

# Promise and Deliverance

## Student Workbook

Volume 12

Level 3

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:** “Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’” (Matthew 19:23-24)

**Lesson Truth:** Jesus said that in Kingdom many who are first will be last and the last first.

### Lesson

In the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ the faith of a child is recognized. Men become citizens of His Kingdom by grace and not by keeping the Law, yet obedience that arises out of faith will be rewarded. The obedience that comes from faith is a gift of grace along with citizenship in the Kingdom.

We receive some real insight into what kind of people are citizens of the Kingdom as we travel with the Lord Jesus Christ through Judea. The Lord’s disciples had difficulty understanding just who the citizens of the Kingdom really were. This became evident when parents brought their little children to Jesus and asked that he put His hands on them and bless them. The disciples so completely misunderstood who was really a citizen of the Kingdom that they rebuked the parents who brought their children. They were convinced that Jesus could not be bothered with children.

Jesus corrected the disciples and told them to let the children come to Him. He insisted that the disciples should not forbid them to come for of such is the Kingdom of heaven. Jesus showed by His actions that citizenship in the Kingdom of heaven is a free gift of grace. Because it is a gift of grace, children can receive this gift as well as adults. Jesus also showed that these children could be part of the Kingdom because they were covenant children. They had received the sign and seal of the covenant in the sacrament of circumcision. Because they had received the sign of the covenant, they could also receive the promise of the covenant which was the Kingdom of heaven. Not only did Jesus invite the children to come to Him, but He also laid His hands on them. Jesus placed his hands on these children in baptism indicating that the promise of the Kingdom belonged to them. This promise in baptism was just as certain as the promise in circumcision. The children of that day, as well as children today, must accept this promise in faith.

As we continue our travels with Jesus, we see a young man approach Him. This young man addressed Jesus as “Good Teacher,” and asked Him what good thing he could do to make sure he would have eternal life. The young man’s question showed that he did not understand that the Kingdom of heaven, or eternal life, was not something you could earn. The Kingdom of heaven is a free gift of grace and cannot be earned by doing some good thing. For this reason, Jesus responded to his question by telling him to keep the commandments. When the young man assured Jesus that he had kept the commandments from his youth, Jesus said there was one thing lacking. He told the young man to sell everything he owned and give the proceeds to the poor. At this the young man went away in sorrow.



4. What amazing claim did the young man make concerning the commandments? (Matt. 19:20)

5. What did Jesus say was a difficult thing for a rich man to do? (Matt. 19:23)

6. What did Jesus say is easier than having a rich man enter the Kingdom? (Matt. 19:24)

7. What question did the disciples ask Jesus when He said it was hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom? (Matt. 19:25)

8. What inheritance, will those who left family, for Jesus' sake, receive? (Matt.19:29)

## Lesson 2

# Looking for Fruit

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 21:18-46

**Memory Verse:** “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’” (Matthew 21:42)

**Lesson Truth:** As Jesus cursed the fig tree, so we are cursed. Jesus bore our curse so we might bear fruit.

### Lesson

As Jesus looked for fruit on a fig tree on His way to Jerusalem, so He also looks for fruit in the lives of His followers. The sad truth is that we live under a curse just like the fig tree. Yet we rejoice to know that Jesus bore our curse so that we might bear the fruit of faith. These are the lessons we learn from the Lord’s encounter with a fig tree and His parables addressed to the chief priests and elders.

Jesus knew that at Jerusalem the people would turn against Him and insist that the authorities crucify Him. Still, He taught openly in the temple and freely engaged in discussions about the authority by which He taught and did miracles. Each night He would travel back to Bethany to His place of lodging. One morning as He was returning to Jerusalem from Bethany, He saw a fig tree covered with leaves. Jesus knew that fig trees bear fruit at the same time they leaf out. However, when He came to this fig tree, He did not find any fruit. Because Jesus was hungry, it bothered Him that He could not find any fruit on this tree. He therefore cursed the tree and commanded that never again would it bear fruit. Immediately the tree withered away.

The disciples were amazed to see the fig tree wither so soon. But the Lord Jesus used this occasion to teach His disciples. He told them if they had faith without doubting, they would be able to do greater things than cause a fig tree to wither. They would be able to tell a mountain to be removed and to be cast into the sea and it would be done. The curse of the fig tree also illustrated how mankind lives under the curse of sin. Yet the curse of sin will not remain on God’s people, because Jesus bore the curse for His people so they can again bear the fruit of faith.

