

Promise and Deliverance Student Workbook

Volume 20

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 Victory of the Word of Grace

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 35

Scripture: Acts 12:1-24

Memory Verse: “And when Peter had come to himself, he said, ‘Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.’” (Acts 12:11)

Lesson Truth: The Word of grace defeated the destructive plans of Herod.

Lesson

It is impossible to stop the spread of God’s Word of grace. Evidence of the power of God’s Word of grace was seen after the Gentile church at Antioch began. The Jews did not want Gentiles to be included in God’s covenant promise. Therefore, they tried to destroy the believers in Jerusalem. Herod, the king at that time, joined in this destruction by killing James and arresting Peter. But God sent an angel to deliver Peter from prison and to demonstrate that His Word of grace could not be stopped. God also destroyed proud Herod who was willing to have the people call him a god. The Word of God’s grace won the victory!

This is a story of how the Word of grace won the victory over men who thought they could stop God’s Word of grace from spreading. The Jewish people did not like it when a congregation of believers began at Antioch. They were still convinced that only Jews could be part of the covenant. They believed that only Jews were God’s chosen people. Herod the king knew how the Jews despised the Gentiles. At one time the emperor, Tiberius, had taken away his authority. However, he was later elevated to the throne of his grandfather. Herod saw how the Jews enjoyed it when he did harm to the apostles who spread God’s Word of grace. He even went so far as to kill James the brother of John. He followed this execution by arresting Peter and putting him in prison. But this was on the day before the Passover feast, so Peter’s trial had to wait until after the Passover. On the night before Peter’s trial God brought about an amazing deliverance. This deliverance showed that the spread of God’s Word of grace could never be stopped.

Peter was bound between two soldiers with two chains and additional guards were placed at the prison doors. The Lord’s disciples thought that it looked hopeless. They gathered for prayer, but they never expected that their prayers for Peter’s deliverance could happen. But this was the night that the believers would see a demonstration of the Lord’s power. During the night, an angel woke Peter and told him to get up and put on his sandals. Immediately, the chains fell from his arms, and he was able to stand up. The angel then told Peter to put on his coat and to follow him. Peter followed the angel past the first and the second guard posts and finally out of the prison gate. All the while, Peter thought that he was seeing a vision. But once they were out of the prison, the angel departed, and Peter knew that the Lord had delivered him. Peter then decided to join the group of believers at Mary’s house. When he arrived at the house and knocked at the door, Rhoda the maid greeted him. But Rhoda was so excited that she forgot to unlatch the door. Instead, she ran into the house and told the other believers that Peter was at the door.

Rhoda’s announcement seemed so impossible that they said she was beside herself. When she insisted that Peter was at the door, they said it had to be his angel. This group of believers was not

5. What happened to the iron gate of the prison as Peter and the angel approached? (Acts 12:10)

6. To whose house did Peter go after he found that the Lord had delivered him from prison? (Acts 12:12)

7. What happened to the soldiers who were guarding Peter, after Herod questioned them? (Acts 12:19)

8. What happened with the Word of God after worms ate Herod's flesh and he died? (Acts 12:24)

Lesson 2

The Door of Faith Opened to the Gentiles

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 36

Scripture: Acts 12:25–14:28

Memory Verse: “Therefore let it be known to you, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” (Acts 13:38-39)

Lesson Truth: The Word of grace and God’s Spirit opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Lesson

Barnabas and Saul were appointed to bring the Word of grace to the Gentiles. They traveled to various cities on the island of Cyprus. From there they sailed to Antioch of Pisidia and later to Iconium and Lystra. At each of these cities they preached the Word of grace. Some received their preaching, while others opposed them and had them expelled. Barnabas and Saul encountered the resistance of sorcery and magic as well as Jewish self-righteousness and Gentile idolatry. As they revisited many of these churches, they ordained elders to carry on the work of the Lord. When they returned to Antioch in Syria, they reported the wonderful news that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

The first missionary journey of Barnabas and Saul began after they were commissioned at Antioch. As the prophets and teachers at Antioch ministered to the Lord, the Holy Spirit instructed them to separate Saul and Barnabas from the others. They were called to preach gospel of grace to the Gentiles. These prophets and teachers fasted and prayed and commissioned Barnabas and Saul by laying hands on them. Now they knew that the Holy Spirit had sent them, so they sailed to Cyprus. On the island of Cyprus, they went to the synagogue at Salamis and preached the Word of grace to the Jews. At Paphos, Saul and Barnabas ran into a sorcerer named Elymas. He traveled with the governor who had asked Barnabas and Saul to share the Word of God. Now Elymas tried to prevent the apostles from bringing the Word of God to the governor. He wanted the governor to look for divine power through his magic. Saul, whose name was Paul in the Greek language, was filled with the Holy Spirit and admonished Elymas to stop perverting the ways of the Lord. He said the hand of the Lord was upon him and would cause him to be blind. When the governor saw that Elymas was blind, he was astonished at the Lord’s teaching, and he believed.

