

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2023: *Managing for the Master—Till He Comes*

Lesson 6 “Laying Up Treasure in Heaven”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 6:5–14; Hebrews 11:8–13; 2 Corinthians 4:18; Genesis 13:10–12; Genesis 32:22–31; Hebrews 11:24–29.

Memory Text

“ ‘For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?’ ” (Mark 8:36, 37, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Noah Found Grace
- III. Abram, the Father of the Faithful
- IV. Lot’s Bad Decisions
- V. From Deceiver to Prince
- VI. Moses in Egypt
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Our discussion this week begins with the meaning of “treasure” and how you lay up treasure in heaven. We will follow that up with a number of biblical examples of people who “laid up treasure in heaven”. There is also a biblical example of how NOT to lay up treasure in heaven (Lot). The lesson closes with some practical applications of the biblical material.
2. Read Matthew 6:19-21. What does Jesus mean by “treasure” in this passage? What do you think of Jesus’ motivational strategy? Is there room for selfish motivations in our response to God? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
3. Read Genesis 6:5-14. Notice the repetition in the passage and how the term for God changes from beginning to end. What do you make of that? What, according to this passage, are the central sins of the ante-diluvians? How did God’s call lead to a radical change in Noah’s life? (Sunday’s Lesson)

4. Read Genesis 12:1-3. What does the word “blessing” mean in practical terms? How have all the families of the earth been blessed as a result of God’s call to Abraham? Read Hebrews 11:8-13. What does this passage add to the call of Abraham in Genesis? Read 2 Corinthians 4:18. What principle does this verse suggest that might be relevant to the decision that Abraham made? (Monday’s Lesson)
5. Read Genesis 32:22-31. What happened to Jacob here? Are there any lessons we can take away about God’s grace to those who make bad decisions? What is the meaning of Israel? Read Genesis 49:29-33. Why did Jacob give the instructions he did about his burial? (Wednesday’s Lesson)
6. Read Hebrews 11:24-29. What did Moses have to leave behind when God called? What was he getting by accepting the call? How do you think he came to the decision that he did? What implications might you draw from that for us today? (Thursday’s Lesson)
7. Read Genesis 13:10-12. What factors do you think could have led Lot to make the decision he did? Read Genesis 18:20-33. What did God tell Abraham was the reason for His visit to earth? When Abraham heard God’s plan, how did he respond? (Tuesday’s Lesson)
8. Read 2 Peter 3:3-7. People were skeptical that a Flood would ever come. Things will be similar during the end-time events. What human characteristic is strongly predictive of the kind of decisions people will make in a crisis? (Friday’s Lesson)
9. How ready would you be to make a major change in your life if God called you the way he did Noah? (Friday’s Lesson)
10. Read Mark 4:19. What does Jesus mean when He talks about the deceitfulness of riches? How can riches deceive us? (Friday’s Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When God picks a person in the Bible who exemplifies the highest fulfillment of his ambitions for us sinners, when he finally really wins somebody, and he inspires later writers to say, “If you want to know what God wants, look at him, all the way through the Bible.” It’s Abraham. Over and over it’s Abraham who was what God wanted. And it says of Abraham that he was God’s friend. And what was it that made him such a friend? It always says Abraham trusted God. Now, a version may say “believed God.” Same word, there’s only one word for belief, trust, faith, all the same word. That’s why we need the different versions. Abraham trusted God, he really did. And God considered him His friend.

Now evidence that he really trusted God, James says is that he loved cooperating with God and doing what God said. And when God said take your son, sacrifice him; the trust was not, “Well, if you say so God, fine, I’ll do it.” No, he trusted God enough to say, “God, as I know you that

will make sense some day. It surely doesn't now. But I hear you speaking. We've talked so often, I know you wouldn't ask me to do something wrong, or something that will confuse others for eternity, so I'm on my way. But may I reverently ask you why?" And for three days and three nights he asked him why. And he came to a conclusion. God would either resurrect his son or provide a substitute and Hebrews says he was right. He showed he was a friend. And James says see how Abraham, the friend of God, *showed* his trust. He didn't just say, "Sure, I believe in God."

James says the devils do that and it scares them. They're no friends of God. Abraham's trust was the trust of a friend, and a friend shows his friendship in certain, very special ways, like being jealous for your friend's reputation. And when God said I'm going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah Abraham said, "God how could you? As I know you, you wouldn't. I mean, if there were fifty saints there you wouldn't. Forty. Thirty. Forgive me if I seem irreverent, but God, shouldn't the judge of all the earth do what is right?"

