

Promise and Deliverance

Student Workbook

Volume 12

Level 4

Harvey De Groot

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Preface

When S.G. De Graaf wrote his four-volume series, *Promise and Deliverance*, he showed educators how to teach Bible stories from a redemptive-historical perspective. Rather than turning Bible stories into moralistic tales, De Graaf taught us how all the Bible shows God revealing himself as the God of the covenant, who is working out His redemptive plan for humanity and all of creation.

The 80 workbooks written by Harvey De Groot are meant to supplement De Graaf's work. They are divided by volume and level number: 20 volumes with four levels per volume. Workbook lessons are written at four levels so that families with students in various grades can study the same Bible stories during the week in preparation for their classes on Sunday. Prior to class, the Sunday School teacher should study the lesson in De Graaf's book. The teacher and students can go through the workbook during class.

The levels are divided according to the following grades:

- **Level One:** Grades K-1
- **Level Two:** Grades 2-3
- **Level Three:** Grades 4-6
- **Level Four:** Grades 7-8

Each volume contains 12 or 13 lessons, and each lesson has the following sections:

- **Reference:** The volume and lesson number in De Graaf's series.
- **Scripture:** The passage from Scripture on which the lesson is based.
- **Memory Verse:** A memory verse related to the lesson.
- **Lesson Truth:** A short statement to help the class focus on the main point of the lesson.
- **Lesson:** The lesson itself, which the teacher can read in class. For older grades, the teacher may opt to assign it as homework.
- **Questions:** Items to be discussed in class. For older grades, the teacher can assign these questions as homework but should also use them as a basis for class discussion. These are not the only questions that could or should be asked. Teachers should encourage students to come with their own questions as well.

This edition was written by Harvey De Groot and edited by his son Norlan De Groot.

Lesson 1

The First and the Last

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 14

Scripture: Matthew 19:13–20:16

Memory Verse: “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” (Matthew 19:29-30)

Lesson Truth: In the Kingdom of heaven, many of those who are first will be last, and many of the last will be first.

Lesson

In the economy of the Kingdom of heaven the deeds of men appear to bring the opposite results of what we see in an earthly kingdom. That is why the Lord Jesus could talk about the first being last, and the last being first. In today’s lesson Jesus indicated that the Kingdom of heaven belongs to those who have the faith of a child. He clearly taught that righteousness is a gift of grace and that obedience growing out of faith in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ would be rewarded.

As Jesus traveled toward Jerusalem in anticipation of His suffering, He taught the people in Judea. At the time He was teaching in Judea, some parents brought their little children to Jesus asking Him to lay His hands on them and pray for them. Although these parents did not completely understand who Jesus was, they saw Him to be a prophet of God. They wanted this prophet to bless their children. Imagine their dismay when Jesus’ disciples rebuked them and insinuated that Jesus could not be bothered with children. But their dismay turned to joy when Jesus told His disciples to let the children come to Him. He told the disciples not to forbid them to come, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to those who receive it in faith as a child.

The disciples had to learn that the Kingdom was a free gift of God’s grace. Because it is a free gift of grace children can receive it as well as adults. They had to understand that the kingdom of heaven was the fulfillment of the covenant promise. These children were children of covenant parents who had received the sign and seal of the covenant. Jesus laid His hands in baptism on these children and blessed them. He made it clear to the disciples that the children belonged to Him and to His Father in heaven. In this baptism the children received the same promise as in circumcision, that the Kingdom of heaven belonged to them!

When Jesus encountered a rich young ruler, He taught the impossibility of being saved by keeping the law. Salvation is by grace to those who believe in the finished work of the Lord Jesus in His death and resurrection. The rich young ruler had been an upstanding young man who kept the letter of the law; however, he did not have peace in his heart. That is why he asked Jesus what additional thing he had to do in order to gain eternal life. Jesus then touched on the one thing, his wealth, that kept the young man from the Kingdom of heaven. He was attached to his wealth and would not sell all he had to give to the poor. Jesus then shared with His disciples how hard it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven. He said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God’s Kingdom.

When the disciples heard this, they questioned whether it was possible for anyone to be saved. We all have things we possess. But Christ Jesus taught that it is necessary for us to know that we cannot put our trust in anything but the grace of the Lord Jesus for our salvation. He told the disciples that with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. We must know that all we possess are gifts from God.

Peter as the spokesman for the disciples then reminded Jesus that the disciples had left all to follow Him. Jesus assured the disciple that in the Kingdom of God, those who left all to follow him would reign with Him in judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Obedience that flows out of faith will be rewarded, not because of what man has done but because of what Christ Jesus has done. The Lord then reminded the disciple of the economy of His Kingdom saying that many who are first will be last, and last first.

Christ Jesus then illustrated the Kingdom economy by telling a parable of a man who owned a vineyard. This owner hired workers for his vineyard for a set price. He then added other workers throughout the day for the exact same wage. When at the end of the day the workers who worked all day were paid the same wage as those who worked only an hour, they complained. To this Jesus replied that they were paid the wages for which they agreed to work. Such is the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is a free gift to all. For those who worked a lifetime time in His Kingdom as well as for those who were chosen at the last hour; the Kingdom is a free gift of grace. Do you believe in that gift of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ?

