

ADULT BIBLICAL EDUCATION SERIES

Vol. II, Book 7

Days of Spiritual Decline in Israel and Judah

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TEACHER'S GUIDE



Pictured on the cover is the Sower, examining the young tree, which shows progress of growth from the tender plant of Volume II, Books 1-4.

Here, we might think of the words of James 5:7: Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it...

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Teacher's Supplement to Volume II, Book 7

The introductory material for the teacher, containing guidelines, helps in preparing to teach a lesson, elements of a good lesson, etc. which was printed in the Teacher's Supplement for Vol. n, Book 2 (pp. 1-3), will not be repeated. You may wish to reread that material before beginning to teach this quarter of lessons.

Below, we will give some helps for the teacher in approaching each of the lessons of this quarter. Remember, the suggestions are based on the expectation that each student will have read the lesson material, so that the teacher can build on what the student has already read.

LESSON ONE

Introduction to the Lesson:

In this quarter we will be continuing our survey of the history of the northern and southern kingdoms (Israel and Judah). We have supplied chronological charts that you ought to call to the attention of the students. Urge them to use them as they read the lessons.

In addition to the study of the history of this period, we will also be studying the messages which God was sending to the churches in this time, especially by Isaiah and Micah.

Both of these prophets were sent to Judah, while in the north, the kingdom continued to deteriorate until the people were all carried away into a slavery from which they never escaped.

You will want to point out to the class particularly how God called the people of Judah more and more to look to Him to do what was necessary for their salvation. By these prophets, the person and work of the Christ (Redeemer) came more clearly into focus.

For the first lesson, particularly urge them to reread the brief summary given at the beginning of this quarterly regarding the messages of those prophets already studied: Jonah, Amos, and Hosea.

In the light of the history surveyed in this first lesson, draw the following points for their consideration.

Point One: A church body falls when its people and leaders fail to turn from their sins and to heed God's Word.

Stress how we have, learned in this study that Israel was warned over and over of her sins and called to repentance by those prophets whom we have already studied (Amos and Hosea).

In spite of these warnings, they did not give heed to what God's Word said and went on sinning, going their way, assuming that God needed them and would not discard them.

Show how this was erroneous reasoning on their part and that, finally, God did overthrow the northern kingdom as He had warned.

That is the subject of our study today. Show them that such a lesson ought to help us to realize that even now God will not strive forever with a disobedient congregation or denomination; He will overthrow it when it fails to glorify Him any longer.

You may point back to the experience of Israel in the wilderness. Those who came out of Egypt, though taught the Law of God and blessed by the Lord, refused to believe in the Lord and refused to cease their murmuring and evil doing, so that that whole generation was overthrown in the wilderness and God had to raise up an entirely new generation to go into Canaan.

Yet God had warned them over and over that unless they repented, that first generation of Israel would be overthrown by God.

You can point out also how the northern kingdom of Israel was given every opportunity to succeed as a people of God, but refused to respond and so ultimately had to be discarded by God.

Likewise, the southern kingdom, as we shall study later, refused to learn from God; and its people were also taken away into captivity, to Babylon.

Then, after the Exile in Babylon and their resettlement in Jerusalem, after some generations, they reverted to their evil ways and the Lord shut them off from His Word for 400 years, until the Christ came, not sending to them in all that time any word from the Lord.

In the New Testament, we see how the Lord came into the world and came unto His own people, teaching them directly and calling them to repent of their ways lest they be cut off from His Kingdom.

But instead of listening to Him, they rejected and crucified Him, so that the Lord turned to the Gentiles. The Jewish people were then left with no further communication from God. The strength and future of the church was among the Gentiles, not the Jews.

Show how Paul, in Romans 11:22, gives warning to Gentile churches lest they be arrogant, as though God needs them. If they do not continue in the doctrine of God, taught by the apostles, but turn to evil ways, they too will be cut off.

Show how, in Revelation 2-3, the Lord reviews the state of Gentile churches at the end of the first century and warns of judgment to come on them if they do not repent.

Thus, the Lord shows throughout His dealings with the various churches among men that when they do not honor Him and obey Him, He can and will dispose of them and work through others.

Point Two: When any church or individual is under God's discipline, others must take heed, lest they too fall.

You can illustrate this well by reminding the class of the many times God's prophets, while denouncing Israel, warned Judah to take heed, lest they fall into the same snares and destiny that Israel, the north, was following.

Show how Judah had ample opportunity to learn from the experience of Israel with God, in judgment, and to repent and turn from her evil practices; but she did not learn.

You can make reference to I Corinthians 10:12, which challenges us all to take heed lest we fall. What God has written about His judgment of others in the world ought to serve as a lesson for us.

Challenge them to study how the Lord brought home this principle in dealing with the churches of Asia Minor, recorded in Revelation chapters 2,3. Point to Revelation 2:7, which challenges us to give careful heed to such judgments on other churches, lest we too follow in their footsteps.

Help them to see the advantage of studying God's judgments on those first century churches, so that our own church will not follow the same path.

Remind them that the entire Old and New Testaments give us much opportunity for learning what pleases and what displeases God in the church in the world.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You may lead the class in listing some of Israel's failures and then seek to determine whether any of her failures are reflected in your church today? Utilize also Revelation chs. 1 and 2.
2. Help the class to consider some of the evidences of God's longsuffering and patience with your church, and whether or not the church has expressed gratitude for that grace of God.

LESSON TWO

Introduction to the Lesson:

Remind the class that though Israel as a nation fell and its people were carried off never to be heard from again, nevertheless, there were a few in Israel who did believe and these were called out of the north to join

with Judah. God's people in the south, through whom God promised to send blessings and salvation to all of His true believers, was their refuge.

Point One: Those who are against God's people, really oppose God.

Begin with Hezekiah's prayer to God against his enemies, whom he recognized to be against God as well. His prayer was therefore to the glory of God though against a people.

Point out how David had earlier shown this same principle when he boldly went out to oppose Goliath, not because he was harassing Israel, but chiefly because Goliath was an announced enemy of Israel's God. That gave David the boldness to face him.

Remind them of how the psalmist frequently mentions his own enemies, but always in the context of their being enemies of God and of God's people. Point to Ps. 139:21,22, which declares that the enemies-of God have become the enemies of God's people, as well, and that therefore we are to oppose them.

Show how Nehemiah, after the return to Jerusalem, opposed those who stood against God's people, knowing that they opposed God as well, and did not hesitate to ask God to overthrow them and defeat their efforts for that reason.

Show how Mordecai, and Esther too, united to pray for the overthrow of Israel's enemies, solely because such enemies were enemies of God.