Barnabas and Paul then traveled to Perga in Pamphylia and from there to Antioch in Pisidia. Once again, they went to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day. Here they heard the reading of the Law and were then invited to preach. As Paul preached, he reminded the Jews of their history, which showed that God had chosen the patriarchs out of free grace. God’s grace had chosen David as king of Israel and from his seed the Redeemer came. This was the Redeemer that the Jews rejected and put to death on the cross. But God raised the Redeemer from the dead, and through Him there is forgiveness of sins. Paul warned the Jews not to harden their hearts against this Word of grace. He told them that it was necessary for the Jews to hear this Word first. But since they rejected it, he and Barnabas would turn to the Gentiles. The Gentiles glorified the Word of the Lord when they heard this and those that were appointed to eternal life believed.

From Antioch in Pisidia Barnabas and Paul went to Iconium where they preached at the synagogue. Many Jews and Greeks believed, but there were also those who stirred up the people to stone the apostles. So, they left and went to Lystra and Derbe. At Lystra the apostles saw a man who had been crippled from birth. The man was listening to their preaching. Paul looked at this man intently and saw that he faith to believe. He said to the man in a loud voice, “Stand up straight on your feet!” (Acts 14:10). Immediately he leapt and walked. When the people saw this, their attachment to idolatry became evident. They called Barnabas and Paul gods and tried to offer sacrifices to them. Sadly, these people wanted to worship human power and not submit to the grace of God that had been shown to them. It was even more tragic that Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and stirred the people to protest against Paul and Barnabas. These protests became so violent that they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city. Paul did not die because God protected him, and he went on to Derbe.

Barnabas and Paul preached at Derbe for a time and then decided to return to Antioch in Syria. On the way back, they visited the churches at Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, and Perga. At each of these churches, they provided for their organization by appointing elders to carry on the work of the Lord. The joy of this first missionary journey of Paul was that Gentiles were included with Jews in the covenant. Paul and Barnabas reported to the church at Antioch of Syria that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Now we know that God’s Word of grace is meant for all who believe from every nation and tongue.

Questions

1. Where was the church located that anointed Barnabas and Saul to do the Lord’s work? (Acts 13:1-2)

2. By whom were Barnabas and Saul sent when they went to Seleucia and Cyprus? (Acts 13:4)

3. Who looked at the sorcerer, Elymas, and told him that he was a son of the devil? (Acts 13:9-10)

Lesson 3

Freedom of Faith

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 37

Scripture: Acts 15:1-34

Memory Verse: “Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.” (Acts 15:10-11)

Lesson Truth: The Holy Spirit frees God’s people from the duties of the Law so they can freely believe.

Lesson

The Gentile church at Antioch was growing. The believers were free to practice their faith without the duty to keep the Jewish laws. They enjoyed this freedom until some zealous Jews came from Judea and hindered them. These Jews insisted that in order to be saved, Gentiles had to be circumcised. This caused a problem in the Gentile church. So, these believers decided to send elders along with Paul and Barnabas to seek advice from the apostles at Jerusalem. The apostles discussed the problem and concluded that the zealous Jews were wrong. Here is the story of what happened.

Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch in Syria after their first missionary journey. They shared with these believers the many things that God had done through them. The most wonderful thing that they shared was that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. As the Gentiles were rejoicing over the gift of faith some zealous Jews came to disturb them. These zealous Jews came from Judea to visit the church at Antioch. With misdirected zeal they told the believers in Antioch that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised. This was sad because Paul and Barnabas told the Gentile believers that they could be saved if they believed that Jesus paid for their sins. They taught the Gentiles that by faith in Christ Jesus they were free to serve Him. In this freedom, salvation does not depend on the things we do but on what the Lord Jesus did for us.

What were these Gentile believers at Antioch to do? The zealous Jews knew the requirements of the Jewish laws. Were Paul and Barnabas wrong in teaching them that they were free in Christ Jesus? The church leaders decided to send some elders along with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to ask the apostles about this matter. As this group traveled to Jerusalem they stopped at Phoenicia and Samaria and talked about the faith of the Gentiles. This caused real joy among the Gentile believers. When they arrived at Jerusalem the apostles and elders received them warmly. They gave the group from Antioch the opportunity to tell about the things God had done among them. They also shared the problem that arose because some Jews insisted that the Gentiles had to be circumcised. When some Pharisees heard their report, they spoke up and said the zealous Jews were right. They said it was necessary for the Gentiles to be circumcised. Sadly, these Pharisees believed that salvation could only come if believers kept the Law. They believed this even though neither these Jews nor their fathers had ever been able to keep the Law. As the discussion continued Simon Peter stood up and spoke to those at the meeting.