Questions

1. Who rebuked the parents who brought their children to Jesus that he might lay His hands on them? (Matt. 19:13)
2. What was Jesus' response to this rebuke? (Matt. 19:14)
3. How was Jesus addressed by the man who wanted to know what to do to have eternal life? (Matt. 19:16)
4. According to Jesus who is the only One who is good? (Matt. 19:17)

Lesson 2

Looking for Fruit

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 15

Scripture: Matthew 21:18-46

Memory Verse: “So Jesus answered and said to them, Assuredly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but you will say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and cast into the sea,’ it will be done.” (Matthew 21:21)

Lesson Truth: Christ Himself bears the curse of our fruitlessness in order that we may bear fruit.

Lesson

Jesus was looking for the fruits of righteousness in the hearts and lives of the spiritual leaders in Israel. The evidence of these fruits would be hearts that believed the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was prompted to talk about bearing fruit when He saw a fig tree with new leaves, but it had no fruit. The sad truth was that the spiritual leaders at the temple in Jerusalem were like that fig tree. They had leaves but no fruit. They insisted on practicing the law, but in their heart, they had no love for their fellow men. Because their hearts were closed, they could not understand that Jesus was the Christ. They made plans to kill Him rather than honor Him as the Son of God, the promised Messiah.

As Jesus returned to Jerusalem from Bethany, He saw a fig tree covered with leaves. He knew that a fig tree usually produces its first edible fruit as soon as it produces leaves. Therefore, He went to the tree looking for fruit, because He was hungry. When He found that the tree had no fruit, He cursed the tree and declared that this tree would never again bear fruit. In this same way lives that do not bear spiritual fruit are cursed so that they will never again bear fruit, unless the Messiah takes this curse upon Himself. Because the Lord Jesus did take the curse upon Himself; those who have the faith to believe that He took their curse will again bear the fruit of repentance and life. Faith would allow them to command that a mountain be cast into the sea and it would happen.

The teachings of Jesus were so astounding that the scribes and the elders confronted him when he came to the temple. They asked Him by what authority He taught these astounding things. In response, Jesus asked them a question. He asked if they thought John the Baptist was sent by God to baptize the people, or if he just did this baptism on his own. This question put the elders in a tight spot. If they said that John was sent from God, then He would question why they didn't believe him. However, if they said he baptized on his own, they were afraid of the people because John was regarded as a prophet. Jesus was not trying to outsmart them, but He did want them to realize that they were unwilling to surrender in faith. For that reason, Jesus said that He would not tell them by whose authority He showed His signs.

The Lord Jesus then followed this conversation with a parable to demonstrate to the elders that obedience is better than words. He told of a farmer who had two sons. This farmer instructed his oldest son to work in his vineyard, but the son refused. Later he thought about his refusal and went to work in the vineyard. The farmer also instructed the second son to work in his vineyard. This son told the father he was ready to go to work, but he didn't do as he said. Jesus' question for the elders was, “Which of the two did the will of his father?” The elders answered the first son did the will of his father. Jesus then clearly told them that many people who seem to refuse the kingdom of heaven, such as tax collectors and harlots, later turn to the Lord and will enter the kingdom of God. Do we believe in this power Christ's grace to change hearts?

5. Which of the two sons in the parable did the will of the father? (Matt. 21:28-31)

6. According to Jesus who would enter the kingdom of God before the elders? (Matt. 21:31)

7. In the parable of the wicked vinedressers, what did they do to the servants and the son? (Matt. 21:33-39)

8. What will the owner of the vineyard do to the wicked vinedressers? (Matt. 21:40-41)

Lesson 3

Calling and Election

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 16

Scripture: Matthew 22:1-14

Memory Verse: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.” (Matthew 22:2-3)

Lesson Truth: Calling can only be understood as election.

Lesson

Calling and election are wonderful and encouraging truths of Scripture. Election is that sovereign act of God by which He chooses people to be His own. Election occurs in relationship to Christ Jesus. “Calling is that gracious act of God whereby He invites sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus.”¹ God is the author of both calling and election. He is the starting point of the work of redemption in the hearts of men. Jesus taught the truth of His calling and election in the Parable of the Wedding Feast.

Jesus continued in His exchange with the chief priests and elders. The elders wanted to reject Jesus outright, but they were afraid of the people. Still the hostility of the chief priests and elders against Jesus grew. It would continue to grow until they would incite the crowds to yell, “Let him be crucified!” (Matt. 27:22). Still Jesus wanted the chief priests and elders to know that God chose Israel to be His people because of His grace. He wanted them to know that they did not deserve to be chosen any more than any other nation. They had to understand that they did not have a right to God’s favor. If only they could understand that citizenship in God’s kingdom is a gift of grace and not something they deserved; maybe they would respond in faith.

In the parable of the wedding feast Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a king who planned a wedding feast for his son. When the feast was prepared, he sent his servants to call the invited guests to come to the wedding. Sadly, these guests were not willing to come because they failed to realize what a privilege it would be to share in the king’s joy. The guests treated the king’s invitation as if it were a thing that they could either accept or reject. What arrogance to think that they were the ones who could determine who could come to the wedding feast. That is why their hearts were closed to His grace. Still the king sent out additional servants to urge those who were invited to come to the wedding feast. But they also scorned these servants and continued to go about their business. They even treated these additional servants spitefully and killed them. No wonder the king was furious when he heard of the response of his invited guests.

The king sent his armies to destroy the invited guests and burn up their city. Then he sent other servants into the highways and byways to bring in people to attend his wedding feast. The meaning was clear that the children of Israel who had been invited to the king’s wedding feast had refused to come. They would now be destroyed, and others would be brought in as guests. The poor people from the streets and highways would take the place of the chosen nation who had originally been invited. The wedding hall must be filled with guests at the king’s wedding feast.

