala) and Mary (the mother of Jesus) were watching where the body was placed.{39}

Topics: - JESUS RISES FROM DEATH

After the Sabbath day, when Sunday{40} morning was dawning, Mary (the one from Magdala) and the other Mary were on their way to look at the grave. Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He went to the large stone in the doorway of the tomb and rolled it away. Then the angel sat on top of it. His appearance was shining like lightning. His clothes were as white as snow. The men who were guarding the tomb acted as if they were dead men; they trembled with fear.

The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus who was nailed to the cross. He is not here! He was raised from death, just as he said. Come, look at the place where he lay. Go quickly and tell his followers: 'Jesus has been raised from death! Listen, he will go ahead of you to the land of Galilee. You will see him there.' Remember, I told you."

The women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, yet very happy. They ran to tell Jesus' followers. Suddenly, Jesus met them. He said, "Greetings!" They went to him, held onto his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid. Go tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee. They will see me there."{41}

Topics: - THE LIE

While the women were going, some of the guards went into Jerusalem. They told the most important priests everything which had happened. The priests had a meeting with the Jewish elders. They decided to give the soldiers some money to lie. They said to the soldiers, "Say this: 'While we were sleeping, the followers of Jesus came at night and stole his body.' If the governor hears about this, we will make him believe us. We will fix it; don't worry." So, the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. This rumor has spread among Jewish people until this very day.{42}

Topics: - JESUS APPEARS TO HIS FOLLOWERS

Jesus' friends were crying; they were so sad. Mary (the one from Magdala) went and told them. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that he had been seen by Mary, they didn't believe it.{43}

After this, while two more of them were walking to a field, Jesus used a different form to appear to them. They went back and told this to the other followers, but the followers didn't believe them, either.{44}

It was late that same Sunday. The doors were locked where the followers were gathered. They were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood in the middle of them. He said to them, "Peace be to you."{45} They began to be filled with fear. They were terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost. But Jesus asked, "Why are you disturbed? Why do you doubt what you see? Look at my hands and my feet. It is really me! Touch me. You can see that I have a living body; a ghost doesn't have a body like this."

After Jesus told them this, he showed them the holes in his hands and feet. They were amazed and very, very happy to see that he was alive. They still couldn't believe it. So Jesus asked them, "Do you have any food here?" They gave him a piece of cooked fish. While they watched, Jesus took it and ate it.

Jesus said to them, "Do you remember when I was with you before? I said that everything written about me must come true -- everything written in the law of Moses, the books of the prophets, and the Psalms."

Then Jesus explained the Scriptures. He helped them to understand the things which had been written about him. Then Jesus said to them, "It is written that the Messiah would be killed and come back to life on the third day. You saw these things happen. You must go and tell all nations{46} that their sins can be forgiven."{47} They were happy. Then Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you. I am sending you just as the Father has sent me." After Jesus said this, he breathed on them{48} and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you say some people are forgiven, then they are forgiven. But, if you say that the sins of some people are not forgiven, then they are not forgiven."{49}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES OF LESSON FOUR:

{1} literally, the Son of Man

{2} Mark 10:32-34

{3} a Hebrew expression which means: "Help! Please save!" This showed great religious enthusiasm.

{4} See Psalm 118:26.

{5} literally, in the highest places. Mark 11:1,7-10

{6} Jews who came to Jerusalem from distant places needed to buy animals to sacrifice. Also, no foreign coins were allowed in the temple. But these merchants were charging very high prices and treating God's temple only as a place to make money.

{7} Isaiah 56:7

- {8} Mark 11:15-18
- {9} Mark 14:1-2
- {10} Mark 14:10-11
- {11} represents
- {12} Mark 14:22-26
- {13} Zechariah 13:7
- {14} Mark 14:27-28
- {15} literally, the Son of Man
- {16} Mark 14:32-42
- {17} Kissing was a form of greeting. See Romans 16:16.
- {18} It means "my master" of "my teacher." It became a title of respect for Jewish leaders.
- {19} Mark 14:43-50
- {20} Jesus
- {21} literally, the Power. Psalm 110:1
- {22} Daniel 7:13
- {23} Tearing one's clothes was a sign of grief or outrage.
- {24} Mark 14:53-65
- {25} Pilate was the Roman governor. The Jews could not execute anyone without his special permission.
- {26} literally, "You are saying it"; a statement meaning: "I agree with what you are saying."
- {27} Mark 15:1-5
- {28} Mark 15:6-15
- {29} Mark 15:16-20
- {30} possibly the man named Rufus in Romans 16:13
- {31} Jesus began carrying his own cross (John 19:17), but he was not able to continue. So, they forced a man in the crowd to do it.
- {32} a sweet-smelling hardened sap used as medicine and for burial preparation
- {33} Mark 15:21-32
- {34} "Eloi" may have sounded like "Elijah" in his language.
- {35} literally, the branch of a hyssop plant. It was about one yard long.
- {36} Jesus, our high priest, had entered the Most Holy Place on our behalf. See Hebrew 9:11-12.
- {37} Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:37-43,45-46
- {38} Friday. According to Jewish custom, each day began at sundown.
- {39} Mark 15:42-47
- {40} literally, the first day of the week
- {41} Matthew 28:1-10
- {42} Matthew 28:11-15
- {43} Mark 16:10-11
- {44} Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-34
- {45} John 20:19
- {46} every cultural (ethnic) group
- {47} Luke 24:37-48
- {48} Here the prophet Jesus was demonstrating inspiration.
- {49} John 20:20-23

START OF LESSON FIVE

The apostles saw Jesus several times during the forty days after he was raised from death. Jesus proved that he was alive by doing many convincing things. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus told them what they must do. He was talking to them about the kingdom of God.{1}

Topics: - IN GALILEE

The eleven followers went to a mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them to meet him. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some had doubts. Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.{2} When you have gone into the whole world, preach the Good News to all mankind. The person who believes it and is immersed will be saved, but the person who doesn't believe it will be condemned.{3} Make followers for me from all nations.{4} Immerse them by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I commanded you. Remember, I will always be with you -- even until the end of time!"{5}

Topics: - IN JERUSALEM

Once when Jesus was together with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem. He said, "Wait here for the Father's promise that you heard me talk about.{6} John immersed people in water, but in a few days you will be immersed in the Holy Spirit."{7}

The apostles were all together. They asked Jesus, "Lord, is this the time for you to rebuild the kingdom for Israel?"