In the New Testament, you may point to Acts 13:8-10, where Paul opposes an enemy of the gospel with a strong curse on him, because such a man stands in the way of God's glory. He does not hesitate to call him a son of the devil, as Jesus did those who opposed Him.

Recall that we are indeed in a warfare with Satan and that the enemies who oppose us in the world, as we seek to serve God, are, in reality, enemies of God and cannot be treated with friendship and compromise.

Point Two: God opposes those who oppose His people.

Show from this how God is clearly opposed to those who are opposed to His people. Remind them of how the Lord withstood Sennacherib and the whole Assyrian army, which boasted against God, and His people.

Show how the Lord, too, dealt with Sodom and Gomorrah for their evil against His servant, Lot, and overthrew all of them.

Remind them of how God viewed the Egyptians as His enemies, since they treated His people in Israel with great cruelty.

LESSON THREE

You could illustrate such intervening from God against Israel's enemies throughout the Old Testament.

Particularly, point to Psalm two, which shows that the enemies of believers are, in reality, God's enemies; and God recognizes this and gives refuge to those who trust in Him while destroying His and their enemies.

Show how the same thing happened ultimately to Babylon, because the kings of Babylon also exalted themselves over God, when they mistreated His people; and they had to be overthrown.

Show how the same destiny was ordained for Rome, which overran God's people and persecuted the church in its early history. They thereby made themselves enemies of God.

Point to Revelation 19, which shows Christ in the world, going to war with all nations who oppose Him and His people.

Point Three: God calls those who do trust in Him to be unswerving in their commitment to Him.

Start with Hezekiah's hesitancy and wavering in respect to the Babylonians who visited him. Flattered by their attention, he forgot momentarily that they were enemies of God and began to compromise with them.

Remind them of Israel's experience in the wilderness when they often wished to return to Egypt or compromise with their enemies rather than be faithful to God, and had to be punished.

Recall Joshua's own wavering, once they were in Canaan—how he made compromise with God's enemies, the Gibeonites, a thing which caused great sorrow for Israel for many generations.

Remind them too of our recent study of Ahaz's compromise with the Assyrians, which brought near disaster to Judah in the days of his son, Hezekiah.

Show how our Lord, in temptations from the devil, was unswerving in His opposition to Satan and determination not to yield to him in compromise of His mission to serve His Father.

Point out how Paul, in Ephesians 6, teaches us that the point of taking on the whole armor of God is that we might stand—not be taken in by the compromises of Satan, our great enemy.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. Cite with the class some of the enemies of the church (denomination or local church) and how we, as a church (denomination) are dealing with them.
2. Point out ways we may be compromising with the enemy as a church (denomination) today, in our warfare against Satan and his children.

Remind the class, as you begin the study of the prophet Isaiah, that his ministry covered a long period of time, down through the reigns of Ahaz the wicked king of Judah and of Hezekiah, his son, who was faithful above most of the kings of Judah.

Show that while Isaiah's message was, in large measure, condemnatory of much that was going on in Judah, nevertheless, God also spoke words of comfort through Isaiah.

Point One: All people stand as sinners before the Holy God.

Begin with a reminder of how Isaiah first experienced standing before the Holy God. There, he immediately became a-ware of his great sinfulness and at the same time of the sins of his people (ch. 6).

Show them that Isaiah was able to apply to Israel the same guilt he felt before the Holy God of Israel.

You may wish to remind them of Noah, who, born in a corrupt generation, was sinful too, which he proved after the flood by his own shameful behavior.

Show them how even Abraham had to be called out of the sinful environment in which he and his family had worshipped pagan gods. Even after being called by God, he continued to sin in many ways.

Remind them of Jacob, who, through much of his life—though chosen by the Lord—nevertheless, proved to be a very rebellious sinner much of his early life.

Point to Moses, who, even after being called by God, continued to sin, so that he was once nearly killed by God for his sins.

You could make mention of the whole of Israel, a people who, after being rescued from Egypt, showed in the wilderness their exceedingly great sins before God.

David is an example of a child of God who was still a sinner.

You might include the lesson that Habakkuk had to learn, namely, that all who stand before the Holy God in His holy temple stand as sinners (Hab. 2:20).

In the New Testament, you can point to Jesus' instruction to His disciples, beginning with the Sermon on the Mount, (Matt. 5-7) in which His purpose was to expose their sins which had been hidden, even as He exposed the sins of the woman of Samaria (John 4).

Finally, point out that when Paul begins to expound the gospel to the Romans, he takes nearly three chapters to establish the fact that all people are sinners in the sight of God.

Point Two: The solution to the sins of all men is

God's cleansing work.

Start with Isaiah's experience in the temple. He was awed by his sin and nearly overcome, but the Lord met his need, showing him that his sins had been cleansed by the Lord's work.

Then, remind them that Isaiah, after calling the sins of the people to their attention, promises them that though they have sinned, they can be as clean as snow or like white wool (Isa. 1:18).

You can go back and show that God, by His grace, cleansed the sins of Noah and made him acceptable to God in that sinful generation (Gen. 6:8).

Show how the Lord taught Abraham that he stood as acceptable (righteous) before God because God reckoned his faith as righteousness. He was cleansed by what God did, not what he did (Gen. 15:6).

You can point to Jacob also, showing that he came to an awareness of the forgiveness of his sins only after he had confessed that he could do nothing to help himself (Gen. 32:10).

Show that Moses and Israel were able to escape the angel of death only by looking to what God could do through the blood of the lamb, at the Passover.

You can also show how David, as he expressed it in the 51st Psalm, learned that his only hope was in the forgiveness of God.

Point to Habakkuk, which declares that all men will live before God only by their faith in what God will do (Hab. 2:4).

Show that Jesus taught His disciples that they must learn to pray to God to be merciful to them as sinners before they could please the Lord.

Finally, point out that Paul, after showing man's guilt of sin before God in Romans chapters 1-3, then, in chapter 3, begins to show that God has an answer for our great need for forgiveness: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Point Three: All who have been cleansed of sin are called by God to be God's witnesses to others.

Note how Isaiah, when cleansed, desired to be God's witness and also that Isaiah, in developing his message, showed that God was going to cleanse a remnant of the people who believed in Him, in order that they could bring His message of cleansing and salvation to the nations of the earth.

Show how Noah, when cleansed by God, also began to teach his sons God's truth about them and their ministry (Gen. 9:25-27).

Point to Abraham who was commissioned by God to teach his children about righteousness and justice (Gen. 18:19).

Show how Moses was given God's Word at Sinai

so that he could instruct the people in their need of cleansing and then teach them through the sacrificial system about God's work of cleansing in their lives.