The people from the streets were aware that they did not deserve the honor of being guests at the king’s wedding feast. But since the king had invited them, they would share in the joy of his feast. When every seat at

¹ Louis Berkhof, *Summary of Christian Doctrine*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), p.125.

the king's feast was filled, the king himself entered and looked over the guests. He noticed immediately that there was one guest that dared to join the wedding feast without wearing the white wedding garment. The king questioned why he came to the feast without a wedding garment. This parable taught all who listened, that anyone who comes as a guest to the wedding feast of the King, must be clothed in the garment of His grace! God would call people from every nation to the feast of His favor by grace!

The king then commanded that the guest who came to the feast without a wedding garment be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness. This outer darkness is the place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. In telling this parable, Jesus made it clear to the chief priests and elders that Israel as God's covenant people would no longer live in that blessed relationship. God desires that people from every nation submit to the Word of His grace. This parable of the wedding feast helps us understand how God calls and elects His people from every nation and tribe and tongue.

Questions

1. According to Jesus' parable what is the kingdom of heaven like? (Matt. 22:2)
2. What was hard-hearted about the guests who were invited to the wedding feast? (Matt. 22:3)
3. What were the king's servants instructed to tell those who were invited to the king's feast? (Matt. 22:4)
4. How did the invited wedding guests scorn the king's invitation? (Matt. 22:5-6)

Lesson 4

For the Bridegroom's Sake

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 17

Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13

Memory Verse: “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.” (Matthew 25:1)

Lesson Truth: The Bridegroom is worth waiting for.

Lesson

In the final week before His suffering, Jesus spent time teaching His disciples. They had reminded Jesus of the symbol of strength evident in the temple building. If they were hoping for a renewed kingdom of Israel, Jesus discredited that thought. He told them that not one stone would be left upon another of the marvelous temple building. The disciples then questioned Jesus about when these things would occur. In response Jesus told them about the signs of the times, the great tribulation, and the coming of the Son of Man.

Jesus then cautioned the disciples that no one knows the day or the hour of the return of the Son of Man. Yet there are signs that indicate to His people that his return will be soon. The destruction of the city of Jerusalem was a prophecy that pointed to the end of the world. The nations of the world will reject the Kingdom of grace so they will be judged just as Israel was judged. Jesus warned that the end of the age would be like the days Noah. People will be eating and drinking and marrying without any thought of the end. Then when they least expect it the Son of Man will appear. He will separate the people that are in the fields or at the mill. Some will enter into glory and others will not. It will be like ten young girls who were invited to a wedding by the bride and her parents.

The story of the ten young girls who were invited to a wedding is a parable that Jesus shared with His disciples. He wanted the disciples to understand that not everyone would be focused on the honor of the Bridegroom when He comes. There will be many whose only focus is for their own comfort and rewards. Jesus told about ten young women who had been invited to the bride's home to meet the bridegroom when he arrived. Five of these young women were wise and five of them were foolish. The five wise girls understood that they were invited so that they could honor the bridegroom. They not only took their lamps filled with oil, but they also took additional oil so they would have enough if the bridegroom did not come right away. The five foolish girls forgot to bring additional oil. They only filled their lamps with enough oil to give them light at the party. They failed to realize that the reason they were invited was to bring honor and glory to the bridegroom. Then as they waited for the bridegroom to come, they fell asleep.

While the girls were sleeping at midnight, someone yelled the bridegroom is coming! Immediately all the girls lit their lamps. But the lamps of the foolish ones did not have enough oil to remain lit. Their first reaction was to beg for oil from the wise girls so they could light the way for the bridegroom. The wise girls informed them that they only had enough oil for their own lamps and suggested that the foolish girls go to the market to buy additional oil. As the foolish girls rushed to the market, the bridegroom came, and the wise girls were ready to light his way to the home of his bride. When the bridegroom reached the home of his bride, he went in to the wedding feast and locked the door. The wedding feast was in progress and the wise girls were there to show honor and devotion to the bridegroom.

When the foolish girls returned from the market with additional oil for their lamps, they found the door to the wedding feast locked. They called out to the bridegroom, “Lord, Lord, open the door for us, so that we may also be at the wedding feast!” In the parable the bridegroom answered them and said, “I do not know you” (Matt. 25:11-12). They were treated as strangers who would not be allowed to honor the bridegroom.

Jesus concluded His parable by urging the disciple to watch for the coming of the Bridegroom! He then made it clear that the Bridegroom referred to the Redeemer when He said: “You do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming” (Matt. 25:13). This is our notice to wait eagerly for the coming of the Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ! The real anticipation of the return of Christ Jesus is not first of all our salvation, but so that we may honor the Bridegroom. Are we ready for His return?

Questions

1. In Matthew 25 what did Jesus say the kingdom of heaven would be like? (Matt. 25:1)
2. What differences were there in the ten virgins? (Matt. 25:2)
3. What made five of the virgins foolish? (Matt. 25:3)
4. What made five of the virgins wise? (Matt. 25:4)
5. What did the ten virgins do when the bridegroom delayed his coming? (Matt. 25:5)

6. What cry was heard at midnight? (Matt. 25:6)

7. What happened when the foolish virgins went to buy oil? (Matt. 25:10)

8. What was Jesus' admonition to the disciples and also to us? (Matt. 25:13)

Lesson 5

The Master's Goods

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 18

Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30

Memory Verse: “For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability.” (Matthew 25:14-15a)

Lesson Truth: The Master deserves to have us work with His goods.

