

Lesson 11

THE BIBLE

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO STUDY THE BIBLE?

INTRODUCTION

People now as never before have a crying need to return to the precepts of the Bible and obey it! The departure from its principles has brought decay in morals, disarray to families, and departure from peace and tranquility in our nation. I believe that the Psalmist was right when he said, ***“Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah...”*** (Psa. 33:12). Also Prov. 14:34 says, ***“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”*** It has been the rejection of the Bible as the word of God that has produced the problems mentioned above. The only way to bring an end to those problems is to return to God and His word. The Bible is the answer for all problems connected with sin, and is the only way to re-establish the fullness of salvation’s joy in the hearts of both alien sinners and those who need to renew their commitment to God.

God made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7), thereby making man a thinking, intelligent being with the power to choose. To help man, God has given a book adapted to his understanding, to lead and guide him in all his endeavors. But without studying the Bible man cannot benefit from the knowledge revealed therein. In 2 Tim 2:15, Paul said, ***“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*** (KJV). Peter urged Christians to ***“...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”*** 2 Pet 3:18 (KJV).

Since Satan tempted and seduced Eve, and she gave to Adam to eat, sin has been the disturber of the peace of mankind! All heartaches, sickness, sorrow, disappointments, family problems, and death in our world, can be traced to the beginning of the entrance of sin into the world! It is imperative that we study the will of God, the Bible, which not only declares the origin, degradation, and ruin of sin, but also the way of salvation provided by God through Jesus Christ. Since sin separates from God (Isa. 59:1-2) the ***“word of reconciliation”*** is the only means provided to bring lost man back into the favor of God (Rom. 1:16-17; II Cor. 5:17-21).

Though there are many books in the world no book has ever elevated man and woman in the same way as the Bible. Even though there are some helpful books in the world, for every ray of truth they contain, we should be aware that they are indebted to the Bible for that ray of truth. Since God from the beginning of creation has shown His sovereign right to judge His creatures, and since He has given us the Book by which we will be judged, then we should understand the importance of studying His unequalled, holy, and heaven-breathed message. Paul wrote in 2 Tim 3:16-17, ***“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*** (KJV) No one who reads, studies, and obeys this Book of books, has any reason to fear a merciful and just judgment before God.

Notice that the passage above, II Tim. 3:16-17, teaches that we are ***“thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*** That means that the Bible sufficiently furnishes us with all that we need. Peter also declared in 2 Pet 1:3, ***“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called***

us to glory and virtue:” (KJV). The Hebrew writer emphasized its power in Heb 4:12, **“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”** (KJV) David taught us in Ps 119:105, **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”** (KJV) He also said in Ps 119:104, **“Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.”** (KJV) The Bible is sufficient to guide us from earth to glory.

Let’s notice how the Bible is sufficient to meet our every need and in this way we will establish the importance of studying the Bible.

I SALVATION

Man is lost in sin and is therefore separated from God. In Isa. 59:1-2 Isaiah said, **“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”** (KJV) Paul also declared in Rom. 3:10, **“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”** (KJV) Also in Rom. 3:23 Paul said, **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”** (KJV). Because of man’s sins, he is condemned to a devil’s hell for all eternity. Without Christ and obedience to the Word of God, man cannot be brought into a saving relationship with God. In Rom. 10:17 Paul said, **“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”** Paul wrote to Timothy and said: **“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”** II Tim. 3:15.

It is the scriptures that make us **“wise unto salvation.”** The teachings and doctrines of men cannot accomplish that. On the day of Pentecost Peter preached the **word of God** to the people:

Acts 2:40-41 **“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”** (KJV)

When they heard the word that Peter preached they obeyed the gospel. It was **not** by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit that the three thousand were led to obey, but by the hearing of the word of God. This was true in every case of conversion mentioned in the book of Acts. **The word of God is sufficient to satisfy the need of salvation.**

II GROWTH

Another need that man has is to grow and the word of God is also sufficient to provide the nourishment we need to grow. Peter said in I Pet. 2:2, **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”** (KJV) Paul’s parting words to the elders at Ephesus were, **“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”** Acts 20:32 (KJV)

Spiritual growth comes when we apply ourselves to the study of the word of God. Paul said to Timothy in 2 Tim 2:15, ***“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*** (KJV)

III UNDERSTANDING

David said in Psa. 119:104, ***“Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.”*** It is through the study of God’s word we get the understanding of how to live, worship and serve God. In Rom. 15:4 Paul wrote, ***“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”*** (KJV)

Why were things written aforetime? For our learning. Just to have knowledge of them? No! Understanding. From a study of the Old Testament we understand how God dealt with man at that time.