Point out that Jacob, after he was reconciled to the Lord, set about to lead his children to an awareness of their needs (Gen. 35:1-3).

Show how David, in Psalm 51, beautifully expresses the cleansing work of God on the humble and contrite heart, enabling the cleansed one to be His witness to others (Ps. 51:12-19).

You can show how the Lord, after instructing the disciples in the gospel, then sent them out into the world to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8).

Finally, you can point to Romans chs. 12-16, which teach what we, who believe, are to do with our lives in service to the Lord.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You could lead the class in a discussion of ways in which we are made acquainted with our need for God's cleansing in our church (including the preaching of the Word, the sacraments, and prayer).
2. Also, for proper follow-up, lead them in a discussion of ways in which we, as a church and as individuals, are challenged in our church to be witnesses for the Lord, and ways in which we are prepared for that ministry.

LESSON FOUR

Remind the class of the historical background for this lesson in the days of Ahaz, king of Judah. Ahaz failed to trust in the Lord; this gave an occasion for Isaiah to preach about what God will do for His own that will not fail, as Ahaz, their king, has failed them. He turns their eyes upon God and Jesus.

Point One: We only come to recognize our need of God in the midst of human failures.

Recall for them the times of Ahaz and how he failed to lead the people rightly. At such a time the people might well have despaired, but the Lord, through Isaiah, took their eyes off of fallible men and put them on God, in hope that He would be their Redeemer.

You can show how Israel would not repent after the period of the judges, until the coming of Samuel, who taught them to take their eyes off of men and to look to the Lord for help (I Sam. 7).

Again, remind them of Hezekiah's days, when the people were threatened by the Assyrians and would have been overcome had not they despaired of hoping in men and looked to God to deliver them.

Mention also the time after the Exile, when the
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people, led by Ezra and Nehemiah, were able to overcome their own failures and hopelessness because of their many enemies, by looking to God for help.

Note that John the Baptist came in a time when the Jews suffered under the heel of the Romans. At such a time, he called them to look to their Lord who would shortly come.

Show how, before Pentecost, when things seemed gloomy for the believers, God encouraged them to pray and wait for the coming of the Spirit, which they did.

Help the class to see that times of discouragement can be turned into victorious days for those who learn, through human failure, to look to the Lord.

Point Two: Our hope is always in God as our Savior.

Note how Isaiah's message, in the context of human failures, emphasized that God would Himself come and be their Redeemer, born of a virgin (ch. 7), yet, God in the flesh, come to be the King of kings and Lord of lords (ch. 9). He would come truly as a man, but also as God, from the root of Jesse(ch. 11).

Show how, from the beginning, God has promised to be the Savior of His people (Gen. 3:15).

Remind the class that God taught this truth to Abraham when Abraham looked to the Lord to supply the lamb for the sacrifice (Gen. 22).

Point out how the Lord showed His glory to Moses in the wilderness (Ex. 34:6,7), and then how Jesus Christ came into the world—the Word made flesh—to be, in the flesh, all that God had said He was to Moses (John 1).

Remind them that the very sacrificial system was to prepare the people for the sacrifice which only God could provide and that through the tabernacle and its furniture God showed them, in detail, just what the work of the Savior would be.

Point out that continually both the psalmist and the prophets (particularly Isaiah) declare that there is no savior for the people of the earth except their God, the Lord.

Show how, in Jeremiah 31, we are taught very clearly that God is our only hope.

In the New Testament, point to Romans 10:9, where Paul insists that true faith holds that Jesus is the Lord (God of the Old Testament revelation).

Show how the Book of Revelation accords to the Son, Jesus Christ, the same glory as was given to the Father on the throne (Rev. chs. 4,5).

Point Three: True Believers are those who turn to God for help and live lives of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Begin with Isaiah's response after he had written a

preliminary declaration of the coming Messiah (ch. 12).

Show how Moses led the people in praise of God after they had been delivered from their enemies, the Egyptians (Ex. 15).

Show how Samuel praised God, declaring that it is He who has helped Israel (I Sam. 7:12).

You may also note how frequently the prophets and the psalmist, in the midst of their writing, burst into songs of praise and thanksgiving to God their Savior.

Show how characteristic of the early church in Acts was the practice of joining together to praise the Lord (Acts 2).

Show how Paul, though in prison, could continually praise God, as he and Silas did in Philippi (Acts 16).

Show, too, that Jesus taught His disciples so to live that others would see their good works and glorify their Father in heaven (Matt. 5:16).

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You may very profitably call for personal testimonies of praise to God by individual members of the class or for the class jointly to compose a word of thanksgiving to God for the blessings the class has received from God.
2. You can discuss ways in which we show our gratitude in the church worship (prayer, hymns, giving gifts, testimony, preaching of the Word, etc.).

LESSON FIVE

Stress with the class the importance of the study of such a section of Scripture as this, though tedious reading. Seek to show them in this lesson the importance that God puts on these judgments of the nations by their frequency in the Scriptures, particularly, but not exclusively, in the prophets.

Show that in the last analysis, God teaches that all nations of the world will be judged by God in history, as He is the Sovereign in control of all history. One nation rises and another falls, down through history. Point out that Jesus has described history as "wars and rumors of wars," stressing the instability of every nation.

Point out that God chose to make an example of Babylon, the first great world empire and has, throughout Scripture, used that nation as the epitome of nations in rebellion against God and as the prime example of God's judgment and overthrow of all nations, ultimately.

Point One: God will judge all nations of the world.

Beginning with the prophecies we have studied from Isaiah concerning the nations, note the large portion of the entire Book of Isaiah given to such prophecies. You may also compare a similar section in the latter part of Jeremiah and other prophets as well.

Remind them of God's dealings with the nations of men from the earliest times and of His judgment of evil nations at the time of the flood.

Recall for them Noah's prophecy concerning the future nations of the world and God's control over their destinies (Gen. 9:25-27).

You can point to God's dealings with nations at the time of Babel, from which ultimately the nations of the world developed.

Recall that when God called Abraham to follow Him, He promised that those nations which blessed Abraham's people would be blessed and that those nations which cursed His people would be cursed (Gen. 12:3).

You can remind them of how the Lord displaced the Canaanites when they had proven to be unworthy of any further occupation of that land and gave the land to Israel, thus showing His power to raise up one nation and put down another.

The judgment of Egypt, as well, illustrates God's determination to punish those nations which interfere with His blessings on His people.

Show them Psalm 2, with its testimony of the rebellion of all nations of men against the Lord and of God's determination to overthrow them all through the establishing of His Kingdom by His Son.