As Jesus taught openly in the temple, the resistance of the chief priests and elders increased. In hostility, they asked by whose authority He taught and did His miracles. They were not interested to be instructed about the Kingdom of God, but rather wanted to question if He was legitimate. For that reason, Jesus told them He would ask them a question and if they answered His question, He would answer theirs. He asked them about the baptisms of John the Baptist; were they from God or did John just baptize on his own? The chief priests and elders knew they were trapped. If they said his baptism was from God, He would ask why they did not believe him. On the other hand, if they said it was from man, the people would be against them because they believed that John was a great prophet. When they said they would not answer Jesus’ question, He said that neither would He answer them. Jesus knew that their hearts were closed to the things of God.



In order to teach the chief priests and elders to see their resistance to the Kingdom of God, Jesus told them a parable. This was story about a father who had two sons. This father asked his first son to work in his vineyard, but the son refused. Later he thought about his refusal and went to work in the vineyard. The father also asked the second son to work in his vineyard. The second son assured the father that he was ready to work as the father requested. Yet he did not go to work in his father's vineyard. Jesus then asked which one did the will of his father. When they answered the first, Jesus replied that the tax collectors and harlots were like the first son. At the outset that they refused, but they will enter the kingdom of God before the elders.

Jesus then told another parable about a man who owned a vineyard. He put his vineyard in charge of vinedressers to keep it and deliver the produce to the owner. However, when the owner sent servants to bring home the produce, the vinedressers killed the servants. They also killed the owner's son when he sent him. Jesus then asked what the owner would do with these wicked vinedressers. The elders answered that the owner would destroy the vinedressers and give it to others who would deliver the fruit of the vineyard to the owner. This answer was a judgment on the chief priests and elders who failed to bring the fruits of faith to the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God would be taken from them, and it would be given to people who would bear the fruit of faith.

The Lord then quoted from Psalm 118 where the psalmist prophesied that the stone, which the builders rejected would become the chief cornerstone. Yes, Christ Jesus would be rejected, but He would suffer and die to remove that rejection. The curse of a life without fruit would be removed so His people would again bear the fruit of faith. But woe to those who continue to reject Him!

## Questions

1. Why was Jesus eager to find fruit on the fig tree as he returned to Jerusalem? (Matt. 21:18)
2. What did Jesus say to the fig tree when He did not find fruit on it? (Matt. 21:19)
3. What greater thing could the disciples do than wither a fig tree if they had faith? (Matt. 21:21)



Lesson 3  
**Calling and Election**

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 22:1-14

**Memory Verse:** “Then He said to his servants, “The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.” (Matthew 22:8-9)

**Lesson Truth:** Christ Jesus sent His servants to bring people into His wedding feast. In this way they were called and elected.

**Lesson**

The Lord Jesus continued teaching the chief priests and elders at the temple in Jerusalem. In spite of their refusal to submit to His Word of grace, He told them clearly who would be included in the Kingdom of God. Jesus again used a parable to indicate how God calls and elects His people to be citizens of His Kingdom. This time He told them the parable of a wedding feast that a king prepared for his son.

When Jesus told the parable of the wedding feast, He stated clearly that the Kingdom of heaven is like a king who arranged a marriage for his son. After the arrangements had been made the king sent out his servants to call the invited guests to the wedding. Sadly, the invited guests were not willing to come. The king then sent additional servants to tell the invited guests of the elaborate preparations that had been made. He told the servants to remind them that his oxen and fattened cattle had been killed for this feast. Still the invited guests refused to come to the wedding feast. They made light of the king’s invitation and went their own way to their own business. As if scorning the invitation of the king wasn’t bad enough, the invited guests seized the king’s servants and killed them.

How was it possible for guests invited to the wedding feast of the king to refuse the invitation? It was possible because they did not understand the honor and privilege that the king offered in his invitation. They were arrogant and thought they were the king’s equals who could either accept or reject the king’s invitation. They did not understand the call of the Lord Jesus to follow Him, as coming from God. Because of their hard hearts many in Israel did not understand the gift of God’s grace. They did not have the faith to see that if God calls people to His Kingdom, such a call is an amazing gift of grace. It is such an honor and such a privilege that it would be unbelievable pride to suggest that men have the right to accept or reject this invitation. Yet according to Jesus’ parable that is exactly what the people of Israel did. They refused the king’s invitation!

When the king heard about the arrogant refusal of the invited guests to come his wedding feast, he was furious. He was so furious that he sent out his armies to destroy those who murdered his servants, and he burned their city. The invited guests were not worthy to attend the king’s feast, but the king could not have a wedding feast without guests. He therefore sent his servants into the highways to bring in as many as they could find to be guests at the king’s wedding feast. In this way the wedding hall was filled with guests. These guests were those who knew they were unworthy and who





## Lesson 4

# For the Bridegroom's Sake

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:1-13

**Memory Verse:** “Afterward the other virgins came also saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’” (Matthew 25:11-12)

**Lesson Truth:** In the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus is the Bridegroom who is worth waiting for.