Lesson

Jesus continued teaching His disciples using parables. In the parable of the wise and foolish girls He helped the disciples understand that there would be differences in judgment because of different attitudes toward Him. In the parable of the talents, which we study today, He taught the disciples about man's attitude toward the Master's goods. Do all of man's talents, including a person's skills and possessions, belong to the Master? Are they all considered as a trust on loan from the Master? Is it considered an honor to work to make the best possible use of what the master has given? Jesus taught that there were different attitudes toward the master's goods and therefore there were also different judgments.

The Lord Jesus began this parable by making a comparison. This time He compared the kingdom of heaven to a master who was going to travel to a far country. The master called his servants and put them in charge of his goods. He expected them to do business with the goods he entrusted to them because he would be away for some time. With this in mind, the master gave to one servant five talents, to another two talents, and to a third servant he gave one talent. Each servant was given gifts and talents according to his own ability. When the goods were distributed, the master began his journey.

As soon as the master left, the servant who received the five talents traded and did business with his talents and doubled his investment to ten talents. The servant who received two talents did the same thing; by trading, he doubled his investment to four talents. But the third servant had a completely different attitude toward the goods the master had given him. He did not see it as an honor to use what the master had entrusted to him. Rather, he was convinced that the master wanted to exploit him and use him as a slave. So, he decided to bury his master's goods then he could return exactly what the master had given him.

Remember that Jesus said the Kingdom of heaven is like a master who traveled to a far country and entrusted his servants with his goods. This describes the relationship between Christ Jesus and humanity, which is evident in the covenant of grace. There are those who acknowledge that all the possession and skills they have are a trust from the Lord Jesus. They are willing to develop these skills and use them to build the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. They know that the possessions the Lord has given them are a trust, and they are ready to use them for the advancement of His Kingdom. However, there are also those who do not recognize that their talents are a trust from the Lord. They see their skills and possessions as something that they own and are not willing to use them to build the Kingdom of heaven.

The parable continues by telling of the return of the master after being away for a long time. When the master returned, he came to settle the accounts with his servants. The servant who had received five talents told his master that he had used the talents to trade and in this way had gained additional five talents. To this the master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over

Lesson 6

Ready to Be Sacrificed

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 19

Scripture: Matthew 26:1-16

Memory Verse: “Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, ‘You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.’” (Matthew 26:1-2)

Lesson Truth: Christ’s love, by which He is ready to be sacrificed, is in control.

Lesson

Jesus taught His disciples by using many parables. He taught them about the end times and the signs that would indicate that the day and the hour of which no one knows would be near. He taught them that the Bridegroom is worthy of their full attention as they wait and that it is an honor to use the Master’s goods. After this clear teaching about the purpose and nature of His Kingdom, the Lord now told His disciples that it was time for Him to suffer and die for his people.

From Jesus’ own words we know that He was ready to be sacrificed. He was keenly aware that this would happen during the feast of the Passover. He told His disciples that in two days they would go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast and that at that time He would be delivered up to be crucified. What is significant is that the chief priests and the elders had agreed that Jesus had to be put to death, but that their plan to arrest Him could not take place during the Passover. It could not happen during the Passover because it would cause an uproar among the people. But the chief priests and elders were not in control of these events. The love of the Lord Jesus Christ was in control, and He knew that He would be sacrificed during the Passover Feast.

In spite of the agreement made at the palace of Caiaphas to delay the arrest of Jesus, the Passover feast was God’s time for His suffering. This was appropriate because of the event that the Passover remembered. This was the feast that called the children of Israel to remember the time that the angel of death passed over the houses in Egypt that had blood on the door posts. The children of Israel were told that the angel of death would not visit their home if they had the blood of the Passover Lamb sprinkled on the door posts. This was the night when the first-born of every family in Egypt died. The first-born in Israel were spared because of the blood. This was night that Israel was delivered from her bondage in Egypt.

There could hardly be a more meaningful time for the Redeemer to suffer and die than at the Passover. Just as the angel of death passed over the homes whose doors were sprinkled with blood, so also the curse of God passed by those for whom Christ Jesus shed His blood. God’s people who knew and believed the messianic promises would understand that Jesus was the true Passover Lamb. His blood would atone for the sins of God’s chosen people from every nation. Jesus went to Jerusalem ready to be sacrificed. His love for His people controlled the chief priests and elders in their determination to put Him to death.

Why was the Sanhedrin meeting at this time in the palace of Caiaphas? They were meeting because Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples had made an offer to hand Jesus over to them. He probably did this at this time because he hated what he thought were excesses that Jesus tolerated on the part of Mary. He was so committed to the money that he cared for, as the treasurer of the group, that he thought it was terrible for Mary to waste a box of perfume by anointing Jesus.

5. At whose home was Jesus dining when Mary came to visit Him? (Matt. 26:6)

6. What did Mary do with the flask of fragrant oil she brought to Jesus? (Matt. 26:7)

7. What was the attitude of the disciples toward Mary's deed? (Matt. 26:8-9)

8. According to Jesus why did Mary pour the oil on His body? (Matt. 26:12)

Lesson 7

The New Testament in His Blood

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 20

Scripture: Matthew 26:17-29

Memory Verse: “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, ‘Drink from it all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’” (Matthew 26:27-28)

Lesson Truth: The assurance of faith lies in God’s faithfulness in His covenant.