You can point to Daniel 2, and Nebuchadnezzar's dream, to further corroborate this doctrine in Scripture.

In the New Testament, in particular, the Book of Revelation, drawing from many Old Testament Books, makes clear that the proclamation of the Gospel is closely related to the overthrow of the Kingdoms of the world and of their prince, Satan.

Point Two: Babylon represents all of the nations as an example of God's final overthrow of all kingdoms of men.

You may point out to the class that both Isaiah and Jeremiah stress the importance of the prophecies against Babylon, as indicative of the sure overthrow of all nations before the Kingdom of God.

Remind them that Isaiah 14:12ff., ties in the overthrow of Babylon with the overthrow of Satan himself, and that the cry of victory, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great," is the cry of hope for the people of God throughout Scripture.

You may go back to the overthrow of Babel, which was perhaps on the site of the future city of Babylon, as indicative of the earliest teaching of the significance

of Babylon's defeat.

You can point to Daniel 2, where God shows to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, that though his kingdom is the greatest of earthly kingdoms, in the end it and all other such nations will be toppled before the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

In the New Testament, you can remind them of I Peter 5:13, where Peter speaks of Christians as living in "Babylon," not meaning, literally, the old city of Babylon, but symbolically, i.e. whatever nations of the world they may be living in.

Point to Revelation 14:8; 16:19; Rev. 18, as sections of that prophecy which speak of the fall of Babylon as the final act of history, just before the judgment—here again, Babylon representing the nations of the world which are in rebellion against the Lord.

Point Three: God's people are to take comfort in the overthrow of the worldly kingdoms.

Show how both Isaiah and Jeremiah intersperse the judgments against the nations with words of comfort to God's people to show that they are to rejoice in the overthrow of Satan's kingdom in the face of the advancement of God's Kingdom in the world.

Point out that this was particularly the need of the Jews at the time of the overthrow of Jerusalem, when it seemed that all of their hopes would be dashed. They needed to see Jerusalem's fall in proper perspective; therefore God announced the fall of the kingdoms of the world simultaneously with the fall of Jerusalem.

You can go back to Genesis 3:15, where God first announced that the seed of Satan would, in the end, be defeated by the One to come as the seed of the woman, i.e. the Christ.

Remind the class, also, of the importance the Lord gave to the fall of Jericho, in the beginning of the conquest of Canaan by Israel. The fall of that city gave hope to God's people of what the Lord would yet do.

Again, you may utilize Psalm 2 and Daniel 2 as chapters in which not only the overthrow of people against God is taught but also chapters in which God's people have always found great hope for the ultimate triumph of Christ's Kingdom.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You may wish to lead the class in a discussion of the world's hope in nations, leagues of nations, united nations and the like, as contrasted with our hope in the triumph of Christ's Kingdom.
2. Help the class to consider how our church denomination indicates where its treasures are by its budget and investment in earthly things or in the proclamation of the gospel.

LESSON SIX

Remind them that this lesson constitutes the final lesson in the first part of Isaiah's prophecy, just before he begins the section on the comfort of God's gospel message to His people. Show that those in Israel are faced with a clear alternative: believe God's message and be blessed or reject it and be cursed with woes.

Point One: The gospel is a terror to those in the church who do not believe.

Point out the significance of the term "woe," in Scripture, as we have noted before. It is a solemn and terrifying word of coming judgment.

You may begin with the wilderness experience of Israel in which it was evident that most of those who came out of Egypt and were members of the first congregation of God's people, nevertheless, did not believe and did not please the Lord, so that they were destroyed in the wilderness after many hardships and woes. Show how Paul and Jude stress this lesson (I Cor. 10:1-12; Jude 5), thus showing that many in the church, in any age, do not believe and will face God's wrath.

Show how the period of the judges also indicates how very many of those who are ostensibly in the church (among God's people) nevertheless, do not belong to God and will face God's punishment.

Remind them of Saul's experience in which he, though a leader of Israel, did not show any evidence of faith, and, in the end, felt the sting of God's wrath.

Point out the messages of the prophets already studied, such as Amos, which deal in large measure with God's wrath on the false leaders and false people in Israel who are not really His people and who will meet dire woes.

Show how all of this necessitated the distinction between the majority in Israel and the true remnant who did believe.

Remind them of how Christ obviously made this distinction, pronouncing woes on many of the leaders and members of Judaism who were not God's children but Satan's.

Point to II Cor. 2:14-17, as indicating that the gospel is a message of death to some (the unbelievers).

Note how, in the messages to the 7 churches (Rev. 2,3), Jesus expresses great wrath toward churches controlled by unbelievers.

Point Two: The gospel is a blessing to those in the church who do believe.

You can show, by contrast with the former point,

that Isaiah did bless those who would believe his report.

In the wilderness, those who did believe survived the ordeals and entered the Promised Land, with the exception of Moses.

In the period of the judges, there were some faithful, such as Naomi, Boaz, Ruth, Hannah and her husband, as well as Samuel, the last of the judges. All of these were richly blessed by the Lord.

Note that all of the prophets, no matter how severe their messages against the unbelievers in Israel and Judah, always leave a message of comfort and hope for true believers, and promises of great blessings to come and give them hope through the most difficult times in Israel's history.

Christ also gave great comfort to His disciples who followed Him, teaching them that in the world they would face tribulation, but that in spite of that, they should be encouraged, knowing that in the end they would overcome the world through the gospel.

Show how Paul saw that the gospel was life for those who would believe (H Cor. 2:14-17).

You can remind them, too, that in the messages to the 7 churches, Jesus had a word of encouragement for those who would believe. They were to persevere in their faith, no matter what the rest did.

Point Three: Those in the church who do not believe will despise those who do believe in the gospel.

You can use several examples of this from the Old Testament and the New Testament: Ham's treatment of his father Noah, in which the unbeliever despised the believing father; Ishmael's treatment of Isaac, in which he despised and mocked his younger brother; Laban's and Esau's treatment of Jacob, in which they treated him with disdain; Saul's treatment of David, treating him as a fugitive and an outlaw; Amos's warnings to the unbelievers of Samaria of their mistreating and cheating God's righteous ones, whom he called the poor; Christ's beatitudes (Matt. 5), in which He blesses the meek and poor in spirit and the persecuted, stating that theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; Jesus' words to His disciples, warning them that as He has been treated, so will they be; and Paul's reminder to the Corinthian Christians that they do not count among their members many of the elite and rich and famous, but the despised and poor and weak.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. Lead the class in a discussion of their church's attitude toward the meek, the humble, and less aggressive members of the church. Are they elected to offices or given responsible positions? are they greatly respected? Why? Why not?

