

Promise and Deliverance

Student Workbook

Volume 2

Level 4

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

God's Confidant

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 13

Scripture: Genesis 18

Memory Verse: “Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:5)

Lesson Truth: The Lord makes Abraham His confidant.

Lesson

Three special events recorded in Genesis chapter 18 that tell us that Almighty God was willing to confide in a man. When we confide in someone, we tell that person the deepest secrets of our heart. Isn't it amazing that Almighty God confided in Abraham, an ordinary man? God once again promised Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son. He also told Abraham what he planned to do to the cities Sodom and Gomorrah. Then He allowed Abraham to speak to the Angel of the Lord and plead to save these cities if there were enough righteous people in them.

God in His grace sent three angels, who appeared as men, to talk to Abraham. It is likely that they were sent to strengthen Sarah's faith. Sarah could not believe that two old people could have a child. When the Angel of the Lord assured Abraham, in Sarah's hearing, that they would have a child, Sarah laughed to herself. The Angel of the Lord then asked Abraham: “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?’ Is anything too hard for the Lord?” Abraham and Sarah were once again given the assurance that they would have a son. This was to be the son of promise through whom all the nations would be blessed.

God then did another amazing thing for Abraham. The Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing . . . ? He shared His plans to destroy the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, because He wanted Abraham to command his children to keep the way of the Lord. It was through Abraham's children that all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Such was God's acceptance of Abraham, that He told him of His plans to destroy the wicked cities. What a merciful God we serve. A God who warns that wickedness will be destroyed, so we, like Abraham, will teach our children to keep the commands of God.

Abraham's close walk with the Lord was evident when he was willing to approach the Angel of the Lord about saving the righteous people of Sodom and Gomorrah. We see Abraham's faith in the justice of Almighty God when he interceded for these righteous people by asking: “Would you also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” We then see an amazing conversation between the Lord and the man, Abraham. Abraham boldly asked, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

The Lord assured Abraham that He would save the cities for fifty righteous, for forty-five righteous, for forty righteous, for thirty righteous, for twenty righteous, and finally for ten righteous. Abraham's soul must have grieved to realize, from the Lord's response each time, that there were not even ten righteous people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Abraham truly was God's confidant. God spoke with him as a person does to a person. And Abraham, as a man of faith, prayed not only for the righteous people of the cities, but also for the honor of the name of the Lord.

Questions

1. What Christian virtue did Abraham show in Genesis eighteen? (Heb. 13:2)
2. What did Abraham have to do if God's promises were to be fulfilled? (Gen. 18:19)
3. What was Sarah's response when the Angels told Abraham they would have a son? (Gen. 18:12)
4. What was the Lord's response to Sarah's lack of faith? (Gen.18:14)
5. What did Abraham ask the Lord about justice? (Gen. 18:23)

6. What did Abraham ask the Lord regarding His honor? (Gen. 18:25)

7. The Lord told Abraham He would spare the cities for how few righteous? (Gen. 18:32)

8. Why was God going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah? (Gen. 18:20)

Lesson 2

The Judge of All the Earth

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 14

Scripture: Genesis 19

Memory Verse: “Likewise as it was in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built: but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:28-29)

Lesson Truth: The righteousness of the Lord is revealed so that believers can take refuge in it.

Lesson

The title of today’s lesson comes from the prayer of Abraham when he asked the Lord to spare the city of Sodom if there were at least ten righteous people in the city. Abraham’s question was: “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” We must know that the Lord did right when He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. A righteous God cannot ignore sins like those of Sodom. The Lord showed His righteousness not only in destroying the cities, but also in saving believing Lot.

What a chilling story of wickedness we read in Genesis nineteen. The two angels who had accompanied the Angel of the Lord went to Sodom to test the people. When they arrived, Lot greeted them at the city gate. He immediately invited them to his house and offered to wash their feet. The angels suggested that they would be comfortable staying in the city square, as was the custom in those days. Because Lot knew the wickedness of the city, he urged them to stay at his house. How Lot must have cringed when the men of Sodom came to his door and asked that he send out the two men, who came to his house, so they could use them sexually. In desperation he even offered the men his two daughters. Lot pleaded with the men not to do such wickedness. But the men of Sodom would not be persuaded. They began to press Lot to enter his house by force.

It was then that the angels reached out and pulled Lot into the house, and struck the men of the city with blindness. The men of Sodom had failed the test. They were so wicked that the angels told Lot, the Lord would destroy the city. They gave Lot the opportunity to gather his family together and escape before the city was destroyed. To Lot’s sons-in-law it all seemed like a big joke that God would destroy the city because of its wickedness. Lot and his wife also showed their attachment to Sodom by lingering. They hesitated until the angels took them by the hand and led them out of the city and told them to flee to the mountains.