### Lesson

Jesus continued to teach His disciples by using parables. Now in the last week before His suffering He taught about the end of time. Jesus assured His disciples that there were signs they could watch for to indicate that the end was near. However, He also told them that no one knows the day or the hour of the return of the Son of Man. In the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids He wanted the disciples to focus on the return of the Bridegroom. If the disciples would focus on the coming of the Bridegroom and how they might show Him honor, they would be ready for His return.

Even after seeing the miracles Jesus performed and hearing His teaching for a few years, the disciples still did not understand the spiritual nature of His Kingdom. This was evident when they called the Lord's attention to the beautiful temple building. They still seemed to think that God would continue to dwell among His people at the temple just as he did at the tabernacle. They did not realize that the temple was no longer a sign of God dwelling with His people. God's favor shown to His people through the temple had been rejected. For that reason, Jesus reminded His disciples that not one stone would be left upon another of the temple in its complete destruction. He then talked to the disciples about the end of time when the Lord would return to earth to claim all those who are His.

Jesus helped the disciples understand that there would be some separations and surprises when the Lord returns. Two people will be involved in the same occupation when one will be taken and the other will be left. He then emphasized where their focus should be at the coming of the Son of Man by telling a parable of ten virgins. These ten young girls had been invited to a wedding feast by the bride's parents. Their role at this wedding feast was to light the way and welcome the bridegroom when he arrived.

The Lord immediately showed that the ten girls in the parable were very different. He said that five of them were wise and five foolish. The five foolish girls took only their lamps and no additional oil to refill their lamps if the bridegroom did not come immediately. The wise girls took additional vessels of oil along with their lamps. All ten girls waited for the bridegroom to come and while they waited, they fell asleep. This was a dishonor that none of them were truly eager and watching for the bridegroom.

At the hour appointed for His coming a cry was heard, “Behold, the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet him!” (Matt. 25:6). Think of the clamor as the young women rushed to trim their lamps so they could light the bridegroom's way to the wedding hall. Only now we become aware of the difference

between the wise and the foolish virgins. The lamps of the foolish girls sputtered for just a moment and then went out because they were out of oil. They turned to the wise girls and begged for some of the oil from their vessels, but the wise girls informed them that there was only enough for their own lamps. They suggested that the foolish girls go to the oil merchants and buy more oil. While they were away to purchase more oil, the bridegroom did come, and the wise girls were able to light his way and to join him at the wedding feast.

The bridegroom not only went into the wedding feast, but he also closed the door. When the five foolish girls returned with the oil for their lamps, they could not get in to the wedding feast. They cried out, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But the Lord answered, "I do not know you." As Jesus told the parable He concluded with this admonition: "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming" (Matt. 25:11-13). The Lord Jesus cautioned His disciples to be ready and waiting for the Bridegroom. He wanted them to set their minds and hearts on the Bridegroom because He is worthy to receive honor at His coming! May we as God's people long for the coming of the Bridegroom and direct our lives toward His return!

### **Questions**

1. What were the ten virgins with lamps going to do? (Matt. 25:1)
2. What time of the day did the virgins hear a cry? (Matt.25:6)
3. What was the cry that the virgins heard? (Matt. 25:6)
4. What request did the foolish virgins make to the wise ones? (Matt. 25:8)





## Lesson 5

# The Master's Goods

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:14-30

**Memory Verse:** “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord you delivered to me five talents; look I have gained five more talents beside them. His lord said to him ‘Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’” (Matthew 25:20-21)

**Lesson Truth:** The parable of the talents teaches that it honors the Lord's to use the gifts that He gives us.

### Lesson

Today we will learn the truth about the Parable of the Talents. Jesus wanted His disciples to know the right attitude toward the talents the Lord gave them. The parable of the young girls taught the right attitude toward the Lord. The parable of the talents teaches the right attitude toward the Master's goods. We must know that the Master is worthy to have us honor Him by working with the talents He gives us.

In this parable, Jesus told the disciples that the Kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country. This man was a master who had servants. As he prepared to leave for the distant country, he called his servants to charge them with caring for his goods. He wanted to distribute his goods to his servants according to their ability. This master wanted his servants to use his goods in such a way that they would multiply and produce. With that in mind, he gave to the first servant five talents. He gave two talents to the second servant, and just one talent to the third. After he distributed his goods, he left for the distant land.

The master had no sooner left than the first servant went out and traded with the master's goods. His trading went well and soon his five talents had grown to become ten talents. The second servant also traded with his master's goods and his two talents soon became four. But the third servant had a very different attitude toward the use of the master's goods. He did not understand that the master's goods were a trust on loan from the master. This servant did not consider it an honor to work with the master's goods. He thought his master was using him in an unfair way. So he buried the one talent his master had given him planning to return to the master exactly what he had received.