Lesson

In a previous lesson we learned that the Lord Jesus told His disciples that He would suffer and die during the Passover feast. The events of today’s lesson take place on the first day of this feast. The question the disciples had for Jesus at this time concerned the place where they should prepare the Passover meal. Jesus directed them to the house of a believer that they would find by following someone on the street. There they would prepare the Passover meal which the disciples thought would be the usual unleavened bread. They had no idea what the Lord meant when He said: “My time is at hand” (Matt. 26:18). The disciples still did not realize that Jesus was the Passover Lamb. They did not understand that His blood had to be shed so that the angel of eternal death would pass by His chosen ones. Nor did they realize that at this Passover meal Jesus would tell them that His blood was the blood of the new covenant.

As Jesus sat with His disciples at the Passover meal, He showed them His love. He wanted them to know that He was going to die for them and for all those whom the Father had given Him. Then in the midst of His expressions of love for His disciples, He said something that must have shocked every one of them. He said: “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me” (Matt. 26:21). Following this announcement, the disciples showed that their hope of eternal life did not rely on what they could do. Each one was aware that aside from the grace of God in their heart they were capable of being the betrayer. Each one asked the Lord: “Is it I?” (Matt. 26:22). Jesus could have stated that Judas would betray Him, but He likely wanted to remove any confidence the disciples had in themselves. Jesus loved his disciples so much that He wanted them to know that their only hope for life in His Kingdom could come from the faithfulness of God in His covenant.

After each of the disciples questioned Jesus if he was the betrayer, Jesus told them that it was the one who dipped his hand with Him in the dish. Jesus wanted Judas to know that He was aware of his plan to betray the Lord, but He did not do anything to prevent this plan. Jesus was ready to give Himself as the Passover Lamb as the Redeemer of His chosen ones. Yes, Christ Jesus would suffer and die for the sins of His people, “but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed” (Matt. 26:24). His betrayal would lead to an awful rejection of God’s mercy. Jesus said it would have been better if he had never been born. Then, when Judas asked the Lord, “Rabbi is it I?” (Matt. 26:25). Jesus told him plainly that he was the one. With those words Judas left!

The disciples most likely did not understand the awful consequences of Judas’ intent to betray the Lord. Still, they were in need of assurances from the Christ. They had to be assured that God is forever faithful to His covenant. The disciples were about to receive a new revelation concerning the covenant. In the old covenant God’s promises were sealed with the blood of bulls and goats. In the new covenant God’s promises are sealed with the blood of the true Passover Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made this known to His disciples as they shared the Passover meal. “He took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to His disciples and said, ‘Take

eat: this is My body” (Matt. 26:26). Jesus also instructed His disciples to drink from the cup and then He introduced the new covenant when He said: “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Just think, no longer would it be necessary to offer the blood of bulls and goats as the seal for God’s covenant promise. Now we live in the assurance that the blood of the Passover Lamb, Christ Jesus was shed as the complete assurance that God will be forever faithful to His covenant. It was through this ceremony that Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He commanded us along with His disciples to keep this sacrament as a remembrance of Him. We must remember that His blood seals the covenant God made with His people for all eternity.

Following the supper, the Lord and His disciples sang a hymn and then went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him and that He would be taken as a prisoner to suffer and die. He was ready for His suffering, but were the disciples ready? Would they be able to live in the assurance of the new covenant? The truth is that they were not ready. They still trusted in themselves. For that reason, Jesus told them that this was the night they would all stumble because of Him. Jesus then quoted words from the prophet Zechariah saying: “I will strike the Shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered” (Matt. 26:31). This quote indicated how difficult it was for the disciples to understand that redemption would come through the death and resurrection of the Redeemer. Yes, Jesus offered the New Testament in His blood!

Questions

1. What question did the disciples ask Jesus on the first day of the feast of Unleavened bread? (Matt. 26:17)
2. What were the disciples instructed to say to a certain man in the city? (Matt. 26:18)
3. What astounding statement did Jesus make to His disciples as they were eating? (Matt. 26:21)
4. What question did each of the disciples have for the Lord about His statement? (Matt. 26:22)

Lesson 8

The Faithful Witness

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 21

Scripture: Matthew 26:57-75

Memory Verse: “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you have said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.’” (Matthew 26:63-64)

Lesson Truth: The Mediator undergoes substitutionary suffering in His rejection as the Christ.

Lesson

The faithful witness that we will learn about today is Christ Jesus as He gave testimony to being the Son of God. He gave this testimony before a council of priests, scribes, and elders who were gathered to find an occasion to put Him to death. They looked for false witnesses and entertained accusations about destroying the temple and raising it in three days. Finally, they accused Him of blasphemy when He testified to the truth of being the Son of God. Jesus’ suffering included being rejected as the Christ.

Jesus was taken as a prisoner in the Garden of Gethsemane. The soldiers then led Him to the house of Caiaphas to meet a gathering of the high priests, scribes, and elders. This group usually met near the temple but this time they were called together in a hurry because it was time to accuse Jesus. The Lord had taught the people that His Kingdom was a Kingdom of grace and that this grace was available only through Him because he was the Son of God. This infuriated the Sadducees and Pharisees gathered at the house of Caiaphas because they rejected the claim that He was the Christ the Son of God. They were determined to find a cause to put Him to death. In that effort they listened to the reports of false witnesses, but they could not get two witnesses to agree, as the law required.

In desperation they finally found two witnesses who were willing to testify that Jesus had said that He would destroy the temple and build it up in three days. The chief priests and elders wanted Him to verify that He had made these claims, but Jesus kept silent. He knew that in their hatred for Him they would never understand that He was referring to the temple of His body. This temple of the body of the Lord Jesus would be destroyed and after three days He would rise again. After His resurrection He would pour out His Spirit upon His people. Then God would dwell in their hearts. The temple was the sign that God lived with His people. Following Christ’s resurrection, the temple of God would be the hearts of all believers.