God surely showed his righteousness when He saved Lot. Lot did not deserve the salvation he received, but he was a believer and was in this way tied to the Redeemer. The Lord saved Lot for His own honor and glory. Lot’s wife did not share his faith. She was not tied to the Redeemer. She tried to cling to Sodom by looking back when the angels led her from the city, and she became a pillar of salt.

When the Lord commanded Lot to flee to the mountains, he willfully requested to stay at Zoar. He soon realized that his security was not at Zoar, so he heeded God’s command and went to the mountains with his two daughters. Living with only his two daughters he existed as an outcast. His two daughters satisfied their desire for children in an utterly sinful way. They each had a son who was conceived with their father. These sons were born of unbelief. They had no part in the covenant God made with Abraham. From these two sons came the Moabites and the Ammonites, who were enemies of Israel, God’s chosen people.

From this story we know Lot was saved, but his descendants were lost. The Lord’s promise that He will visit the iniquity of the fathers on the children unto the third and fourth generation certainly was true in Lot’s family.

Questions

1. When Lot invited the angels to his house, where did they say they would stay? (Gen. 19:2)
2. What did the men of Sodom do when Lot and his guests were feasting? (Gen. 19:4-5a)
3. Who saved Lot when the men of Sodom were going to force their way into the house? (Gen. 19:10)
4. What happened to the men of Sodom when Lot was pulled into the house? (Gen. 19:11)
5. What did Lot's sons-in-law think of his urging them to leave Sodom? (Gen. 19:14)

6. When Lot and his family left the city, what happened to Lot's wife? (Gen. 19:26)

7. Why did God save Lot from Sodom? (Gen. 19:29)

8. What two nations came from Lot and his daughters? (Gen. 19:37-38)

Lesson 3

The Protection of the Promised Seed

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 15

Scripture: Genesis 20

Memory Verse: “In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.” (Job 33:15-16)

Lesson Truth: The Lord binds Himself to the Christ so that we can claim the promise.

Lesson

What assurance to know that God always cares for His covenant children. God cared for Abraham and Sarah even when their faith was weak. God had the Philistine king, Abimelech, rebuke Abraham and Sarah for their lack of faith. When you and I fail to confess Jesus Christ as Lord let us pray that He will also rebuke us.

Abraham and Sarah came to the city of Gerar, a Philistine city. They became afraid that someone would take Sarah away from Abraham because she was beautiful. So, they decided to take things in their own hands. They told the king of Gerar that Sarah was Abraham’s sister. How sad that Abraham, who had shown such great faith when God told him he and Sarah would have a son, now became afraid. Instead of having faith that God would take care of them, Abraham and Sarah told a half-truth. Just the thing they most feared happened. King Abimelech took Sarah to be his wife.

How thankful we must be that even when Abraham’s faith was weak, God remained faithful. God came to Abimelech at night in a dream and told him that Sarah was another man’s wife. He also told him Abimelech would be destroyed if he made Sarah his wife. When Abimelech claimed that he didn’t know Sarah was a married woman, God told him that He had kept him from sin with Sarah. He also told Abimelech he must restore Sarah to Abraham, and he must have Abraham pray for him, because he was a prophet.

Abimelech did two things following the dream, he told his servants the dream and he called Abraham. He asked Abraham, “What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin?” Abraham responded by sharing his fear that the people of Gerar would kill him and take his wife. He also tried to rationalize his lie by saying that she really was his half-sister.

What a comfort to know that God worked in the heart of this heathen king, to have him bring an offering of animals, servants, and silver to Abraham. Abraham then prayed for him, and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his women servants. God caused all the women of Gerar to be barren so He could get Abimelech’s attention. Just think our covenant God protected Abraham and Sarah, even in their lack of faith, because the promised seed, our Lord Jesus Christ, would come from Abraham’s children.

Questions

1. What half-truth did Abraham tell the king of Gerar about his wife? (Gen. 20:2)

Lesson 4

Divine Good Pleasure

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 16

Scripture: Genesis 21

Memory Verse: “By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.” (Hebrews 11:11)

Lesson Truth: The blessing of the covenant is enjoyed in recognition of God’s good pleasure.

Lesson

When our covenant God makes a promise, He always keeps His word. God promised that Sarah would have son, even though she was past the age of childbearing. The lesson today tells us about the birth of that promised son, and how the son of Abraham and Hagar scoffed at this son of promise.