2. Talk about the church's outreach in the community? Is it directed more to any one class than another? How much attention is given to the "despised" of the community, whoever they may be?

LESSON SEVEN

Compare, with the class, the differences between the reaction of Ahaz and of Hezekiah to similar situations, when the nation was threatened from without, by nations which would destroy Jerusalem.

Show that Isaiah's chapters on Hezekiah are preparatory to what follows, in the message of comfort in Isaiah beginning in chapter 40.

Remind them that it was a message of comfort only to those who trusted in the Lord, as Hezekiah had done.

Point One: God's Word has sure comfort for believers.

Begin by reminding them that Isaiah 40-66 is addressed to believers in God's promises.

Show them that every prophet studied so far (viz. Amos, Hosea, Joel), has ended his message with words of comfort for the remnant, i.e., those who truly believe in the Lord.

You may go back to the time of Noah and remind them that his very name means "comfort," and that he symbolized the kind of comfort which God gives to men.

Remind them that when Abraham was childless and had no hope of future heirs, God came to him with comfort concerning a son.

Show how David was driven from his home and made a fugitive both by Saul and later by his son, Absalom; nevertheless, as we see from his many psalms, God gave to him great comfort.

Illustrate, also, from the life of Jeremiah, who, through most of his ministry was persecuted by enemies to whom God sent him to preach. Nevertheless, the Lord comforted Jeremiah and reassured him from the day He called him to be His servant and messenger (Jer. 1).

You can remind them of Jesus' words to His disciples that He would not leave them comfortless, though He was about to leave them (John 14:18).

Show too how Paul, though writing a very stern first epistle to the Corinthians, nevertheless, in a second letter, showed them the comfort of God (II Cor. 1:3,4).

You may also mention the Book of Revelation in which God comforts those who have died for the faith, who cry out for God's justice (Rev. 6:9-11).

In all of these illustrations, it is clear that God does care about the sorrow of His children and is always ready to speak comfortably to them. Therefore, believers need to look to God and into His Word for their comfort.

Point Two: God's comfort to believers is the good news of what God can do for them.

Show how God proceeds in Isaiah to expound to the believers of that day the wonderful news of the gospel of God in Christ Jesus.

Return to Noah and remind them that in those days God comforted Noah while the whole human race faced extinction, by showing His grace to Noah, not dealing with him as he deserved, but according to God's love and grace, saving him—and humanity—from extinction.

Show how the Lord promised to give a child to Abraham and Sarah, though it was impossible for them to have a baby without God's help, and promised a multitude of seed to Abraham.

Remind them of how the Lord gave to David the promise of an eternal kingdom through his seed (the Christ), in spite of the fact that men (Saul and Absalom) were continually seeking to deny him his kingdom.

Point out to the class that though Jeremiah was called to deliver a harsh message of judgment against the sinners in Jerusalem, he was also given the first message concerning the new covenant of God with His people that would be fulfilled by God alone, who would change their hearts (give them re-birth) (Jer. 31).

Remind them, too, that when Jesus promised not to leave His disciples comfortless, after He returned to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit to live in each believer forever (See John 14).

Show them that when Paul spoke of the comfort of God, he wrote to the Corinthians, in the second letter, concerning God's great love for them and shared his own testimony with these Corinthians to an extent not found in any other letter of Paul.

Remind them, too, that God concluded the Revelation of John by the final chapters on the comfort and blessings to God's children in heaven, forever—the new heaven and the new earth.

Encourage the class members always to look to God's Word for their assurance and comfort whenever they are troubled.

Point Three: Unbelievers have no comfort from God, only sure judgment.

Remind them of how Isaiah began his message with a clear alternative between heaven and hell (ch. 1). He also concluded his message in the same way
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(ch. 66).

Remind them that though Noah and his family were comforted for the sake of the whole human race, nevertheless, most in that generation did not believe and therefore perished.

Recall how some seeds of Abraham which did not believe, such as Ishmael and Esau, were cut off from the people of God.

You can mention the judgment on Saul and Absalom, who did not believe in God's promises as David had, and who faced the wrath of God.

Also, in Jeremiah's generation, there was only a remnant blessed by the Lord; the rest, refusing to believe God's servant, Jeremiah, were condemned and punished.

You may also mention that while Jesus had words of comfort for the disciples who believed in Him, He had the harshest words of condemnation for the unbelieving Jews of that day.

In regard to Paul's words to the Corinthians, you can point to his own words that his gospel was not believed by some who were, therefore, condemned (II Cor. 2:15; 4:1-4).

Remind them, too, that while the Book of Revelation ends with good news for believers, it contains the strongest final judgment on unbelievers (Rev. 20).

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You may wish to lead the class in a discussion of their church as a place of comfort for believers who may have great trials in the world. In what way has your church been a refuge for such?
2. You may also lead a discussion on the place of warning to sinners who come to your church. What effort is made to show them that they are under God's judgment unless they repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ?

LESSON EIGHT

Remind the class that these chapters of Isaiah are perhaps the most familiar of all, dealing particularly with the work of the Christ.

Point One: Our salvation depends solely on God's mercy.

Remind them that throughout the revelation of God in the Old and New Testaments, His mercy toward men has always been God's revelation to sinners. It is what all men are called to recognize, as they come to see that they cannot please God by their own efforts.

Remind them of the structure of the tabernacle, in which the mercy seat is above the ark, where God

dwells, showing that our approach to God ultimately depends on God's mercy, not our accomplishments.

Remind them of how Isaiah speaks in this text of the sure mercies of David as an example of the need of all men for God's mercy in His dealing with them.

Show how the whole history of the Jews shows that time and again they proved to be unworthy of God's blessings and unable to earn His favor in any way. They deserved God's wrath, and only the mercy of God sustained them.

Point out how Jesus taught His disciples that the proper way to approach God in prayer was not by relating what we have done, but by pleading for the mercy of God toward us (Luke 18:13).

Show how Paul, too, teaches that we are saved not by what we do, or by our effort, but solely by depending on God who shows mercy (Rom. 9:36).

Point Two: What God has done in Jesus Christ, in mercy toward us, is the sole way of salvation.

You should begin this point by reviewing for them what is taught in Isaiah 53, the heart of the exposition of the gospel according to Isaiah.

Return to Genesis 3:15, the first gospel promise, and from there you can trace the unfolding of God's plan of salvation.

You may point out, for instance, Genesis 22, where Abraham was first taught the doctrine of substitutionary atonement.

Note God's lessons through Moses, connected with the Passover lamb, slain for the sins of the people, and the whole doctrine of the sacrificial system, which pointed to the work of Christ.

