

LESSON 26 (Second Epistle of Peter - Lesson 10). – December 29, 1888.

2 PETER 3:13-18.

I. GIVE a statement of some of the things that will take place in the day of the, Lord. [2 Peter 3:10]

2. To what condition will the earth be reduced? 2 Peter 3 : 10, 12.

3. Notwithstanding this, for what may we confidently look? Verse 13.

4. Where is this promise recorded? Isa. 65 : 17.

5. What is said of the beauty of the new earth? Isa. 35 : 1, 2 ; 51 : 3.

6. What class of people shall live in it? Isa. 60 : 21; 2 Peter 3 : 13.

7. How long will they possess it? Isa. 60 : 21 ; Ps. 37 : 29; Dan. 7 : 18.

8. Will they be troubled by disease? Isa. 33 : 24.

9. What change will be wrought in the righteous ones who now are afflicted? Isa. 35:5, 6.

10. What is said of the peace and quiet of that land? Isa. 32 : 17, 19 ; 54 : 13, 14; 60: 18.

11. How will the people stand related to the great Source of wisdom and peace? Isa. 54 : 13; Rev. 21 :3, 4; 22 : 3, 4.

12. Seeing we look for such glorious things when Christ comes, what should we do? 2 Peter 3 : 14.

13. How should we regard the fact that God has so long delayed the great consummation? Verses 9, 15.

14. What apostle besides Peter has said much about the second coming of Christ? Verse 15, last part.

15. How extensively does Peter say that Paul has spoken of these things? Verse 16.

16. Is there one of Paul's epistles which does not refer to the second coming of Christ and the Judgment?

17. What epistles contain a mention of this event in every chapter?

Ans.—The epistles to the Thessalonians.

18. In view, of the glorious future that is promised to the righteous, and the great wickedness that will prevail just before the Lord comes, of what should we beware? 2 Peter 3 : 17.

19. In view of the failures of God's people in the past, what warning is given us? 1 Cor. 10:12.

20. How alone can we keep from being led away by the error of the, wicked? 2 Peter 3 : 18.

21. To whom and for what should we ascribe glory? Ib., Jude 24, 25.

NOTES.

IN the epistles of Paul there are "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction." Notice that it is not said that there is anything in Paul's epistles that is impossible to be understood. It is only "hard to be understood." But that which is hard to be understood may be understood by hard study. Moreover it is only the unlearned and unstable that wrest them to their own destruction. The double-minded, or unstable, will take the strongest statements concerning the law and the gospel, and will construe them so as to make them teach the abolition of the law and consequently of the gospel. It is only the "unlearned," those who do not look beneath the surface, who do this. Those who delight in the law of God, and who know Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," have a key with which they may unlock any of the mysteries of that most profound writer. Notice further, also, that those who wrest the words of Paul out of their legitimate meaning, do the same thing also to the other scriptures.

"BUT grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This text is misquoted in two ways. A very common misquotation is, "Grow in knowledge of the truth." There is no such text to be found in the Bible, although this text amounts to the same thing, because Christ is the truth, as well as the way and the life. John 14 : 6. The poet says of Christ,— "In thy life the law appears Drawn out in living characters."

He was the law personified. If one wishes to know just how much righteousness the law of God requires, he has only to study the life and character of Christ. All the beauty and holiness of Christ were simply the manifestation of the law of love which prompted every act. It is in the life and death of Christ that we can get more exalted ideas of the holiness and majesty of God's law. If we do not grow in knowledge of Christ, we can never have the law written in our hearts, for it is only in him that we can be made the righteousness of God. 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

Another misquotation is sometimes heard in prayers to Christ, that we may "grow in grace and in thy knowledge." The idea seems to be that we must grow in the knowledge that Christ has, so as to approach him in wisdom. But this is not the proper idea. We are simply and literally to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We must know him intimately. He must sup with us, and we with him; but he must be a constant companion, and not a transient guest. And in proportion as we know him intimately, know him as a friend, loving and true, know him as the "chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely," we shall develop that purity of heart which will enable us to see God; for Christ cannot be comprehended except as we become like him.