Genesis 21:1 tells us the Lord visited Sarah, and she was able to have a son when she was an old woman. Abraham was an old man when Sarah gave birth to Isaac. It happened, just as the Lord said it would. Abraham gave this son of promise the name Isaac, which means, laughter. Sarah said, “God has made me laugh and all who hear will laugh with me.” Abraham gave his son, born of a miracle, the sign and seal of the covenant, the sacrament of circumcision.

When it was time for Isaac to be weaned, Abraham made a feast for the occasion. It was at this feast that Sarah saw Isaac’s half-brother, Ishmael, scoffing. He made fun of the promise of God, that in Isaac’s children all the nations would be blessed. Ishmael rejected the covenant that was to be fulfilled through Isaac. When Sarah saw him mock Isaac, she insisted that Abraham send him away. It was painful for Abraham to send his own son away, but he once again showed that he was willing to obey his Lord.

Abraham sent Ishmael and Hagar, his mother, away with bread and a skin of water. As they wandered in the wilderness they ran out of water, and were in danger of dying of thirst. Hagar placed her boy in a bush and walked away so she would not have to see him die. It was then that she learned again that the God of Abraham controls all things. God heard the cries of Ishmael and he opened the eyes of Hagar so she could see the well for water nearby. This scene describes the situation for all the nations of the earth. Salvation in Christ Jesus is there, but they cannot see it until their eyes are opened. God promised Abraham that Ishmael would become a great nation. Again, God’s promise is sure, he did become a great nation. Many years later some of his children came to worship the Lord; the curse of Ishmael was broken.

While Ishmael scoffed at the covenant, king Abimelech of the Philistines recognized that Abraham’s God could bring blessings. Therefore, he asked Abraham to make an agreement with him to remember his descendants with kindness. He realized Abraham would become a great nation, so he reminded Abraham how he had been treated with kindness in the land of the Philistines. Abraham said he would swear to the agreement with one condition: that they clear up the problem of the well Abimelech’s servants had seized. Abraham asked Abimelech to take seven ewe lambs as a sign of agreement that the well belonged to him because he had dug it. Abimelech took the ewe lambs as a witness. Abraham then named the place Beersheba because the two swore an oath there. He also planted a tamarisk tree and called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. In this way we too must acknowledge the Lord, the One in whom God has chosen to give us salvation.

Questions

1. How was it possible for Sarah to conceive a child in her old age? (Hebrews 11:11)
2. What sign and seal of the covenant did Abraham administer to Isaac? (Gen.21:4)
3. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? (Gen.21:5)
4. What was Sarah's reaction to the birth of a son in her old age? (Gen.21:6)
5. Why did Sarah ask Abraham to send Ishmael away? (Gen. 21:9)

6. Who ministered to Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness? (Gen. 21:17)

7. Who made it possible for Hagar to see a well in the wilderness? (Gen. 21:19)

8. Where did Abimelech say Abraham's blessings came from? (Gen. 21:22)

Lesson 5

On the Mount of the Lord

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 17

Scripture: Genesis 22

Memory Verse: “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promise offered up his only begotten son, of whom it is said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called.’” (Hebrews 11:17-18)

Lesson Truth: On the mount of the Lord He will appear.

Lesson

Abraham was a man of faith. He believed that God provided all things. He believed that God could raise up a son from the dead when he was asked to offer up his son Isaac. Abraham believed that with God all things are possible. When God tested him, by asking him to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering, Abraham believed God would keep His promise even if Isaac had to die. What a joy to know that we serve a God who could instill in Abraham the faith to believe God would provide even if he offered the son of promise as a sacrifice.

In order for us to understand the incredible response of Abraham to God’s test, we must realize what happened in his life. Abraham had been called to leave his father’s house. He had been told that in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed. After he had been given these rich promises he lived for years without a son who would be the son of promise. At last, when he was an old man and Sarah was an old woman God miraculously made it possible for Sarah to have a child. Now, as unbelievable as it seems, Abraham was instructed by God to offer this son as a human sacrifice. He could have reminded God that this was the promised son.

Instead of finding excuses, Abraham went about preparations to obey God and sacrifice his son Isaac. He took the fire, the wood, the knife, and his son and journeyed three days to the mountain of the Lord. He left his servants, and he and Isaac went on to the mountain to which God directed him. Imagine what you would have answered to the question Isaac asked when he said to Abraham: “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Again, we see the faith of Abraham. He responded: “God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering. This was not just a way for Abraham to avoid giving Isaac the real answer. It was a statement of his faith. He believed God would surely provide the lamb for the sacrifice.