Despite their efforts the chief priests and elders found that even these two witnesses did not entirely agree. For that reason, they now had to question Jesus themselves about the real issue; was He the Christ the Son of God? The high priest then told Jesus that he was putting Him under oath by the living God. He commanded: “Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!” (Matt. 26:63). This was an awful moment in the history of mankind. It was the moment that they forced Jesus to testify under oath that He was the Christ, so they could reject Him. Just think, the people, through their officials, rejected the grace of God in Christ!

Jesus responded to their command by stating clearly that He was the Christ. Still, He wanted to warn the chief priests and elders, so He added that after this time they would see the Son of man at the right hand of the Power of God. He also said they would see Him coming on the clouds of heaven. Despite this warning the high priests and elders did not submit. The high priest tore his clothes and charged Jesus with blasphemy. The

Lesson 9

Like Clay in the Potter's Hands

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 22

Scripture: Matthew 27:1-10

Memory Verse: “When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.” (Matthew 27:1-2)

Lesson Truth: In Christ, life is transformed just as clay is reshaped by the potter!

Lesson

Judas had received thirty pieces of silver as payment to betray the Lord Jesus. Later when he saw that Jesus was condemned, he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the Sanhedrin. These thirty pieces of silver were used to purchase the potter's field, a place to bury strangers. This field is a sign that believers rest in the earth under the price of the blood of the Lord Jesus. By the price of Jesus' blood, believers are redeemed from sin and death. The potter's field is also a reminder of the work of the potter. The potter can take a vessel of dishonor and remake it into a vessel of honor. In the same way our God, for Jesus' sake, can remake a sinful, depraved person into a person who lives for God's glory.

The suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ at the hands of the Sanhedrin, was encouraged by the betrayal of Judas. The tragedy of the hatred demonstrated by Judas and the Sanhedrin was that they rejected their covenant head. They rejected God's grace when they rejected their covenant head. This was not the first time that Israel had rejected the covenant promises. Each time they served other gods they rejected the covenant head. Each time they thought they could save themselves by their own righteousness they rejected Him. Judas's betrayal of Jesus and the Sanhedrin's delivery of Him to Pontius Pilate were the outcome of that rejection. But Jesus was willing to suffer that rejection because of His people's sins. God the Father's rejection of the Redeemer was justified because he was the head of the covenant. God destroyed life in Christ Jesus, just like the potter destroyed a vessel of dishonor on his wheel. It was destroyed so that a new vessel could be made. This new vessel would be a new people in Christ Jesus created for His honor.

The morning after Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus, he saw that the chief priests and elders were plotting to kill Him. Judas was convinced of their intent when they led Him to Pontius Pilate. He saw the results of his hatred of the Lord Jesus and realized that he was responsible for His betrayal. How could Judas have done such a deed? The truth is that he was an unbeliever who had closed his heart to the words and miracles of Christ. Judas had closed his heart to the grace of God that was available in Christ Jesus. He had seen the love that Jesus showed to Mary and her response of love when she anointed Him with oil. But Judas hated that love and that is why he came to betray the Lord Jesus.

In spite of the hatred that Judas had for the Lord Jesus, he experienced some remorse when he saw what would happen to Him. He decided to return the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and confess that he had betrayed innocent blood. The elders however, had no time for his remorse and told him that was no concern of theirs. Then Judas was filled with despair and threw down the thirty pieces of silver. He then went out and hanged himself. It seemed that he wanted to try to escape from himself, but that is impossible. When he hanged himself he had to face the justice of Almighty God. Judas came to realize the full horror of his unbelief when he came to the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lesson 10

Arbitrary Treatment

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 23

Scripture: Matthew 27:11-31

Memory Verse: “Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him saying, ‘Are You the King of the Jews?’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you say.’ And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.” (Matthew 27:11-12)

Lesson Truth: The Christ suffered arbitrariness so that we may find protection under God’s justice.

Lesson

The chief priests and elders achieved their initial goal. They presented Jesus to be tried by Pilate, the Roman governor. The elders brought the charge they had agreed upon, that Jesus called Himself the King of the Jews. They used this charge that was not regulated by a fixed rule or a law. It was a purely arbitrary accusation, because their final goal was to see that Jesus was put to death. Through His entire trial Jesus was treated without the benefit of the rule of law. He suffered injustice from Pontius Pilate so that He could pay the price of God’s justice for His people.

The first thing Pilate did was to ask Jesus about the charge that the chief priests and elders brought against Him. He asked, “Are You the King of the Jews?” (Matt. 27:11). Jesus did not deny this charge, but told Pilate it was as he said; He was the King of the Jews. Pilate didn’t really know what to do with Jesus as he considered Him to be foolish but not a threat to Rome. So he decided to bring Jesus out before the public where he could clear His name. Then Pilate would let Him go. When the people understood that Pilate really wanted to set Jesus free, they brought a stream of accusations. The people had no facts to prove these accusations. No one could make a case before Pilate that Jesus had broken any existing law. The accusations were completely arbitrary. But Pilate did not achieve his goal, because Jesus did not answer his accusers. He willingly suffered the false accusations brought against Him.

