

Promise and Deliverance

Student Workbook

Volume 17

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

Alone

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 76

Scripture: Luke 23:26-31

Memory Verse: “Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; they shall say to mountains, ‘Cover us!’ and to the hills, ‘Fall on us!’” (Hosea 10:8)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus suffered alone. No one understood the depth and cause of His suffering. He suffered to atone for the sins of His people.

Lesson

When we think of Jesus suffering alone it is necessary to realize that no one understood the depth of His suffering. Although the women who saw Him struggle under the load of the cross wept, they wept for the wrong reason. The tears of the women were really empty tears because they did not understand His real grief. Still, the Lord responded with deep compassion and showed genuine sorrow for the sins of mankind.

Pilate did as the Jews requested and released Barabbas the murderer to them. He also gave in to their request to deliver Jesus to them to be crucified. The Jewish leaders, followed by a huge crowd, led Jesus from Jerusalem. The Lord Jesus was so despised and rejected that they banned Him from the city. As He struggled under the load of the cross, they forced a man by the name of Simon to carry it for Him. Simon was a man from Cyrene, who had no desire to carry the cross for Jesus. The Lord Jesus was truly alone. He was alone not only because the people didn't want anything to do with Him, but also because no one understood Him. No one understood what it meant to atone for the sins of God's people.

That no one understood the awful load of sin that Jesus carried for His people was evident by the women in the crowd. These women mourned and lamented for Jesus as they saw Him struggle under the weight of the cross. They were filled with pity that the chief priests showed such a hunger for destroying Jesus. Yet sadly these women did not understand what was really happening to Jesus. They did not realize that He was being banned from the city of Jerusalem. Nor did they understand that the way to God's grace was being sent away from the people of Israel. They should have understood that He was God's gift of grace to His people, because Jesus had told them so. But on this occasion the women were so filled with an emotional pity that they never thought of this gift of grace. As Jesus saw the women weeping, He experienced additional suffering because of their misunderstanding. The women's tears only added to His agony.

Then in compassion Jesus turned to the women. He called them daughters of Jerusalem because He knew what they would have to go through. With words of genuine sorrow Jesus told the women not to weep for Him, but to weep for themselves and for their children. Jesus knew the destruction that would come not only on Jerusalem, but also on all unbelievers. This destruction would come because

the people had rejected the gift of God's grace in Christ Jesus. This is what should cause the women to weep!

The destruction that Jesus talked about would not only be terrible, but also eternal. It would be so terrible that the women who never had children would be considered blessed. No mother could bear to see such everlasting destruction visited on her children. Fear of this awful destruction would be so great that the people would call for the mountains to fall on them! They would pray for the hills to cover them! If only the women would weep for that terrible, eternal loss. If only the women would plead for God's grace in sorrow for sin, their tears would not add to the Lord's agony.

Jesus then added: "For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:31). The Lord Jesus is the green wood. He is the living tree, and He was not spared; but suffered the wrath of God against sin. How will the dry branches, the sinners, be spared the wrath of God? Only the grace of God in Christ Jesus will spare His people! Christ Jesus suffered alone as He urged the daughters of Jerusalem to look beyond pity and to be concerned for the coming judgment!

Questions

1. What did the soldiers compel Simon of Cyrene to do? (Luke 23:26)
2. What did the women in the crowd do for Jesus? (Luke 23:27)
3. Who addressed the women as daughters of Jerusalem? (Luke 23:28)
4. What did Jesus urge the women to do for themselves and the children? (Luke 23:28)

Lesson 2

His Sacrifice

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 77

Scripture: Luke 23:32-56

Memory Verse: “Then he said to Jesus, ‘Lord remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” (Luke 23:42-43)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for man’s sins. By His sacrifice He purchased life for His people.

Lesson

Christ Jesus offered Himself as the sacrifice for all the sins of those who believe. He was the sacrifice for the sins of ignorance and wasted lives as seen in those surrounding the cross. In order to satisfy the justice of God, the Lord was utterly forsaken by the Father. For three days He remained in the grave before the Father raised Him from the dead and accepted His sacrifice.