As the story continues, after a long time the master returned from the distant country. When he returned, he went to settle the accounts with his servants. The first servant joyfully gave account of what he had done with his master's goods. He told his master that he had traded with the five talents he had been given and now he was able to return ten talents. The second servant also gave an account of his activities with joy. He had traded with his two talents and now he was able to present his master with four talents. The response of the master to the first two servants was exactly the same. He commended them for using the master's goods as faithful servants. He told them that because they were faithful over a few things they would be given the responsibility of many things. Even more, he





## Lesson 6

# Ready to Be Sacrificed

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 26:1-16

**Memory Verse:** “But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, ‘Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.’” (Matthew 26:10-11)

**Lesson Truth:** The love of the Lord Jesus was in control even when He allowed Himself to be crucified.

### Lesson

We learned about many of the instructions Jesus gave to His disciples and the elders during the week before His suffering. He urged them to be ready to welcome the Bridegroom when He comes and to find joy in using the Master’s goods. Matthew then told us that after Jesus had finished sharing these instructions He talked to His disciples about His coming crucifixion. The amazing thing about the talk concerning His death was that Jesus was ready to be sacrificed. His words to His disciples show His love for the Father and for His people. It is the love of the Redeemer that controlled the events of His suffering and death.

That Jesus was in control can be seen by the difference in the plans for the Passover Feast between the Lord and the elders. The chief priests, scribes, and elders got together at the palace of Caiaphas and agreed that Jesus had to be put to death. They even plotted a way that they could take Jesus by some trick and put Him to death. But they also agreed that this could not happen during the Passover feast. They were sure that if they arrested Jesus during the Passover feast, it would cause an uproar among the people.

On the other hand, Jesus told His disciples that in two days they would celebrate the Passover at Jerusalem. He also told them that during the Passover He would be delivered into the hands of the Romans to be crucified. It was precisely because it was the Passover that this was the time for Jesus to suffer and die. The Passover was a feast called to remember the time that the angel of death passed over the homes in Egypt. The first born of every home in Egypt that did not have blood on the doorposts died that night. But the homes that had the blood of the Passover lamb sprinkled on the doorposts were spared. That is why it was necessary for Jesus to suffer and die during Passover, because He is the true Passover Lamb. The curse of God will certainly pass by those that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

The Lord Jesus was fully ready to die for His people. He was ready to give Himself for sinful people who by nature hate God. Jesus was ready to seal His works of grace with His blood. It was because Jesus spoke about His grace that the chief priests and elders decided He had to die. In their pride they actually thought it was their idea that He should be put to death. They did not understand that Jesus was the Passover Lamb. Nor did they understand that their actions were controlled by the Redeemer’s love.





## 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:** “But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s Kingdom.” (Matthew 26:29)

**Lesson Truth:** The disciples could be assured of their faith because God is faithful to His covenant.

### Lesson

In the Bible passage for this lesson, we learn that Jesus clearly made the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant. The promises of the old covenant were sealed with the blood of bulls and goats. Jesus said that the promises of the new covenant were sealed with His blood. No longer would the blood of bulls and goats be necessary because Jesus said: “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Jesus announced this change when He shared the Passover meal with His disciples. Our lesson is about the events that led to this assurance for His disciples.

It was the first day of the Passover feast and Jesus’ disciples came to Him and asked where they should go to prepare the Passover meal. The disciples may have wondered about the instructions that Jesus gave them. He told them to go to a man in the city and tell him that the teacher says, “My time is at hand: I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples” (Matt. 26:18). The disciples were not yet aware that Jesus was the true Passover Lamb. They were not aware of what would happen at the Passover supper. But Jesus used this occasion with His disciples to assure them of His love because His Spirit would always be with them.

As the disciples enjoyed fellowship with Jesus at this meal, think of how astounded they must have been to hear His announcement when He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me” (Matt. 26:21). This sounded incredible! Would one of the twelve betray the love of God that they had seen in Jesus the Christ? If it were possible for one of them to be a betrayer, what could they depend on? The Lord Jesus had to help them understand that they could not rely on themselves. Jesus loved them so much that He wanted them to know that the only thing they could rely on was the faithfulness of God in His covenant. Because the disciples still did not understand that they had to rely entirely on God’s faithfulness each one asked Jesus: “Is it I?” (Matt. 26:22).

