

## Sabbath School Lesson #12 – Covenant Faith – 12-18 June 2021

**C**hrist would have us believe in Him, as Abraham also believed. Studying this week's Lesson, we do well to keep this passage in mind: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:10-14).

**Sunday: Reflections of Calvary** – How are we to reflect on the Christ dying at Calvary? "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul; "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). Christ was crucified; He was "delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). But unless we are crucified with Him, His death and resurrection profit us nothing. If the cross of Christ is separated from us, and outside of us, even though it be but a moment of time and an hair's breadth of space, it is to us all the same as if He were not crucified. No one was ever saved simply by looking forward to a cross to be erected and a Christ to be crucified at some indefinite time in the future, and no one can now be saved simply by believing that at a certain time in the past Christ was crucified. No; if men would see Christ crucified, they must look neither forward nor backward, but upward; for the arms of the cross that was erected on Calvary, reach from Paradise lost to Paradise restored, and cover the entire world. But let us note particularly in the following paragraphs how it is that Christ must be crucified in every soul that derives any real benefit from the sacrifice. We must know that sin a personal matter. Christ was delivered for our offenses. He in "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). He bears the sins of the world (John 1:29). But every man is guilty only of the sins which he himself has committed. Now I do not sin where I am not, but where I am. Sin is in the heart of man: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within" (Mark 7:21-23). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 27:9). Others have sinned as well as I; but their sin is not mine, and I do not have to answer for it.

What I need is freedom from my own personal sin, – that sin which not only has been committed by me personally, but which dwells in the heart, – the sin which constitutes the whole of my life. I cannot free myself from sin. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (Proverbs 5:22). "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before Me, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 2:22). My sin is committed by myself, in myself, and I cannot separate it from me. Cast it on the Lord? Ah, yes, that is right, but how? He says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9). What shall we confess about the Lord Jesus? – Why, confess the truth, that He is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, and believe that He is there risen from the dead. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" (Ephesians 4:9). And the risen Saviour is the crucified Saviour. As Christ risen is in the heart of the sinner, therefore, Christ crucified is there. If it were not so, there would be no hope for any. A man may believe that Jesus was crucified many hundreds of years ago, and may die in his sins; but he who believes that Christ is crucified and risen in Him, has salvation. What a glorious thought that, wherever sin is, there is Christ, the Saviour from sin! He bears sin, all sin, the sin of the world. Sin is in all flesh, and so Christ is come in the flesh. Christ is crucified in every man.

**Monday: The Covenant and the Sacrifice** – Christ has purchased us by His life, and let no man ask, 'will the Lord receive me?' Will a man receive that which he has bought? If the price that you paid was great, and you have almost given your life to earn it, then there can be no question but that you will accept the purchase when it is delivered. Your great anxiety

is lest there should be some failure to deliver it. Christ has bought us. "For ye are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20). The price was His own blood – His life. Thus Paul said: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers' but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). He "gave Himself for us" (Titus 2:14). He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Galatians 1:4). He bought not a certain class, but the whole world of sinners. "For God so loved *the world*, that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). Jesus said, "The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6, 8). The price paid was infinite, thus we know that He very much desired that which He bought. He had His heart set on obtaining it. He could not be satisfied without it.

**Tuesday: The Faith of Abraham: Part 1** – "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" (Romans 4:1). Abraham was not the father, or ancestor, according to the flesh, of all those to whom Paul addressed the epistle to Romans. If Abraham were justified by works, he might glory; but the fact is that he could not glory before God; and the proof of this is found in the words of Scripture: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3). A man can be justified by works when it can be shown that he has done no wrong. In that case he needs no faith; his works speak for themselves. But Abraham was justified by faith, and therefore it is evident that he was not justified by any works. He who is justified only by the works of God, will glory only in those works. That is glorying in God, and is far different from glorying before God.

**Wednesday: The Faith of Abraham: Part 2** – Some may quote the words of James, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (James 2:21); this is often quoted as a disparagement of the words of Paul. Some think there is a contradiction between Paul and James, imagining James to teach that there is some merit in their own works. There is no contradiction in Scripture. No one need hope to come to an understanding of the Scriptures until he approaches them with the settled conviction that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Holy Spirit does not at one time inspire words which must later on be corrected. James says, "Seest thou how *faith wrought* with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And *the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness*: and he was called the friend of God" (James 2:22-23). Here, when Abraham worked, it was his faith that was working; and those works by which he was justified were simply the fulfilment of the scripture, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." The works were the product of his faith, and showed that he had it in perfection. Faith includes everything that a man can do to please God; for "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6). "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (verse 24). That is, a man is justified by the works of faith, and not by dead faith, which does not work. In this, James and Paul are fully agreed. And that was the faith of Abraham.

**Thursday: Resting on the Promises** – Speaking of Christ, Paul says, "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Corinthians 1:20). There is no promise of God to any man that ever lived on earth, or that will ever live, except through Jesus Christ. The promises to Israel, especially, which most concern us are those that were first made to Abraham. But "he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3). To us therefore it is said, "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). So, then, the promise to Israel come through the cross of Christ; and none are Israel except those who have personal, saving faith in Him. Speaking of how the promise came to Abraham, the apostle says, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4:13).