Following the Lord’s admonition to the women to weep for themselves and for their children, they led Him away to be crucified. He was taken to the place called Calvary along with two criminals. At Calvary they crucified the Lord Jesus with a criminal on His right and on His left. Amazingly even as Jesus was crucified, He showed His grace when He said, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). There is little doubt that Jesus was thinking of the chief priests and elders when He asked that they be forgiven. These Jewish leaders really did not know what they were doing. They could have known because Jesus told them plainly that He was the Redeemer. Still their eyes were blind because they did not know God’s Word. In their pride and self-righteousness, they overlooked what the prophets told them. But Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer who sacrificed Himself for sins of ignorance. That is why it was possible for Him to ask the Father to forgive them. But for them to be forgiven they could no longer remain in their ignorance. They would have to come to know God’s grace in their lives and acknowledge His grace to forgive their sin of ignorance. That the elders along with the people did not know what they were doing was evident by their jeering and mocking. They sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God” (Luke 23:35). The soldiers joined the mockery saying: “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself” (Luke 23:37).

As Jesus hung on the cross, jeering and mockery continued, but there was also evidence of His grace. One of the criminals that was crucified with Him, added to the mocking with blasphemy. He said, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us” (Luke 23:39). His was a jeer of total unbelief. But the other criminal learned of God’s grace. He questioned the first criminal by asking, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward for our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong” (Luke 23:40-41). Then with a heart of faith he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). God’s grace had touched this criminal and he longed be part of the Lord’s kingdom in the future. Imagine

Lesson 3

The Redemption of Life

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 3, Lesson 78

Scripture: Luke 24

Memory Verse: “And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’” (Luke 24:38-30)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus arose from death and the grave. He is the Redeemer of life.

Lesson

The Lord Jesus was delivered from the bonds of death. He rose from the grave as Israel’s Redeemer and the Redeemer of all life. Jesus confirmed that He had truly risen from the dead by showing His disciples the nail prints in His hands and feet. He then told His disciples that they were the ones called to tell the story of His resurrection to all nations. After the Lord promised the disciples that He would send them power from on high, He ascended into heaven. In heaven He presented His sacrifice to the Father.

The women were the first to see and hear of the Lord’s resurrection. They went to the tomb early on the first day of the week to anoint Jesus’ body with spices. When they came to the tomb, they found the huge stone rolled away from the entrance. They also found the tomb empty. As they tried to imagine what happened, two men in white garments came to them. This made the women afraid because they knew that these were not ordinary men. In their fear the women bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men, who were actually angels, asked them an astounding question. They asked, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5). Even more astounding, they said, “He is not here, but is risen!” (Luke 24:6). They then asked the women to remember the words that Jesus had spoken to them when He was still in Galilee. Jesus had told them that the Son of Man would suffer and die and that He would rise again. Now they did remember, and they rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples. When Peter heard their report, he hurried to the tomb to see if it was empty as the women had said. Peter marveled at what he saw and likely also remembered some of Jesus’ words. Could it be that the Lord had risen? If Jesus had risen from the dead, then the power of death had been broken. If the power of death was broken, then the Lord’s promise of eternal life was real. Still at this time neither Peter nor the other disciples could believe it. Jesus needed to bring His followers into favor with God.

Later that day two of Jesus’ followers were walking back to the village of Emmaus. As they walked, they talked about the astounding things that had happened in Jerusalem. Suddenly, a stranger joined them and asked why they were so sad. The men thought it was incredible that anyone from the area had not heard about the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. So, they shared with this stranger not only about the Lord’s death, but also that some women claimed that He was alive. The stranger, who was actually Jesus, then said to them: “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!” (Luke 24:25). The Lord then opened the Scriptures for them and told them the things

Lesson 4

The True Light

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 1

Scripture: John 1:1-34

Memory Verse: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus Is the True Light. He is the Light that came to give light to His people.

Lesson

When Adam fell into sin, darkness covered the entire earth. It was a darkness of men living apart from God. John announced that Jesus came as the True Light to shine in the darkness. He was the Word of God, the Creator, who became flesh to live among men. It was John who was honored to announce the arrival of the King. He called on the people to make straight the way for the Lord. John declared that the Redeemer was already among them, but they did not know Him. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus was the Man who came after John but was preferred before him.

Following Adam’s sin mankind lived in darkness. Adam and Eve had lived in communion with God. But when they ate of the forbidden tree and fell into sin their communion was lost. For mankind to live apart from God with no communion with Him is to live in darkness. That is why John’s announcement of the coming of Christ Jesus was so earth-shaking. He established that Jesus was the Word of God who was from the beginning. He was the Creator who made all things from nothing. In this Creator God was life and the life was the light of men. John the Baptist was sent to bear witness of that Light. John witnessed that He was the true Light, which gives light to every man coming into the world. This Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness did not overpower it. Christ Jesus the Light dispelled the darkness of sin and Satan.