Pilate then thought of another way that he might be able to set Jesus free. This plan was also contrary to the law because it assumed that Jesus was guilty. It was the custom for the governor to set a prisoner free at the Passover Feast. The Romans probably instituted this custom to give the Jews the illusion that they had a voice in their government. Pilate thought that if he gave the people a choice to release Jesus or Barabbas, a known murderer, the people would choose Jesus. This was completely arbitrary because Jesus was not guilty. Pilate put an innocent man at the mercy of His accusers. There was no justice under Pilate!

While Pilate was presiding over the trial of the Lord Jesus, his wife came to him to warn him. She urged Pilate not to have anything to do with Jesus, because she learned in a dream that he was innocent. She confided to her husband that she had suffered in a frightening dream because of Jesus. She did not ask her husband to work for justice, but rather to just ignore Jesus. Although Pilate did not realize it, he had received a warning from God through his wife. Still, he did not rule with justice. Without the benefit of the law, he allowed the people to decide what should be done with Jesus.

As Pilate talked with his wife concerning her dreams about Jesus, the chief priests and elders convinced the people to ask that Barabbas be released. This may have surprised Pilate because he asked: “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called the Christ?” (Matt. 27:22). Following that question he began to understand the hatred that the Jewish leaders had for Jesus. They incited the people to call for His crucifixion. Pilate again tried

Lesson 11

Cursed by God

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 24

Scripture: Matthew 27:32-56

Memory Verse: “Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” (Matthew 27:45-46)

Lesson Truth: Christ was cursed by God so that he might obtain God’s blessing for us.

Lesson

Jesus was considered to be an outcast as he was led away to be crucified. As He hung on the cross, people mocked Him by asking Him to come down from the cross if he was truly the Son of God. Christ Jesus was so completely separated from the love of the Father that the earth was covered with darkness. Jesus was willing to die under God’s curse to redeem His people.

After the soldiers had mocked Jesus and spit on Him, they were ready to lead Him out of the city to be crucified. He was treated like an outcast. Jesus was banished from having any fellowship with the people that He loved so completely. However, His exclusion from the city and the people was a reminder of an Old Testament sacrificial service. Just as the sins of the people were placed on the scapegoat and he was driven into the wilderness, so also Jesus carried the sins of the people as He was led out of the city. He struggled under the weight of the cross that He was made to carry, until the soldiers compelled a man from Cyrene to carry it for Him. Even this seemingly helpful gesture added to Jesus’ suffering as Simon from Cyrene looked with disdain at the One whose cross he was made to carry.

Once the soldiers, prodding Jesus along, were out of the city they came to the hill called Golgotha. The Romans preferred to crucify condemned criminals on a hill so that everyone could see their shame. In preparation for His crucifixion the soldiers offered Jesus some wine to drink to deaden the pain. But Jesus refused this wine because He wanted to be fully conscious as he suffered for His people. The soldiers then nailed Him to the cross and stood the cross up in the hole that was made ready. When He was hanging on the cross the people mocked Him and blasphemed His name by jeering, “If You are the Son of God come down from the cross” (Matt. 27:44). In spite of this, Jesus’ physical suffering was not His worst suffering. Being cursed by God was His greatest suffering! From Jesus’ words we know that being forsaken by God brought Him the most intense suffering. Yet He willingly suffered that rejection for the sake of His people.

It is hard to imagine the unbelievable suffering of the Lord Jesus when the Father forsook Him. He was the One who could not live a moment without God’s love, yet now this love was completely removed from Him. The Light of the World was extinguished! And then it happened! At high noon even the light of the sun was darkened and remained dark for three hours. What else could we expect when God forsook the One who was the Head of the covenant? It was not strange that the sun refused to shine when God forsook the One who brought grace and blessing for His people.

This was the time of the Lord’s most intense suffering and was hidden from the eyes of men. At that moment Jesus was without God! The Head of the covenant without God meant eternal darkness and eternal death, even hell itself. It was then in bitter anguish that He cried out: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46). It was not because he did not know, that He asked this question. Christ Jesus knew that He had

Lesson 12

In the Realm of the Dead

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 25

Scripture: Matthew 27:57-66

Memory Verse: “Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him.” (Matthew 27:57-58)

Lesson Truth: Christ enters the realm of the dead to open its gates.

Lesson

Jesus had been nailed to the cross and suffered the rejection of God until He gave up His spirit. At that time an earthquake shook the earth, and many saints were raised from the dead. These wonders were so stupendous that the Roman centurion gave a testimony out of unbelief when he said: “Truly this was the Son of God” (Matt. 27:54). After these events Jesus entered the realm of the dead in order that He might open the gates of death for us. Our entrance into the realm of the dead is the result of sin. It means that we will be forgotten, and our name will perish with us. The elders of Israel also intended that for Jesus. They wanted His name to perish and to be forgotten forever. That is why they sealed the stone that closed the tomb. Because Christ Jesus suffered the full curse of God against sin, He could break open the kingdom of the dead. The Lord Jesus would rise from the dead so His name would not perish or be forgotten.

On the evening following the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, came to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. He, along with Nicodemus, another disciple, took the body of Jesus and wrapped it for burial. They anointed His body with spices and brought Him to a new tomb in a garden near the hill of Golgotha. While it was wonderful that friends of the Lord Jesus took His body and laid it in the tomb; it was tragic that they felt that He would remain in the realm of the dead. These disciples thought that this was the end of Jesus. They thought that His name would perish and that He would soon be forgotten on the earth. Sadly, they did not yet realize that Christ Jesus had gained the victory over the curse of sin and that He would open the gates of the realm of the dead for His chosen ones. That this appeared to be the end of Jesus is evident when Joseph had a large stone rolled against the door of the tomb. The two Mary’s witnessed the burial of Jesus giving further testimony to His entering the realm of the dead.