Jesus then told them that it was the one who dipped his hand with Him in the dish. The Lord wanted the betrayer to know that He knew who he was. Jesus also indicated that the Redeemer would freely suffer and die, but there would be destruction for the one who betrayed Him. The Lord added that it would have been good if that man had never been born. It was then that Judas also asked the Lord, “Is it I?” (Matt. 26:25). Jesus then told him clearly that he was the one. Judas then left the table and walked away from God’s grace forever!







## Lesson 8

# The Faithful Witness

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 26:57-75

**Memory Verse:** “Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!’” (Matthew 26:65)

**Lesson Truth:** Part of the suffering of the Lord Jesus was to be rejected as the Christ.

### Lesson

When Jesus faced the Sanhedrin, they tried to find false witnesses to witness against Him, so they could put Him to death. They tried to get two witnesses to agree that He claimed to be the Son of God. The amazing thing is that Jesus became the faithful witness who told them plainly that He was the Son of God. When the high priests and elders heard Him say that He was the Son of God they accused Him of blasphemy. His suffering included being rejected as the Christ and being sentenced to die.

Jesus was with His disciples in the garden of Gethsemane when he was taken prisoner. The soldiers led Him to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. The council of high priests, scribes, and elders had quickly assembled at the home of the high priest. They felt it was urgent to get witnesses to accuse Him as quickly as possible, so they did not take Him to their usual meeting place. The reason these leaders felt it was so urgent to find witnesses to witness against Him was because He had proclaimed the Kingdom of grace. He told them that the grace of God was available through Him because he was the Christ sent from God. The priests and elders rejected His claim that He was the Christ and wanted Him condemned. The problem was that Roman law demanded that two witnesses had to agree in their testimony in order to condemn a person. The priests and elders could not find two witnesses to agree.

Finally, two false witnesses came forward and said that Jesus had said He could destroy the temple of God and rebuild in three days. Their testimony showed that they did not understand what the Lord had said. He had said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (Matt. 26:61). He was talking about the temple of His body that would be rejected and killed. This is the temple that would rise again in three days! This risen temple was filled with the Holy Spirit that would be poured out upon His people. God the Holy Spirit would live in the hearts of His people. That is the way Christ Jesus would raise up the temple again.

The priests, scribes, and elders did not understand His claim because they did not want to understand. They were not ready to submit their life as holy to the Lord. Jesus did not respond to their accusations. He suffered in silence to atone for the hatred that was directed against Him. The high priest realized that even these witnesses could not provide a case to condemn Jesus, so he asked the real question. He told Jesus that He was under oath before God to tell if He was the Christ the Son of God! The high priest wanted to hear Jesus say that he was the Son of God, not that he could believe Him, but that he might condemn Him.

This was an awful moment in the history of mankind. It was the moment that mankind heard Jesus say that He was the Son of God. It was also the moment that the people, through their appointed leaders, rejected the Son of God. In rejecting the Son, they rejected the grace that is given only in Christ Jesus. The Lord knew what they would do with His testimony under oath. He knew they would condemn Him. But He was willing to suffer and die so he could atone for all people who by nature reject Him. When the high priest heard Jesus' testimony, he tore his clothes and said that Jesus had spoken blasphemy. The other council members agreed with him and said that Jesus should be put to death.

The prophecy that the temple would be destroyed then came true. They destroyed the temple of His body when they spit in His face and hit Him with their fists. They rejected Him as the Holy One and as the One in whom God lived. All this Jesus suffered in silence as the faithful witness that He was the Son of God.

While the Lord Jesus stood as the faithful witness, one of His disciples denied Him. It was Peter who told the Lord that, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" (Matt. 26:35). This self-confident Peter denied three times that he knew the Lord Jesus. After he denied the Lord the third time the rooster crowed. Then he remembered the words of Jesus when He said, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times" (Matt. 26:34). Peter then went out and he wept bitterly. Peter then experienced the grace of God in his heart and repented of his sin. He was not separated from the Lord eternally as Judas was, but found forgiveness and restoration. Jesus was the faithful witness who suffered for the sins of His people when he was rejected as the Christ!

## Questions

1. Who was assembled at the house of Caiaphas to hear witnesses against Jesus? (Matt. 26:57)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who followed Jesus at a distance to the high priest's courtyard? (Matt. 26:58)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who questioned Jesus about His silence after two witnesses testified against Him? (Matt. 26:62)



## 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:** “Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I have betrayed innocent blood.’” (Matthew 27:3-4a)

**Lesson Truth:** The Lord Jesus can make our lives new, just as the potter can remake an old vessel.

### Lesson

The author of *Promise and Deliverance* used the reference to the fulfillment of a prophecy from Jeremiah to instruct us about clay in the potter's hands. The first ten verses of Matthew 27 tell about the Sanhedrin rejecting Jesus as the covenant Head and the destruction of Judas. An Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled when the elders purchased the potter's field with the thirty pieces of silver that Judas returned. The quote in Matthew is from Zechariah but the description of a potter making a vessel of honor from a vessel of dishonor is from Jeremiah.