Jesus said to them, "The Father is the only One who has the authority to decide such dates and times. It is not for you to know these things. However, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power. You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the world."{8}

Topics: - JESUS GOES BACK TO HEAVEN

After Jesus said these things,{9} he led them out of Jerusalem, almost to the town of Bethany. He raised his hands and blessed them. While Jesus was blessing them, he was separated from them and carried up into heaven. They worshiped him.{10} While the apostles were watching, Jesus went into a cloud; they couldn't see him anymore.

As Jesus was going away, the apostles were staring into the sky. Suddenly, two angels{11} stood beside them. They were dressed in white clothes. The two angels said, "Men from Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? This Jesus who was carried away from you into heaven will return in the same way that you saw him go." Then the apostles went back to Jerusalem from Olive Mountain. (This mountain is about three-quarters of a mile{12} from Jerusalem.){13} They were very happy. They were always in the temple courtyard, praising God.{14}

Topics: - THE DAY OF PENTECOST

When the day of Pentecost{15} came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly, a noise came from the sky. It sounded like a strong wind blowing. This noise filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something which looked like flames of fire separating and staying over each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak different inspired languages; the Spirit was giving them power to do this. There were some devout Jewish men staying in Jerusalem at this time. These men were from every country in the world. A large group of them came together because they heard the noise. They were confused. The apostles were speaking, and every man heard in his own language and understood. The Jewish people were all amazed at this. They didn't understand how the apostles could do this. They said, "Look! These men whom we hear speaking are all from Galilee!{16} But each of us is hearing them in our own native language. How is this possible? We are: Parthians, Medes, Elamites, those living in Mesopotamia, from Judea, from Cappadocia, from Pontus, from Asia,{17} from Phrygia, from Pamphylia, from Egypt, from parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, Cretans, and Arabians. Some of us were born Jews. Others are converts to Judaism. We can hear these men in our own languages! We can all understand the wonderful things they are saying about God."

The people were all amazed but confused. They asked each other, "What does this mean?" Other people were laughing at the apostles. They were claiming that the apostles were drunk.

Topics: - PETER PREACHES

Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles. He spoke loudly:{18} "My Jewish brothers and all of you who are staying in Jerusalem, listen to me. I will tell you something you need to know. Listen carefully. These men are not drunk, as you think; it is only nine o'clock in the morning! This is the same thing which God said through the prophet Joel:

"God says: `In the last days, I will pour out My Spirit upon all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will have special dreams. At that time, I will pour out My Spirit upon My servants, both men and women, and they will prophesy. I will show amazing things in the sky above. I will do miracles on the earth below. There will be blood, fire, and thick smoke. The sun will be changed into darkness, and the moon will become red like blood. Then the great and glorious day of the Lord will come. And every person who trusts in the name of the Lord will be saved.'"{19}

Topics: - WHAT KING DAVID SAID

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus from Nazareth was a very special man. God clearly showed this to you. God proved this by the powerful and amazing things which He did through Jesus among you. You know this is true. You killed this man Jesus by handing him over to lawless men. They nailed him to a cross. But God knew ahead of time that all this would occur; it was part of His plan which He made long ago. Jesus suffered the pains of death, but God set him free. God raised Jesus up from death. It was impossible for death to hold him. This is what David said about Jesus: `I always saw the Lord before me, because He is at my right side to keep me secure. So, my heart was glad and my mouth spoke with joy. Yes, even my body will live with hope, because You won't abandon my soul in death.{20} You will not allow the body of Your holy one to decay in the grave. You taught me how to live. You came near me, and I felt great joy.'{21}

My Jewish brothers, I can tell you plainly about David, our ancestor. He died and was buried. His grave is still here with us today. David was a prophet. God vowed to David that one of his descendants would sit upon David's throne. David knew this before it took place. That is why David said this: `He will not be left in death. His body will not decay in the grave.'{22}

David was talking about the Messiah rising from death. So Jesus, not David, is the one whom God raised from death! We are all eye-witnesses of this! Jesus was lifted up to heaven. Now Jesus is with God -- at His right side. The Father has now given the

promise of the Holy Spirit to Jesus. So now, Jesus poured out this which you see and hear. David did not go up to heaven. It was Jesus. David himself said: `The Lord God said to my Lord. "Sit at My right side until I put your enemies under your feet." '{23}

Topics: - JESUS IS LORD AND MESSIAH

"Therefore, all the people of Israel can be sure of this one thing: God has made Jesus both Lord and Messiah, this man whom you nailed to the cross!"

When the people heard this, they felt a sharp, cutting pain in their conscience. They asked Peter and the other apostles, "What should we do, brothers?"

Then Peter answered, "Change your hearts and each one of you must be immersed by the authority of Jesus the Messiah,{24} so that your sins may be forgiven. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you and for your children. It is also for people who are far away,{25} for everyone whom the Lord our God may call."

Peter was warning them with many other words; he was encouraging them, saying, "Be saved from this twisted generation of people!" Then those people who accepted what Peter said were immersed. On that day, about three thousand people were added to the group of believers. After this, the believers dedicated themselves to learning the teaching of the apostles, to sharing with each other, to eating the supper of the Lord,{26} and to prayer.

God was using the apostles to do many powerful and amazing things; every person felt great respect for God. All of the believers stayed together. They shared everything. They sold their property and the things they owned and they were dividing the money, giving it to anyone who needed it. Every day the believers met together with the same purpose in the temple courtyard. They ate together in their homes, eating their food with joyful hearts. They were very happy. The believers were praising God. All of the people liked them. More and more people were being saved every day; the Lord was adding them to the congregation.{27}

The group of believers were joined in their hearts and they were united in spirit. No one in the group said that the things he had were his own. Instead, they shared everything. The apostles used great power to give evidence that the Lord Jesus had been raised from death. All of the believers felt very thankful for God's great blessings. They all received the things they needed. Everyone who owned fields or houses sold them. Then they brought the money and gave it to the apostles. Each person was given the things he needed.{28}

Topics: - STEPHEN

Since a believer named Stephen was full of God's favor and power, he was working miracles among the people to show great proofs from God. But, some Jews stood up and argued with Stephen. They were from a synagogue called "A Synagogue for Freed Men."{29} (This synagogue was also for Jews from the cities of Cyrene and Alexandria.) Jews from Cilicia and Asia were with them. They all came and argued with Stephen, but the Spirit was helping Stephen speak with wisdom. His words were so powerful that the Jews could not argue with him. So they secretly paid some men to say, "We heard Stephen say some evil things against Moses and against God!" In this way, they stirred up the people, the Jewish elders, and the teachers of the law. They became so angry that they came and grabbed Stephen. Then they took him to the Jewish Council. They brought some men into the meeting. These men were told to tell lies about Stephen. The men said, "This man always says things against the holy place{30} and against the law of Moses. We heard him say that Jesus from Nazareth will destroy this place. He also said that Jesus will change the customs which Moses passed down to us."{31}

Stephen answered, "My Jewish fathers and brothers, listen to me. You stubborn leaders! Your hearts are not circumcised! You won't listen to God! You are always against what the Holy Spirit is trying to tell you. Your ancestors did this, and you are just like them! Your ancestors persecuted every prophet who ever lived. Those prophets said long ago that the righteous one{32} would come, but your ancestors killed the prophets. And now, you have turned against this righteous one and murdered him. You are the people who received the law of Moses, the commands which God gave through the angels, but you don't obey the law!"