Peter reminded them that God had directed him to share the gospel with the Gentiles. He reminded them that God, who knows the hearts of men, gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. In God's eyes there was no difference between Jews and Gentiles. Peter said that because God made no difference between Jew and Gentile, neither could they. He told them that they could not put a burden on Gentile believers that no one would be able to bear. Neither Jews nor Gentiles are able to keep the law to earn salvation. Peter said that it was through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that all believers are saved. When those at the meeting heard this, they were quiet and listened to Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas told about the way that God worked miracles and wonders among the Gentiles.

After that, James made a proposal to those at the meeting. He assured them that Peter showed clearly that God had visited the Gentiles. Therefore, he urged them not to trouble the Gentiles with the law of circumcision. He asked only that they help the Gentiles avoid anything pagan. James said they should tell the Gentiles to avoid anything polluted by idols. This would include things strangled and the blood of animals. They should also avoid sexual immorality. Those in attendance at the meeting in Jerusalem agreed with James. They sent some of their group and Paul and Barnabas with a letter sharing these instructions with the believers at Antioch. When these believers received this letter, they were filled with joy. Now the Gentile believers knew that they were free to serve the Lord by faith without the duty of the Law.

Questions

1. Where did the men come from who said the believers at Antioch had to be circumcised? (Acts 15:1)
2. What churches did Paul and Barnabas pass through on their way to Jerusalem? (Acts 15:3)
3. Who came together to consider the matter of circumcision? (Acts 15:6)
4. Who knows the hearts of men? (Acts 15:8)

Lesson 4

Overlooking the Times of Their Ignorance

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 38

Scripture: Acts 15:35–18:22

Memory Verse: “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.” (Acts 17:30-31a)

Lesson Truth: God overlooked the times of man’s ignorance, but now in love sent His gospel to all nations.

Lesson

After Christ Jesus rose from the dead and the disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, there was no way the spread of the gospel could be stopped. Our lesson today talks about the way the gospel was spread to the continent of Europe. We are told in Acts 17 that God overlooked the times of their ignorance in places such as Athens, Corinth, Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi. God allowed Paul to proclaim the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ Jesus in Europe as well as in Asia. The light of the gospel of Christ Jesus dispelled the darkness of these times.

The good news of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ Jesus to pay for the sins of His people had to reach every nation. But how would this good news reach such far off places as Europe? The lesson today tells how the Holy Spirit caused the apostle Paul to be restless. This restlessness prompted him to suggest to Barnabas that they go back to visit the new Gentile churches and encourage them. Barnabas liked this suggestion, but he wanted to take John Mark with them. Paul felt that Mark should not go with them because he deserted them on their previous trip. The result of this disagreement was that Paul and Barnabas separated. Paul took Silas, and Barnabas took Mark.

Paul and Silas went to Derbe and Lystra where they found Timothy, a young disciple of the Lord Jesus. Paul wanted to take Timothy with them, so he had him circumcised to satisfy the demands of the Jews in that region. With Timothy along, they visited the Gentile churches and encouraged them in the faith. Then something amazing happened as they traveled through Phrygia and Galatia. The Holy Spirit said they could not preach the word in Asia. They wanted to go to Bithynia, but the Holy Spirit would not allow them to, so they went on to Troas, where the Lord sent Paul a vision. In this vision Paul saw a man from Macedonia pleading with him to come to Macedonia and help. Paul and Silas answered the call of the man in the vision and sailed to Macedonia where they went to the city of Philippi. This was the way that the Holy Spirit guided Paul and Silas to preach the gospel in Europe.

At Philippi Paul and Silas preached the gospel to believers near the river outside the city. There they met a believer named Lydia who was a cloth merchant. The Holy Spirit opened Lydia’s heart to the gospel and she and her household believed and were baptized. After they were baptized Lydia urged the apostles to stay with her so she could minister to their needs. Then as Paul and Silas joined the other believers for prayer, a girl with a spirit of divination met them. She made a good income for her masters by fortune telling. This girl cried out for all to hear, that Paul and Silas were servants of the Most High God. She said that they proclaimed the way of salvation.

Lesson 5

The Way of the Lord

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 39

Scripture: Acts 18:23–20:38

Memory Verse: “Then Paul said, ‘John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, on Christ Jesus.’ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 19:4-5)

Lesson Truth: The way of the Lord was made known to all people when Paul preached in Ephesus.

