

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2022: *In the Crucible With Christ*

Lesson 5 “Extreme Heat”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 22; Hosea 2:1-12; Job 1:6-2:10; 2 Corinthians 11:23-29; Isaiah 43:1-7.

Memory Text

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand” (Isaiah 53:10, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Abraham in the Crucible
- III. Wayward Israel
- IV. Surviving Through Worship
- V. Surviving Through Hope
- VI. Extreme Heat
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. This lesson centers on some of the most difficult and challenging stories in the Bible, exploring how God’s purpose could be achieved in such contexts. C. S. Lewis went through such a horrendous experience. As his wife was dying, he wrote, “Not that I am (I think) in much danger of ceasing to believe in God. The real danger is of coming to believe such dreadful things about Him. The conclusion I dread is not ‘So there’s no God after all,’ but ‘So this is what God’s really like.’” Why do you think God is willing to risk being misunderstood by those He wants to know Him and love Him? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Genesis 22:1-18. This incident is not explained by the context of Genesis. What do you think God is doing here? Abraham is lauded as a man of faith for offering up Isaac. Would it have been an even greater expression of faith for him to say no to God here (as he did in Genesis 18)? How often does God ask us to do things that He

never intends for us to complete? How did Abraham know that it was God's voice speaking to him? How would we know today? (Sunday's Lesson)

3. Read Hosea 2:1-12. What methods does God say He will use to restore Israel to Himself? Who is speaking in verses 2 and 3, is it God or Hosea? Regardless of who is speaking, what is God's purpose with the hedge of thorns? What does this passage reveal about God? What does it reveal about us? What do we do if we discover God is at work in our lives and we don't like what He is doing? (Monday's Lesson)
4. Read Job 1:6 through 2:10. Who is it that brings up Job as a topic of conversation? Who is it that actually causes Job's suffering? Was it truly the Lord who "took away" from Job? Job 1:21. According to this verse, what three things does Job do to help him deal with the catastrophe? How does this entire scene in Job align with the message of John 10:10? In light of that, why does God take responsibility for Job's suffering in Job 2:3? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Read 2 Corinthians 1:4-11. How does Paul describe the level of suffering that he had experienced? How did he cope with that suffering? According to this passage, what goal was God trying to achieve through Paul's suffering? How can we take hold of God's comfort in the midst of our own suffering? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Isaiah 43:1-7. What are some of the ways God assures His people of comfort in the midst of "waters" and "fire"? What does this passage tell us about God? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. In *Patriarchs and Prophets* 129-130 there is the following concerning what God was calling Abraham to: "God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test; He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal, that it may reflect the radiance of His love. . . . He sees that some have powers which may be used in the advancement of His work, and He puts these persons upon trial. . . . He shows them their own weakness, and teaches them to lean upon Him. . . . Thus His object is attained. They are educated, trained, and disciplined, prepared to fulfill the grand purpose for which their powers were given them." How comfortable are you with the active role of God in suffering that is portrayed here? (Friday's Lesson)
8. What relationship is there between our own suffering and the impact of our ministry to others? (Friday's Lesson)
9. How can we learn to trust God "in the darkness as well as the day"? 5T 316. (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: In our Bible reference sheet we have the passage regarding Abraham, and James' reference to that. Abraham is referred to as a "man of faith." Couldn't you call it "blind faith" when Abraham set out to obey God—when God said, "Take your son. I want you to bring him and to offer him as a sacrifice"?

Graham: Abraham's relationship with God—why, they were two of the best friends in all history! Abraham knew God well. He had had long experience with God. When God asked him to do things before, it had always worked out well and it made sense. So there was no **blind** faith on Abraham's part. God asked him to do something that puzzled him a great deal. At the moment he couldn't understand. But he said, "God, if it is you saying it (and I know you so well) I know this will make sense and there will be some solution, so I'm on my way."

This kind of faith is saying, "God, I'm on my way, but may I ask you why?" And so on the way, he asked why. And as he thought it through, he thought, the one who gave me this son miraculously is well able to resurrect my son. Or maybe he will provide a substitute. And Hebrews says he was right. So instead of that being blind faith, I would say he knew God well enough to go—and to know that there would be a solution that would make sense. And so it did.

Lou: But there was in that experience an element of uncertainty. That is to say, how will it work out? There was pain, certainly.

Graham: He wondered.

Lou: Yes. So faith can include that kind of thing.

Graham: Because God is so trustworthy, we are willing to obey him when he asks us to do something beyond our present understanding. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #3 with Lou Venden, "All God Asks Is Trust" recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

The word of God, like the character of its Author, presents mysteries that can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. But God has given in the Scriptures sufficient evidence of their divine authority. His own existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. True, He has not

removed the possibility of doubt; faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration; those who wish to doubt have opportunity; but those who desire to know the truth find ample ground for faith. {Ed 169.2}

God has given in His word sufficient evidence of its divine character. The great truths which concern our redemption are clearly presented. By the aid of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to all who seek it in sincerity, every man may understand these truths for himself. God has granted to men a strong foundation upon which to rest their faith. {GC 526.2}

Christ came to this world as the expression of the very heart and mind and nature and character of God. He was the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His person. But He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command to take the place of a servant. He was rich, but for our sake, that we might have eternal riches, He became poor. He made the world, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." {MM 19.1}

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all, easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. He took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoke words of hope and comfort to the weary mothers. With unfailing tenderness and gentleness He met every form of human woe and affliction. Not for Himself, but for others, did He labor. He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden ones with whom He daily came in contact. {MM 19.3}

He came as an expression of the perfect love of God, not to crush, not to judge and condemn, but to heal every weak, defective character, to save men and woman from Satan's power. {MM 20.1}

The enemy cannot overcome the humble learner of Christ, the one who walks prayerfully before the Lord. Christ interposes Himself as a shelter, a retreat, from the assaults of the wicked one. The promise is given, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." . . . {ML 316.2}

Those who follow Christ are ever safe under His watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people. {FLB 328.6}

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being

are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy. {MH 115.3}

The heavenly intelligences, angels that excel in strength, are waiting, obedient to His command, to unite with human agencies; and the Lord will interpose when matters have come to such a pass that none but a divine power can counteract the satanic agencies at work. When His people shall be in the greatest danger, seemingly unable to stand against the power of Satan, God will work in their behalf. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. {2SM 373.1}

Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His "little ones," dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. He has toward them an exceeding tenderness, as far surpassing what our father or mother has felt toward us in our helplessness as the divine is above the human. {DA 327.2}

As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him. {PK 513.1}

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not tell us that there are no dangers in our path. He does not propose to take His people out of the world of sin and evil, but He points us to a never-failing refuge. He invites the weary and care-laden, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Lay off the yoke of anxiety and worldly care that you have placed on your own neck, and "take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28, 29. We may find rest and peace in God, casting all our care upon Him; for He careth for us. See 1 Peter 5:7. {PP 294.1}

It is our privilege to have a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus every day we live. {TMK 320.4}

There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God. {ML 316.3}