

Sabbath School Lesson #10 – Meekness *in the Crucible* – 27 Aug - 2 September 2022

Christ said, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). It is not only in the future the meek looks for blessings, but there is a present blessing in meekness as well as a future one. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and a natural accompaniment of that “love, joy, peace,” which is the Christian’s heritage in this life, as well as in that to come. Without meekness there can be no real enjoyment of spiritual blessings. The person who will take honour and glory to himself cannot be altogether at peace with Him who claims all honour and glory and power as due to Himself. In so far as a man ascribes these to himself, he makes himself a rival of God. He cannot under such circumstances love God with all his might, mind and strength. Meekness is the opposite of selfishness, which strikes directly against all the fruits of the Spirit, causing an individual to take to himself that which belongs alone to God. Taking to self that which is God’s – or attempting to do so – an individual does not in reality get anything, and loses all that which God is able to give him.

Sunday: “Broken Bread and Poured-Out Wine” – The Lesson writer quotes this subtitle from the works of Oswald Chambers, and then says: ‘Oswald Chambers has said that we are to become “broken bread and poured-out wine” for others.’ Oswald Chambers (24 July 1874 – 15 November 1917) was an early-twentieth-century Scottish Baptist evangelist and teacher who was aligned with the Holiness Movement. Should Chambers be quoted in good light in our Lesson? Let us test Chamber’s theology quoted in the previous Lesson 7 on Monday 8 August: he was quoted saying, “Have you been asking God what He is going to do? He will never tell you.” So, Chambers says God does not tell us, but Scripture says, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). On that test of Scripture, should Chambers be quoted in our Lesson?

We know these symbols of broken bread and wine from the Lord’s Supper service. What do these symbols mean? “The broken bread was a symbol of Christ’s broken body, given for the salvation of the world. The wine was a symbol of his blood, shed for the cleansing of the sins of all those who should come unto him for pardon, and receive him as their Saviour” – EG White {3SG 227.2}. How should we move on this matter? “Then I was pointed back to the time that Jesus took his disciples away alone, into an upper room, and first washed their feet, and then gave them to eat of the broken bread, to represent his broken body, and juice of the vine to represent his spilled blood. I saw that all should move understandingly, and follow the example of Jesus in these things, and when attending to these ordinances, should be as separate from unbelievers as possible” – EG White {PT November 1, 1850, par. 4}.

There are lessons in Ezekiel 24. EG White quoted Ezekiel 24 verses 6-24, then said: “There is a spirit of wickedness at work in the church that is striving at every opportunity to make void the law of God. While the Lord may not punish unto death those who have carried their rebellion to great lengths, the light will never again shine with such convincing power upon the stubborn opposers of truth. Sufficient evidence is given to every soul regarding what is truth and what is error. But the deceptive power of evil upon some is so great that they will not receive the evidence and respond to it by repentance” {22LtMs, Ms 125, 1907, par. 10}. “A long-continued resistance of truth will harden the most impressionable heart. Those who reject the Spirit of truth place themselves under the control of a spirit that is opposed to the Word and work of God. For a time they may continue to teach some phases of the truth; but their refusal to accept all the light God sends will after a time place them where they will do the work of a false watchman” {22LtMs, Ms 125, 1907, par. 11}.

Monday: Interceding for Grace – Read Exodus 32. What did God think to do to the Israelites for their abominable idolatry? Read Exodus 32:9-10; Deuteronomy 9:20. With what words did Moses plead for them? Read Exodus 32:11-13, 31-32. Did the Lord grant his request? “And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” “And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them” (verses 14, 33-34). Why did the Lord hearken to Moses’ plea for grace? The reason why the Lord hearkened unto Moses, is assigned in Ezekiel 20:14: “But I wrought for my

name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen in whose sight I brought them out." What immediate punishment did the people receive? See Exodus 32:19-20, 26-28, 35.

Tuesday: Loving Those Who Hurt Us – Let us draw from a practical matter of industrial strike. It is common for workers who think they are underpaid to go on strike. Should we go on strike to coerce our employer to accede to our demands? The Saviour said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). He said also, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:44-45). Again He said, through His chosen Apostle, "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 7:19-21). "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17). From these texts it will be seen that a strike is directly contrary to the law of God, and the Gospel; that men who are children of God and who have His love dwelling in them cannot engage in it; for it is as directly contrary to God as is possible for anything to be. Strike, therefore, under whatever name it goes, is something that proceeds directly from the devil. If any think that this is strong language, let them read the Bible and see if they can find any warrant in the Gospel for industrial strike. If they cannot, and indeed they cannot, then it is sin; "and he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning" (1 John 3:8). "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (James 3:14-16).

Wednesday: A Closed Mouth – In 1 Peter 2:18-25, are we to be submissive and always obedient to authority? Also read Romans 13, and you will see that the submission enjoined does not involve obedience to wicked laws. We are exhorted: "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." We are to be subject to rightful authority, whether the exerciser of that authority be good and gentle, or froward. Then come the words, "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully" (1 Peter 2:17-19). Now a man could not for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, unless conscience toward God had compelled him to disobey some command laid upon him. This statement, immediately following the exhortation to be submissive, plainly shows that disobedience is contemplated as a probability when those in authority are "froward." This is emphasised by the reference to Christ, who suffered wrongfully, yet made no resistance. "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). He was condemned for His loyalty to the truth, which He would not compromise in the least, and yet He was submissive to the authority of the rulers. The apostle says that in this He left us an example, that we should follow in His steps.

Thursday: Our Rock and Refuge – Are you a Christian, and do you know truly Christ as your Rock? We will notice a few of the many scriptures in which Christ is spoken as the Rock: "I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He" (Deuteronomy 32:3-4). "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee" (verse 18). "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (verse 31). The inspired words of Hannah, after the birth of Samuel, are of the same import: "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God" (1 Samuel 2:2). So are the words of David, when delivered "out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:" "And he said, the Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer." "For who is God, save the Lord, And who is a Rock, save our God?" (2 Samuel 22:1-2, 32). Still further, "He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved" (Psalm 62:2).