Lesson

Believers in the churches in Asia Minor were often referred to as people of the Way. This was a good description because the Lord did show the way that believers might commune with Him. He showed the way that believers could fellowship with Him in the covenant. In this lesson we will learn of the way of the Lord with Apollos and in the baptism of John. We will also learn about the way of the Lord with the believers in the synagogue and the church at Ephesus. Following the way of the Lord the apostle Paul was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem. He followed the guidance of the Holy Spirit even though he realized it could cost him his life. But in following the way of the Lord Paul was ready to die.

After his second missionary journey Paul did not remain at Antioch in Syria very long. He thought of the promise he made to the believers in Ephesus. So, he began his third missionary journey and made his way to Ephesus. Aquilla and Priscilla had stayed at Ephesus to teach and encourage the believers. While working with the believers, they encountered a Jew named Apollos. Apollos was a man who knew the Scriptures and was an eloquent speaker. He taught the people the truth of God’s Word, but he stopped at the baptism of John the Baptist. Apollos did not know about the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. So, Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and taught him the way of the Lord after the Holy Spirit was poured out. When Apollos learned the way of the Lord, he taught his fellow Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

By this time Paul had reached Ephesus, and he also found believers that stopped at the baptism of John. Paul asked these believers if they had received the Holy Spirit. They replied that they had never heard of the Holy Spirit. So, Paul told them that John had preached the baptism of repentance. But John had also said they should believe on the Christ who would follow him. When these believers heard this truth, they asked to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then an amazing thing happened. As Paul laid his hands on them in baptism, the Holy Spirit came upon them. They even spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Paul continued preaching so that both Jews and Greeks heard the word of the Lord. Some believed, but others spoke evil about the people of the Way. God also allowed Paul to do many miracles of healing. Some people were even healed when others laid handkerchiefs on them that had touched Paul. But this brought another problem because some people were superstitious. The sons of Sceva tried to cast out a demon by saying they had to leave in the name of Jesus whom Paul preached. The demon answered saying, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” (Acts 19:15). Then the man who had an evil spirit jumped on these men and overpowered them

so they left wounded and naked. This made a deep impression on the people, and many confessed their sins. They became believers and burned their books of magic.

The Holy Spirit then started to move Paul to think of going back to Jerusalem and eventually to Rome. But before he left Ephesus, another problem arose. A commotion arose about the people of the Way. A silversmith named Demetrius blamed the people of the Way for his business failure. Demetrius made silver shrines for the idol goddess, Diana. When the people became believers, they no longer bought these shrines. This made Demetrius and the other silversmiths angry. So, they stirred up the people and created a riot. Paul's companions were captured and brought into the theatre where they were going to deal with them. Paul wanted to go into the theatre to help them, but other disciples would not allow it. Fortunately, a leader named Alexander was able to quiet the crowd.

Then Paul decided to make his way to Jerusalem. He stopped in Macedonia and Corinth on his way to Troas. At Troas Paul preached a long sermon that went into the night. A young man named Eutychus fell asleep while listening to Paul's sermon and fell from a third story window. The people who were gathered there were sure that he was dead, but Paul fell on him, and his life returned. Paul then went to Miletus where he called for the elders from Ephesus to meet with him. He shared with these elders his deep concern for them and how he tried to serve them. He then told them that he was going to Jerusalem where the Holy Spirit said that he would face chains and tribulations. Paul then added that he was ready to die so that he could finish his race of life with joy. After he urged these elders to be ready for difficult times, he said farewell. Through these many events in the life of Paul, the way of the Lord was made known to the world.

Questions

1. In whose way had Apollos been instructed? (Acts 18:24-25)
2. What question did Paul ask the believers in Ephesus? (Acts 19:2)
3. Into whose baptism had these believers been baptized? (Acts 19:3)
4. By whose hands did God work unusual miracles at Ephesus? (Acts 19:11)

Lesson 6

Imitator of the Christ

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 40

Scripture: Acts 21:1–23:35

Memory Verse: “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.” (Acts 23:11b)

Lesson Truth: If we believe in Christ, we will seek to live like Christ.

Lesson

The Lord prepared Paul with a unique background that he used to his advantage. He was born a Roman citizen but raised a Jew. He also was trained as a Pharisee who believed in the resurrection of the dead. Paul used all of this to promote the good news of the gospel, that Jesus Christ died for all sinners, both Jew and Gentile. Paul would have given himself over to death rather than compromise on that gospel truth. In that way, he was an imitator of Christ.

In this lesson, we see Paul traveling to Jerusalem. Many people urged him not to go, but Paul was determined. At Tyre, the Holy Spirit revealed to believers that Paul would be imprisoned in Jerusalem. At Caesarea, Agabus prophesied that Paul would be delivered into the hands of Gentiles. In both cases, Paul refused to listen to them. He was determined to go to Jerusalem to strengthen the bonds between Gentile and Jewish believers. Throughout his ministry, Paul worked to strengthen that unity, but to strengthen it in the right way—not through observance of the Law, but through a recognition of Christ’s saving work.