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 When great and wise men had proved to their satisfaction that it was impossible for the world to be destroyed by water, when the fears of the people were quieted, when all regarded Noah's prophecy as a delusion, and looked upon him as a fanatic--then it was that God's time had come. "The fountains of the great deep" were "broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and the scoffers were overwhelmed in the waters of the Flood. With all their boasted philosophy, men found too late that their wisdom was foolishness, that the Lawgiver is greater than the laws of nature, and that Omnipotence is at no loss for means to accomplish His purposes. "As it was in the days of Noah," "even thus shall it be in the days when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26, 30. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10. When the reasoning of philosophy has banished the fear of God's judgments; when religious teachers are pointing forward to long ages of peace and prosperity, and the world are absorbed in their rounds of business and pleasure, planting and building, feasting and merrymaking, rejecting God's warnings and mocking His messengers--then it is that sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. 1 Thessalonians 5:3. {PP 103.3}

#2 The day of the Lord is at hand, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and all the cities of the earth shall be destroyed. Christ, escorted by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels, shall come in the clouds of heaven. The righteous dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and rise from their graves to immortal life, and we that are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so be forever with the Lord. In view of these great and solemn events we are exhorted to be diligent that we may be "found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." {ST, February 10, 1888 par. 2}

#3 The earth promised to the meek will not be like this, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." "There shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him." 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 22:3. {Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing 17.3}

#4 (No comment.)

#5 In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. [Hebrews 11:14-16.] There the heavenly Shepherd leads his flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the widespreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home. {GC88 675.1}

"My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: . . . mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." [Isaiah 32:18; 60:18; 65:21, 22.] {GC88 675.2}

There, "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." [Isaiah 35:1; 55:13.] "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard

shall lie down with the kid; . . . and a little child shall lead them." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.] saith the Lord. {GC88 675.3}

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of Heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. . . . for the former things are passed away." [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.] "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.] {GC88 676.1}

It is then that the peaceful and long-desired kingdom of the Messiah shall be established under the whole heaven. "The Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called My Delight, and thy land Beulah." "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." [Isaiah 51:3; 35:2; 62:4, 5 (MARGIN).] {GC88 301.4}

#6 As the prophet beholds the redeemed dwelling in the city of God, free from sin and from all marks of the curse, in rapture he exclaims: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her." Isaiah 66:10. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 22}

"Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isaiah 60:18-21. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 23}

"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." {5T 692.4}

#7 The great plan of redemption results in fully bringing back the world into God's favor. All that was lost by sin is restored. Not only man but the earth is redeemed, to be the eternal abode of the obedient. For six thousand years Satan has struggled to maintain possession of the earth. Now God's original purpose in its creation is accomplished. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." {AH 539.3}

God's original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal abode of the redeemed. "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." The time has come to which holy men have looked with longing since the flaming sword barred the first pair from Eden--the time for "the redemption of the purchased possession." The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. {AH 540.1}

#8 Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of Heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, . . . for the former things are passed away." [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.] "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.] {GC88 676.1}

#9 The voice of the Son of God is heard calling forth the sleeping saints; and as the prophet beholds them coming from the prison house of death, he exclaims: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 17}

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isaiah 35:5, 6. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 18}

#10 "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Christ will be to his people all that these words express if they will heed the invitation to come to him. He will be to them life and power, strength and efficiency, wisdom and holiness. God calls upon us to live the Christ-life, to reveal this life to the world. When we do this, prejudice will vanish, and difficulties will adjust themselves. We shall gather about the great Missionary, our hearts filled with gratitude and love. {RH, November 24, 1904 par. 14}

In the words, "They shall be all taught of God," Jesus referred to the prophecy of Isaiah: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isaiah 54:13. This scripture the Jews appropriated to themselves. It was their boast that God was their teacher. But Jesus showed how vain is this claim; for He said, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." Only through Christ could they receive a knowledge of the Father. Humanity could not endure the vision of His glory. Those who had learned of God had been listening to the voice of His Son, and in Jesus of Nazareth they would recognize Him who through nature and revelation has declared the Father. {DA 387.5}

(Also see quotes for #5)

#11 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." This is the company with whom we desire to stand. Then let us show it by our works, and remove from our hearts everything that will shut out Jesus. The latter rain is to fall upon the people of God. A mighty angel is to come down from heaven, and the whole earth is to be lighted with his glory. Are we ready to take part in the glorious work of the third angel? Are our vessels ready to receive the heavenly dew? Have we defilement and sin in the heart? If so, let us cleanse the soul temple, and prepare for the showers of the latter rain. The refreshing from the presence of the Lord will never come to hearts filled with impurity. May God help us to die to self, that Christ, the hope of glory, may be formed within! I must have the Spirit of God in my heart. I can never go forward to do the great work of God, unless the Holy Spirit rests upon my soul. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." The day of judgment is upon us. O that we may wash our robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb! {RH, April 21, 1891 par. 11}