It seems almost unbelievable that Abraham made the altar ready and even bound his son in preparation to make the sacrifice God had asked him to make. What a joy to hear the Angel of the Lord stop him just as he took the knife to slay his son. God then did provide a ram caught in a thicket to be the sacrifice. We are told in Hebrews 11 that it was by faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who received the promise offered up his only begotten son. Abraham also demonstrated his faith by the name he gave to the place where this occurred. He called the place, “The Lord Will Provide.”

Following the demonstration of Abraham’s faith in a God who will provide, the Angel of the Lord once again gave him God’s blessing. Abraham was told that his descendants would be as the stars of the heaven and as the sand on the seashore. Even more the Angel of the Lord once again told of the coming Messiah when he said, “In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed.” If we believe that the Messiah did come as a child of Abraham just as He was promised, then we too are children of Abraham by faith.

Questions

1. What did God ask Abraham to offer as a burnt offering? (Gen. 22:2)
2. Why did God ask Abraham to make this sacrifice? (Gen. 22:1)
3. What was Abraham's response to Isaac's question, "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Gen 22:8)
4. Why did the Angel of the Lord say Abraham feared God? (Gen. 22:12)
5. What was provided as the sacrifice on the altar Abraham made for Isaac? (Gen 22:13)

6. What name did Abraham give to the place where he offered his sacrifice? (Gen. 22:14)

7. What nations will be blessed through of Abraham's seed? (Gen. 22:18)

8. What was Abraham's conclusion if he offered Isaac on the altar? (Heb. 11:19)

Lesson 6

The Guarantee of the Inheritance

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 18

Scripture: Genesis 23

Memory Verse: “These all died in faith, not having received the promise, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” (Hebrews 11:13)

Lesson Truth: The Lord gave Abraham a place to bury Sarah as a guarantee of his inheritance.

Lesson

The story of Sarah, through whom the promised seed came, ends with the account of her death. When Abraham’s wife, Sarah, died we once again see him do an act of remarkable faith. Abraham believed the promises of God. He believed that he and his descendants after him would inherit the land of Canaan. It was this belief in the sure promises of God that prompted Abraham to buy a permanent burying place for Sarah.

Sarah is the only woman in the Bible whose age at the time of her death is given. She was the mother of the promised seed. Being the mother of the promised seed gave her a special place in the history of redemption. The Bible not only records her age at the time of her death, but also the place of her death. The place is significant because Abraham was in the land Canaan among the Hittites. God promised this land as an inheritance to Abraham and his descendants. The ownership of this land by Abraham’s descendants was many years away. To buy a permanent place to bury his dead in this strange land was truly an act of faith. He was certain that God would keep His promise and one day give this land to his descendants.

We are told that Abraham came to mourn and weep for Sarah. Abraham was a man of faith, but he too had to deal with the reality of death. As Abraham was able to see beyond the death of Sarah to the promise of God, we too must see beyond death to the promise of God. We are certain that there will be a resurrection. There will be a new heaven and a new earth. This new heaven and new earth will be ours after we have passed through death.

The manner in which Abraham dealt with the Hittites to buy the cave of Machpelah also showed his deep faith. Abraham refused to take a burying place from the Hittites as a gift. He insisted that he pay full price for the field and the cave that was in it. He spoke to Ephron, the prince of the Hittites, and asked that he name the price for the field. When the price was named, Abraham paid the price in full. He did not want to share in the life or the death of the Hittites. Abraham had been called by God to be separate. He maintained that separation because the Spirit of Christ dwelled in him. When he purchased the field and cave of Machpelah, he once again demonstrated that he believed that his descendants would one-day possess the land of Canaan. Abraham was confident that the God he served would do just as He promised.

After the burying place was purchased, Abraham buried his beloved, Sarah. She rested in a place before Mamre in the land of Canaan. This was also known as Hebron, a place where Abraham enjoyed living. He loved Sarah deeply. He knew that Sarah would one-day rise from the dead. When the Redeemer comes again Sarah will rise from the dead, as will all who believe that Christ Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

Questions

1. How old was Sarah at the time of her death? (Gen. 23:1)
2. What was Abraham's response to the death of Sarah? (Gen. 23:2)
3. What did the sons of Heth think of Abraham? (Gen. 23:6)
4. What was the name of the cave Abraham wished to buy for a burying place? (Gen. 22:8-9)
5. In addition to Sarah, who was buried in the cave of Machpelah? (Gen. 49:28-33)

6. What was the purchase price of the field and cave of Machpelah? (Gen. 23:16)

7. What did Ephron initially want for the field and cave of Machpelah? (Gen. 23:10-11)

8. Whom did Abraham bury in the cave he had purchased? (Gen. 23:19)

Lesson 7

Loving God for His Own Sake

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 19

Scripture: Job 1

Memory Verse: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 1:21)

Lesson Truth: God takes pleasure in man’s loving Him solely for what He is.