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem, church leaders told him that some Jews were spreading a rumor that Paul wanted Jews around the world to stop observing the Ceremonial Law. But Paul only said that Gentile believers should not be required to observe it. If Jewish Christians wanted to keep observing the Law, they were free to do so. To keep peace between Jews and Gentiles, the church leaders asked Paul to join with fellow believers who had taken a Nazirite vow. Paul agreed to do that to demonstrate his respect for the Law of Moses.

When Paul went to the temple with the believers who had made the vow, some Jews from Asia Minor recognized him. They thought he had taken a Gentile into the part of the temple that only Jews were allowed to enter. They raised the alarm, and soon the whole city was in an uproar. The commander of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem heard it, and he arrived with centurions and soldiers to restore order. The commander allowed Paul to speak to the crowd before taking him away. When Paul spoke, he spoke in Hebrew, which only a true Jew would speak. He also said he was a student of a famous Jewish scholar and was brought up as a strict Pharisee. At one time, he persecuted Christians. But then Christ changed his life on the road to Damascus. Later, Christ told Paul that he was sending him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

When the crowd heard Paul speak about going to the Gentiles, they said he deserved to die. For Paul’s safety, the Roman commander could not allow Paul to go free. Instead, he ordered that Paul should be questioned and flogged. But Paul knew that Roman commanders were not allowed to flog Roman citizens without cause, so he let the commander know that he was a Roman Citizen. The commander called off the flogging and commanded the chief priests to appear the next day to sort out the matter.

When the council met, Paul told them that he was a Pharisee who believed in the resurrection of the dead. This caused an argument in the council, and the Roman commander removed Paul from the meeting. That night, the Lord appeared to Paul and assured him that just as Paul testified about Him in Jerusalem, he would also bear witness about Him in Rome.

Questions

1. What did Paul and the Christians from Tyre do on the shore before Paul boarded the ship? (Acts 21:5)
2. Who lived in Caesarea where Paul stayed? (Acts 21:8)
3. What was the name of the man who used Paul's belt to prophesy? (Acts 21:10)
4. What was the name of the man from Ephesus who was a companion of Paul? (Acts 21:29)
5. What language did Paul use to speak to the Roman commander? (Acts 21:37)

6. What language did Paul use to speak to the crowd? (Acts 21:40)

7. What did Paul say that made the Roman commander afraid? (Acts 22:25-29)

8. To whom did the Roman commander send Paul? (Acts 23:24)

Lesson 7

Standing before Kings and Governors

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 41

Scripture: Acts 24–26

Memory Verse: “I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” (Acts 24:15)

Lesson Truth: Even kings and governors must hear the call to faith.

Lesson

Paul knew that the Lord had special plans for him. The Lord made Paul a missionary to the Gentiles. The Lord also used Paul to proclaim the gospel to earthly rulers. This is what we will learn in today’s lesson. When Paul was arrested and forced to defend himself before Roman authorities, he used the opportunity to speak to them about the judgment to come, true justice, and the Old Testament testimony regarding Jesus Christ. Paul never shrank from testifying about Jesus. He was even willing to suffer and die if it honored the name of Jesus Christ.

When Paul was brought before Felix in Caesarea, the Jews laid out their case against him. A man named Tertullus spoke for the Jewish leaders. He used flattery to try to make Felix more open to accepting their accusations. He also said that Paul was “a creator of dissension among Jews” (Acts 24:5). This would have been a serious accusation since Rome dealt harshly with anyone thought to be causing unrest in the Roman empire. Then he claimed that Paul was part of the Nazarene sect and that he broke Jewish law by profaning the temple. He said that the Jewish leaders would have dealt with Paul themselves if Lysias had not removed Paul from their hands and sent him to Caesarea. Through all of this, Tertullus attempted, through flattery and misdirection, to turn Felix against Paul.

When Paul responded to the charges, he took a different approach. He responded to all the charges, but he also turned the conversation to the judgment to come. In responding to the charges, he said that he could not have caused dissension since he was only in Jerusalem twelve days before he was arrested. He also stated that the Jewish leaders could not prove that he profaned the temple. Paul knew that the charges were false, so he laid the burden of proof on those who made the false claim. He admitted to belonging to the Nazarene sect called “the Way,” however, he argued that it was not a dissenting sect, but one that served God according to His Word. He said that the only possible complaint the Jewish leaders could have against him was that when he was before the Sanhedrin, he cried out, “Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day” (Acts 24:21).

When Paul spoke of the resurrection of the dead, he claimed that both the just and the unjust would be resurrected, pointing to the day when all people would be judged by God. This probably made Felix uncomfortable, since he was a very unjust ruler. Felix decided to postpone judgment, but sent for Paul often, hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe for his release. When Felix was finally called back to Rome, he left Paul in prison as a favor to the Jews.