To understand why the Word had to become flesh, we must realize that Adam, the first man, lost communion with God. He lost this communion when he fell into sin. As the head of mankind, Adam lost communion with God for everyone that would follow. The only way for communion with God to be restored was for God’s Son to take Adam’s place. If He lived in obedience to God, He would restore the communion of man with God. In order to do that Son of God had to become man. Imagine the joy of this announcement that the Word that was from the beginning became flesh. This was the Word who had created all things and was the Light of men. Yet tragically He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. The people who were chosen to live in covenant with God did not recognize the Redeemer. Still, God’s grace was present because there were some who did believe that He was the Redeemer. To those who believed He gave the right to become children of God. The Word that became flesh was full of grace and truth. But no one has ever come to know God on his own. It is only through the Son of God and His grace that He is made known.

John the Baptist was sent as a testimony to the truth of the coming of the Son of Man. He confessed to priests and Levites that were sent to inquire about him that he was not the Christ. He told them that he was not Elijah or any other prophet. In answer to their question about who he was, John said,

Lesson 5
Confessors

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 2

Scripture: John 1:35-51

Memory Verse: “Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God.’” (John 1:35-36)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus brought men to confess His name. He called them by the power of His Spirit.

Lesson

Some of the first disciples that followed Jesus had been disciples of John the Baptist. The Lord called them to confess His name to show that they believed he was the Christ. Later He called them to do the work of a disciple. Jesus knew the nature of each of the disciples, so He called each one in a personal way. He called Andrew and his companion from following John the Baptist. When He saw Simon, He changed his name because He knew what he would become. And He led Philip and Nathanael to confess that He was the Son of God; the One of whom the prophets spoke.

John was standing one day with two of his disciples and they were looking at Jesus. When John saw Jesus he said to his disciples something he had said the day before. He said, “Behold the Lamb of God” (John 1:36). When his two disciples heard him declare that Jesus was the Lamb of God, they immediately followed Him. They were not sure why they followed Him except they had a strong desire to be with Him. When Jesus saw them follow Him, He asked what they were looking for. Because they were not sure what they wanted they simply asked Jesus where He was staying. Then the Lord showed His grace and invited them to, “Come and see” (John 1:39). Jesus knew that these disciples desired to find God, so He invited them to commune with Him. This left no doubt in the minds of Andrew and his companion that Jesus was the Messiah. So, they found Simon Peter, Andrew’s brother, and confessed their new-found faith. They said to Simon, “We have found the Messiah” (John 1:41). God the Father had caused this faith to grow in their hearts.

Andrew and his companion then brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus knew Simon before He ever saw him. Jesus also knew that Simon would be used in a very special way to build His church. Jesus looked at Simon and said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (John 1:42). Cephas is the Aramaic name for rock. The Greek name for rock was Peter. Christ Jesus knew that Peter would be the rock on which he would build His church. Jesus knew Simon Peter and by His grace He would change him into the disciple He wanted him to be. Christ Jesus also changes believers today and makes them into His own image. Pray that the Lord Jesus will change us to be His disciples.

Jesus noticed Philip as He set out for Galilee. He knew that Philip also had a desire to know the Messiah. So, Jesus said to him, “Follow Me” (John 1:43). To Philip this was not just an invitation from a stranger. It was an invitation from Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Not only did Philip immediately show that he was ready to follow Jesus, but he also went to find Nathanael. And when he found Nathanael, he confessed his faith in Jesus saying, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law,

and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (John 1:45). Philip knew that Jesus was the Redeemer who would visit His people with His grace. But Philip’s statement that Jesus was from Nazareth raised a question in Nathanael’s mind.

Nathaniel asked, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). Nathanael had heard what John the Baptist had said and wanted to believe that the Messiah had come. But he wondered if it was possible that the Messiah would come from Nazareth. His was a question of faith, not doubt, because he wanted to see the Messiah. Philip did not try to correct Nathanael, he simply said, “Come and see” (John 1:46).

The Lord saw Nathanael coming and gave a testimony of his faith. He said: “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit” (John 1:47). This made Nathanael question how Jesus knew him. Jesus then explained that He knew Nathanael even before Philip invited him to come and see. He saw him under a fig tree before Philip had called him. Now Nathanael knew that Jesus was the Messiah and exclaimed: “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” (John 1:49). Nathanael joined Andrew and his companion, as well as Simon and Philip in confessing that Jesus was the Messiah. We should also pray for grace so that we can confess that Jesus, the Messiah, is the Son of God, our Redeemer!