Note too, the doctrines connected with the tabernacle, pointing to the whole work of the Christ. (We have studied all of this in the past.)

You could show them that Christ's work is the chief point of the writer of the Book of Hebrews, as he sets about to show how Jesus has fulfilled all the doctrines concerning our salvation as they are contained in the Old Testament (Hebrews chs. 1-13).

You may point to Acts 4:12, which teaches that there is no other means of salvation than through Jesus Christ and also to I Timothy 2:5, which shows that Jesus Christ is the only mediator.

The Old and New Testaments teach the same doctrine: that salvation is through the work of God in Christ Jesus.

Point Three: God's plan of salvation in Christ opens the door to all of God's good purpose for His people.

Start by showing them that this section of Isaiah teaches that once the work of Christ is done, the way is

open to all of the blessings which God has in store for His people. In the Old Testament they are expressed in terms of the greatest agricultural blessings.

Show how, in reality, those blessings are connected with the New Heaven and New Earth of which Isaiah teaches in the closing words of his message (Isa. 65,66).

Remind them that Christ taught that He was the sole Way, Truth, and Life, and the only way to the blessings which God had prepared for His own in heaven (His Father's house) (John 14:1 -6).

Show how Paul, quoting from the Old Testament, reminds us that eye has not seen nor ear heard all that God has yet in store, by way of blessings, for His own people (I Cor. 2:9).

You can point also to I Peter 1, which teaches that there are treasures in heaven—rich inheritances stored up for those who had put their trust in the Lord—treasures that will not fade away as the agricultural blessings to Israel faded away in Old Testament times.

You can conclude by reminding them of a special verse, Eph. 3:4, which shows that all the good purposes of God for His people are to be found in Christ alone.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. The class might cite together instances of God's mercy shown in His dealings with their particular church or denomination.
2. You may wish to lead the class in a discussion of ways in which Christ's gospel is proclaimed by our church other than from the pulpit, and note ways in which all members can participate in these other means of proclamation of the gospel.

LESSON NINE

Remind the class of the perspective of this lesson, immediately following Isaiah's exposition of the gospel, calling for a response on the part of the people who have believed. It is to be a loving response -

Help them to see that the Lord teaches that a loving response is called for in those who have received God's free salvation.

Show how God begins by reminding the believers of what they were, then moving to what they ought to be as God's children.

Point One: God expects all believers to live as His children, not as before.

Point out that Isaiah has begun this whole section by recalling what they were like before God changed their hearts. He contrasted their old life with the life that they ought to be living.

Go back to Abraham's life and remind them of how the Lord called him first out of paganism and then called him to walk before the Lord and be perfect (Gen. 17:1).

Show how, when God had called out Israel from Egypt and set them free and called them to be His children, then, He immediately began to teach them how a child of God ought to live, by the 10 Commandments and other instructions (Ex. 39,20).

Show how the Lord taught Moses, in Exodus 33,34, concerning His image and nature which ought to be reflected in the lives of His children, so that they might glorify Him (Ex. 34:6,7).

You may also point out that our Lord, when He began to call a people to repent and believe in Him, immediately after that began to instruct them in how His followers ought to live for His glory, as in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). He called them to do works worthy of repentance.

Show how Paul, in Romans 12:1-2, after expounding on the gospel in the early chapters, then challenged believers to present as a living sacrifice, the rest of their lives and all they do in their bodies as a spiritual sacrifice to God.

Point Two: All true believers will strive to glorify God by the way they live in the world as His children.

Remind them of how Isaiah begins by lifting up the standards which God had held before His children from the beginning: righteousness and justice (cf. Gen. 18:19).

Point out how the righteous one is described in terms of the fruit he bears, as he meditates on God's Word, applying it to his life, in Psalm 1.

You can point them to Micah 6:8, which summarizes what God expects His children to do.

Show how Paul teaches that we are to bear the image of Christ in our lives, bearing spiritual fruit to His glory, appearing before the world, bearing the image of God (Rom. 8:29; Gal. 5:22,23).

Show how Paul challenges every believer to press on toward this goal of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Ph. 3:8-16).

Challenge the class to see that true believers are going to wish to express their gratitude to God by the way they live daily, glorifying Him as they show in their lives the image of God which He showed earlier to Moses (Ex. 34:6,7).

Point Three: Right observance of the Lord's Day is the key to faithful living.

Stress the clear importance Isaiah puts on the Sabbath observance and show that this is not some
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new thought in Isaiah.

Return to Genesis 2, where the Lord first established the principle of Sabbath observance by His own resting on the 7th day.

Show how that principle was given to all men, not just to the Israelites, and that the Israelites were practicing it even before the giving of the 4th commandment, as, for example, in respect to their not gathering manna on the Sabbath.

Show how the 4th Commandment stands at the conclusion of three commandments teaching how to honor God. By the fourth commandment, therefore, we have the opportunity to study and reflect on God, His nature and name, and how we may glorify him.

Remind them of how Amos expresses the indifference of the Israelites in his day to the Sabbath and how that is rebuked (Am. 8:5).

Remind them of Christ's own use of the Sabbath and His practice on the Sabbath, as we find it in the gospels. It was His custom to go to the synagogue and worship with God's people on the Sabbath.

Show that the apostles, after Christ's ascension, continued to observe the Sabbath as an integral part of their spiritual life (The Book of Acts).

Review with them how, in the early church, the first day of the week became the Christian Sabbath and that it was called the Lord's Day.

Show how the writer to the Hebrews stresses the importance of observing that day, not neglecting to gather together for worship, showing that this was the means of our learning to grow spiritually (Heb. 10:23-25).

Challenge the class members to review their own use of the Lord's Day—whether they utilize it fully for God's glory or have been guilty of misusing it for their own pleasure.

Suggestions for Discussion:

1. You may lead the class in a discussion of ways in which the lives of Christians in the world today show that they are the children of God.
2. You may also discuss the place of the Lord's Day in the lives of Christians today, and what abuses of the use of that day the church may generally be guilty of condoning today.

LESSON TEN

Help the class to see the necessity of this kind of conclusion to the wonderful message of God's gospel. In the world, the believers in the Lord will have tribulation, they need a hope that will carry them through the trials of this life and into heaven.

Help them to see that God always holds before His children the expectation of a world, some day, which

will be without any evil or evil person. Thus, it is much as the Book of Revelation portrays the end, when all evil has been judged.

Clearly, the Lord wants His children to lift their eyes above the present trials of life, beyond, to their living with Him in the joy of heaven forever.

Point One: Believers must live in hope of the new heaven and new earth while enduring the trials of this world.

Show how Isaiah ends on this important note, after the very long prophecies of his Book. Show that he also began with this same message (ch. 1).

