

Phata-Drama

of

Creation

(PART IV)

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PENTECOSTAL PREACHING
Lesson 73

Memory Text: "Upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."
Joel 2:29

The eleven apostles wondered what to do about the place of service which Judas had left. That unfaithful apostle had killed himself in shame for his dreadful act against Jesus.

They looked about them and saw many faithful followers of Jesus, and then they chose Matthias to take the place of Judas. Matthias was a sincere and noble Christian no doubt, but he was not God's choice. In God's sight, there were only eleven apostles until Paul became a Christian.

In the meantime the apostles, with others of the brethren, were in Jerusalem at Pentecost. Here they received God's Holy Spirit -- His power, His influence, His attitude, and His characteristics. And they also received miraculous gifts for the purpose of starting the Christian church. God gave to these humble Galileans the talent of speaking in foreign languages. The many Jews who were visiting Jerusalem for Pentecost -- these many Jews from every nation -- were amazed to hear these simple men from Galilee preaching in their languages.

What do you think the apostles were teaching in these many languages? Of course, they were telling of Jesus, the Savior of the world, who had died that all the world might live in the Kingdom. Not only did that Jesus die, but he was resurrected. It was because he had gone to heaven, having given up his human life to purchase Adam's life and family, that Christians now received the Holy Spirit.

Many were the Redeemer's followers at times, both men and women, but only the apostles were specially used of God. To them

PENTECOSTAL PREACHING
Lesson 73



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Who is supposed to tell others about God's plan? Isaiah 61:1; II Timothy 4:2; Matthew 28:19,20.
2. Read Matthew 16:19. What are the two keys of the Kingdom? Whom did Peter invite to be a part of the true Church? Acts 1:15 and Acts 10.
3. How many apostles of Jesus have there been? Revelation 21:14; Matthew 19:28; John 6:70.
4. Did the eleven apostles have the Holy Spirit (the deep understanding of God's plans) when they appointed Matthias to be the twelfth apostle?
5. Who are the twelve stars of Revelation 12:1?
6. Are the popes of the Catholic Church apostles?
7. Are the bishops of the Episcopalian Church apostles?
8. How did Joel 2:29 prophesy about Pentecost?
9. When will "all flesh" (Joel 2:28) receive God's Holy Spirit (the understanding of God's plan and the desire to do it)?
10. How many people believed the apostles at Pentecost? Acts 2:41.
11. What did the people do when they believed the Apostles' message? Acts 2:41.

GOD'S CHOSEN VESSEL

Lesson 74

Memory Text: "He is a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My Name to the Gentiles." Acts 9:15

As people saw the miracles of the apostles and heard their story of Jesus, the Early Church grew and grew.

The apostles tried to care for all the needs of the brethren, but there was too much to do. And so they said to the disciples, "Our main business is to tell the message of Jesus. It is not sensible that we spend so much time doing other things for you. Choose deacons to serve you in these ways." So the apostles taught the Word of the Lord, and the deacons helped with the tasks that did not require skilled teaching ability. Acts 6:1-6.

One of the deacons was named Stephen. Acts 6:8-7:60 tells us that Stephen was full of faith and power and did great wonders and miracles among the people; but because he preached that Jesus was the Savior of the world, he was stoned to death. It is hard for us to think of such cruelty. We ask ourselves, "Would we be as faithful to tell others of our beloved Jesus?" Consider a moment. Would you?

An amazing fact in the story of Stephen concerns his persecutors. In the 58th verse of Acts 7, we read of a young man named Saul. Acts 8:1 and 3 tell that Saul consented to the death of Stephen and put other men and women in prison because they loved Jesus and talked about his love for us.

As you read Acts 9:1 and 2, you will decide, "Saul was a sinful man, an evil follower of Satan. No one else would imprison innocent followers of Jesus." But this is not true. Saul really thought he was doing right. And because he was so sincere and zealous trying to do God's will (as he believed), Jesus explained

GOD'S CHOSEN VESSEL
Lesson 74



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Name the twelve apostles. Matthew 10:2-4, II Corinthians 11:5; II Corinthians 12:11.
2. How many epistles (letters) did Paul write, which are included in our Bible?
3. What nationality was Paul? Philippians 3:5; Acts 21:39; 22:25-29; 22:3.
4. Why was Saul traveling to Damascus? Acts 9:1,2.
5. What did Saul see as he came near Damascus? Acts 9:3.
6. Who spoke to Saul from this light? Acts 9:4,5.
7. What happened to Saul's eyesight? Acts 9:9.
8. What did Saul do after seeing the light and hearing the voice? Acts 9:6-22.
9. How did the Jews feel about Saul becoming a Christian? Acts 9:23.
10. How did the Christians save Saul's life? Acts 9:25.
11. Were the Christians at Jerusalem happy to see Saul? Acts 9:26-31.