Questions

1. Who stood with two of his disciples looking at Jesus? (John 1:35-36)
2. What did John say as he looked at Jesus? (John 1:36)
3. What question did Jesus ask of the two disciples that followed Him? (John 1:38)

Lesson 6
Life's Renewer

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 3

Scripture: John 2:1-12

Memory Verse: “This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory and His disciples believed in Him.” (John 2:11)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus revealed Himself at Cana in Galilee. He revealed that He is the One who restores life for his people.

Lesson

To think of having our life renewed in Christ Jesus is a glorious thought! In today's lesson we learn that Christ Jesus is the One who renews life. A life renewed by the grace of the Lord Jesus is a life in which His people once again live in communion with God. Jesus had to wait for the time appointed by the Father to demonstrate that He restored the joy of life. The sign Jesus used to show that He restored this joy was the changing of the water to wine at the wedding feast at Cana. When His disciples saw this sign, they believed that Jesus was in truth the Messiah whom they had confessed.

It happened this way: A few days after His disciples had confessed that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, they went to Cana in Galilee. Jesus and His disciples, along with Jesus' mother, were invited to a wedding feast at Cana. Jesus and His disciples readily accepted this invitation to join in a wedding feast. By attending this wedding feast Jesus showed that He was different than John the Baptist in the way He lived. John had denied himself all the pleasures of life. He lived out in the desert, eating locusts and wild honey to show that mankind had lost everything because of sin. John preached the need for repentance and sorrow for sin. Now Jesus arrived and showed that He was the One who restored life. He restored communion with God for His people by atoning for their sins. God's people who are once again restored to communion with Him may now enjoy life in that communion. The joy that is restored to God's people is not a joy of sin and serving self. It is a complete joy of giving thanks to God for what He has given His people in His grace.

As Jesus, His mother, and His disciples were enjoying the wedding feast the wine ran out. When Jesus' mother realized that there was no more wine, she told Him about the shortage. She implied that Jesus could do something about this problem. When Jesus heard His mother, He questioned her sharply, saying, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come” (John 2:4). This was the Lord's way of telling His mother that He could not reveal who He was until the hour appointed by the Father. His mother was not allowed to force Him to reveal Himself. He had to wait until the Father gave Him the opportunity to do so. But Jesus' mother found it hard to drop her concern about the wine, so she told the servants to do whatever He told them.

What followed the exchange of Jesus and His mother showed that this was the time for the Lord to show His grace. This was the opportunity the Father had provided to reveal that He was the One who restored life. He was the One who would call His people to have faith in Him.

Jesus then told the servants to fill six large water pots with water. After they were filled, He asked them to pour out some of the water and bring it to the master of the feast to sample. When they did so, the master of the feast called the bridegroom and reminded him that it was the custom to serve the best wine first and when people are intoxicated to serve the poor wine. But he said, “You have kept the good wine until now!” (John 2:10). This was the sign that Jesus used to show that He was the One who restored life. He restored the joy of the wedding feast. Even more the Lord Jesus restored the joy of communion with God and His people. Now His people can enjoy everything in life because they know it is a gift of God’s grace.

When His disciples saw what Jesus had done, they knew that He controlled all things by His grace. A few days before they had confessed that He was the Messiah. Now they were certain that their confession was correct, and they believed in Him. This revelation is also an opportunity for us to believe in Him. We know that Jesus restored life for us to enjoy. By the power of His grace, He restored to His people the true joy of communion with God!

Questions

1. Who was the relative of Jesus that was at the wedding at Cana? (John 2:1)
2. According to John’s account, to what feast were Jesus and His disciple invited? (John 2:2)
3. When they ran out of wine at the feast, who talked to Jesus about it? (John 2:3)
4. To whom did Jesus say: “My hour has not yet come?” (John 2:4)

Lesson 7

The Kingdom as a Revelation

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 4

Scripture: John 3:1-21

Memory Verse: “Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” (John 3:5-6)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus tells us about the Kingdom of God. We cannot enter this Kingdom unless we are born again.

Lesson

We cannot know about the Kingdom of God unless the Lord tells us what it is. God’s Kingdom is a mystery to our minds until Christ makes it known. In this lesson Jesus encountered a man of the Pharisees name Nicodemus. He told Nicodemus that the only way he could see the Kingdom of God was through a new birth. Jesus said that only faith could know this new birth that brings believers into the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God that believers are born into, through a new birth, comes from God’s love.