Lesson

In the time that God shared with Abraham the promises of the covenant through a son from whom the Redeemer would come, there lived another man who loved the Lord. This man was Job. He did not receive a special covenant promise as Abraham did, but he did fear God. We are told he was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. We want to study the book of Job at this time because he most likely lived about the time Abraham lived. From God’s relationship with Abraham we learn about a covenant promise. From God’s relationship with Job we learn how God tests a righteous man to see if he loves God for His own sake.

The Bible gives a beautiful description of Job as a blameless and upright man. He showed how he loved the Lord by the way he would offer burnt offerings for his seven sons and three daughters. Job was deeply concerned for his children. On the first day of each week he would rise early in the morning and rededicate his children and pray for them. Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Job loved his children so very much; he could not bear the thought that one of them might be lost. Even more than that he loved the Lord his God. He wanted, above everything else, that his children would serve his God.

At a meeting of the angels of God, Satan appeared with the angels. Satan came as a critic of God and His relationship with men. When God asked if he had observed Job as a truly righteous man, Satan could only respond that Job served God because God had given him everything a man could wish for. God had given him great wealth, as well as sons and daughters. Satan insisted that it was because of this wealth that Job feared God. God then allowed Satan to test Job to see if he served God for God’s sake or for the wealth God had given him.

In one frightful day God allowed Satan to take away all of Job’s wealth and his children. Job’s wealth and children were destroyed in one disaster after another. Sabeans took his oxen and donkeys; fire consumed his sheep; Chaldeans stole the camels; and a great wind destroyed his sons and daughters when their house collapsed. All these disasters that came to Job help us understand the why of suffering. Persecution and suffering may well come because God allows Satan to test us, as He allowed Satan to test Job.

Following this severe test we see the evidence of God’s grace in Job. We see that Job really did serve God because He is God, and not just because God had given him wealth. After all Job’s wealth and his children were taken away he continued to love and honor his God. Job responded with deep sorrow. He tore his clothing and shaved his head. He acknowledged that he did not have a right to any of the wealth he once possessed. He acknowledged that he did not bring anything into the world and that he will one-day leave this world without taking anything with him. What is even more astounding, he blessed the name of the Lord. We are told that in this whole test, Job did not sin nor charge God with doing wrong. God’s servant, Job, served God for His sake, not for the wealth he had been given. Do we serve God because He is God, rather than for the blessings He gives us?

Questions

1. How is Job's character described? (Job 1:1)
2. How did Job show his love and concern for his sons and daughters? (Job 1:5)
3. What was the Lord's evaluation of Job's character? (Job 1:8)
4. Who allowed Satan to test Job? (Job 1:12)
5. What possessions did God allow Satan to take from Job? (Job 1:13-19)

6. What additional things did Job suffer? (Job 3:25; 7:4; 7:5)

7. How did Job show his deep sorrow? (Job 1:20)

8. What was Job's response to losing all his possessions? (Job 1:21)

Lesson 8

The Lord's Involvement in Human Suffering

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 20

Scripture: Job 2– 39

Memory Verse “For affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble spring from the ground; yet man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” (Job 5:6-7)

Lesson Truth: The Lord is against us in suffering, but at the same time He is for us in the Christ.

Lesson

Human beings experience a lot of suffering in this life. Christians, God's people, sometimes suffer a great deal. The question often arises in the mind of God's people, “Why do we suffer?” God gave us the book of Job to reveal the Lord's involvement in human suffering. Chapters 2 through 39 of the book of Job help us understand the phenomenon of the suffering of God's people. This is done by relating the rebellion in Job's response to the suffering God allowed him to experience. God then showed the foolishness of human reason in the speeches of Job's friends as they told Job why they thought he suffered. Finally, with the speech of Elihu, the youngest of Job's friends, we are given some insight into the reason God allowed Job to suffer. Job was reluctant to be instructed by Elihu. It was necessary for God Himself to speak to Job. When God spoke, Job did not receive the answer he expected. This study teaches us the majesty and power of God. We know God cannot be called to account when we suffer.