GENTILES FELLOW-HEIRS

Lesson 75

Memory Text: "Thou, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them."
Romans 11:17

Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian band. He prayed to God and respected Him, but he was neither a Christian nor a Jew. Through the Jewish Age, there had been Gentiles who accepted the Jewish faith and had tried to obey the law of Moses, but Cornelius had not done this. He had heard of Jesus, but he had not become a Christian. So here he was, wanting to do God's will, and yet not knowing what it was. Acts 10.

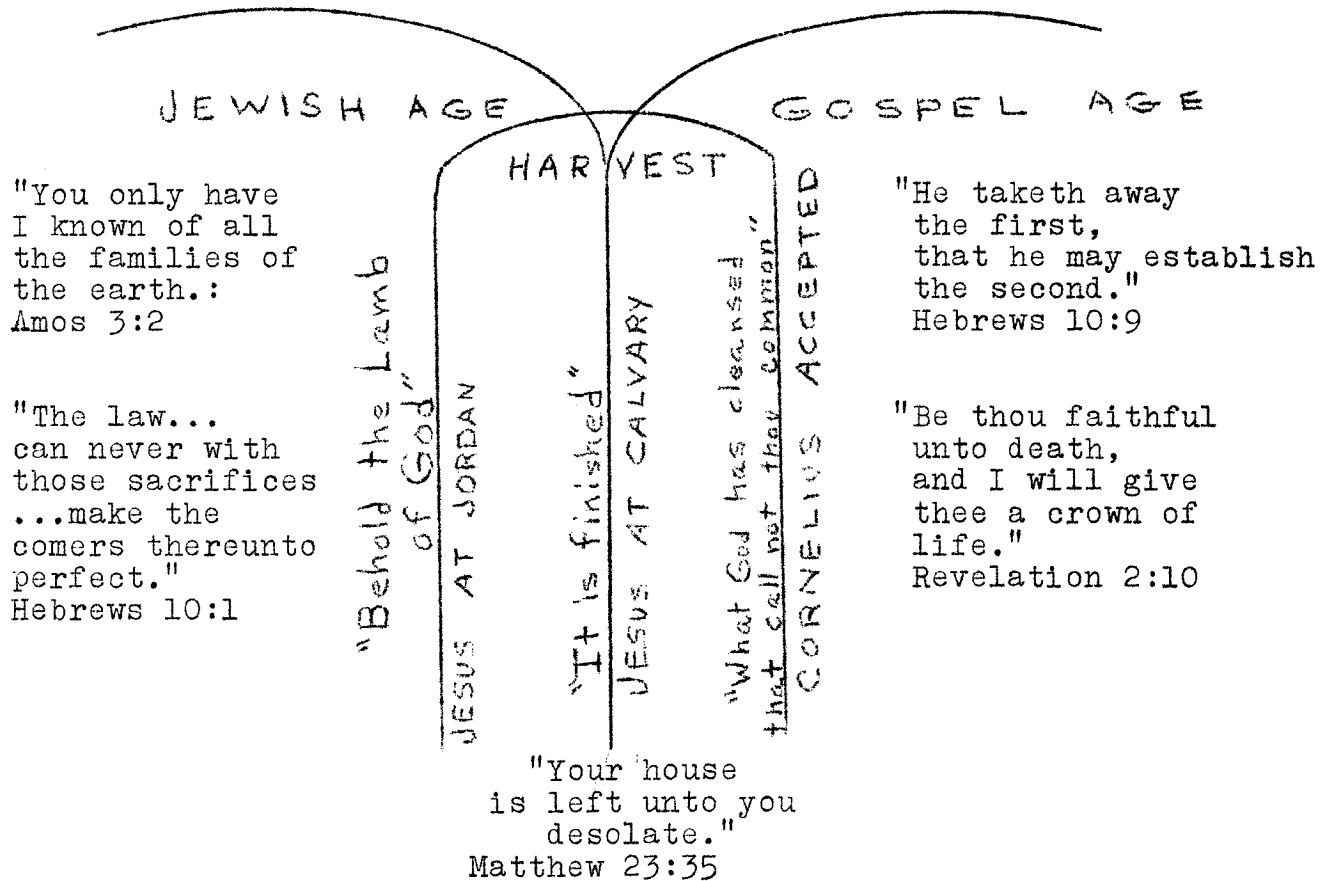
Suddenly, one day, an angel of God appeared to Cornelius in a vision. The angel said, "God will now pay attention to all the prayers that you have prayed and all the good deeds you have done. Send your men to find a man named Peter, who is staying with Simon the tanner by the seaside at Joppa. Peter will explain God's will to you."