Jesus began His public ministry in Galilee, but He did not remain there. He soon came to Jerusalem and taught in the temple. At the temple the Lord sent out the moneychangers and drove away those who bought and sold in the temple courts. When the people saw the miracles He did and the authority with which He taught, many believed in His name. Even a few of the leaders believed He was a teacher that came from God. But this was a problem for them because the things that Jesus said were just the opposite of what they taught. They taught that people had to earn their own salvation by keeping the Law. They believed that in the future, God’s Kingdom would come and they would have earned a place in that Kingdom because they had done good things. But Jesus told the people that the Kingdom of God was a Kingdom of grace. In this Kingdom everything is given freely by grace.

One of the leaders who believed that Jesus was a teacher who came from God was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee who ruled the Jews. Nicodemus came to Jesus one night to find out what this teacher really taught. He came at night because he was not yet ready to confess that Jesus was the Messiah. He wasn’t ready to forsake the teachings of the Pharisees and believe in the grace that Jesus taught. So, he came at night because he was ashamed to have people know that he went to visit Jesus. Still, Jesus received Nicodemus with grace even though he came at night.

Nicodemus didn’t waste any time explaining why he came to see Jesus. He addressed Jesus as, Rabbi and said that he knew that He was a teacher who came from God. He knew this because of the miracles Jesus did. Nicodemus was certain that no one could do the things Jesus had done unless God was with Him. Still, he could not understand and was not ready to believe what Jesus taught. That is why Jesus responded to his comments with a shocking statement. He said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John 3:3). What Jesus was saying to Nicodemus was that only a complete renewal in his heart and mind could bring him into the

Lesson 8

The Bridegroom

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 5

Scripture: John 3:22-36

Memory Verse: “The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. ‘He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.’” (John 3:35-36)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus is the Bridegroom. God’s people, the church, are His bride. The Bridegroom received the bride from His friend. John the Baptist was that friend of the Bridegroom.

Lesson

The figure of speech that John used of Jesus being the Bridegroom was a beautiful expression. It showed how John understood that Jesus was the central figure in the story of redemption. John said that Christ had to increase while he decreased. He claimed that Jesus was the One from above and was therefore, above all. John was grieved that not everyone believed the Lord’s testimony that He was the Redeemer.

Jesus told Nicodemus that only those who are born again would see the Kingdom of God. After His exchange with Nicodemus, He went to the land of Judea. Jesus and His disciples went the same place where John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing. There in the area of Aenon near Salim the Lord’s disciples baptized many people. Because of their baptisms John’s disciples and the Jews began to quarrel. They quarreled about the need to wash hands and do other kinds of cleansing before baptism. The problem was that John’s disciples followed the scribes’ laws of cleansing, but Jesus and His disciples did not. Jesus taught that baptism was the sign of complete cleansing in His Kingdom. After they quarreled with the Jews about cleansing, they went to John to complain. They told John that Jesus and His disciples were baptizing people. This troubled them because they said all the people are going to Him. In the minds of John’s disciples, the people were forsaking John and running after another preacher. Sadly, John’s disciples did not understand that it was time for the people to see the Redeemer instead of the one who announced His coming.

John clearly told His disciples that, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven” (John 3:27). This was John’s testimony that Jesus was from heaven and that is where He received His authority. He reminded his disciples that they heard him say that he was not the Christ. He was the one who was sent before Him to announce His coming. Then John used a beautiful figure of speech to help his disciples understand his relationship with Jesus.

The figure of speech that John used was of a bride and bridegroom. The bride in John’s figure is the church of Jesus Christ. God’s people are His bride. The Bridegroom is the Lord Jesus. And it is the friend of the Bridegroom who brings Him to His bride. John said that he was that friend of the Bridegroom. He was the one who announced the coming of the Bridegroom, the Redeemer. He was the one who brought the Bridegroom, Jesus, to His bride, the church. John said that he was filled with joy to bring the Bridegroom to His bride. He was filled with joy that the people were going to Jesus.

The people, the bride of Christ, would also be filled with joy to meet their Redeemer. John said to his disciples, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). John did not want to do anything to stand between the Redeemer and His people. Those who bring the Word of God today will also want the people to rejoice in the Redeemer and not the messenger.