Job chapter two relates a second meeting of God and Satan. God again asked Satan if he observed that Job was a righteous man who hated evil. Satan's response was predictable when he said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life.” God then allowed Satan to inflict Job with severe boils that completely covered his body. His suffering was so extreme that he sat on an ash heap and scraped himself with a broken piece of pottery. When his physical suffering was most severe, we are told of the addition of his mental suffering. This began when his wife turned against him and suggested that he curse God and die.

God allowed Job's mental and emotional suffering to increase when his three friends came to counsel and console him. They were so amazed by Job's appearance they sat in stunned silence for a whole week. After a week Job spoke and could only find it in himself to curse the day of his birth. He wished that he had never been born. Job asked the question: How could the Lord bring good out of all this evil? After that question his three friends shared with Job what they thought were the reasons for his suffering. They used very simple logic. They were certain that since Job suffered so severely, he must have committed a very great sin. They also concluded that since all his children died, they too must have committed a terrible sin. This counsel of his friends made Job suffer even more. Job could not do what only the Lord Jesus Christ could do. He could not endure suffering without trying to call God to account. Only Our Lord could be forsaken by God, but did not rebel against God.

Job's fourth friend, Elihu gave him some real insight into why God's children suffer. He said that suffering could be a chastisement of the Lord to test and perfect His children. This was very good counsel from Elihu. But Job was so mentally and emotionally caught up in defending himself before God that he didn't respond to Elihu's instruction. It was necessary for God to speak to Job out of a whirlwind.

Lesson 9

Sanctification unto Renewal

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 21

Scripture: Job 40–42

Memory Verse “Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.’” (Job 42:1-2)

Lesson Truth: The sanctification of this life is a preparation for complete renewal.

Lesson

Job’s life can best be understood when we see it in three periods. The first period was before his suffering, the second period was during his suffering, and the third was his restoration after his suffering. It is the third period that we will study in today’s lesson.

Following Job’s defense that he did not suffer because of serious sins, God talked to him from a whirlwind. He questioned Job about who would darken counsel with words without knowledge. God now spoke to Job a second time from a whirlwind. He asked, “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him?” God graciously communicated with Job until he understood. Job then answered, “Behold I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.” Job recognized that Almighty God can give wealth to his people and He can take wealth away. He is just in both His giving and in His taking away.

Job was finally willing to listen to God instead of trying to defend himself. He then realized that God was truly his loving Lord even when he suffered. When Job surrendered to the Lord’s rule he repented of his rebellion. He confessed, “I know that You can do everything, and no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.” It is in this way God wants us to also surrender to Him in all things.

God then called on His servant Job to be an intercessor for his three friends. God reminded Job’s three friends that they had not spoken what was right as Job had. The error the three friends made was to put man at the center of his relationship with God. They believed that God could only send adversity as a punishment for sin. This was wrong and God was angry with these friends. He told them to offer seven bulls and seven rams as a sacrifice and to have Job pray for them. God was willing to accept the prayers of Job for his three friends. When the three friends did as the Lord commanded, He restored them for Job’s sake.

God then restored to his servant Job all his possessions in a double portion. He gave Job seven more sons and three more daughters. While Job would mourn for his first sons and daughters all through his life, he was given additional children. When Job prayed for his three friends, we see his great love for the God he served. Job proved that God was right when He told Satan that Job was an upright man, one who hated evil. Job proved that he loved God because God is God and not because God gave him wealth and a family.

The three periods in Job’s life remind us of the three periods of history surrounding our Lord Jesus Christ: The period before the fall of man into sin, the period from the fall into sin until the return of Christ, and the period after the return of Christ. Just as Job lived in splendor after he was restored, so also will be the glory of the Kingdom of God after Christ returns.

6. What was God's reaction to Job's three friends? (Job 42:7)

7. How well was Job restored because he did not lose his trust in God? (Job 42:12-13)

8. Of what was Job certain even when he suffered? (Job 19:25-26)

Lesson 10

The Preservation of the Covenant Seed

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 22

Scripture: Genesis 24:1–25:18

Memory Verse: “So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, ‘Please put your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell.’” (Genesis 24:2-3)

Lesson Truth: The Lord preserves the covenant seed.

Lesson

You may recall that God asked Abraham to leave the Land of Ur and his father’s house at Haran. God wanted Abraham to be separate from people who were sinking away into idolatry. God wanted him to be separate because from Abraham’s seed the Redeemer would come. Abraham’s promised son Isaac was now ready to take a wife for himself. Abraham realized that as he was called by God to be separate, his son Isaac should also remain separate. If Isaac was to remain separate, he could not find a wife from among the Canaanites.