The setting of the events in our Bible passage take place the morning after Jesus was arrested. The chief priests and elders were plotting against Jesus to find a way to put Him to death. However, these rulers were not permitted by law to put Him to death. So they bound Him like a criminal and led Him to Pilate, the Roman governor. The tragedy of their actions is that they rejected the One who was their Head in God's covenant. Jesus was the One who brought God's grace to His people. The rulers as representatives of the people were rejecting God's grace that was available only in Christ Jesus. But this was not the first time that they had rejected God's grace. The people of Israel had done this again and again in their history. They had done it when they served other gods and when they thought they could be saved by their own righteousness. When they brought Jesus to Pontius Pilate, this was the outcome of a lifetime of rejection.

It would have been right if God had rejected Israel forever. But the Lord Jesus had chosen to be the covenant Head of His people. That is why He was willing to suffer to make atonement for their sins. It was in Jesus, the covenant Head, that God destroyed life, so that in His resurrection there could be new life. He was willing to become like clay in the hands of the potter so that from a vessel broken for the sins of the people a vessel of honor could be made. We too reject the Head of the covenant and deserve to have God reject us. But God in His grace through the suffering and death of the Lord wants to make us into vessels of honor.

The chief priests and elders accused Jesus of blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God. But this was not an accusation that would mean anything to Pilate. So, the elders quickly called an early morning meeting to decide what accusation against Jesus they could bring to Pilate. They agreed to tell Pilate that He claimed to be the king of the Jews. Pilate could view this as an act of revolt or treason against Rome. When Judas saw that Jesus was being led away to Pilate, he understood what





## Lesson 10

# Arbitrary Treatment

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 27:11-31

**Memory Verse:** “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)

**Lesson Truth:** The Lord suffered because he was judged to be guilty without breaking any laws. He did this so we could find protection from God’s justice.

### Lesson

The Lord Jesus suffered in His trial before Pontius Pilate. He suffered because He was treated as a being guilty when He hadn’t broken any laws. Jesus was willing to endure this suffering so that He could pay for our protection from God’s justice.

When the Sanhedrin brought Jesus before Pilate, they accused Him of saying that he was the King of the Jews. Pilate wanted to know if Jesus agreed with this accusation, so he asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” Jesus then told him plainly, “It is as you say” (Matt. 27:11). He truly was the King of the Jews who wanted to rule in righteousness to pay for the sins of His people. What could Pilate do with such a King? He was a King who would rule in righteousness to satisfy the justice of God. Pilate did not understand the need for Jesus to satisfy the justice of God for his people. Nor did he consider Jesus to be a threat against the Roman government. So, he decided not to assume his responsibility to be the judge. A responsible judge should have declared Jesus to be innocent and set Him free. Pilate decided to allow Jesus to answer the accusations made against Him and when He had answered them, he would set Him free.

This plan did not work for Pilate because the people realized what he had in mind and as a result they brought many more complaints. Another reason it didn’t work was because Jesus did not answer any of these complaints. Pilate finally asked Him if He didn’t hear the complaints that they were making against Him. But Jesus never answered a word. He did not answer because He was willing to suffer these false accusations in order to pay for the sins of His people.

Pilate then did something unusual. He treated Jesus as if He were already guilty and already a prisoner even though the accusations were not true. Pilate thought of a Roman custom that might work to set Jesus free. This custom was to set a prisoner free each year at the Passover feast. The Jews were allowed to decide, from a set of prisoners the Romans presented, who would be set free. Pilate now acted as if Jesus was already a guilty prisoner and presented Jesus and a prisoner named Barabbas as the choice for the Jews decision. He thought they would surely select Jesus because Barabbas was a murderer. But even this plan to escape his responsibilities did not work for Pilate. The judge did not uphold justice!

While Pilate was trying to escape his responsibility as the judge, his wife came and warned him about Jesus. She told him that she had learned in a dream that Jesus was an honest and righteous man. She







Lesson 11  
**Cursed by God**

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 27:32-56

**Memory Verse:** “So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”” (Matthew 27:54)

**Lesson Truth:** The Lord bore the curse of God in order to satisfy His justice and secure His blessing for us.

### **Lesson**

Jesus experienced the curse of God when He was treated as an outlaw and nailed to the cross. While He was on the cross, He was mocked for His claim that He was the Son of God. The Lord died under God’s curse, which was covered by darkness.