John continued with his testimony that Jesus was the Christ. He said, “He who comes from heaven is above all” (John 3:31). He added that he was the one who came from earth and therefore talked of the things of the earth. But John proclaimed that Jesus was the one who came from heaven. Anyone who believed the testimony of the Lord would certify that God is true. It was God who sent the Lord Jesus to the earth as the Redeemer. It is the Redeemer who speaks the Words of God. He speaks God’s Words because God has given Him the Spirit without limit.

It did not trouble John that the people turned to Jesus. He rejoiced that they saw the Redeemer. But it did trouble him that many people did not believe the Lord’s testimony. He left this warning not only for his disciples, but also for us: “He who believes in the Son of God has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

Questions

1. What did Jesus and His disciples do when they came to the land of Judea? (John 3:22)
2. What was the name of the area where John baptized? (John 3:23)
3. What horrible thing had not yet happened to John? (John 3:24)
4. With whom did John’s disciples dispute about purification? (John 3:25)

Lesson 9

The Gift of God

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 6

Scripture: John 4:1-42

Memory Verse: “You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” (John 4:22-23)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus is the gift of God. He is God’s gift to all nations, tribes, and tongues.

Lesson

The wonderful truth of this lesson is that Jesus is presented as the gift of God for all nations. In a conversation with a Samaritan woman Jesus said He could give people living water. He communicated clearly to this woman that He was the Messiah. Jesus then pointed out to His disciples that the harvest for souls was ready to be harvested. At that time an interim harvest took place among the Samaritans.

Following the exchange with John’s disciples about the people turning to Jesus, the Pharisees raised some questions. Since Jesus did not want to get into a conflict with the Pharisees at this time, He decided to leave Judea. He planned to go back to Galilee and decided to go there by way of Samaria. Most of the Jews did not take this route because they despised the Samaritans and went around Samaria to get to Galilee. But Jesus chose to go through Samaria because He would show them the Gift of God.

On the way through Samaria Jesus and His disciples came to the city of Sychar. Outside of Sychar on the piece of land that Jacob gave to Joseph was the well that Jacob dug. At this well Jesus sat down to rest while His disciples went to get food. About noon a woman from Sychar came to draw water from the well. This was strange that she would come at this hour because it was the hottest time of the day. She probably chose this time because she was an outcast in the city and wanted to avoid the other women. The other women usually came toward evening when it was cooler. Now when Jesus saw the woman, He asked her for a drink. This was also very strange because the Jews would usually have nothing to do with Samaritans. The Jews despised the Samaritans because they were a mixed race of people. That is why the woman asked Jesus why He being a Jew, would ask her, a Samaritan for a drink. Then Jesus shared the wonder of His grace!

He told this woman that if she knew about the Gift of God and who it was who asked her for a drink, she would be asking Him for water. Only the water she would ask from Him would be living water. Jesus informed this woman that anyone who drank the water that she drew would thirst again. But anyone who drank the water that He could give would never again be thirsty. He told her that the water He could give would be a fountain of water spring up to everlasting life. The woman was a sinful woman and tried to avoid any discussion about her sins. So, she said to Jesus give me some of this water so that I will never be thirsty and won’t have to come to the well. She knew that Jesus was not talking about physical thirst, yet she tried to put Him off. Now Jesus decided to take her captive by

His word. He told her to call her husband and to take him to the well. At that suggestion the woman told the truth. She said that she did not have a husband.

Then Jesus began to reveal to her that He was the Messiah. He told her that she had spoken the truth. She had five previous husbands, but the man with whom she was living was not her husband. Once again, the woman tried to change the subject. She told Jesus that she believed that He was a prophet and as such she had a question for Him. She asked if the people were supposed to worship in Jerusalem or on Mount Gerizim. In answer to that question Jesus indicated that the old covenant was coming to a close. He told her that the time was near when people would worship neither at Jerusalem nor Mount Gerizim. Instead, they would worship the Father everywhere in spirit and in truth. They would do this because, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). At this the woman sensed God’s grace in her life and she said, “I know the Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will tell us all things” (John 4:25). Jesus then informed her that he was the Messiah. The woman then hurried to back to Sychar and told others about the Christ.

The woman left when the disciples returned with the food. The disciples urged Jesus to eat some of the food they brought. In response Jesus told them that He had food of which they did not know. He told them that His food was to do the will of His Father. The Lord went on to tell them that the harvest for souls was ready. They did not need to think that this harvest was in the future, because the fields were ripe. The disciples were called to reap what others had sown. An interim harvest took place as the people from Sychar came out to see Jesus. They responded to the testimony of the woman from the well and many believed in Jesus. They confessed that, “This was indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). From this word the Lord also revealed to us that He is the Gift of God and that He can give us living water!