In a response of faith, Abraham instructed his faithful old servant to go back to his family to find a wife for Isaac. He warned Eliezer, his servant, not to take Isaac back to Haran, but to find a wife for him and bring her back to Canaan. Abraham assured his servant that God would send His angel before him and help him find the wife of God’s choosing for Isaac. Abraham believed that God wanted his son, Isaac to remain separate. He was so sure of this that he believed God would see to it that the woman chosen as Isaac’s wife would willingly come along with Eliezer.

Abraham’s servant did as he was instructed to do. He went to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor to seek a wife for Isaac. Eliezer carefully sought the Lord’s guidance to direct him to the woman of God’s choosing. He asked God for a sign that he would know whom the Lord had selected for Isaac. He asked for a sign that would indicate that the woman was a helpful person who was ready to serve. He asked that it be the young woman who not only agreed to give him a drink, but also offered to water his camels. When God answered the prayer of Eliezer exactly as he requested, he knew that God had directed him to a wife for Isaac. That evening he found himself at the house of Bethuel, Rebekah’s father. He told Bethuel why he had come and how God had directed his journey.

Bethuel also submitted to the Lord in this matter. He, along with his son Laban, gave his approval for Rebekah to go along with Abraham’s servant. However, he allowed Rebekah to decide if she would go with Abraham’s servant immediately or if she would wait for a few days. Rebekah also showed that she was willing to submit to the leading of the Lord. She agreed to go immediately. She showed her faith in Abraham’s promise and calling.

Abraham’s servant along with Rebekah traveled to the land of Canaan. About the time they arrived in the area of Abraham’s dwelling place, Isaac went out to the field to meditate and to pray. It may be that he inquired of the Lord about finding a wife. When Rebekah saw him she immediately dismounted from the camel she was riding and covered herself with a veil. Abraham’s servant then gave her to Isaac. When Isaac received Rebekah

as his wife he acknowledged God's favor to him and to his children in the future. God was again faithful to His promise. In Abraham and in his children all the nations would be blessed. The promised Redeemer would come from the seed of Isaac and Rebekah.

After the death of Sarah, Abraham married Keturah. He had additional sons along with Ishmael, but the son of promise was Isaac. Isaac's children were not allowed to mix with the other children of Abraham. Isaac was to inherit the blessing and the promise.

Questions

1. From where was Abraham's servant not to take a wife for Isaac? (Gen. 24:3)
2. When Abraham sent Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac whom did he say would be with him? (Gen. 24:7)
3. Whom did Abraham's servant ask to help him find a wife for Isaac? (Gen. 24:12)
4. What sign did Abraham's servant ask for to indicate which woman God selected? (Gen. 24:14)

Lesson 11

Flesh and Spirit

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 23

Scripture: Genesis 25:19-34

Memory Verse: “For the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls, it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.”” (Romans 9:11-12)

Lesson Truth: In the covenant circle, the calling of God awakens the struggle between flesh and spirit.

Lesson

When we read the Bible from Romans 9:11-12, we are given some insight into the prophecy concerning the twin boys that were to be born to Isaac and Rebekah. God told Rebekah before her twins were born that the older would serve the younger. We know that the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah and the birth of their two sons were rooted in divine election. Ever since God told Eve that He would put enmity between the seed of Satan and her seed, we have seen the struggle between good and evil. We are given another glimpse of this struggle when God spoke to Rebekah before the birth of her twins. We see the struggle between flesh and spirit. This struggle between flesh and spirit came to a climax on the cross of Christ. The true Spirit, of Jesus the Christ overcame Satan embodied in the flesh.

The miracle of the birth of the promised seed that we saw when Sarah gave birth to a son at ninety years of age was repeated when Rebekah gave birth to her twins. Isaac married Rebekah when he was forty years old. After they had been married for some years, they knew that Rebekah could not have children. We are told that Isaac pleaded with Lord for his wife, because she was barren. What is even more astounding is that we are told that the Lord granted Isaac’s plea. Rebekah found that she was with child. The whole plan of redemption is a miracle from God. It was God who gave children of promise to barren women.

When Rebekah was carrying her children, they struggled within her. Her response to this struggle was a response of faith. We are told Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord. Again, we see the hand of the Lord in preserving the promised seed. The Lord told Rebekah that she would give birth to two sons who would become two nations. He also told her that one of her sons would be stronger than the other, and that the older son would serve the younger.

