

28. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is a Spirit?
29. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these truths?
30. Q. What does the Epistle of James teach us in this respect?
31. Q. How are we to worship God?
32. Q. What does Jesus teach us in this statement?

Lesson Four

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Scripture Reading: Isa. 55:6-11, Psalm 139:7-10.

Scripture to Memorize: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).

33. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely perfect?
- A. We mean that God is not like created things who are good only in part or measure, but that God unites in Himself all perfections without measure or bounds.
34. Q. What do we mean by the Attributes of God?
- A. By the Attributes of God, we mean the Perfections of the Divine Nature.
35. Q. What are the Attributes of God?
- A. These: God is eternal, unchangeable, omniscient, all-wise, omnipresent and omnipotent; infinitely holy, just, and good; infinitely true and faithful; infinitely merciful and longsuffering.
36. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?
- A. We mean that God is, always; that He has always been and will always be; that He is without beginning and without end.

God is self-existent. It is His nature to be. Cf. Exo. 3:14—"I AM THAT I AM." Psa. 90:2—"Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

37. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is unchangeable?

A. We mean that He is eternally the same, without any change in His nature or attributes, or variation from His eternal purpose and plan.

"All change must be to better or to worse. But God is absolute perfection, and no change to better is possible. Change to worse would be equally inconsistent with perfection. No cause for such change exists, either outside of God or in God Himself" (Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 257). Psa. 102:27—"thou art the same." Mal. 3:6—"I, Jehovah, change not." Jas. 1:17—"The Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." Isa. 46:10—"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

38. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omniscient?

A. We mean that He is all-knowing; in the sense that He knows all things, past, present and future; and in the sense also that He knows our inmost desires and thoughts.

Psa. 147:4—"He counteth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." 1 Sam. 16:7—"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart." Prov. 15:3—"The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good." Acts 15:8—"God, who knoweth the heart," etc. Heb. 4:13—"there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

39. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is all-wise?

A. We mean that He knows how to ordain and dispose all things in the best manner to attain His purposes and ends.

Isa. 46:9, 10—"I am God, and there is none like me; de-

claring the end from the beginning." Psa. 147:5—"His understanding is infinite." Examples: the deliverance of Noah; the saving of the child Moses; the humiliation and exaltation of Joseph; works wrought through the Hebrew people; the saving of the Infant Jesus from Herod's wrath, etc. Eph. 3:11—"according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Do you suppose that God is interested in our own selfish desires and schemes?)

40. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipresent?

A. We mean that He is everywhere, and everywhere at one and the same time.

(1) Spirit is unlimited by our poor conceptions of time and space. Illustrate this by your own experience in a dream. In that subconscious state you re-live many of the experiences of a lifetime, in just a few seconds; or perhaps take a long journey in the time that would be required for a clock to tick. (2) Jer. 23:23, 24—"Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah." (3) Psa. 139:7-10, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (4) Acts 17:28—"he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being."

"Speak to Him then, for He hears, and spirit with Spirit can meet;

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." (Tennyson)

(5) How comforting the realization of His ever-presence! Not only "an ever-present help in time of trouble," not only "a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night," but also a real Friend, so close that one has but to reach out his hands and feel His presence, so to speak; always near to

hear the cry of His children, to deliver them from the evil one, to lift them up when they have fallen, and to guide them day by day if they will but accept His guidance. One who loves. One who cares. One who rescues. One who forgives. One who redeems. One whose presence fills Heaven, earth, and all places.

41. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipotent?

A. We mean that He is all-powerful, or almighty; that He can do anything He wills to do, and has only to will it and the thing is done.

(1) Gen. 17:1—"I am God Almighty." Isa. 44:24—"I am Jehovah, that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth." Heb. 1:3—"upholding all things by the word of his power." Psa. 33:9—"for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Psa. 115:3—"He hath done whatsoever he pleased." Psa. 135:6—"Whatsoever Jehovah pleased, that hath he done." Eph. 1:11—"who worketh all things after the counsel of his will." Matt. 19:26—"with God all things are possible" (Jesus). Matt. 3:9—"God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (2) Examples: the Creation; the wonders in Egypt and in the Wilderness; the miracles wrought through holy men of old, and through Jesus and His apostles. Acts 2:22—"a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you." (3) It is understood of course that God must of necessity always act consistently, and therefore never in opposition to His own nature, attributes, or ends. Heb. 6:18—"in which it is impossible for God to lie." Tit. 1:2—"God, who cannot lie." For instance, it would be impossible for an irresistible force to be brought to bear upon an immovable object, for both such a force and such an object would be infinite, and Infinity is never self-contradictory. God never acts in opposition to Himself or His own ends.

42. Q. What lessons should be impressed upon our minds by these great truths about God?

- A. Three lessons, especially: 1. That we should strive at all times to do good and to keep ourselves from evil; 2. That we should under all circumstances trust in God implicitly; and 3. That we should under all circumstances and conditions be resigned to His dispensations.

Psa. 23:1—"Jehovah is my shepherd: I shall not want."
 Eph. 3:20—"unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." John 10:14—"I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me." Psa. 23:4—"I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FOUR

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35. Q. What are the Attributes of God?
36. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?
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41. Q. What do we mean when we say that God is omnipotent?
42. Q. What lessons should be impressed upon our minds by these great truths about God?

Lesson Five

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (Concluded)

Scripture Reading: Psalm 145.

Scriptures To Memorize: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).