Questions

1. Through which province did Jesus need to go to get to Galilee? (John 4:4)
2. Where did Jesus sit to rest? John 4:6)
3. As Jesus rested what did His disciples go to do? (John 4:8)

Lesson 10

The Opening Up of Galilee

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 7

Scripture: John 4:43-54

Memory Verse: “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:30-31)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus brought the gospel to Galilee. He opened the hearts of His chosen people.

Lesson

It was tragic that Galilee, the province where Jesus grew up, was basically closed to the gospel. Still, Jesus, in His grace, went to this area and opened up Galilee to the gospel. He caused a nobleman from Capernaum to surrender in faith to the gospel of grace. The Lord’s grace also worked faith in the hearts of the nobleman’s family, to believe that Jesus was the Redeemer.

Jesus spent two days in Sychar where He had talked to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well. Because of her testimony many Samaritans came out to see Jesus and believed that He was the Christ the Savior of the world. The Lord now continued His journey to Galilee, the place where He had grown up. Sadly, as Jesus came into Galilee, He testified that a prophet has no honor in His own country. Still, the Galileans were happy to see Jesus come to Galilee. They were happy because many of them had seen Jesus do miracles at Jerusalem at the Passover Feast. Now they hoped that He would do the same kind of miracles in their part of the country. The sad truth was that they were only interested in the Lord’s power to do miracles. Their belief in a Jesus as a miracle worker closed their hearts to the gospel of salvation. But it was their hearts that Jesus wanted, not their emotional excitement about a miracle. When Jesus arrived at Cana, He soon realized that the Father had given Him an opportunity to touch the people’s hearts with the gospel of grace.

When Jesus came to Galilee, He returned to Cana the place where He changed the water to wine at a wedding feast. Soon after Jesus came to Cana a nobleman from Capernaum heard that He was back in Galilee. This nobleman had a son who was very sick, right at the point of death. He hurried to Galilee to find Jesus and asked Him to come to Capernaum to heal his son. When Jesus heard this request, He answered the nobleman with a harsh response. Jesus said, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe” (John 4:48). Still the nobleman would not be put off, so he pleaded with Jesus one more time. He said, “Sir. Come down before my child dies!” (John 4:49). Was it possible that Jesus sensed more faith in this man than just a faith in miracles? Jesus then said something to him to test his faith. The Lord said, “Go your way; your son lives” (John 4:50). When the nobleman heard these words, he was moved by God’s grace to a deeper faith. He believed the words the Lord had spoken and went on his way. Because of the hour of the day the nobleman was not able to travel back to Capernaum before nightfall.

The following day, his servants met him and told him that his son had recovered and was alive. When the nobleman heard this announcement, he wasn’t at all surprised. That is what he expected to hear.

Lesson 11

The Everflowing Spring

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 8

Scripture: John 5:1-18

Memory Verse: “Jesus said to him, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk.’ And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.” (John 5:8-9)

Lesson Truth: The ever-flowing spring of our lesson is the spring of God’s grace to His people.

Lesson

In today’s story we learn how Jesus showed the ever-flowing spring of His grace to a man with an infirmity. This man looked for healing at the pool of Bethesda instead of to the ever-flowing spring of God’s grace. This man would learn of God’s healing grace that was infinitely greater than the healing of Bethesda. Jesus also revealed that He was One with His Father. He revealed that the ever-flowing spring of grace that came from the Father and the Son was always available, especially on the Sabbath Day.

Jesus had returned to Jerusalem to attend a feast of the Jews. At the time He was in Jerusalem, the Lord went to the pool of Bethesda located near the Sheep Gate. Many sick people and those who were blind, lame, or paralyzed came to this pool. They came to this pool because it provided healing to anyone who could enter the pool when the waters were stirred. However, when the springs erupted in the pool, only those who got into the water when it was stirred were healed. This made it difficult for a man with a severe infirmity. He found that when the waters stirred, others got into the pool ahead of him, so he never found healing. This poor man had lived with his infirmity for thirty-eight years and was never able to get into the pool on time. Imagine how he must have felt when Jesus saw him and asked him, “Do you want to be made well?” (John 5:6). At this time the man thought that Jesus was talking about finding a way to get him into the pool on time. But the truth was that Jesus was asking him if he wanted to experience God’s ever-flowing spring of grace. It took the Lord’s question to awaken faith in this man so he could experience God’s grace.