Do we understand obedience more clearly when we study the subject of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10? We understand the necessity of a pattern better when we study Noah and the Ark, or Moses and the tabernacle:

Heb 8:5 ***“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.”*** (KJV)

God gave Moses a pattern for the building of the tabernacle. He also gave Noah a pattern for the building of the ark. This helps us to understand the need for the church of our Lord to be built according to the pattern given through Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

We understand the necessity of worshipping God ***“in spirit and in truth”*** because of the examples of the Old Testament as that of Cain and Abel:

Heb 11:4 ***“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”*** (KJV)

How did Cain and Abel know how to worship and what to sacrifice? **God told them.** Cain did not obey God by worshipping as instructed therefore God refused his sacrifice. We understand the same thing today. God gives us instruction regarding the way we must worship. As David said, ***“through thy precepts I get understanding.”*** (Psa. 119:104)

IV KNOWLEDGE

The scriptures are sufficient to provide us with knowledge:

Hosea 4:6 ***“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”*** (KJV)

Solomon declared,

Prov 1:22 ***“How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?”*** (KJV)

Ignorance is a curse to man, and strictly condemned in both the Old and New Testaments. It was the basic cause of the death of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ! Peter said, ***“I know that in ignorance ye did it, as also did your rulers.”*** (Acts 3:17) We are also informed that ignorance can cause wrong actions to seem right; and even will cause men, in their blindness, to think they were pleasing God! Speaking to His apostles, Jesus said:

“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.” (KJV)

Ignorance was the cause of the raging hatred and murderous actions of Saul of Tarsus! His moral judgment had been trained wrongly by the ignorance of his parents and teachers, and therefore his conscience did not bother him! Later he would say in his defense before the council:

“Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day” (Acts 23:1).

Further, he stated in his plea before Agrippa:

“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” Acts 26:9-11 (KJV)

But, after being enlightened by the Gospel, Paul wrote of the ability and strength that enabled him to change his course in life (Phil. 4:13). He never denied nor forgot the checkered past of his hurtful and ignorant transgressions! It seemed to make him even more determined, energetic, and thankful for the rich blessings of his knowledge of the Gospel. He wrote to young Timothy:

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” 1 Tim 1:12-13 (KJV)

Surely, we should be convinced of our inability to guide ourselves in matters spiritual and eternal (Cf. Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; Duet. 12:8-9). We must be reminded that without the study of the word of God we may think we are right and yet be wrong! In mercy for His creation Jehovah, by the Bible, comes to the rescue in giving man the guidance he needs.

We must have knowledge in defeating the devil. Paul tells us to take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). Jesus used His knowledge of the scriptures in defeating Satan at His temptation. Learn the scriptures. Learn to memorize the scriptures. We

desperately need people who know the Bible. In I Cor. 2:7 Paul said, ***“We speak the wisdom of God...which God ordained.”*** In I Cor. 1:21-25 Paul wrote:

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (KJV)

CONCLUSION

Yes, the Bible is sufficient. It is sufficient to tell us what to do to be saved. The Bible is sufficient for growth, understanding, and knowledge. We do not need to go to any source other than the Bible. It is the knowledge of the Bible that we need. This requires our study of it and this must not be left to others to do for us. We will stand before God individually to be judged.

It is inconceivable that one who loves God would not also be vitally interested in His word and equally determined to learn as much of it as possible. One may indeed read scripture and not heed its precepts, but the one who neither reads nor heeds it's teaching cannot please God. Every child of God ought regularly to read the sacred writings, since such effort, when pursued in the right spirit and prompted by proper motives, will immeasurably increase one's spiritual stature and secure the greater favor of God. One ought to read daily the divine writings diligently, prayerfully, and with an open mind.

There are three steps absolutely essential to the proper study of the Bible:

1. One must study regularly – at least fifteen minutes every day.
2. This study must be done under strict conditioned circumstances. Regular place, quiet, undisturbed, and comfortable. Give complete attention to effort.
3. Must have the basic aids essential to this work. A good translation, an English Dictionary, a Bible Dictionary, and a Concordance.

By following this simple program one may become familiar with a chapter each week, in which case, half of the New Testament will have been mastered in two years.

We can reject Christ and His teaching. Jesus answers all who ask “how”:

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” John 12:48-50 (KJV)

“Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” Mark 8:38 (KJV)

Questions

1. What has happened to man as a result of turning his back upon the Bible?

2. How has the Bible elevated man and woman?

3. What did Paul say the Bible furnishes man?

4. How does the Bible meet every need of man?

5. Name three steps absolutely essential to the proper study of the Bible.

6. How can one reject Christ today?
