

## Sabbath School Lesson #6 – I Will Arise – 3-9 February 2024

**C**hrist would have us know that the Lord has pledged the safety of the poor and needy: “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him” (Psalm 15:5). The Lord cares for the poor and the afflicted. He has identified Himself so closely with them that whosoever gives to the poor is considered as lending to the Lord. Christ was on this earth as a poor man, so that “he that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker” (Proverbs 14:31). “The Lord heareth the poor” (Psalm 69:33). “The needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever” (Psalm 9:18). “The Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor” (Psalm 140:12). “Lord, who is like unto Thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?” (Psalm 35:10). With the Lord so interested in their case, what a pity it is that the poor are so ill-advised as to seek to right their own wrongs. Sad to say, even professed ministers of the Gospel of peace too often encourage them in this suicidal course.

**Sunday: The Majestic Warrior** – Reading Psalm 18:3-18; 76:3-9, 12; 144:5-7, we see the imagery depicting our God as the majestic warrior. But there is more we discover in Psalm 18. In Psalm 18:17-19 we read: “He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me; for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity; but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place; He delivered me, because He delighted in me.” Again, in Psalm 31:7-8, we read, “I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy; for Thou hast considered my trouble; Thou hast known my soul in adversities; and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: Thou hast set my feet in a large room.” Once more: “I called upon the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place” (Psalm 118:5). What is this “large place” in which the Lord sets those at liberty to call upon Him and put their trust in Him? and how large is it? A few texts of Scripture will tell us. In the first chapter of Ephesians the apostle prays that we may be enlightened to “know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power to us-ward who believe” (verses 18-19). In the 10th and 11th verses we are told that it is in Christ that we obtain this inheritance; and in the second chapter (verses 4-10) we learn that we are made partakers of the inheritance in Christ because of the great love wherewith God loved us. Now read the sum of the whole matter in one of the most wonderful prayers ever uttered: “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:14-19). Here we have set before us the “large place,” and the size of it. The large place is the love of God which passes knowledge. “For the love of God is broader Than the measure of man’s mind” (see SDAH 114). But the size of it? It is a thing that it will take us all eternity to discover. As soon as we are rooted and grounded in love, we may begin to comprehend with all saints what is “the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,” to know the love of God in Christ for us.

**Monday: Justice for the Oppressed** – Are you oppressed or in need, and do you know that God cares for you? The words of inspiration by the Apostle Peter are, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (1 Peter 5:6-7). How few there are who do this. Some do not seem to realise that God cares for them. David knew it, for He said, by the Spirit, “But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me; Thou art my help and my Deliverer” (Psalm 40:17). And Jesus said, “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke 12:6-7). God not only knows our need, and cares for us, but He is able to do whatever His love prompts

Him to do. Happy the man who can say with Job, "I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of Thine can be restrained" (Job 42:2). Or with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). "Casting all your care upon Him," means therefore to put it upon Him, and to leave it there with the assurance that He will see to it. "Roll thy way upon the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5). When we travel, we deliver our luggage to the agent, and go our way, thinking nothing more about it, confident that it will be taken care of. Surely, we ought to trust the Lord more than we do a man. But the trouble with so many is that they deal with the Lord just as they do with travel agents. They deliver their luggage into His hands, and then after a while they take it from Him again. We are to cast our cares on the Lord, and leave them there for ever, receiving His peace as our surety, and not to take them again as the traveller does his luggage. He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

**Tuesday: How Long Will You Judge Unjustly?** – Read Psalm 82. What happens when the leaders pervert justice and oppress the people they are tasked to protect? How does this apply to your use of authority in our church, or what do you witness those in authority in our church do, are they applying right leadership principles? "There is need of an education in regard to the rights and duties of men in authority who have lorded it over God's heritage. When a man is placed in a position of trust, who knows not what kind of spirit he should exercise in dealing with human minds, he needs to learn the very first principles as to his authority over his fellow men. Right principles must be brought into the heart, and wrought into the warp and woof of character" {11LtMs, Lt 83, 1896, par. 21}. "Men are wanted who feel their need of wisdom from above, men who are converted at heart, who understand that they are but sinful mortals, and must learn their lessons in the school of Christ before they are prepared to mold other minds. When men have learned to depend on God, when they have faith that works by love, and purifies their own souls, then they will not lay on other men's shoulders burdens that are grievous to be borne. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have exalted themselves and have favored men who were not worthy, not being careful to treat all justly, without partiality and without hypocrisy" {par 22}.

**Wednesday: Pour Out Your Indignation** – What is righteous indignation and how do we avoid a call of judgment in human passion? The natural effect upon the doubting soul is to lead him to think, 'I know that I am wicked, and therefore God is angry with me;' and then will follow either a feeling of apathy, or else vain efforts to do something to appease the supposed anger of God. Thus, the purpose of the enemy of souls is accomplished. When we read the psalmist's call for vengeance, let us recall that "God is love" (1 John 4:8); that He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16); and that this was a sacrifice on the part of God Himself, because "the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). For example: "Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger; Lift up Thyself against the fury of mine adversaries; And awake for me the judgment Thou hast commanded. So shall the congregation of the peoples compass Thee about, And over it return Thou on high" (Psalm 7:6-7). Read in light of the first part of the psalm, this cry for vengeance does not seem so revengeful as it sometimes does to the careless reader. It is not demand of one man for vengeance upon other men who are hostile to him, but it is a call for judgment upon the archenemy. Moreover, it is inspired by the Spirit of Christ (1 Peter 1:10-11), so that the element of human passion does not enter into it.

**Thursday: The Lord's Judgment and the Sanctuary** – Read Romans 8:34. How does this verse show us that what Christ is doing in the heavenly sanctuary is good news for His people? The idea plainly is that when God justifies, nobody has any right to condemn. Moreover, we are told that God justifies, and that is evidence that He does not condemn. God sent His Son into the world as the representative of Himself. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Now read, "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17). Therefore, God is not condemning even the wicked world, but rather is seeking to save them. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." God's grace justifies and saves us from sin.