When Festus, the successor to Felix, arrived, Paul made the same defense he made before Felix. But this time, instead of focusing on the judgment of God, he focused on justice. Paul knew that if he was returned to Jerusalem for trial, he would not be shown justice. So, he appealed to Caesar.

6. What favor did Festus want to do for the Jews? (Acts 25:9)

7. Was Paul afraid to die? (Acts 25:11)

8. What did Paul say happened to him on the road to Damascus? (Acts 26:12-18)

Lesson 8

Christ's Global Reign

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 42

Scripture: Acts 27–28

Memory Verse: “It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul went to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him.” (Acts 28:8)

Lesson Truth: Paul preaches the gospel of Christ's Kingdom in Rome.

Lesson

When Paul talked about going to Rome, he probably thought that he would travel there as a free man, choosing where to go and how to get there. But God had a different idea. He sent Paul to Rome as a prisoner. This was how the Lord wanted Paul to travel to Rome, and Paul submitted to His will. Throughout the trip, the Lord protected Paul along the way so that Paul would arrive in Rome and proclaim the gospel to Caesar himself. What mattered was not the way that Paul went to Rome, but what he did when he got there. He preached the gospel. He proclaimed the good news of Christ's kingdom to fellow Christians, Jewish leaders, and Roman officials—anyone who would listen.

In our last lesson, we learned that Paul was forced to appeal to Caesar to avoid being sent back to Jerusalem to stand trial before the Jewish leaders. When Paul was first arrested, his nephew learned of a plot to kill Paul as he traveled to the Jewish leaders for trial. It was likely that if Paul made a similar trip now, another attempt would be made on his life.

By appealing to Caesar, Paul was forced to travel to Rome but to do so as a prisoner of the Roman government. The centurion who was ordered to take Paul to Rome was named Julius. He treated Paul kindly, and even allowed some of Paul's friends to join him on the journey. Luke went with him and wrote about the journey, including the story in the Book of Acts. Paul's friend Aristarchus also traveled with Paul. Aristarchus was a Macedonian from Thessalonica. He must have been a good friend of Paul because after the journey was completed, he stayed with Paul in Rome.

Paul encountered many challenges on his trip to Rome. It was as if something or someone was trying to keep Paul from arriving at Rome to preach the gospel. But we know that if God wanted Paul in Rome, then Paul would most certainly arrive there. Even so, the trip was filled with challenges. The crew of the ship met their first challenge after setting out from Sidon. They encountered strong headwinds and had to use the island of Cyprus as a shelter from the winds.

Later, when Paul and the others set out from Myra in Lycia, they encountered just the opposite. The wind was so light that they hardly made any headway for many days. When they finally arrived at a port called Fair Havens, they were so late that they had to decide if they wanted to risk setting sail from Fair Havens during the winter season, when they were more likely to encounter storms on the Mediterranean Sea. Paul advised the crew to spend the winter in Fair Havens, but the pilot of the ship and the ship's owner wanted to continue. Fair Havens was not a good harbor for spending the winter. They wanted to sail on and try to make it to Phoenix, a harbor on the island of Crete. Even though Paul was the bearer of God's Word, the pilot and the ship's owner had more experience sailing, so the centurion listened to them instead.

Lesson 9

The Victory of the Kingdom

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 43

Scripture: Matthew 24–25

Memory Verse: “And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Matt. 24:30b)

Lesson Truth: Jesus will return as our victorious King.

Lesson

The Jews of Jesus’ day were very proud of the temple in Jerusalem. Even Jesus’ disciples could see that the temple was a magnificent building. One day, they pointed it out to Jesus, but his response must have surprised them. He said that the whole building would be torn down. Later, when they were at the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked him about his comment. They thought that when the temple was torn down, it would be the end of the age, and Jesus would show His kingdom in all its glory. But Jesus explained that it would be different than what they were thinking.

Jesus explained that there would be a long time between the destruction of the temple and the end of the age. The temple would be destroyed because the Jews of Jesus’ day did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, and they did not accept the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Jesus explained that in the same way, the world would be destroyed because it would also reject the Lord’s Kingdom and the gospel of His grace. But before that happened, Jesus said the gospel must be “preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations” (Matt. 24:14).

Jesus said that all the nations would hear the gospel, but many would not believe it because false prophets would arise and lead many people astray. They would say, “Look, here is the Christ!” or “There” (Acts 24:23). But they would always be pointing to someone other than the real Christ. Jesus said that when He does return, everyone will know right away that the real Christ has come.

Before Christ comes, the world will be in a terrible state. Nations will fight against nations. There will be wars and rumors of wars. People will want peace, but they will not be able to get it. Even the creation itself will groan and struggle. There will be earthquakes, famines, and pandemics. The world will also be much more hostile to Christians. Believers will be persecuted and will find it harder and harder to live in a world that is increasingly wicked.