How happy Cornelius was! Now he knew what to do. Hurriedly he sent two of his household servants and a faithful soldier of his band to get Peter.

In the meantime, God also instructed Peter about Cornelius. We must remember that God only blessed and punished the Jews as His special people during the entire Jewish Age. Other nations had the blessing of life, but God did not deal with them particularly. In order to work with His people, who knew His promises and Law, God did not want them to marry into other religions or to have close friends among the heathens. Therefore, the faithful Jews knew they must not be friendly to the Gentiles with their false gods.

Now God had to explain his next plan to Peter: Because the Jews had been too proud to accept Jesus as their King, there were

GENTILES FELLOW-HEIRS
Lesson 75



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What part of the Law was Peter referring to when he said, "I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." Acts 10:14; Leviticus 11, particularly verses 46, 47.
2. Would a careful Jew feel that a Gentile was clean or unclean?
3. How did Peter feel about being friendly with Cornelius? Acts 10:28
4. What did Peter tell Cornelius and his household? Acts 10:38-43
5. How did Cornelius and his household respond to the teachings of Peter? Acts 10:47, 48
6. What tree is like the Jewish nation? Romans 11:17
8. If a Jew breaks away from God's favor, how is he described by Paul? Romans 11:17
8. If the Jew breaks away from God's favor, who is put into his place? Romans 11:17, 19
9. Why would one be broken off from God's favor and another one be put in? Romans 11:20

THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH
Lesson 76

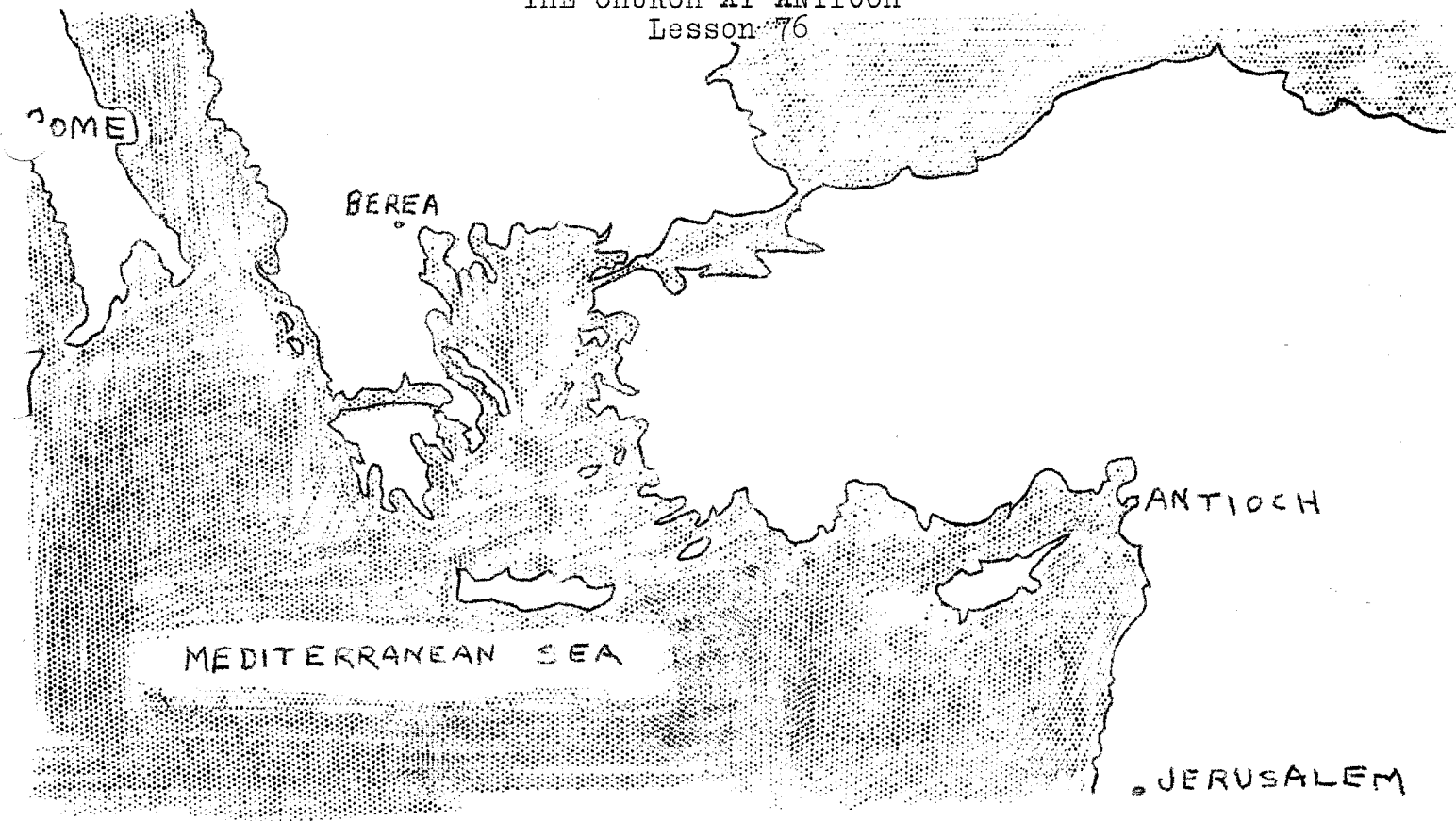
Memory Text: "The hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." Acts 11:21

Except for the city of Jerusalem, the city of Antioch is most important in the history of the Early Church. One of the seven deacons first appointed was Nicolas of Antioch. The Christians who had to flee (from the persecution which killed Stephen) went to Antioch. The first church which had more Gentile believers than Jewish believers was Antioch. It was at Antioch that the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. Paul spoke to Peter in Antioch concerning the proper acceptance of Gentile Christians. Paul took his first and second missionary journeys from Antioch. His third missionary journey also began from Antioch, but ended with his imprisonment at Jerusalem. The city of Antioch had always been favorable to Jewish people, and many Jews lived there. Acts 6:5; 11:19,20,26,27; 13:1-3; 14:26; 15:36; 18:22,23; Galatians 2:11,12.

When the brethren at Jerusalem heard of the growing number of believers at Antioch, they were delighted. You will remember that some of Jesus' followers had escaped to Antioch when Stephen was stoned and others were imprisoned in Jerusalem. Of course, these escapees had taught about Jesus in Antioch, and now there were many new brethren full of questions, wanting to know all about the wonderful Savior and God's plan. So Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to help proclaim the Word of God.

Barnabas was good and faithful in his ministry to the church at Antioch; he was a kind and loving comforter. But there were so many new Christians here, hungry for detailed knowledge of the beautiful Plan of Redemption, that Barnabas sent for the brilliant

THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH
Lesson 76



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Why were the followers of Jesus called CHRISTIANS?
2. Some feel that it was the Romans who hated the Early Church who named them CHRISTIANS. Would you be willing to be called CHRISTIAN if you were called that by people who hated CHRIST?
3. What power directed the minds of the church at Antioch?
Acts 13:2
4. Explain the phrase "turned unto the Lord."
5. Why did Jesus have to suffer? Hebrews 5:8,9
6. Why did Paul and Barnabas have to be persecuted? Colossians 1:24
7. Who was Nero?
8. Who was Diocletian?
9. Why is suffering necessary for the development of a Christian?
Romans 8:17