When the Jewish leaders heard Stephen say these things, they became very angry. They were so mad that they were grinding their teeth at Stephen. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit. He looked up into the sky and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right side. He said, "Look! I see heaven open. And, I see the Son of Man{33} standing at God's right side!"

Then they all shouted with a loud voice. They covered their ears with their hands. Together they all ran at Stephen. They took him out of the city to stone him to death. The men, who told lies against Stephen, gave their robes to a young man named Saul.{34} Then they began to throw stones at Stephen, but Stephen was praying. He said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" He fell on his knees and shouted this: "Lord, don't blame them for this sin!" After Stephen said that, he died. Saul (Paul) approved of the killing of Stephen.{35}

Topics: - THE PERSECUTION BEGINS

Some good men buried Stephen. They cried very loudly for him.{36} On that day there was a fierce attack on the congregation in Jerusalem. Saul was also trying to destroy them. He even went into their homes. He dragged out men and women and put them in jail. All of the believers had to leave Jerusalem; only the apostles stayed there. The believers went to different places in Judea and Samaria.{37}

In Jerusalem Saul was still trying to scare the followers of the Lord Jesus, threatening to kill them. So, he went to the high priest. Saul asked him to write letters to the Jews of the synagogues in the city of Damascus. Saul wanted the authority to find people

in Damascus who were followers of The Way. If he found any believers there, men or women, he would tie them up and bring them back to Jerusalem.

So, Saul went to Damascus. When he came near the city, a bright light from the sky suddenly shined all around him. Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying to him: "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

Saul asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

The voice answered, "I am Jesus. I am the one you are persecuting. Get up now and go into the city. Someone there will tell you what you must do."

The men traveling with Saul stood there. They said nothing. The men heard the voice, but they saw no one. Saul got up from the ground. He opened his eyes, but he couldn't see anything. So, the men with Saul held his hand and led him into Damascus. For three days, Saul could not see; he didn't eat or drink.

There was a follower of Jesus in Damascus. His name was Ananias.{38} The Lord Jesus spoke to Ananias in a vision, saying: "Ananias!"

Ananias answered, "Here I am, Lord."

The Lord said to Ananias, "Get up and go to Straight Street. Find the house of Judas. Ask for a man named Saul, from the city of Tarsus. He is there now, praying. In a vision, a man named Ananias came to him and put his hands on him, so that he could see again."

But Ananias answered, "Lord, many people have told me about this man, Saul. They told me about how many terrible things he did to your holy people in Jerusalem. Now he has come to Damascus. The ruling priests have given him the authority to arrest all people who trust in your name."

But the Lord Jesus said to Ananias, "Go! I have chosen Saul for an important work. He will carry my name to kings, to the Jewish people, and to other nations. I will show Saul the things he must suffer for my name."

So Ananias left and went to the house of Judas. He put his hands on Saul and said, "Saul, my brother, the Lord Jesus sent me. He is the one you saw on the road when you came here. He sent me, so that you may see again and so that you may be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something which looked like fish scales fell off Saul's eyes. Saul could see again! He got up and was immersed in water. Then he ate some food and began to feel strong again. Saul stayed with the followers of Jesus in Damascus for a few days.{39}

The believers were scattered everywhere. And everywhere the believers went, they told people{40} the Good News about Jesus.{41}

Topics: - THE CONGREGATION IN ANTIOCH

The believers were scattered by the persecution which occurred after Stephen was killed. Some of the believers went to places far away, like Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch in Syria. The believers told the message in these places, but they told it only to Jews. However, some of these believers came to the city of Antioch. They were men from Cyprus and Cyrene. These men were also talking to non-Jews,{42} telling them the Good News, that Jesus is Lord. The Lord was helping the believers. A large group of people believed and turned to the Lord.

The congregation which was in Jerusalem heard about these new believers in Antioch in Syria. So, the believers in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man. He was full of the Holy Spirit and full of faith. When Barnabas went to Antioch, he saw how much God had blessed them. This made him very happy. He began to encourage all the believers in Antioch. He told them, "Never lose your faith. Always obey the Lord with all your hearts." A large number of people became followers of the Lord Jesus.

Then Barnabas left for the city of Tarsus. He was looking for Saul. When he found Saul, Barnabas brought him to Antioch. Saul and Barnabas taught a large crowd. For a whole year they met with the congregation. In Antioch, God called the followers of Jesus "Christians" for the first time.{43}

In the congregation at Antioch in Syria, there were some prophets and teachers. They were: Barnabas, Simeon (also called Black), Lucius (from the city of Cyrene), Manaen (who had grown up with Herod Antipas, the ruler), and Saul.

They were all serving the Lord and fasting.{44} The Holy Spirit said to them, "Appoint Barnabas and Saul for My service; I have chosen them to do a special work."

So, the congregation fasted and prayed. They put their hands on Barnabas and Saul{45} and sent them out.{46}

Topics: - PAUL AND BARNABAS

In Lystra there was a man whose feet were paralyzed. He had been born crippled; he had never walked. This man was sitting there and listening to Paul speak. Paul looked straight at him. Paul saw that the man believed that God could heal him. So, Paul shouted, "Stand up on your feet!" The man jumped up and began walking around. When the crowd saw what Paul did, they shouted in their own Lycaonian language. They said, "The gods have become like men! They have come down to us!" The people began to call Barnabas "Zeus." {47} They called Paul "Hermes," {48} because he was the main speaker. The temple of Zeus was near the town. The priest of this temple brought some bulls and flowers to the town gates. The priest and the crowds wanted to give an offering, to worship Paul and Barnabas.

But when the apostles,{49} Barnabas and Paul, understood what the people were doing, they ripped their own clothes.{50} Then they ran in among the crowd and shouted to them, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are not gods! We have the same

feelings you have! We came to tell you the Good News. We are telling you to turn away from these worthless things. Turn to the true living God. He is the One who made the land, the sea, the sky, and everything which is in them. In the past, God let all the nations do what they wanted. But God did things to prove that He is real: He does good things for you. He gives you rain from the sky and good harvests at the right times. He gives you plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.” Paul and Barnabas told the crowd these things. The people still wanted to offer sacrifices to worship them, but Paul and Barnabas stopped them.

