

Sabbath School Lesson #10 – The Bible as History – 30 May-5 June 2020

Christ would have us know the inspired history in the Bible so that we may worship the true God whom thus Moses records: “I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:2-3). Verse three that says “no other gods before Me,” is irrelevant unless you first know who the “Me” is. It is verse two that identifies who the “Me” is – He is “the LORD [Jehovah] thy God.” This “LORD thy God” who we must worship is not ‘a unity of three coeternal persons’ – committee of gods! “That men may know that Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth” (Psalms 83:18). This Jehovah that we must worship is One and He is “the Most High.” He alone is “the Most High” and Jesus Christ is “called the Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:32). Men often make no distinction, yet even the devils distinguish Jesus from the Most High; they testified: “Jesus, Son of the Most High God” (Mark 5:7). Jesus tells us that the commandments belong to His Father, for He said, “I have kept My Father’s commandments” (John 5:10). Jesus’ Father is “whose name alone is Jehovah,” yet Jesus is also called by this name (“Jehovah our righteousness” Jeremiah 23:6). Why? Because Jesus inherited the name from His Father (Hebrews 1:4; Philippians 2:9; Exodus 23:20-23). Jehovah said of Jesus: “My name is in Him” (Exodus 23:21), Jesus said, “I am come in My Father’s name” (John 5:43). That He is called by His Father’s name affirms that He is truly “the Son of the Father” (2 John 1:3).

Sunday: David, Solomon, and the Monarchy – Every new discovery by those who are busily engaged in the work of unearthing the monuments and records of antiquity, serves to make more evident the simple, straightforward truth of the Scripture narrative. Whilst the monarchy of David and Solomon represents the golden age in Israel’s history, there are some who claim that their kingdom did not exist as narrated in the Bible. But now that in 1993 a fragmentary stele was discovered at Tel-Dan in northern Israel, with a surviving inscription, which dates to 840 BCE, detailing that an individual killed Jehoram, the son of Ahab, king of Israel and the king of the house of David (http://cojs.org/tel_dan_stele-_c-_840_bce/)(accessed 20 May 2020), then visitors to the Israel Museum may gaze upon that ancient stele testifying of the monarchy of David. It is sufficient to say that this is only one of the many instances where the correctness of Bible history has been demonstrated by discoveries of ancient records, and should serve to teach people that the Bible is true.

Monday: Isaiah, Hezekiah, and Sennacherib – Numerous historical inscriptions have been discovered in the land of Assyria, and much additional information has been gleaned therefrom concerning the life of Sennacherib, which the sceptics of Bible narrative cannot gainsay. One lesson for us is the protection God gives His people. “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them” (Psalm 34:7). The king of Assyria, Sennacherib, had come up with a vast army against Jerusalem, and had written the most boastful and insulting letter to Hezekiah, the king. Hezekiah placed the matter before the Lord, and received this assurance concerning the king of Assyria, “He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with a shield, nor cast a mount against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend the city to save it.” That was a promise of complete deliverance, and here is the record of its fulfilment: “And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and return, and dwelt in Nineveh” (2 Kings 19:32-36). When Peter offered to defend Christ, the Lord bade him put up his sword, and said, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels” (Matthew 26:53). We are assured that “as He is, so are we in this world” (1 John 5:17); the Father’s love for us is equal to His love for Him (John 17:23). Therefore we know that in any time of need we could pray to the Father, and He would send to our aid “more than twelve legions of angels,” if so many were necessary. There are “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” of them (Revelation 5:11), even “an innumerable company of angels” (Hebrews 12:22), they

are all “ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Now let us make a little calculation of the help. “The angel of the Lord,” who came to the aid of Hezekiah, proved himself equal at the very least, to 185,000 men. But the Lord promises “more than twelve legions of angels.” A Roman legion was about 6,000 men. Twelve legions make 72,000 men. 185,000 times 72,000 gives us 13,320,000,000 of fighting power. That is, the “more than twelve legions of angels,” which the Lord holds at the service of each of His children, are, at the very lowest calculation, equal in fighting power to about 14,000,000,000 of men, or about twice the current world population. With such an overwhelming force at his disposal, the child of God is safe anywhere. He needs not the protection of earthly powers, for he has power with him infinitely greater than all theirs combined; so that he may say: “The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” “Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me in this will I be confident” (Psalm 27:1, 3). “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.”

Tuesday: Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, and Babylon – Some historical records collaborating the Bible history were dug up in 1800s: “We are told in Daniel that Babylon was captured on the night of a great feast to the idol gods, at which the wives and concubines joined in a wild revelry. But the women were not in the habit of feasting with men - how is this? An account, by Cyrus himself, of his capture of Babylon, was dug up only three or four years ago. In it he declares that Babylon was captured, ‘without fighting,’ on the fourteenth day of the month Tammuz. Now the month Tammuz was named in honor of the god Tammuz, the Babylonian Adonis, who married their Venus or Ishtar; and the fourteenth of Tammuz was the regular time to celebrate their union, with lascivious orgies. On this day of all others, the women took part in the horrible rites; and it was in this feast of king, princes, wives, and concubines, that Babylon was taken and Belshazzar slain. The Bible is here fully and wonderfully corroborated” (Alonzo T Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, Review and Herald 1898).

Wednesday: The Historical Jesus – Besides history books collaborating biblical account of men who killed Jesus, there is a problem in our Church with the belief that make the Spirit of Christ a separate Being from Christ. It is a belief that holds that the historical Jesus went back to heaven and sent another leader, the Holy Spirit, as a separate Individual or Being, as the fellow who is down here running things. Many are deceived into thinking that their new leader is better for them than the old one. Let them sing songs, pray to and even tell stories to their children about the historical Jesus. They can even look forward to the Second Coming when He will come back and once again be their leader. However, if Satan can keep the souls in a state of lethargy spiritually, it will be too late for their salvation when Christ returns and thus does not threaten Satan’s control of the lukewarm Laodicean church.

Thursday: Faith and History – Besides Hebrews 11 history of the faithful, Israel did not always fulfil its high calling. Unbelief and self-trust deprived them of the prestige with which they entered the promised land. They did not let their light shine, and so in time they themselves lost it. They were content to colonise in Canaan, instead of possessing the whole earth. They assumed that the light which God had given them was due to the fact that He loved them better than He did others, and so they became haughty, and despised others. Nevertheless God ceased not to indicate to them that they were to be the light of the world. The history of the Jews, instead of showing that God was shut up to them, shows that He was continually trying to use them to make His name known to others. Witness the account of Naaman the Syrian, who was sent to the king of Israel to be healed of his leprosy. See the case of the widow of Sarepta, to whom Elijah was sent. The Queen of Sheba came from far to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Jonah was sent, much against his will, to warn the Ninevites, who repented at his preaching. Read the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and see how often the various nations are directly appealed to. At last, when Israel had utterly refused to fulfil the mission to which God had called them, He sent them into captivity, that thus the heathen might receive some of the knowledge of God, which they would not impart voluntarily. There a few faithful souls were the means of bringing the truth clearly before the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar, who in time humbly acknowledged God, publishing his confession of faith throughout the earth. King Cyrus, also, and other Persian kings, in royal proclamations made known the name of the one true God in all the world.