Still, he answered the Lord that he couldn’t be healed because each time he tried to enter the pool, someone got in ahead of him. Then Jesus said something astounding. He said, “Rise, take up your bed and walk” (John 5:8). At this command the Lord’s grace became evident, and the man immediately took up his bed and walked. Think of the joy he must have felt to be able to walk after thirty-eight years. But the Jews interrupted his joy, when they told him it was unlawful to carry his bedroll on the Sabbath Day. He responded that the one who made him well told him to take up his bed and walk. The Jews then asked him who it was that made him well. He told them honestly that he did not know, because Jesus had left and was lost in the crowd.

Later, Jesus saw the man in the temple and reminded him of the miracle of healing that he had experienced. He told the man to “sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you” (John 5:14). Now the man knew who healed him, so he found the leaders of the Jews and told them that it was Jesus

who made him well. This should have made the Jews rejoice. But instead of rejoicing they persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him!

Why did the Jews seek to kill Jesus? They said it was because He healed the man with the infirmity on the Sabbath Day. But the truth was that they rejected Jesus as the Messiah. When Jesus answered the Jews about breaking the Sabbath law, He said: “My Father has been working till now and I have been working” (John 5:17). This was the Lord’s way of saying that the Father always shows His grace and mercy, also on the Sabbath Day. But the words of Jesus that referred to His Father’s grace only made the Jews angrier. Now they not only rejected His word, but they were more determined than ever to kill Him. They were convinced that Jesus deserved to die, because he not only broke their Sabbath laws, but He also made Himself equal with the Father. This in the minds of these unbelievers was blasphemy!

You and I must remember that the healing that took place in the pool of Bethesda was the work of God’s grace. God’s grace governed the laws of nature that caused this pool to have healing powers. But a much greater display of His grace comes from the ever-flowing spring of grace in Christ Jesus the Redeemer! Pray that you and I may know the Lord’s ever-flowing spring of grace in our lives!

Questions

1. By which gate in Jerusalem was the pool of Bethesda found? (John 5:2)

2. For what were the blind and lame people waiting at Bethesda? (John 5:3)

3. Who asked the man at the pool of Bethesda if he wanted to be made well? (John 5:6)

Lesson 12
The Bread of Life

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 9

Scripture: John 6

Memory Verse: “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” (John 6:37-38)

Lesson Truth: Christ Jesus said: “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life” (John 6:54). He said this because He is the bread of life.

Lesson

Jesus showed the power of grace when He fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. Because the people followed after Jesus as the One who could provide bread; He warned them not to work for bread that perishes. He declared that He was the bread of life. Therefore, whoever eats His flesh and drinks His blood has eternal life. Some of the people believed the Lord’s claim that He was the bread of life, while others did not believe. Because of this crisis some people no longer followed Him.

After Jesus healed the man at the Pool of Bethesda the Jewish leaders sought to kill Him. Therefore, He went back to Galilee. In order to escape the large crowds of people who followed Him, He crossed the Sea of Galilee. He wanted to be alone with His disciples and find time to pray. But the people had seen the miracles He performed and those who were healed of their diseases, so they followed Him. They walked around the Sea of Galilee and found Jesus to the other side. When the Lord saw this crowd coming toward Him and realized that they had not eaten, He asked Philip, “Where shall we buy bread that these may eat?” (John 6:5). Philip did not think about the opportunity for the Lord to show the power of His grace. Instead, he thought only of what they could afford, and reminded Jesus of how little they could buy with two hundred coins. At the same time Andrew checked to see if the people brought their own provisions. He came to Jesus and told Him there was a boy who had five barley loaves and two small fish. He questioned whether that was enough to feed so many people. Jesus already knew what He was going to do, but He allowed the disciples to question in order to test them.

Now the Lord asked the crowd of about five thousand people to sit on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two small fish and gave thanks to God. After Jesus had given thanks, He instructed the disciples to distribute the bread and the fish to the multitude. Amazingly all the people ate as much as they wanted, and the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. With this miracle Jesus showed that God, in His grace, provides for all our physical needs. Now the people said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world” (John 6:14). Jesus knew that the people wanted to take Him by force to be their king. They wanted Him to be their earthly king who would free them from the Romans. So, Jesus left to be by Himself, and later at night He walked out on the Sea of Galilee to join His disciples in their boat. The following day the people again crossed the Sea of Galilee to find Jesus. They asked Jesus how He got to Capernaum because they did not see Him leave with His disciples.