Then some Jews came from Antioch in Pisidia and Iconium. They persuaded the people to oppose Paul. And so, the people stoned Paul and dragged him out of the town. The people thought that they had killed him. The followers of Jesus gathered around Paul and he got up and went back into town. The next day he and Barnabas left and went to the town of Derbe.

Paul and Barnabas told the Good News in the town of Derbe, too. Many people became followers of Jesus. Paul and Barnabas went back to the towns of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia. In those cities they made the followers of Jesus stronger. They helped them to stay in the faith. They said, “We must suffer many things on our way into God's kingdom.” They appointed elders for each congregation. The believers fasted and prayed for these men. These men had put their trust in the Lord Jesus. So, Paul and Barnabas put them in the Lord's care. {51}

Topics: - PAUL AND SILAS

In the city of Philippi the crowd was against Paul and Silas, another companion of Paul. Then the leaders tore off the clothes of Paul and Silas and ordered some men to beat them with rods. The men beat them many times. Then the leaders threw Paul and Silas in jail. The leaders commanded the jailor, “Guard them very carefully!” The jailor heard this special order. So he put Paul and Silas into the inner prison, far inside the jail. He locked their feet in wooden stocks.

About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing songs to God. The other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. It was so strong that it shook the foundations of the jail. Then all the doors of the jail quickly opened. All prisoners were freed from their chains. The jailor woke up. He saw that the jail doors were open. He thought that the prisoners had escaped. So the jailor took his sword and was ready to kill himself. {52} But Paul shouted, “Don't hurt yourself! We are all here!”

The jailor told someone to bring a light. Then he ran inside. He was shaking. He fell down in front of Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and asked, “Men, what must I do to be saved?”

They said to him, “Commit yourself to the Lord Jesus and you will be saved -- you and all the people living in your house.” So, Paul and Silas told the story of the Lord Jesus to the jailor and to all the people in his house. It was late at night, but the jailor took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. The jailor and all his people were immersed right away. After this, the jailor took Paul and Silas and gave them some food. All of the people were very happy because they now trusted in God. {53}

Topics: - PAUL IN ATHENS

Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens. Paul felt deeply troubled, because he saw that the city was full of idols. In the synagogue, Paul debated with the Jews and the Greeks who worshiped the true God. Every day he also debated with some people in the business district of the city, with people who just happened to be there. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers argued with him.

Some of them said, “This man doesn't really know what he is talking about. What is he trying to say?” Paul was telling them the Good News about Jesus rising from death. So, they said, “He seems to be telling us about some other gods.” They got Paul and took him to a meeting of the Areopagus Council. They said, “Please explain to us this new idea which you have been teaching. The things that you are saying are so new to us. We have never heard these things before. We want to know what this teaching means.” (All the people of Athens and the people from other countries who lived there always used their time to talk about any new idea.)

Then Paul stood before the meeting of the Areopagus Council. Paul said, “Men of Athens, I can see that you are very religious in all things. I was going through your city and I saw the things you worship. I found an altar which had these words written on it: ‘TO THE GOD WHO IS NOT KNOWN.’

You worship a God you don't know. This is the God I am telling you about! He is the God who made the whole world and everything in it. He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. He doesn't live in temples which men build! This God is the One who gives men life, breath, and everything else. He doesn't need any help from men; God has everything He needs. God started with one man. {54} He made all the different people in the world to live everywhere. God decided exactly when and where they must live. He wanted the people to look for Him. Perhaps they could search all around for Him and find Him -- He is not far from any of us: ‘In Him, we live, we walk, we are.’ Some of your own writers have said: ‘For we are God's children.’ {55}

Therefore, we are God's children. So you must not think that God is something like what man imagines or makes out of silver or stone. In the past, although man didn't understand God, God ignored this, but now, God commands every person in the world to change his heart. God has set a day when He will judge the whole world. He will be fair, using a man to do this. He chose this man a long time ago. God proved it to everyone by raising that man from death!”

When the people heard about Jesus rising from death, some of them began to laugh at Paul. The people said, “We will hear more about this from you later.” Paul left them. However, some of the people did believe Paul and joined him. One of them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus Council. Another was a woman named Damaris. There were some others, too. {56}

Topics: - PAUL IN EPHESUS

Years later Paul went into the synagogue in Ephesus and began to speak very boldly. Paul did this for three months. He debated with the Jews and he tried to persuade them to believe in the kingdom of God, but some of the Jews became stubborn. They refused to believe. They said some terrible things about The Way. The people heard these things. So Paul left and took the followers of Jesus with him. He went to a place where a man named Tyrannus had a school. There he reasoned with people every day. He did this for two years. Because of this work, every Jew and Greek in the country of Asia heard the message of the Lord.{57}

Topics: - EUTYCHUS

On Sunday,{58} Paul, Luke, and the Christians in the city of Troas all met together to eat the supper of the Lord.{59} Paul was talking with the group. He was ready to leave the next day. Paul continued his speech until midnight. There were many torches in the room where they were gathered. The room was upstairs. There was a young man named Eutychus sitting in the window. As Paul talked on and on, Eutychus became sleepier and sleepier. Finally, Eutychus went to sleep and fell out of the window. He fell to the ground from the third floor. When they got to him, he was dead. Paul went down to Eutychus. He knelt down and hugged him. Paul said to the other believers, "Don't worry. He is alive now!" They brought the young man inside. He was alive, and they were very much comforted. Paul went upstairs again. After he broke off some of the bread and ate it, Paul spoke to them a long time. When he finished talking, it was early morning.{60}

Topics: - PAUL'S FAREWELL SPEECH TO THE ELDERS

After sailing past the city of Ephesus, Paul sent a message back to Ephesus from Miletus. He invited the elders of the congregation in Ephesus to come to him. When the elders came, Paul said to them, "Do you remember when I came to you on my first day in Asia? I stayed with you the whole time. The Jewish leaders planned evil things against me. Although this troubled me very much (sometimes I even cried), I always served the Lord. I never thought about myself first. I always did what was best for you, telling you the Good News about Jesus in public and also in your homes. I told both Jewish and non Jewish people to change their hearts and turn to God. I told them all to trust in our Lord Jesus. But now I must obey the Holy Spirit and go to Jerusalem. I don't know what will happen to me there. I only know that, in every town, the Holy Spirit warns me that troubles and even jail wait for me. My life doesn't matter. The most important thing is that I finish the race and the work which the Lord Jesus gave me to do, telling people the Good News about God's gracious love.