After Pilate had scourged Jesus and commanded that He be crucified, the soldiers mocked Him and then led Him out of the city. In this way Jesus was treated like a common criminal or an outlaw. A criminal had to be separated from the people to indicate that he was banished. Jesus was banished from the people that He loved. But this act was a reminder of the sacrificial banishment of the scapegoat. The sins of the people were placed on the scapegoat before he was sent into the wilderness. Now Jesus carried the sins of the people as he was sent out of the city.

Because Jesus was weak from the suffering He experienced, the soldiers looked for someone to carry His cross. No one would volunteer to carry a cross because there was a curse attached to this symbol of death. As they were leaving the city, the soldiers found a stranger from Cyrene who they commanded to carry the cross for Jesus. This made Jesus feel the shame of One who was cursed. In this way the soldiers escorted Jesus out of the city and to a hill called Golgotha.

The Romans preferred to crucify criminals on a hill so that their shame would be visible to everyone. When they arrived at Golgotha the soldiers tried to give Jesus some sour wine to prepare Him for crucifixion. The wine would dull the senses of the criminal so he could endure the pain. But Jesus refused the wine. He was ready to suffer in a fully conscious state for the sins of His people. The soldiers then removed His outer garments and nailed Him to the cross. As soon as Jesus was hanging on the cross the soldiers cast lots for His clothing. They showed so little respect for Jesus that they treated Him as if He were already dead. The people who passed by the cross blasphemed the name of Jesus and said with a jeer, “If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross” (Matt. 27:40). Yet all the pain and shame that Jesus experienced was not the worst of His suffering. The most excruciating pain came to Jesus because God the Father rejected Him. The rejection of God the Father made Him cry out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46). We must never forget that Jesus was willing to be forsaken and rejected by God for the sake of His people. He bore the rejection of God that we, His people, deserve!

The death of Jesus on the cross was the singular event of history. His death indicated that all light in the world was extinguished. From the sixth hour to the ninth hour there was darkness over the whole land. This is what happened when God forsook the Head of the covenant. Even the sun refused to shine when God forsook the One through whom He sent His grace and blessing to His people. During this time of darkness Jesus suffered His most intense suffering. This was the time that God forsook him, and He felt the full weight of God's curse against sin. Because He was willing to be forsaken by God, He removed the curse from us. Now God will never forsake His people because Jesus holds them for all eternity!

When Jesus cried out about being forsaken by God, the people continued to mock Him. Some said that He was calling for Elijah to help Him. While one of the spectators ran to get some wine on a sponge for Jesus, others said, "Let Him alone let us see if Elijah will come to save Him" (Matt. 27:49). Then Jesus cried out once more and He gave up His spirit. At the moment of Jesus' death other spectacular things happened. The veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split apart, and graves were opened allowing saints to arise from the dead. Never in all of history has anything like the death and resurrection of Jesus taken place. These events were so amazing that even an unbelieving centurion gave a testimony to the truth of what had happened. In an attitude of great fear he said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54). Jesus willingly gave up His spirit for the sins of His people. Still His death was a death under the curse of God. God directed the curse against sin at the Lord Jesus. When the veil of the temple was torn, God appeared from behind the curtain. He was no longer separated from His people, but could now live in their hearts. God showed that the curse was removed when the saints arose from their graves. This is how it will happen at the end of time when all the dead will arise, and God will make all things new!

## Questions

1. What did the soldiers compel Simon of Cyrene to do? (Matt. 27:32)
2. What was the name of the place also known as the place of a skull? (Matt. 27:33)
3. What did Jesus do with the wine mixed with gall that He was offered? (Matt. 27:34)



## 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:** “When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.” (Matthew 27:59-60)

**Lesson Truth:** The Lord Jesus entered the realm of the dead to open the gates of death for us.

### Lesson

What does it mean to enter the realm of the dead? For mankind it means that they enter the realm where they are forgotten, where their names perish, to be remembered no more. That is exactly what the leaders of the Jews wanted to happen to Jesus. They wanted Him to be forgotten. They didn't want anyone to remember His name. More than anything they wanted His name to perish from the earth. But that is not what happened! Jesus did enter the realm of the dead, but He was not forgotten. Instead, He conquered death and the realm of the dead and removed the curse of death for believers of every age.

The Bible records for us the burial of Jesus by a friend and disciple. Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Jesus in the broader sense. He believed Jesus' teaching, but had always stayed in the background. Now when he learned that Jesus was dead, he went to Pilate and asked permission to take His body down from the cross and bury it. It was customary for friends of a condemned person to request permission to bury their bodies. For that reason, Pilate had no problem granting Joseph's request to bury Jesus' body.