The earth promised to the meek will not be like this, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." "There shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him." 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 22:3. {MB 17.3}

#12 The little while of tarrying is almost ended. The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home. Let the blessed hope of our Saviour's soon appearing inspire us with fresh courage, and give vigor to every Christian grace. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." Basel, Switzerland. {RH, October 26, 1886 par. 14}

#13 The reason why the Bridegroom delays is because he is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance. O the precious longsuffering of our merciful Saviour! O that each of the dear youth would appreciate the value of the soul that has been purchased at infinite cost on Calvary! O that each one would place a proper estimate upon the capabilities that have been given him of God! Through Christ you may climb the ladder of progress, and bring every power under the control of Jesus. You may represent the character of Jesus. In spirit, in thought, in word, and in action, you may make manifest that you are moved by the Spirit of Christ, and your life may wield a power of influence over others. {YI, September 20, 1894 par. 6}

#14 "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found to him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you. . . . Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." {RH, September 26, 1912 par. 9}

In the providence of God, Peter was permitted to close his ministry in Rome, where his imprisonment was ordered by the emperor Nero about the time of Paul's final arrest. Thus the two veteran apostles, who for many years had been widely separated in their labors, were called upon to bear their last witness for Christ in the world's metropolis, and upon its soil to shed their blood as the seed of a vast harvest of saints and martyrs. {RH, September 26, 1912 par. 10}

#15 (No comment)

#16 The power of Christ, the crucified Saviour, to give eternal life, should be presented to the people. We should show them that the Old Testament is as verily the gospel in types and shadows as the New Testament is in its unfolding power. The New Testament does not present a new religion; the Old Testament does not present a religion to be superseded by the New. The New Testament is only the advancement and unfolding of the Old. Abel was a believer in Christ, and was as verily saved by His power as was Peter or Paul. Enoch was a representative of Christ as surely as was the beloved disciple John. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. To him was committed the message of the second coming of Christ. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude 14, 15. The message preached by Enoch and his translation to heaven were a convincing argument to all who lived in his time. These things were an argument that Methuselah and Noah could use with power to show that the righteous could be translated. {6T 392.1}

#17 (No comment)

#18 We should show our faith by our works. A greater anxiety should be manifested to have a large measure of the spirit of Christ; for in this will be the strength of the church. It is Satan who is striving to have God's children draw apart. Love, oh, how little love we have--love for God and for one another! The word and spirit of truth, dwelling in our hearts, will separate us from the world. The immutable principles of truth and love will bind heart to heart, and the strength of the union will be according to the measure of grace and truth enjoyed. Well would it be for us each to hold up the mirror, God's royal law, and see in it the reflection of His own character. Let us be careful not to neglect the danger signals and the warnings given in His word. Unless heed is given to these warnings, and defects of character are overcome, these defects will overcome those who possess them, and they will fall into error, apostasy, and open sin. The mind that is not elevated to the highest standard will in time lose its power to retain that which it had once gained. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." {5T 537.2}

#19 "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Corinthians 10:11, 12. Satan well knows the material with which he has to deal in the human heart. He knows--for he has studied with fiendish intensity for thousands of years--the points most easily assailed in every character; and through successive generations he has wrought to overthrow the strongest men, princes in Israel, by the same temptations that were so successful at Baalpeor. All along through the ages there are strewn wrecks of character that have been stranded upon the rocks of sensual indulgence. As we approach the close of time, as the people of God stand upon the borders of the heavenly Canaan, Satan will, as of old, redouble his efforts to prevent them from entering the goodly land. He lays his snares for every soul. It is not the ignorant and uncultured merely that need to be guarded; he will prepare his temptations for those in the highest positions, in the most holy office; if he can lead them to pollute their souls, he can through them destroy many. And he employs the same agents now as he employed three thousand years ago. By worldly friendships, by the charms of beauty, by pleasure seeking, mirth, feasting, or the wine cup, he tempts to the violation of the seventh commandment. {PP 457.3}

#20 Peter exhorts his brethren to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." [2 Peter 3:18.] Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion. {GW 297.2}

#21 "And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" [Jude 18, 17, 21-23]. Let those who claim to have great light and spiritual knowledge be careful that their garments are not defiled. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever" [Jude 24, 25]. {19MR 106.1}