"And now listen to me. I know that none of you will ever see my face again! During the whole time I was with you, I was preaching to you about the kingdom of God. So, today I can tell you one thing that I am sure of: I'm not to blame, if some of you will not be saved!{61} I can say this, because I know I told you everything that God wants you to know. Watch out for yourselves and for all the people God has given you. The Holy Spirit chose you to guard this flock. You must shepherd the Lord's people whom he bought with his own blood.{62} I know that after I leave, some men will come into your group. They will be like vicious wolves, trying to destroy the flock. Also, men from your own group will become bad leaders. They will begin to teach things which are wrong, leading away some followers away from the truth. So, be alert! Always remember: I was with you for three years. During this time, I never stopped warning each one of you. I taught you night and day. I often cried over you.

"Now I am giving you to God. I am depending on the message of God's gracious love to make you strong. That story is able to give you the blessings which God gives to all His holy people. When I was with you, I never wanted anybody's money or fine clothes. You know I always worked to take care of my own needs and the needs of the people who were with me. I always showed you that you should work as I did and help people who are weak. I taught you to remember the words of the Lord Jesus. Jesus once said, "You will be happier when you give than when you receive.""

When Paul finished saying these things, he knelt down and they all prayed together. They all cried and cried and cried. They were especially sad, because Paul had said that they would never see his face again. They hugged Paul and kept on kissing him. They went with him to the ship to say good-bye.{63}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES OF LESSON FIVE:

- {1} Acts 1:2-3
- {2} Matthew 28:16-18
- {3} Mark 16:15-16
- {4} every cultural group
- {5} Matthew 28:19-20
- {6} the Holy Spirit (See John 14:26; 16:13.)
- {7} Acts 1:4-5
- {8} Acts 1:6-8
- {9} Acts 1:9
- {10} Luke 24:50-52
- {11} literally, men
- {12} literally, a Sabbath's day's journey. See Exodus 16:29; Numbers 35:5; Joshua 3:4.
- {13} Acts 1:9-12

- {14} Luke 24:52-53
- {15} (a Sunday), a yearly Jewish feast of the wheat harvest, held 50 days after Passover
- {16} These were natives of Palestine who would not be expected to know many languages.
- {17} This is not the modern country of Asia. It is the country of Turkey.
- {18} literally, raised his voice
- {19} Joel 2:28-32
- {20} literally, Hades, the Greek word for the unseen world of the dead
- {21} Psalm 16:8-11
- {22} Psalm 16:10
- {23} in your control. Psalm 110:1
- {24} Jesus Christ
- {25} See Ephesians 2:13.
- {26} literally, "breaking bread," an idiom usually referring to the Lord's Supper
- {27} Acts 2:1-47
- {28} Acts 4:32-35
- {29} freedmen or sons of men freed from slavery
- {30} the temple
- {31} Acts 6:8-14
- {32} Jesus
- {33} Jesus
- {34} Paul
- {35} Acts 7:2,51-60
- {36} It was the custom in Palestine to cry long and loud when someone died. See Jeremiah 9:17-20.
- {37} Acts 8:1-3
- {38} There are three different men named Ananias in Acts: 5:1; 9:10; 23:2.
- {39} Acts 9:1-19
- {40} In the beginning, they thought that the message was given only to Jewish believers (including Samaritans and converts to Judaism).
- {41} Acts 8:4
- {42} This was the first time this ever happened.
- {43} Acts 11:19-26
- {44} going without food for a period of time for spiritual reasons
- {45} Paul
- {46} Acts 13:1-3
- {47} the chief god of the Greeks. Barnabas may have appeared to be the leader.
- {48} the son of Zeus, the messenger of the gods
- {49} The word means "special messengers" (from Antioch in Syria). Here it does not refer to the original twelve apostles.
- {50} a sign of grief or outrage
- {51} Acts 14:8-23
- {52} The keeper of the jail would be killed if he let even one prisoner escape.
- {53} Acts 16:22-34
- {54} Adam
- {55} written by Aratus in Phaenomena 5
- {56} Acts 17:16-34
- {57} Acts 19:8-10
- {58} literally, the first day of the week. According to Jewish custom, the first day of the week began at sundown (when the Sabbath ended) and lasted until the next sundown.
- {59} literally, to break bread, a Greek idiom usually referring to the Lord's Supper
- {60} Acts 20:7-12
- {61} literally, "I am clean (innocent) from the blood of all."
- {62} Some manuscripts have: "God" for "Lord." Some manuscripts have: "the blood of His own."
- {63} Acts 20:17-38

START OF LESSON SIX

Topics: - CHANGE YOUR HEART!

In the past, although man didn't understand God, God ignored this, but now, God commands every person in the world to change his heart. God has set a day when He will judge the whole world. {1} The evil people will go off into eternal punishment, but the good people will go into eternal life. {2} John said, "And I saw a great white throne and the One who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky ran away from His face, but they could not find any place to hide. I saw dead people -- important and unimportant. They

were standing in front of the throne. Books were opened. And another book -- the Book of Life -- was opened. The dead were judged from the things which had been written in the books, according to the way they had lived. The ocean yielded the dead people who were in it. Death and Hades{3} yielded the dead people who were in them. Each person was judged by the way he had lived. Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.{4} (The second death is the same thing as the lake of fire.) If someone's name was not found in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”{5}

Don't be fooled! You cannot mock God.{6} It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!{7} Our God is like a fire which destroys everything.{8}

All of us must appear in front of Christ's judgment bench. Then each person will receive good or bad as a reward -- according to what he did while he was in his physical body.{9}

Topics: - WHAT GOD WANTS

God wants all men to be saved and to begin understanding the truth.{10} The gracious love of God has appeared to save all mankind.{11} The Lord is not slow to keep His promise. No, He is patient with you. He wants everyone to find room for a change in their hearts. He doesn't want anyone to be lost. The Day of the Lord will come suddenly, like a robber. The heavens will pass away with a whizzing noise. The elements will be destroyed with heat. The earth and every force in it will be gone.{12} Jesus, whom God raised from death, will rescue us from the punishment that is coming from God.{13} Jesus will come with a flaming fire. He will punish the people who do not acknowledge God and those who don't obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction -- away from the Lord and from the glory of his strength.{14}

Jesus came to his own people, but most of the Jewish people would not accept him. But he gave the right to become God's children to those who did accept him, to those who believe in his name.{15}

