

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 9



THE PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE

Scripture Texts: Psalm 102:12-28; Romans 1:14; Romans 16:25-26

Law, history, wisdom, drama, guidance—these are some things the Bible brings to mankind. We have learned that the Prophet was sometimes a foreteller, but more often a forthright preacher.

From the very beginning, there has been a deep yearning for God in the heart of man. God has placed within His written Word, the Bible, direction for man, which, if followed, will lead him from his self-centered life to a soul-satisfying, God-centered life in Christ. Heart highways that lead to Zion! Roads over which God can march into the strongholds of our hearts. The Bible brings down into our daily walk the God Who made the earth and stars and Who keeps the planets in their orbits. He Who in the beginning said, "Let there be light," also speaks the same Word to the darkness of our lives. Jesus, Who wept at the grave of Lazarus, enters into our sorrows still.

MEMORY VERSE: *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.—Psalm 119:9*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**Deuteronomy 4:1-9** Passing on God's Word as it is.

Tue.—**Nehemiah 8** Ezra reads God's Law to the people.

Wed.—**Luke 8:4-15** Sowing the seed.

Thu.—**Romans 1:7-16** Paul's urge to spread the Gospel.

Fri.—**Psalm 119:145-160** Pleading God's favor as to His Word.

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 Ministry of reconciliation.

Good News to All People

Psalm 102 This chapter begins with a great cry of distress. In **Psalm 102:12** the writer turns to consider God, and hope mounts. He begins to prophesy as God speaks through him of the coming of Christ. **He shall appear (Psalm 102:16)** bringing salvation to **loose those that are appointed to death (Psalm 102:20)**. He sets his own weakness and shortness of life beside God's strength and endlessness, then shows God's people so closely unified with God as to partake of His eternity (**Psalm 102:27-28**).

Psalm 102:18-22 **This shall be written for the generation to come.** God revealed that this good news was to be passed on by the written word. Future generations would read and **praise the Lord**. Why? Because the Lord would look down from **his sanctuary; from heaven**, see the needy **earth**, and **hear the groaning of the prisoner**—prisoners of Satan bound by the prison bars of sin. Why would He look? **To loose those that are appointed to death**—to save them from hell. This is the Gospel written beforehand, a picture of the love of God for lost sinners. It was to be delivered to mankind without change to reconcile man and God (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**). It was to be proclaimed from Zion and Jerusalem (**Micah 4:2; Luke 24:47**). Zion, near Jerusalem, was **the city of David** the king (**1 Chronicles 11:5**) and was a type of the church (**Isaiah 35:10**). **People and kingdoms** would be **gathered together . . . to serve the Lord**. People cannot be pulled or driven together. They must flow together (**Isaiah 2:2**). The Prophet here foretells the establishing of God's church, **the mountain of the Lord's house**. **It shall be exalted above the hills**. Centuries later, Christ was to liken His disciples to a **city that is set on a hill which cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14)**. **And all nations shall flow unto it**. Metal cannot be pulled or forced together. The cold, hard hearts of men from all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, are made into one people by the heat of the Holy Spirit melting their hearts together into one people through salvation.

Micah had no faith in any remedy except God. His message was that when men turn to God, they will have peace; when they give up oppression, they will have prosperity. It has always been man's belief that he can

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manage his own affairs without any reference to the will and purpose of God. God knew there was no solution for a spiritual problem except the spiritual solution. Never underestimate the importance of the Bible and the power of its Words in the lives of mankind.

All of this must be written in God's Book, the Bible, and passed on to the people of all generations. They are of **every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation (Revelation 5:9)**. To reach them, the Bible must be passed on unchanged.

We Owe the Gospel to All People

Romans 1:14 Paul said, **I am debtor to Greeks . . . Barbarians . . . wise . . . unwise**. What did he owe them? The Gospel (**Romans 1:15**). Why? Because he had been given it. It was not for him alone—nor for us alone. It was **to all people** that Jesus came (**Luke 2:10**). The **good tidings** of salvation through the Gospel must be shared. To share it, we must have it. Jesus will someday come as a Judge, but He came first as a Savior, and we are living in that day of grace when we may accept him as such. This acceptance should not give us a long face. The happiest people are Christians.

The Gospel Opened to All

Romans 16:25-26 **The preaching of Jesus Christ was the revelation of the mystery** of God's plan to save sinners. His plan was a mystery because it was **kept secret since the world began**. When Christ came, it was **made manifest**, revealed. It was **made known to all nations . . . by the scriptures of the prophets**. These Old Testament Scriptures foretelling salvation in Christ were preached by the Apostles (**Acts 13:14-41**). It was by **the commandment of the everlasting God** that the Gospel was opened **to all nations**. It remains for His servants to carry it to them. Jesus gave this command just before leaving this world (**Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8**). We cannot teach Christ unless we have Him. No unsaved person can teach the way to God.

JUST A THOUGHT

**Knowledge is one thing that does not become
secondhand when used.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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