Show how Jesus taught His disciples to think in terms of His coming again to receive them to Himself and talked of preparing a place for them (John 14:1ff.). Remind them that when Jesus spoke of their inheriting the earth, He was speaking not of this present earth, but of the new heavens and new earth, of which Isaiah taught.

Show how this was the hope of all the Old Testament saints as well as of the New Testament, as we can see from the Book of Hebrews (Heb. 11:9,10,13-16; 12:22; 13:14).

Show how Paul teaches us to take our eyes and hope off of the Jerusalem of this world (any earthly inheritance of this world) and to look to the Jerusalem that is above (the new Jerusalem) (Gal. 4:26).

Show how Peter promises us an inheritance that is reserved in heaven for us and toward which we should hope (I Pet. 1:3-9), and then reminds us that this present heaven and earth will pass away, so that we await new heavens and a new earth (II Pet. 3:8-13).

Show how the Book of Revelation shows us that in the end these new heavens and new earth and the New Jerusalem will come for all the saints (Rev. chs. 21-22).

Point Two: Believers ought to look forward to eternal fellowship with the Lord.

Remind them of Isaiah's concept of an eternal Sabbath in heaven (ch. 66).

Then, return them to Ephesians 1:4, which shows that it has been God's eternal purpose to have a people in eternal fellowship with Him through all of history; God has been moving toward the accomplishment of that purpose for His children.

Show how, in creation, God had the plan of a people to share eternity with Him in fellowship, and that, after sin entered the world, He immediately began to execute a plan of redemption, to the end that His purpose would not fail.

Remind them of the importance God puts on the presence of the Lord with His people always, from the
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time of His fellowship with Abraham, and later Moses, until the coming of Jesus Christ and His sending His Holy Spirit to live in each believer, till He comes to receive them all to His home forever.

Remind them of Paul's genuine longing rather to leave this world and to be with the Lord, but also his willingness to live in the world for a time, for the good of God's people, always with the hope of going home to be with the Lord (II Cor. 5:6-8).

Point Three: Believers in the world must accept, too, the reality of eternal punishment for all unbelievers.

Stress to the class that it is just as important to believe the reality of hell as it is to believe the reality of heaven.

Show how Isaiah, at the beginning and ending of his message, speaks of the eternal burning of the wicked (chs. 1,66).

Show how death entered into the world at the very beginning of man's history and that God warned man of that death (not just physical, but spiritual separation from God forever) (Gen. 2,3).

Remind them how even Balaam realized that there was a difference between the death of the righteous and the death of the unrighteous (Num. 23:10).

Show that the prophets continually speak of judgment by fire, from Joel on.

Point them to Daniel 12:2, which teaches clearly of the eternal punishment of the wicked.

Show the place Jesus gives to the teaching regarding the lake of fire, using some of Isaiah's terminology, and speaks of the Gehenna (Hell) to which all unbelievers shall go.

Note for them how plainly the Book of Revelation warns of this terrible end for all unbelievers, together with Satan and his angels (Rev. 20).

Suggestions for discussion:

1. Ask the class to consider together the emphasis today (or lack of it) among members of the church on our heavenly inheritance and hope.
2. Have them discuss how this hope helps us cope with death and changes the significance of death for believers.
3. You may also have them discuss the attention given in the church today—and in Christian literature—to the subject and reality of hell.

LESSON ELEVEN

Remind the class that Micah is a later contemporary of Isaiah and that his prophecy is mentioned specifically in the prophecy of Jeremiah,

which comes nearly a century later.

Help them to realize that in the first part of Micah his concern is primarily with the failures of the leadership and that, therefore, this lesson will focus on that particular problem in the church, throughout its history.

Point One: Evil leaders rise in the church when the people have refused to follow true leaders and do not repent of their sins.

Remind them that we have seen that there were many leaders rising in the days of Isaiah and Micah who were false, such as Ahaz. Since the people had not really responded to good leaders, such as Uzziah and Jotham, who had reigned for a long period of time, this paved the way for an Ahaz to rise.

Show that the rise of men like the leaders of the periods of the judges was due to the people not following Moses and Joshua as they had been taught.

You can point to Saul, who rose when the people rejected a godly man like Samuel, who had led them so faithfully, and demanded a leader like the rest of the nations.

Similarly, because the people did not follow the example of David, they received the lesser and corrupt leadership of Solomon and Rehoboam, his son.

The corrupt leadership of Ahab's day came because the people refused to follow Elijah and Elisha, until it grew worse and worse; and finally, all the leadership in Israel was corrupt and Samaria fell.

Show that a similar thing happened in Judah too. There, because such men as Hezekiah and Josiah were not followed and such prophets as Isaiah and Jeremiah were not honored and obeyed, in the end, Jerusalem had to be carried away into captivity.

You can point out that in Christ's day it was the same. Because the people turned from Christ and followed the Pharisees, they were led to crucify the Lord of glory.

Point them to Paul's warning that in the last days pastors would face a situation when the people wished for corrupt leaders and would not listen to the truth.

Churches have only themselves to blame when they are led by evil leaders.

You can show, too, how the Lord warns the churches of Asia Minor, which were beginning to follow corrupt leadership, turning from what Paul and John had taught them for so long and so faithfully.

Help the class to see that good leadership in the church is not the responsibility chiefly on the seminaries, but of the church.

Point Two: God's people must be able to discern between true and false leaders.

Remind them of the confusion that arose in the days of Isaiah and which lasted until the fall of Jerusalem, in Jeremiah's day: confusion between who were the true and false prophets.

Remind them that both the true and false used the same terminology and that the false seemed to be true, to the majority, so that majority opinion is not the way we properly discern the truth.

Remind them of the tests which we find in Deuteronomy, pertaining to the testing of true and false prophets, which show that ultimately, the way to test and discern between true and false teachers and leaders is by what God's Word says, compared with what they are teaching—Compare the days when Elijah had to face the false prophets of his day and called the people to choose and to discern.

You can also mention Jeremiah and the false prophets of his day who said "Peace, peace," but who promised only a false peace, not based on Scripture but on their lies.

Show that Jesus Christ faced the false leaders of his day and called the people to discern, as they knew God's Word. He openly chided His enemies, saying that they erred not knowing the Scriptures (Matt. 22:29).

Remind them of how the Berean church tested all that Paul said by Scripture to see whether he was a true preacher of God's truth (Acts 17:10ff.).

You can also note that in Christ's words to the 7 churches of Asia Minor (Rev. 2,3), He chided them for allowing false doctrines into the church.

Challenge the class to be aware of their individual responsibilities to test all that is taught in their church, by God's Word.