Every person who commits himself to Jesus will be forgiven through the authority of Jesus. All the prophets say that this is true.{16}

Topics: - WHY JESUS CAME

Why did the Son of God appear? To destroy the Devil's works.{17} Death came into the world through one man; rising from death has also come through one man.{18} Death is the last enemy to be destroyed.{19} Jesus wanted to use death to destroy the Devil who has the power of death. He also wanted to set all people free from the slavery of fearing death all their lives.{20} He destroyed death. Through the gospel, he has made it clear that we will live and never die.{21}

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.{22} Jesus said, "I came to find lost people and to save them.”{23}

Jesus sacrificed himself for our sins, so that we might escape from the evil in this world.{24} Christ died for your sins once for all time. He was a good man dying for bad men. Why? To bring you to God.{25}

Jesus said, "I came, so that they might have life -- to the fullest!{26} Jesus was handed over to die for our sins. He was raised from death to make us right with God.{27}

Even though Jesus was God's Son, Jesus learned to obey from the things he suffered. After Jesus was made perfect, he became the Source of eternal salvation for everyone who will obey him.{28}

Jesus is God's Lamb who takes away the world's sin!{29} Christ appeared to take away the sins of the people. There is no sin in Christ.{30} Christ gave himself for everyone. He was the price. That was God's proof given at the right time.{31} His blood has set us free. Christians have the forgiveness of sins!{32} With God's gracious love, we are made right with God through Christ Jesus who sets us free. And all of this is free!{33} We have freedom in Christ -- the forgiveness of sins.{34}

Topics: - CHRIST DIED FOR US

Everyone has sinned and is far away from God's glory.{35} While we were still helpless and ungodly, Christ died for us -- at exactly the right time. It is rare when someone dies for another person -- even for a good person. However, some do dare to die for a good man. But God reassures us of His love for us in this way: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us! Since Christ's blood has made us right with God, even more we will be saved from God's punishment through Christ. We were God's enemies, but the death of His Son was used to make us God's friends. Now that we have become friends of God, we will be saved even more by Christ's life.{36} God uses Christ to bring us back to Himself. He gave the apostles the work of bringing people back to Himself. When God was bringing the people of the world back to Himself in Christ, He was not counting their sins against them. God gave the apostles the message about how He brings men back to Himself.{37}

If you have become a Christian, you have been saved by God's gracious love through faith. Salvation does not come from you; it is God's gift. It does not come from human effort. If that were true, someone would brag about earning it.{38} Salvation did not come from any good deeds that we ourselves did. No, it came by God's mercy!{39} I am not ashamed of the Good News, because it is God's power for saving anyone who believes it -- Jews first, then non-Jews.{40}

Topics: - THE ONLY WAY

There is one God. There is one go-between between God and men -- the man Christ Jesus.{41} There is one Lord Jesus.{42} Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life! The only way anyone can come to the Father is through me!"{43} Through Jesus,

we have access by faith into this favor.{44} Jesus is the only one who can save people. His authority is the only power given to the world by which we can be saved.{45} It is wrong for anyone to try to lay another foundation. The true foundation is Jesus Christ!{46} Though Jesus suffered the pains of death, God set him free. God raised Jesus up from death. It was impossible for death to hold him.{47} Christ never sinned.{48} When any person does sin, we have Jesus Christ -- the righteous one -- to help defend us before God, the Father, Jesus is the way our sins are taken away -- the way all people may have their sins taken away.{49} But with God's gracious love, we are made right with God through Christ Jesus who sets us free. And, all of this is free!{50}

God raised the Lord Jesus from death. With the same power He will also raise you.{51} Paul said, "I am saying nothing new; I am only saying the same things which Moses and the prophets said would take place: They said that the Messiah would die and be the first to rise from death; and that the Messiah would bring light to Jewish people and non-Jewish people."{52}

Jesus said, "The person who rejects me and does not accept my words has something to condemn him -- the very message which I spoke. That message will condemn him on the last day."{53} A person must continue to follow only the teaching of Christ. If anyone goes beyond Christ's teaching, then he does not have God. But if a person continues to stay within the teaching, then he has both the Father and the Son.{54} We now have friendship with God through Christ.{55}

Topics: - WHY THE LAW OF MOSES?

What was the purpose of the law? The law was given to show people the difference between right and wrong. It continued until the special Descendant of Abraham came. God's promise was about this Descendant.{56} The law was given through angels. The angels used Moses as a go-between to give the law to men. (A go-between is not needed when there is only one side; God is only one side.) Therefore, does this mean that the law is against God's promises? If there were a law which could give men life, then we could truly be made right by following the law. However, this cannot be true, because the Scripture showed that all people are bound by sin, so that the promise would be given to people through faith -- to those who believe in Jesus Christ! Before this faith came, we were all held in check by the law. We had no freedom until God revealed to us the way of faith which was coming. So, the law was our trainer, until Christ came, so that we could be made right with God through faith. The way of faith has come. Therefore, we do not live under law anymore.{57} Christ is the purpose of the law. Everyone who believes in Christ will be made right with God.{58}

Topics: - FREE FROM THE LAW

Though the law was given through Moses, gracious love and truth have come through Jesus Christ.{59} Long ago, God used the prophets to speak to our ancestors many times and in many ways; but, during these last times, God used His Son to speak to us. God appointed him to inherit everything.{60} Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. I did not come to destroy them. I have come to give them their full meaning.{61}

But now we have been released from the law. We died to what bound us before, so that we can serve with a new spirit, not by following a strict code.{62} God wiped away the written code with its strict orders. It was negative; it was against us. He took it out of the way. He nailed it to the cross.{63}

We know that a person is not made right with God by following the law. Committing oneself to Jesus Christ is what makes a person right with God. So, we made a commitment to Christ Jesus, because we wanted to be made right with God. We are right with God because we made that commitment, not because of following the law. Nobody will ever be made right by following the law.{64} If the law could have made us right with God, then Christ died for nothing!{65} So, it is clear that no person may be made right with God by the law.{66}

The law put us under condemnation, but Christ took that condemnation away. He changed places with us; he put himself under that condemnation. It is written, "When a person's body is hung on a tree, it shows that the person has been condemned."{67} Christ did this, so that God's promised blessing to Abraham could be given to all people. This blessing comes through Christ Jesus. God wanted us to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit through believing."{68}

We have freedom now. Christ made us free. So stand firm. Don't turn and go back into slavery.{69} If you allow yourselves to be circumcised, then Christ does you no good. Again, I warn every man: If you allow yourselves to be circumcised, then you must follow the entire law. If you try to be made right with God through the law, then you are cut off from Christ -- you have fallen from grace! When a person is in Christ Jesus, it doesn't matter whether he is circumcised or not. The only thing which is important is faith -- the kind of faith which works through love.{70}