The prophecy from the Lord to Rebekah did not come about without incident. As the twins grew, Isaac loved the older son Esau because he was strong and brought tasty game for his father. Rebekah at the same time loved the younger son Jacob. She may have set her heart on Jacob because of the prophecy God had given her, that the older would serve the younger. We are aware that Isaac and Rebekah did not agree as to who was to be the son of promise. God would again direct the affairs of the family of Isaac and Rebekah so the man of His choosing would receive the birthright. This happened through a self-serving act of Jacob when he took advantage of his brother Esau.

Rebekah most likely told Jacob that he was the one who should receive the promise, and not his older brother Esau. Jacob believed the promise of God and accepted it in faith. Yet he tried to get the blessing and the promise in the wrong way. He knew that the custom was that the older son would always receive the blessing. When Esau came in from the fields, famished, and asked for some of the stew Jacob had made, Jacob saw an opportunity to get the birthright. He asked Esau to swear by an oath that he could have the birthright, he would then give Esau some stew.

Lesson 12

Rehoboth

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 1, Lesson 24

Scripture: Genesis 26

Memory Verse: “May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly of peoples; and give you the blessings of Abraham. To you and your descendants with you, that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.” (Genesis 28:3-4)

Lesson Truth: The Lord appears to Isaac at Gerar so that he will recognize that he is the heir to the promise.

Lesson

Isaac seemed to be very fainthearted about the great blessing he was to inherit because of God’s promise to Abraham. How thankful we must be that God made sure Isaac received the same promise as Abraham despite his faintheartedness. God’s promises are always certain and will never be abandoned because of a person.

The story of Abraham is almost repeated in the life of Isaac. God sent a famine in the land. Because of this famine Isaac had to move with his flocks and herds to a place where he could find grass and water. Isaac decided to go to the same place Abraham had gone before. He went to Abimelech the king of the Philistines. While he was at Gerar in Philistia, God appeared to Isaac. God told him he should not go to Egypt but stay in the land of Philistia. God then repeated the blessing He had given to Abraham. He told Isaac that in his children all the nations of the earth would be blessed. God informed Isaac that the blessing would be fulfilled because Abraham had been faithful.

Isaac had to mature in the faith before he was ready to receive the promise as his own. He also demonstrated that he possessed the same fears as his father. When he was living in the land of Gerar and the men of the place asked about Rebekah, he told them she was his sister. This showed a real lack of faith. Isaac was not yet ready to rely completely on the promise of God. In spite of his weakness God protected Isaac and Rebekah. The Redeemer of the world would come from their seed. King Abimelech saw that Isaac treated Rebekah as a husband treats a wife and scolded Isaac for not telling him they were married.

Even though king Abimelech forbade anyone to touch Rebekah the struggle between he and Isaac was not over. God blessed Isaac abundantly with crops that produced a hundredfold. The blessings of Isaac caused the Philistines to envy him, so they tried to hinder him. They stopped all the wells his father Abraham had dug leaving him no water. The king finally asked Isaac to leave. Isaac did leave but each time his servants opened a well of Abraham, the men of Gerar would claim it. Isaac did not stand firm in the promise of the covenant and insist that the land was a promise from God. Instead he moved each time there was a quarrel.

Once again we notice how God carried out the promise of the covenant in the life of fainthearted Isaac. The names Isaac gave to the wells that were taken away tell the story. He named the one well Esek, which means wrangling. The next one he named Sitnah, which means quarreling. He was finally able to dig a well that the men of Gerar did not claim; he named it Rehoboth, which means the Lord has made room for us. Isaac was surely lead to faith by God Himself.

When Isaac moved on to Beersheba, God appeared to him and repeated the promise of the covenant He had given to Abraham. Isaac finally showed he was maturing as the spiritual leader of his family. He built an altar

and called on the name of the Lord. King Abimelech and his friend confirmed this growth in Isaac as the spiritual leader of his family when they said: “We have certainly seen that the Lord is with you.” We must also realize what Isaac realized that is: “Rehoboth” the Lord has made room for us.

Questions

1. What made Isaac go to king Abimelech in Gerar? (Gen. 26:1)
2. Who told Isaac he should not go down to Egypt? (Gen. 26:2)
3. What lie did Isaac tell the men of Gerar? (Gen 26:7)
4. Who had dug the wells before Isaac’s servants? (Gen. 26:18)
5. What name was given the well because the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen? (Gen. 26:20)

6. What is the meaning of the name, Rehoboth, given to the third well dug? (Gen. 26:22)

7. Where did Isaac go after the digging of the wells? (Gen. 26:23)

8. Why did God tell Isaac not to fear? (Gen. 26:24)