They must have been good friends to talk like that. It doesn't say, "And God rebuked him for talking like that and didn't speak to him for a month." No, God says, "Who else knows me that well? I love your jealousy for my reputation. You're right, I wouldn't destroy them if there were five saints, but I can't find that many." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Three Angels' Messages*, #1, recorded October 1981, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MM3ANGELSM>

Further Study with Ellen White

In sparing the life of Cain the murderer, God gave the world an example of what would be the result of permitting the sinner to live to continue a course of unbridled iniquity. Through the influence of Cain's teaching and example, multitudes of his descendants were led into sin, until "the wickedness of man was great in the earth" and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Genesis 6:5, 11. {GC 543.2}

It was for the purpose of bringing the best gifts of Heaven to all the peoples of earth that God called Abraham out from his idolatrous kindred and bade him dwell in the land of Canaan. "I will make of thee a great nation," He said, "and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." Genesis 12:2. . . . {PK 15.1}

Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His

mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.

{COL 286.1}

When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. {PK 231.4}

God did not design that His people should build up a wall of partition between themselves and their fellow men. The heart of Infinite Love was reaching out toward all the inhabitants of the earth. Though they had rejected Him, He was constantly seeking to reveal Himself to them and make them partakers of His love and grace. His blessing was granted to the chosen people, that they might bless others. {PP 368.1}

God scatters blessings all along our path to brighten our journey and lead our hearts out to love and praise Him, and He wants us to draw water from the well of salvation that our hearts may be refreshed. We may sing the songs of Zion, we may cheer our own hearts, and we may cheer the hearts of others; hope may be strengthened, darkness turned to light. God has not left us in a dark world—as pilgrims and strangers seeking a better country, even an heavenly—without giving us precious promises to lighten every burden. The borders of our path are strewn with fair flowers of promise. They blossom all around, sending forth rich fragrance. {OHC 10.2}

While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him. His words, his motives, his actions, may be misrepresented and falsified, but he does not mind it, because he has greater interests at stake. Like Moses, he endures as "seeing Him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27); looking "not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Corinthians 4:18). {MB 32.2}

Christ is acquainted with all that is misunderstood and misrepresented by men. His children can afford to wait in calm patience and trust, no matter how much maligned and despised; for nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, and those who honor God shall be honored by Him in the presence of men and angels. {MB 32.3}

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom.

{DA 466.4}

Satan is constantly urging men to accept his principles. Thus he seeks to counterwork the work of God. He is constantly representing the chosen people of God as a deluded people. He is an accuser of the brethren, and his accusing power he is constantly using against those who work righteousness. The Lord desires through His people to answer Satan's charges by showing the result of obedience to right principles. {6T 11.2}

God desires us to reach the standard of perfection made possible for us by the gift of Christ. He calls upon us to make our choice on the right side, to connect with heavenly agencies, to adopt principles that will restore in us the divine image. In His written Word and in the great book of nature He has revealed the principles of life. It is our work to obtain a knowledge of these principles, and by obedience to cooperate with Him in restoring health to the body as well as to the soul. . . . {AG 103.5}

Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." {AA 564.1}

Each law of God is an enactment of mercy, love, and saving power. These laws, obeyed, are our life, our salvation, our happiness, our peace [Psalm 119:165 quoted] (Letter 112, 1902). {3BC 1153.6}

The Lord will work for all who put their trust in Him. Precious victories will be gained by the faithful. Precious lessons will be learned. Precious experiences will be realized. {MB 11.1}

Our God is a very present help in time of need. He is acquainted with the most secret thoughts of our hearts, with all the intents and purposes of our souls. When we are in perplexity, even before we open to Him our distresses, He is making arrangements for our deliverance.—Letter 73, Feb. 1, 1905, to Drs. D. H. and Laretta Kress. {UL 46.6}

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. {DA 568.3}

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12. {MB 114.1}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to earnestly cry to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place. There is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained (RH May 6, 1862). {7BC 947.5}

By contemplation of Christ, by conformity to the divine likeness, your conceptions of the divine character will expand, and your mind and heart will be elevated, refined, and ennobled. . . . {HP 16.6}

He who constantly depends upon God through simple trust and prayerful confidence, will be surrounded by the angels of heaven. He who lives by faith in Christ, will be strengthened and upheld, able to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold upon eternal life. {HP 16.7}

The three great powers of heaven pledge Themselves to furnish the Christian with all the assistance he requires. The Spirit changes the heart of stone to the heart of flesh. And by partaking of the Word of God, Christians obtain an experience that is after the divine similitude. When Christ abides in the heart by faith, the Christian is the temple of God. Christ does not abide in the heart of the sinner, but in the heart of him who is susceptible to the influences of heaven. {RC 107.3}