

Lesson Twenty-Seven
THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION

Scripture Reading: Gen. 3:9-21.

Scripture to Memorize: "And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:14-15).

1. **Q.** Do the Scriptures teach that man in his present state is totally depraved?
- A.** They teach that he is depraved in consequence of his estrangement from God, but not that he is totally depraved.

(1) Man in his present unnatural state is alienated from God by sin, and consequently more or less depraved. Eph. 2:3—"among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath." Col. 1:21—"and you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works," etc. Paul describes the depravity of heathen nations, in Rom. 1:24-32. Cf. Jude 4, 8, 10-16, 18-19, etc. (2) Man is not totally depraved however, i. e., "wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body," as the creeds give it. If man were totally depraved, he would be hopelessly lost; and all the overtures issuing from God's love, all efforts of the Holy Spirit to touch his heart and quicken it to repentance and obedience, and all proclamations of the gospel designed to convict him of sin and of righteousness and judgment, would all be in vain. (3) The devil and his angels are of course totally depraved. But the precise degree of man's spiritual derangement is no-

where clearly indicated in scripture. "But that it is of the positive or comparative and not of the superlative grade, is evident from our own daily observation and experience. Nothing is more common than to see wicked men growing worse and worse under the influence of their own personal transgressions. But if all men were as bad by nature as sin can make them, there could, of course, be no progress in human depravity. . . . The presumptuous sin committed against the Holy Spirit is a personal sin, and it is this, and this only, which fills up a man's cup of iniquity and makes him totally depraved" (Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, p. 58). See Matt. 12:31-32.

2. Q. In view of man's ability, even in his present fallen state, to respond to the overtures and calls of God, what has God done for him?

A. God has worked out a Plan of Redemption for him.

3. Q. Why did God work out a Plan of Redemption for man?

A. God worked out a Plan of Redemption for man because He loves him.

Because man lapsed into sin and was in danger of perishing in sin for ever, God, out of His great love for him, planned and worked out a plan to avert such a tragedy. John 3:16, 17—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him." Rom. 5:8—"But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Eph. 2:4—"but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us," etc. 1 John 4:10—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Emphasize the fact that if men reject these

gifts and calls of God, they will perish forever, in hell, the penitentiary of the moral universe.

4. Q. When did God first intimate that He proposed to redeem man?

A. He intimated it immediately after the temptation and fall of our first parents.

Gen. 3:14, 15—"and Jehovah God said unto the serpent . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

5. Q. To whom did this mysterious oracle specifically allude?

A. It alluded to Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

(1) "In this very mysterious and sublime oracle we have evidently a double reference: 1. To the natural enmity that has ever existed between mankind and the serpent kind; 2. To the warfare that is still carried on between Christ, who is in the highest and most appropriate sense the Seed of the woman, and Satan, who is here symbolically represented by the serpent . . . and here we have, therefore, the first recorded promise of mercy to fallen man. Here began that mighty conflict which is symbolically represented by the enmity that exists between mankind and the serpent kind, but which will not be fully consummated till Christ, the Seed of the woman, shall have completely vanquished Satan and all his host of rebel followers" (Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, pp. 64-66). (2) 1 John 3:8—"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Rom. 16:20—"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." See Heb. 2:14-15, Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10.

6. Q. In what special sense was Jesus the Seed of the woman?

A. In the sense that He was the Seed of a woman exclusively, i. e., He had no human father.

Isa. 7:14—"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Matt. 1:20—"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Luke 1:35—"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God." Gal. 4:4—"but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law," etc. Cf. Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1-3, 14; 1 Tim. 3:16, etc. Emphasize here the significance of the Virgin Birth. Jesus was the only person who ever came before the world of whom it is claimed that He was the Seed of a woman exclusively.

7. Q. What would have become of man, if God had not worked out a Plan of Redemption for him?
- A. He would have been lost forever; because, if God had not provided a sufficient Atonement for the sins of the world, no human being could ever have been saved.

Without the sufficient Atonement for sin which was provided by Divine grace in the suffering and death of the Lamb of God (John 1:29), there would be for mankind nothing but "a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:27).

8. Q. Why could no human being ever have been saved, if God had not provided an Atonement for sin?
- A. Because Divine Justice required an offering adequate to satisfy the Divine government and to sustain the majesty of the Divine law which was violated when man sinned; and no creature, least of all man, was able to provide such an offering.

This all becomes quite clear when once we realize that sin is

transgression of the Divine law, and not of human law. This is an essential truth quite generally overlooked by people of our day and age, who seem to have lost all sense of the true nature of sin and its tragic consequences. Consequently no offering that is of the earth or of earthly origin, no offering that man might bring, could be a sufficient satisfaction for the transgression of Divine law. This is the reason why Cain's offering was rejected; it was an offering of the ground, earthly, and consequently inadequate. See Gen. 4:1-8. In view of man's inability, therefore, to provide an adequate atonement for sin, God provided it for him, i. e., God did for man what man could not do for himself. Otherwise man would have been lost for ever. Cf. *Psa.* 89:14—"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne." In view of these sublime truths, our rejection or neglect of God's matchless gifts extended us through Jesus Christ, becomes utterly inexcusable!

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON TWENTY-SEVEN

1. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that man in his present state is totally depraved?
2. Q. In view of man's ability, even in his present fallen state, to respond to the overtures and calls of God, what has God done for him?
4. Q. When did God first intimate that He proposed to redeem man?
5. Q. To whom did this mysterious oracle specifically allude?
6. Q. In what special sense was Jesus the Seed of the woman?
7. Q. What would have become of man, if God had not worked out a Plan of Redemption for him?
8. Q. Why could no human being ever have been saved, if God had not provided an Atonement for sin?

Lesson Twenty-Eight
THE ELEMENTS OF TRUE RELIGION

Scripture Reading: Eph. 2:11-22.

Scripture to Memorize: "That he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross" (Eph. 2:15, 16). "But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

9. Q. What was the first necessary step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man?
- A. The first necessary step was to reveal the elementary principles, laws and institutions of true religion.
10. Q. What is true religion?
- A. True religion is the system of means of reconciliation whereby man is bound anew to God in covenant relationship.

(1) "Religion, as the term imports, began after the Fall; for it indicates a previous apostasy. A remedial system is for a diseased subject. The primitive man could love, wonder and adore, as angels now do, without religion; but man, fallen and apostate, needs religion in order to his restoration to the love and worship and enjoyment of God. Religion, then, is a system of means of reconciliation—an institution for bringing man back to God—something to bind man anew to love and delight in God" (A. Campbell, **Christian Sys-**