After Jesus was buried in Joseph’s new tomb, we note the chief priests and elders taking every precaution to make sure that this was truly the end of the King of the Jews. The day after the crucifixion they went to Pilate to ask that His tomb be made secure. These leaders of Israel had witnessed the mid-day darkness when Jesus was on the cross. They had witnessed the earthquake and the opened graves when he gave up His spirit. The elders likely knew that the veil of the temple had been torn from the top to the bottom. All these spectacular things made them feel uneasy, so they wanted to make sure that the tomb would be the end for Jesus.

It was unusual for any Jew to approach a Roman governor on the Sabbath-day. But the elders were afraid that His disciples might try to practice some deceit. They told Pilate that they had heard Jesus say that after three days He would rise from the dead. For that reason, they wanted to make sure the tomb was secure. The elders did not want to take a chance that His disciples would take His body and claim that He had risen from the dead. Therefore, they asked Pilate to take proper measures to secure the tomb. Pilate’s response to the elders was to secure the tomb any way they wanted. He told them that the guard cadre was theirs to use any way they wished. With Pilate’s permission they sealed the stone covering the door of the tomb and placed the soldiers

6. What did the chief priests and elders recall hearing Jesus say? (Matt. 27:63)

7. What derogatory name did the chief priests and elders give Jesus? (Matt. 27:63)

8. How did the elders of Israel secure the tomb in which Jesus was buried? (Matt. 27:66)

Lesson 13

The One with Authority

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 26

Scripture: Matthew 28

Memory Verse: “When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying: ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” (Matthew 28:17-18)

Lesson Truth: The risen Lord has all authority in heaven and on earth.

Lesson

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ showed the power of His grace. His resurrection gave Him all authority in heaven and on the earth. He gained the power over sin and death and Satan. His resurrection gave Him control over all things so that the Lord ushered in His Kingdom of grace and made life victorious for all who believe. Belief in the resurrection of Jesus includes belief in a life delivered from sin and death.

Just think of the people in Judea and Jerusalem after Jesus died on the cross and was buried in Joseph’s new tomb. The chief priests and Pharisees were most likely satisfied that they had sealed off the tomb where Jesus lay and had placed soldiers to guard the entrance. In their minds they had done away with the Kingdom of grace that Jesus talked about. They likely felt that they were back in control of the church affairs. People would again have to live by the rules and regulations of the Pharisees. The elders of Israel thought Jesus was in the tomb and His name would be forgotten along with His Kingdom of grace.

The disciples were also in Jerusalem and didn’t know what to do. If there was no Kingdom of grace as Jesus had told them, then life no longer had any meaning. What a long day it must have been as the disciples waited for Sunday morning and the end of the Jewish Sabbath. However, it was the two Mary’s who became the most impatient. Early on Sunday morning they hurried to the tomb of Jesus, prepared to anoint His body with perfumes and spices. Imagine their feeling of awe when they felt a huge earthquake as they neared the tomb. The earthquake was so pronounced that the guards shook for fear and became as dead men. As the earth quaked Christ Jesus rose from the dead and gained the victory over sin and death and hell. The women also saw an angel descend from heaven and roll away the stone from the door of the tomb. The awesome sight of the angel with the countenance like lightening and garments as white as snow must have gripped these women with a holy fear. The angels showed their eagerness to serve the Lord Jesus in His Kingdom of grace.

It was then that the angel of God brought the resurrection message. He said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He has risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you” (Matt. 28:5-7). That message was so overpowering, not only for the women, but also for all believers, that it can hardly be contained! Just think the Lord of all the earth came back to life! He had broken the power of sin and death! Jesus stood on the other side of sin and death and guilt and reigned in the power of grace! The angel gave the women a sign that the Lord’s resurrection was real. He showed them the place where the Lord had lain.

After the women received the word from the angel, they immediately hurried away to tell His disciples. It was then that the Lord met them and told them to rejoice. Their fear was taken away as they fell and worshiped Jesus. It was true! Christ Jesus had risen from the dead and the women now shared in His full favor. We still share in the full favor of the Lord Jesus through His Word. Just as the women had communion with Jesus as they left the tomb, we can have communion with Him through His Word.

Although the women rushed out to tell His disciples, the soldier guards were afraid they would be accused of being negligent. So, they hurried to tell the chief priests and Pharisees. They had witnessed the same resurrection as the women, but they were unbelievers and agreed with the chief priests to lie about what happened. These soldiers were given money to lie and say that His disciples had stolen the body. Today the power of the lie continues to stand against the power of truth and grace, but grace is victorious.

The women told the disciples where Jesus had said that he would meet them. That is where the disciples gathered, and that is where Jesus appeared to them, and they worshiped Him. It was then that the Lord told them that the Father had given Him all authority in heaven and on earth. As the One with all the authority in heaven and earth Jesus commanded His followers to go and make disciples of all nations. Just think, the followers of Jesus can work as partners with the One who has all authority to make disciples. Surely the resurrection of the Lord Jesus marked the victory of His Kingdom of grace!

Questions

1. Who came to see the tomb of the Lord Jesus after the Sabbath? (Matt. 28:1)
2. What event of nature announced the resurrection of the Lord Jesus? (Matt. 28:2)
3. Describe the appearance of the angel that rolled the stone from the tomb? (Matt. 28:3)
4. What was the astounding announcement made by the angel? (Matt. 28:6)
5. As the women were going to tell His disciples, who met them? (Matt. 28:9)