After Joseph received permission to bury Jesus' body, he carefully took it down from the cross. He wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and then laid it in his own new tomb. Jesus was placed in a tomb in which no one had been buried before. Surely as Joseph placed the body of the Lord Jesus in this new tomb, he was certain that Jesus was dead. Joseph placed Jesus in the place of the dead, in the place where His name would be forgotten. Joseph was aware that Jesus' ministry had raised a great commotion when He preached the Kingdom of God. But now He was dead, and He was placed in the realm of the dead. Joseph thought His name would be forgotten. It seemed that His proclamation of the Kingdom of God had been for nothing.

It seemed that way because that is the way of all humanity. We die and our names are forgotten. Because of the curse of sin, death seems to cancel everything we have done in life. It all seems futile. But this was not true of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus took the curse of sin upon Himself so that He could gain the victory over sin and death and hell. His life was not in vain even when He entered the realm of the dead. Jesus entered the realm of the dead for one purpose. That purpose was to open the gates of death for all those who believe. He gained the victory over death when He suffered the curse of sin to the full and rose from the dead. For those who believe, it is said that because He lives,







## Lesson 13

# The One with Authority

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

**Scripture:** Matthew 28

**Memory Verse:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

**Lesson Truth:** After Jesus rose from the dead, He was given all authority in heaven and on earth.

### Lesson

It is assuring for God’s people to know that at the resurrection the Lord Jesus was given all authority in heaven and on earth. As Jesus exercised the power of grace, He had dominion over His enemies. By the power of His grace, He conquered sin and death and Satan. What a joy to know that our Lord Jesus Christ controls all things so that those who believe in His name are made free.

After the Lord Jesus died on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea took His body and placed it in his own new tomb. However, it was not enough for the chief priests and Pharisees to know that Jesus was in the tomb. They sealed the tomb and placed an armed guard to watch it until the third day. They did this because they remembered that Jesus had said that He would rise from the dead. Very likely the chief priests and Pharisees were satisfied that they had done away with Jesus and His message of grace. They thought that they were back in control and the people would have to live under the authority of their rules and laws.

The disciples were also agonizing over the death and burial of Jesus. If the Lord’s message of grace died with Him, then life was no longer worth living. They must have been very discouraged as they spent the Sabbath in Jerusalem discussing what to do. Then came the first day of the week and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary hurried off to the tomb. They could not wait any longer to get to the tomb and anoint the Lord’s body with spices. They never thought about the huge stone covering the entrance to the tomb or how they could move it. They did not remember that Jesus said that He would rise from the dead. They just wanted to minister to the body of the Lord Jesus. Imagine the women’s surprise and fear when they felt a great earthquake as they neared the tomb. Even more they saw an angel whose countenance was like lightening and his clothing as white as snow. He descended from heaven and rolled the stone away from the tomb’s entrance. The whole event was so astounding that the guards shook in fear and became as dead men.

Then the angel spoke to the women and brought a message that was so remarkable that the women could hardly comprehend it. He told the women not to be afraid because he knew that they were looking for Jesus who had been crucified. The angel then shared with the women the message of the resurrection that echoes through the ages for all believers. He said: “He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come and see the place where the Lord lay!” (Matt. 28:6). For believers today that message remains just as remarkable! Just think, He has risen! Christ Jesus has broken the power of sin and

death and hell. He now reigns in the power of His grace. The angel then sent the women to bring the message of the Lord's resurrection to His disciples.

The women hurried away from the tomb to tell the disciples the angel's message. But they were going to be even more amazed! As they were rushing to Jerusalem, Jesus Himself met them and told them to rejoice. He also told them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee and there they would see the risen Lord. The women were overcome with wonder and fell down and held on to His feet in adoration and worship.

While the women and the disciples were overjoyed with the message of the Lord's resurrection, the guards were filled with abject fear. They rushed to chief priests and Pharisees and told them about everything that had happened at the tomb. This was a terrible report for the leaders of Israel whose hearts were completely hardened against the word of the Lord's grace. It was so unthinkable for them to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead that they paid the guards a large sum of money to lie about the resurrection. The lie was so powerful that many believed it. Even today the lie stands in opposition to the message of grace. But the grace of the Lord Jesus has been and is victorious!

The eleven disciples went to Galilee following the instructions the women brought from Jesus. There they saw the Lord and knew that He had risen from the dead. Jesus then told them about the victory that He had won for believers of all ages when He said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on the earth" (Matt. 28:18). On the basis of that authority, He told the disciples what their task on earth would be. From that day on they were to be of service to the One who has all authority. Jesus said: "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20). Our joy is that we are also called to live in service to the One who has all authority!

## Questions

1. What day of the week did the women go to the tomb of Jesus? (Matt. 28:1)
2. Who descended from heaven at the time of the earthquake? (Matt. 28:2)
3. What did the angel do at the tomb of Jesus? (Matt. 28:2)