Paul said, "I want to be in him, not having 'my' righteousness (the kind that comes from the law), but having the righteousness which comes through believing in Christ (the kind of righteousness which comes from God based on faith)."{71}

Topics: - GOD'S PEOPLE

There is no difference between Jews and non-Jews! The Lord is the same Lord of everybody.{72} Now, in Christ, there is no difference between Jews and non-Jews,{73} between slave and free, between male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus. You belong to Christ. Therefore, you are Abraham's descendants. You receive all of God's blessings because of the promise which God made to Abraham.{74} It doesn't matter whether a person is circumcised or uncircumcised. All that is important is being a new creation.{75}

Topics: - A NEW AGREEMENT

You must understand what we are telling you: You can have forgiveness of your sins through this man. The law of Moses could not make right you right with God, but everyone who believes the Good News is made right.{76}

Topics: - WHAT DO YOU THINK?

God loved the people of the world so much that He gave up His only Son. Every person who commits himself to Jesus will not be destroyed. Instead, that person will have eternal life.{77} God loves you,{78} God did not keep His own Son. Instead, God gave him up for all of us.{79} This is how God showed His love to us: God sent His only Son into the world so that we may live through him. Real love (God's love for us, not our love for God) is this: God sent His Son to be the way that God takes away our sins. Since God loved us that much, dear friends, we ought to love each other, too.{80}

Jesus said, "I told you that you would die in your sins. If you don't believe that I am the one, you will die in your sins!"{81} The pay you get for sinning is death.{82} If all of you don't change your hearts, then you will be destroyed.{83} Every person who continues to sin is a slave of sin.{84} The person who continues to sin belongs to the Devil.{85} Jesus used to say, "The kingdom of God is very near! So, turn back to God. Change your hearts and believe in the Good News!"{86} Jesus' followers also went out and preached that people must change their hearts.{87} So, change your hearts! Come back to God, so that He may wipe out your sins.{88} Paul said, "I told both Jewish and non-Jewish people to change their hearts and turn to God. I told them all to trust in our Lord Jesus."{89} Change your lives and do good things. This will show that you have truly changed your hearts.{90} Turn away from darkness to light, turning back from the power of Satan back to God.{91} Surely you know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to a change of heart.{92} Perhaps God will allow you to have a change of heart, leading you to know the truth.{93}

Topics: - WHAT YOU MUST DO

Near the end of Jesus' life on earth, he asked his apostles, "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!"{94} Jesus says to us, "If anyone confesses, in front of other people, that he believes in me, then I will speak for him in front of my Father in heaven.{95} But if anyone is ashamed of me in front of people, then I will be ashamed of him in front of my Father in heaven." If you confess with your mouth that "Jesus is Lord" and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from death, you will be saved. To become right with God a person believes with his heart. Declaring it openly,{96} that person comes into salvation.{97} If someone confesses, "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God," then God lives in that person and that person lives in God.{98}

One of the last things that Jesus said to his apostles was this: "When you have gone into the whole world, preach the Good News to all mankind. The person who believes it and is immersed will be saved, but the person who doesn't believe it will be condemned."{99}

About ten days later Peter preached the truth to a large group of people in Jerusalem. When the people heard this, they felt a sharp, cutting pain in their conscience. They asked Peter and the other apostles, "What should we do, brothers?" Then Peter answered, "Change your hearts and each one of you must be immersed by the authority of Jesus the Messiah so that your sins may be forgiven. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.{100} Then those people who accepted what Peter said were immersed. On that day, about three thousand people obeyed.{101}

Topics: - HOW OTHERS OBEYED

Paul was told this: "Now, don't wait any longer. Rise up, get yourself immersed and get your sins washed away, trusting in his name."{102} Though he had not eaten for three days, he was immersed before he ate!{103}

A jailor asked Paul and Silas, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" They said to him, "Commit yourself to the Lord Jesus and you will be saved -- you and all the people living in your house." So, Paul and Silas told the story of the Lord Jesus to the jailor and to all the people in his house. It was late at night, but the jailor took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. The jailor and all of his people were immersed in water right away. After this, the jailor took Paul and Silas and gave them some food. All of the people were very happy because they now trusted in God.{104}

Crispus was the leader of a synagogue in Corinth. Crispus and all of the people who were living in his house trusted in the Lord Jesus. Many other people in Corinth also listened to Paul. They too believed and were immersed.{105}

Topics: - THE MEANING OF IMMERSION

The Galatian believers were all immersed in Christ in water. So, they were all clothed with Christ. Therefore, they became children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.{106}

The Colossians believers were buried with Christ by immersion. They were also raised with Christ through believing in the power of God who raised Christ from death.{107}

Paul said to the Roman Christians, "You know that all of us were immersed into Christ Jesus in water. Don't you know that we were immersed into his death? So, through immersion, we were buried with him into death. Christ was raised from death through the glory of the Father. In the same way, we will live a new life. Because if we have been planted with Christ, dying as he died, we will also be raised to life with him. You know that our sinful selves{108} were nailed to the cross with Christ, so that the body of sin

would lose its power, so that sin will no longer be used to make us slaves. A person who dies has been set free from sin. Since we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. You know that Christ was raised from death, never to die again -- death does not rule over him anymore! This was the type of death he died: He died for sin, once for all time, but the kind of life that he now lives is for God. In the same way, think of yourselves as being dead to sin, but alive to God by Christ Jesus.”{109}

Topics: - LISTEN TO JESUS

Jesus said, “Listen, I stand at the door. I am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come inside with him. We will have dinner together.{110} You are tired and have heavy loads. If all of you will come to me, I will give you rest. Take the job{111} I give you. Learn from me because I am gentle and humble in heart. You will find rest for your lives. The duty I give you is easy. The load I put upon you is not heavy.{112} If you are thirsty, come to me and drink!”{113} Let the person who is thirsty come. Let him take as much of the living water as he wants.{114} Jesus came to the apostles and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, after you've gone out, make followers for me from all nations.{115} Immerse them in water by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I commanded you. Remember, I will always be with you - - even until the end of time!”{116}

Topics: - BECOME A CHRISTIAN NOW

Christians are obedient followers of Christ. God called the followers of Jesus “Christians” for the first time in Antioch.{117} If you must suffer as a Christian, you shouldn't be ashamed. Use this name to give glory to God.{118} Jesus said, “Listen! I am coming soon. The reward I have is with me. I will pay back each person according to the way he lived.”{119} Listen! Now is the right time. Listen! Now is the day of salvation!{120} You don't know what will happen tomorrow! Your life is like a fog. It appears for a short time and then it disappears.{121} It's late!{122} No one knows when that exact time will be. The angels in heaven don't know it. Jesus didn't know it. Only the heavenly Father knows.{123}