When Jesus said that the temple would be destroyed, he also told his disciples not to fight against the Roman army who would destroy it. Instead, he told his disciples to flee to the wilderness. It would be a terrible time for Jews and would only be shortened for the sake of the elect. In the same way, before Christ comes again, believers will suffer great persecution. But Jesus said then he will come. And he will come to judge the nations and gather his elect from all over the world.

Jesus also said that we should make sure we are ready for Jesus when he comes. He said people know that spring is coming when they start to see leaves budding on the trees. In the same way, we can know that Christ’s Kingdom is coming by looking for the signs of the times. People of the world will be surprised at Christ’s coming. For them, it will be like the days of Noah, when people were “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark” (Matt. 24:38). But believers should not be surprised. We should be like the five wise virgins

Lesson 10

The Victory over Satan

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 44

Scripture: Revelation 12

Memory Verse: “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down” (Rev. 12:10)

Lesson Truth: God’s people can rejoice in Christ’s victory over Satan.

Lesson

After all the other apostles had died, John was still living in the city of Ephesus. Like the other apostles, John was also persecuted for his faith. The Roman government sent him into exile on the island of Patmos. But when John was in exile, Jesus still cared for him. Jesus came to John on Patmos in a series of visions. He told John to “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” (Rev. 1:19).

When we read John’s visions in the book of Revelation, they can seem strange to us and a bit confusing. We might have a hard time figuring out what they mean. But it is important for us to try to understand them. Jesus Christ gave these visions to John and wanted John to share them with His Church. And if that is what Jesus wanted, we would do well to study them.

The vision in Revelation 12 is about a woman and a dragon. The woman was “clothed with sun” (Rev. 12:1). In other words, the woman was wrapped up in the glory that we usually associate with the sun. Revelation 12:2 tells us that the woman was about to have a baby. But then verse 3 describes something very frightening for the woman. Just as the woman was about to give birth, a dragon appeared. He had seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems, or crowns, on his heads. The horns and diadems represented strength and power. This was a very powerful dragon, and he wanted to devour the baby.

What could this vision mean? It becomes easier to understand when we see that the woman represents God’s people and the dragon represents Satan. In the vision, Satan fought against God’s people. When God’s people have fellowship with God, they are glorified (see Romans 8:30), just like the woman was clothed in the glory of the sun. But Satan does not want God’s people to have fellowship with God. He wants to destroy the relationship between God and His people.

Satan’s anger was also directed specifically against the baby that woman would bear. The baby represents Jesus Christ, who was born out of the people of God. The dragon knew that if he could destroy the baby, God’s people would also be destroyed. When Jesus was on earth, Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, trying to make Jesus join him. When that did not work, Satan worked in the hearts of the Jewish leaders to make them hate Jesus so much that they wanted him crucified. Satan thought he won, but it was just the opposite. When Jesus died on the cross, he made atonement for our sins bringing salvation to all his people. Satan can no longer accuse us because we have received righteousness in Christ. Heaven rejoices in the victory of Christ. Revelation 12:10 says, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.”

What a joy to know that our relationship with Christ can never be broken! But that does not mean our struggles are over. Satan will continue to fight against God's people until Christ comes again. Verse 17 says, "And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." All who believe in Jesus Christ are "the rest of her offspring," and Satan will continue to wage war against us until Jesus Christ comes again.

At times, it may seem like Satan is winning. But we know that Jesus Christ rules from heaven. He has already conquered Satan. And when He does come again, he will come as a righteous judge and finally put an end to Satan's rebellion. Then, sin will be no more, and He will set up a new heaven and a new earth where nothing unrighteous will be found, and where God's people will enjoy true communion with God forever.

Questions

1. With what was the woman clothed? What did it represent? (Rev. 12:1)
2. How many heads did the dragon have? What sat on each of his heads? (Rev. 12:2)
3. Where did the woman flee? (Rev. 12:6)
4. When war broke out in heaven, who fought against the dragon and his angels? (Rev. 12:7)
5. When the dragon was defeated, what did the loud voice in heaven say? (Rev. 12:10)

6. How was the dragon finally overcome? (Rev. 12:11)

7. Why was the dragon so angry? (Rev. 12:12)

8. How did John describe the rest of the woman's offspring? (Rev. 12:17)

Lesson 11

The Victory over the Beast

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 45

Scripture: Revelation 19:11-21

Memory Verse: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.” (Rev. 19:11)

Lesson Truth: Jesus will defeat the beast out of the sea.