Point Three: Corrupt leadership can lead to the destruction of the entire church.

Start by reminding them that the corrupt leadership about which Micah was so greatly concerned in his day ultimately led to the fall of Jerusalem.

You can take them back to the time of the wilderness wanderings and remind them of how Korah would have led the people from Moses to their destruction if he had been permitted to get away with his rebellion.

Show how the era of the judges was one in which corrupt leadership led the people into paganism and that Israel would have been destroyed totally, but for the grace of God.

Show how the people sinned in asking for another leader than God and were then led by Saul, who led the people to defeat before their enemies.

You can point to the same kind of corrupt leadership in the days of Solomon and his son,

Rehoboam, which led to the division of the church.

Show how, in Israel, the northern kingdom, the leadership increasingly corrupted so that in the end there were no true leaders and no hope; all had fled south who truly believed.

You can point out how, later, Manasseh was so bad that God determined to overthrow Judah.

Also, during the time of Malachi, it is evident that the priests were leading the people back toward a false life, contrary to God's Word; and so, for 400 years, God was silent.

Point out how Paul shows that the Jews, under corrupt leadership, lost the right to be the people of God and were rejected (cut off) (Rom. 11:1-20). Then, point out that Paul warns the Gentile Christians that the same thing can happen to them (Rom. 11:21-22).

Compare the words of Christ to the Ephesians church, in Rev. 2:5, where He warns that they can be set aside if they do not return to the Lord.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You may wish to lead the class in an exploration of their church, asking what kind of leadership they have deserved because of their receptivity, or lack of it, toward good leaders of the past.
2. You could also lead the class in a discussion of their readiness, as a people of God, to examine what is taught in that church weekly. Do they adequately know Scripture to be able to tell when the messages and teachings are true to the Word?

LESSON TWELVE

Point out to the class that the overall theme of this lesson will be our hope in the Lord alone, in the light of the fact that leaders will and do fail.

You can remind them of how Micah,' particularly in the latter part of his writing, relies on Isaiah's writing.

Point One: Believers rest their hope on God's defeat of our enemy rather than on human leadership.

Show how, in Micah's day, he teaches the people to look to God and what He can and will do for them, rather than become discouraged and quit.

Show how, from the beginning, God has been calling His people to look to Him, since the time of Adam's failure and His promise in Genesis 3:15.

Help them to see that Noah was saved not by his efforts but by God's grace and that Abraham learned that he did not defeat the enemy in his day by his strength but solely by God's help, so that all glory ought to go to the Lord.

Show how Jacob learned his lesson and quit trusting in himself and in his cleverness and turned to the Lord for help.

Show how Israel was helpless in Egypt until the Lord had compassion on them and did something about their predicament.

You can note, too, how Moses and Joshua led the people to look to God as their deliverer, and in the battles, gave all glory to the Lord.

You can note, too, how Samuel, in I Sam. 7, taught the people to recognize that in their victories they should see that they had God's help.

You can point out that the difference between Saul's outlook and the view of David was that Saul thought that he was able to win victories himself and did not need God—he lost. David, however, looked to God as His protector and savior, as his psalms show.

Note how even a corrupt king of Israel recognized that Elijah and Elisha were better for Israel than all of her chariots and horsemen, since he led the people to trust in God.

Show how in the New Testament this doctrine culminates by showing us the person and work of Jesus Christ—God come in the flesh—the second Adam, who will not fail as the first Adam did.

Point Two: The hope of believers rests on God's compassion, not on what they deserve.

You can again remind them of God's salvation of Noah and Abraham, not based on what they deserved, but on His grace and love.

Show too that the Exodus was due solely to God's compassion on His people in Egypt.

Mention the beautiful chapters of the prophets—Isaiah 53, Jeremiah 31, Daniel 12—which all tell of what God will do for us through His Son, based on His love.

Remind them that Jesus Christ is portrayed in the New Testament as God in the flesh, come to do all that

He has promised in the Old Testament out of His great love for the whole world.

Help them to remember that at the end of the first century, the church, as we see it through the examples of the churches of Asia Minor (Rev. 2,3), is a church that has little promise, humanly speaking.

Therefore, we are forced to look to the future, from the first century till the close of history, not with great expectations from men but from God.

Suggestions for discussion:

1. You can discuss the place of hope in your church and how this hope enables us to continue to persevere in the faith, although men may fail.
2. Help the class to discuss the failures of their own church and denomination and to think through the difference between recognizing that the church does fail and using that as an excuse not to give our support to the church.

LESSON THIRTEEN

A Review Lesson:

Part I, the test, may be done at home or in the class, individually or together. If the class is not disposed to do it at all, this entire part may be omitted; however, it is an excellent opportunity for the class to review what has been covered and to see whether they have grasped some of the significant truths in this quarter of study. You, as the teacher, ought to encourage all to test their progress. Working together in the classroom may be a good way to handle this, to encourage the others. If tests are taken individually, it is best not to make the results known publicly.

The questions have been arranged so that the pupils may check the answers in the lessons. Questions are by the lessons, for easier reference.

Below, you will find the answers to the questions.

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|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 16. F | 31. T | 46. T | 61. T |
| 2. T | 17. T | 32. F | 47. T | 62. T |
| 3. T | 18. T | 33. F | 48. T | 63. F |
| 4. T | 19. F | 34. T | 49. T | 64. F |
| 5. F | 20. T | 35. T | 50. F | 65. T |
| 6. T | 21. F | 36. T | 51. T | 66. F |
| 7. T | 22. F | 37. T | 52. F | 67. F |
| 8. T | 23. T | 38. F | 53. F | 68. F |
| 9. T | 24. F | 39. T | 54. F | 69. F |
| 10. F | 25. T | 40. T | 55. F | 70. T |
| 11. T | 26. F | 41. T | 56. T | 71. F |
| 12. T | 27. F | 42. T | 57. T | 72. T |
| 13. T | 28. F | 43. T | 58. F | 73. F |
| 14. F | 29. T | 44. T | 59. T | 74. F |
| 15. F | 30. F | 45. F | 60. T | 75. T |

76. T	81. T	86. T	91. F	96. F
77. T	82. T	87. F	92. T	97. T
78. F	83. F	88. T	93. T	98. T
79. T	84. T	89. T	94. F	99. F
80. T	85. T	90. T	95. T	100. T

Part II, the review of the quarter on the basis of Ephesians 1:4, ought not to be omitted: and if there is not time in class to go over this content, because of the test, then urge the class to read and reflect on what is summarized in this section at home. It may be useful simply to read these paragraphs in class and have discussion of them afterwards.