Topics: - SOME ARE BLINDED BY SATAN

Be alert! Watch! The Devil is your enemy. He is like a lion. He walks around, roaring and looking for someone to eat. Those of you who are strong in faith must resist him.{124} Resist the Devil and he will run away from you. Get close to God and God will get close to you.{125} Be faithful, even if you must die. Jesus will give you the crown of life.{126} Satan himself can make himself look like an angel of light. So, it isn't any big thing, when the servants of Satan try to look like servants of righteousness.{127} Not everyone who says to Jesus, “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven. Only the person who does what my heavenly Father wants will enter it.{128} Jesus said, “Why do you call me, `Lord! Lord!' yet you do not obey what I say?”{129}

So, put first God's kingdom and what is right.{130} Grow in the gracious love and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Give him glory now and forever.{131} Put away all evil, every trick, hypocrisy, jealousy, and any kind of evil talk. Be like little babies who have just been born. Yearn for pure spiritual milk, so that you may use it to grow up for salvation.{132}

Topics: - COME TO JESUS

Jesus said, “The people who wash their robes are happy.{133} They will have the right to eat from the Tree of Life and the right to enter the city. I am the Descendant from the family of David, the bright Morning Star.”{134} The Spirit and the bride{135} are saying, “Come!” Let the person who is listening say, “Come!” Let the person who is thirsty come. Let him take as much of the living water as he wants.{136} Jesus said, “Come, take what belongs to you -- the kingdom which was prepared for you since the beginning of the world.”{137}

Topics: - FOOTNOTES OF LESSON SIX:

- {1} Acts 17:30-31
- {2} Matthew 25:46
- {3} The Greek word for the unseen world of the dead
- {4} hell
- {5} Revelation 20:11-15
- {6} Galatians 6:7; See 2 Peter 2:4.
- {7} Hebrews 10:31
- {8} Hebrews 12:29
- {9} 2 Corinthians 5:10; See Romans 2:16.
- {10} 1 Timothy 2:4
- {11} Titus 2:11
- {12} 2 Peter 3:9-10
- {13} 1 Thessalonians 1:10
- {14} 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

- {15} John 1:11-12
- {16} Acts 10:43
- {17} 1 John 3:8
- {18} 1 Corinthians 15:21; See Romans 5:12.
- {19} 1 Corinthians 15:26; See Luke 1:79.
- {20} Hebrews 2:14-15
- {21} 2 Timothy 1:10
- {22} 1 Timothy 1:15
- {23} Luke 19:10
- {24} Galatians 1:4
- {25} 1 Peter 3:18
- {26} John 10:10
- {27} Romans 4:25
- {28} Hebrews 5:8-9
- {29} John 1:29
- {30} 1 John 3:5
- {31} 1 Timothy 2:6 32 Ephesians 1:7
- {33} Romans 3:24
- {34} Colossians 1:14
- {35} Romans 3:23
- {36} Romans 5:6-10
- {37} 2 Corinthians 5:18-19
- {38} Ephesians 2:8-9; Compare Acts 18:27.
- {39} Titus 3:5
- {40} Romans 1:16
- {41} 1 Timothy 2:5
- {42} Ephesians 4:5
- {43} John 14:6
- {44} Romans 5:2
- {45} Acts 4:12
- {46} 1 Corinthians 3:11
- {47} Acts 2:24
- {48} 2 Corinthians 5:21
- {49} 1 John 2:1-2
- {50} Romans 3:24
- {51} 1 Corinthians 6:14
- {52} Acts 26:22-23
- {53} John 12:48
- {54} 2 John 9
- {55} Romans 5:11
- {56} Jesus
- {57} Galatians 3:19-25
- {58} Romans 10:4
- {59} John 1:17
- {60} Hebrews 1:1-2; See Acts 28:23.
- {61} Matthew 5:17; See Acts 24:14.
- {62} literally, in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter; Romans 7:6; (See Hebrews 9:16-18.)
- {63} Colossians 2:14
- {64} Galatians 2:16
- {65} Galatians 2:21
- {66} Galatians 3:11
- {67} Deuteronomy 21:23; See James 2:10.
- {68} Galatians 3:14
- {69} the slavery of the law of Moses
- {70} Galatians 5:1-6
- {71} Philippians 3:9
- {72} Romans 10:12
- {73} literally, Greek
- {74} Galatians 3:28-29
- {75} Galatians 6:15
- {76} Acts 13:38-39

{77} John 3:16
{78} 1 Thessalonians 1:4
{79} Romans 8:32
{80} 1 John 4:9-11
{81} John 8:24
{82} Romans 6:23
{83} Luke 13:3
{84} John 8:34
{85} 1 John 3:8
{86} Mark 1:15
{87} Mark 6:12
{88} Acts 3:19
{89} Acts 20:21
{90} Acts 26:20
{91} Acts 26:18
{92} Romans 2:4
{93} 2 Timothy 2:25
{94} Matthew 16:15-16
{95} Matthew 10:32-33
{96} or, When one uses the mouth to confess
{97} Romans 10:9-10
{98} 1 John 4:15
{99} Mark 16:15-16
{100} Acts 2:37-38
{101} Acts 2:41
{102} Acts 22:16
{103} See Acts 9:18-19.
{104} Acts 16:30-34
{105} Acts 18:8
{106} Galatians 3:26-27
{107} Colossians 2:12
{108} or, our old man
{109} Romans 6:3-11
{110} Revelation 3:20
{111} literally, the yoke (responsibility)
{112} Matthew 11:28-30
{113} John 7:37
{114} Revelation 22:17
{115} every cultural group
{116} Matthew 28:18-20
{117} Acts 11:26
{118} 1 Peter 4:16
{119} Revelation 22:12
{120} 2 Corinthians 6:2
{121} James 4:14
{122} Romans 13:11
{123} Mark 13:32
{124} 1 Peter 5:8-9
{125} James 4:7-8
{126} Revelation 2:10
{127} 2 Corinthians 11:14-15
{128} Matthew 7:21
{129} Luke 6:46
{130} Matthew 6:33
{131} 2 Peter 3:18
{132} 1 Peter 2:1-2
{133} an expression which means that they live pure lives
{134} Revelation 22:14,16
{135} the Lord's people
{136} Revelation 22:17
{137} Matthew 25:34

The End, or the Beginning?”,