Lesson

In our last lesson, we saw a picture of a woman being chased by a great, fiery, red dragon. We said that the woman represented God’s people and the dragon represented Satan. The woman was about to have a baby, and the dragon was chasing the woman because he wanted to devour the baby. The baby represented Jesus Christ, the Seed of the woman, and we know that Satan is an enemy of Jesus Christ. In the vision, the dragon was not able to destroy the baby, so he got very angry and fought against the rest of the woman’s offspring. In other words, Satan attacked God’s people. He made war against all those “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17).

Our passage today describes what will happen at the end of the war between Satan and the people of God. This war has been going on for a long time. In Genesis 3:15, God said that there would always be enmity, or hostility, between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The Seed of the woman represents Jesus Christ and all who follow Him. The seed of the serpent represents all who follow Satan. But before we discuss what will happen at the end of the war, we should talk about the war itself. In the book of Revelation, the chapters before our passage for today describe the war in more detail.

Revelation 13 describes two beasts and a dragon that fight against Christ and His Kingdom. The first beast came out of the sea. Like the dragon discussed in our last lesson, he had seven heads and ten horns. The dragon gave this beast “his power, his throne, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2), so that he ruled over “every tribe, tongue, and nation” (Rev. 13:7). The beast tried to make everyone in the world worship the dragon, and he said many things that made God very angry. Whenever the beast of the sea would see people who tried to serve the Lord, he would make war against them. It shows just how much Satan hates Jesus Christ and all those who follow Him.

The second beast came from the earth. This beast wasn’t as powerful as the beast of the sea. The beast of the earth only had two horns like a lamb. Instead of using force and power to fight against God’s people, this beast deceived the people with lies. He is a false prophet, and he uses false prophecies to try to get everyone in the world to worship the beast out of the sea. He also performs great signs that look like miracles in order to deceive more people. And he would make life very difficult for anyone who still tried to follow Jesus Christ.

The two beasts lead all the powers in the world to reject Jesus Christ. They fight against Jesus, and they fight against God’s people. We need to realize that not everyone in this world wants to follow Jesus. Many do not want Jesus to be King. They want to make their own rules. They want to set up their own kingdoms. The Old Testament describes kingdoms like this. One kingdom the Old Testament describes is Babylon. It was a world power that did not follow God, but rather sought

5. Who followed the rider? (Rev. 19:14)

6. What was written on the robe of the rider? (Rev. 19:16)

7. Who fought on the same side as the beast? (Rev. 19:19)

8. Who were they fighting against? (Rev. 19:19)

Lesson 12
The Age to Come

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 4, Lesson 46

Scripture: Revelation 21–22

Memory Verse: “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.” (Rev. 21:1)

Lesson Truth: The future age is about to come.

Lesson

Only God knows the future. But isn't it nice that He has given us a glimpse of what He has planned? We know that the Age to Come will be different than what we experience now. The world as we currently know it is filled with sin. We know that we ourselves struggle with sin every day. But we also know that sin will not have any place in the Age to Come. We know that in the Age to Come we will spend eternity in the presence of Jesus. But did you know that we can already have a small taste of the Age to Come already in this life? Our lesson today talks about what we can expect in the future and what we can experience from the Age to Come already now.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, He told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8). When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, the promise that Jesus made was fulfilled. Then Peter did something interesting. He connected the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost with the coming of the “last days.” He quoted from the prophet Joel when He said, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh” (Acts 2:17a). It is a wonderful promise that Joel said would happen in the last days and would give God's people a taste of what the Age to Come would be like. In the Age to Come, we will have perfect communion with God, but even now, as we live in the last days, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts giving us a taste of having very close communion with God even now. The Holy Spirit changes us as He lives in our hearts. He makes us eager for Christ to come again. He makes us think and act differently than non-Christians. Yes, for now, we still struggle with sin, but as the Holy Spirit changes us, He also makes us eager for a time when we no longer will struggle with sin and for a time when all of heaven and earth will be renewed.

The Holy Spirit also showed us what the Age to Come will be like. He did this by giving some visions to the apostle John. John was on the island of Patmos when these visions came to him. We learned about one of those visions in a previous lesson about the woman and the beast. That vision was about the struggle between Satan and his followers and Jesus and his followers. In other visions, the Holy Spirit gave John visions of what the new heaven and earth will be like. One of those visions was of the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. In the New Jerusalem, where will be “no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying” (Rev. 21:4). Everything that sin destroyed in the old creation will be gone, and only the new creation, represented by the New Jerusalem will remain.

God Himself will dwell in the New Jerusalem and will fill it with His glory. In fact, His glory will fill the city so much that there will not be any need for a sun or a moon. The New Jerusalem will have four sides with three gates on each side. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be written on the gates. And the names of the twelve apostles will be written on the foundations of the walls. All of the believers from the Old Covenant and the New Covenant will dwell there