BEREAN BIBLE STUDENTS
Lesson 77

Memory Text: "They...searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11

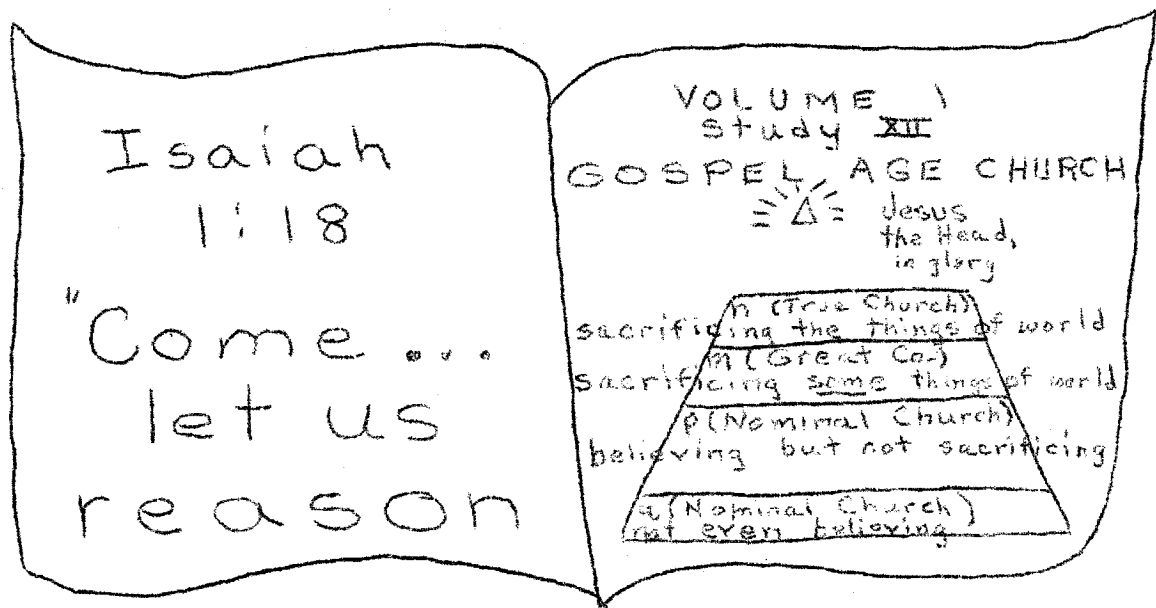
The early Christians had one thing in mind, to know God's plans. They gathered together as children of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, to study the message of Jesus. Their lives were simple, inspired by the One Faith. They were all brethren together, looking to the Apostles' words and the memory of Jesus for direction. They met for the purpose of growing in grace, knowledge, and love, trying to help one another in the narrow way.

We should be very grateful that we, too, may meet with earnest Bible Students. It is a sin and a pity that some churches call themselves Christian, but are only gorgeous buildings, filled with expensively-dressed people, whose wealthy ministers do not care what you believe, but their prayer books teach about fiery torment, and suffering with Christ is forgotten.

If we desire to know the will of God we are specially blest. Knowledge is increased (Daniel 12:4) and not only do we all own Bibles, but we can all read them. It is strange to realize that there were hundreds of years when there were very few Bibles in the world, and even kings and queens did not know how to read or write. How great is our responsibility!

Is it a gray and cloudy day? Is the night too dark for reading? Turn on the light. You can read the promises of God in your living room. Do you wonder what other Bible Students are studying? Get in your car and go to a Bible study, or get on a plane and attend a convention. We are living in the days of Daniel 12:4, when "many shall run to and fro."

We must take advantage of the bounteous blessing of this age,



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Are we supposed to be like other brethren? I Corinthians 11:1
2. What especially good characteristic did the Jews at Berea have? Acts 17:11
3. How would this characteristic make these Jews good Christians?
4. Does Acts 17:11 mean that the church at Thessalonica was not approved by Paul? I Thessalonians 1:2-4; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5
5. Is Acts 17:11 contrasting the Jews at Berea and Thessalonica or the Christians?
6. Why is it important to know the Truth? John 13:17; Luke 11:28
7. What did Jesus advise concerning study? John 5:39
8. Did the Apostle Paul want us to believe everything we are told? I Thessalonians 5:21
9. How does the book of Isaiah advise us to prove what we hear? Isaiah 8:20
10. Did the Apostle Paul value the wisdom of men? I Cor. 2:4,5
11. How educated does a Christian have to be to understand the Truth? Acts 4:13