

Sabbath School Lesson #8 – Jesus in the Writings of Peter – 13-19 May 2017

Christ who by His Spirit was in the prophets (1 Peter 1:10-11) was also in Peter when he wrote his two epistles. Peter, by the Spirit of Christ, partly quoting Isaiah, wrote: “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

Sunday: Jesus, Our Sacrifice – The Apostle Peter, speaks to those “who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time,” and who are in heaviness through manifold temptation, and yet are rejoicing in hope, that the trial of their faith “being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire,” will be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:5-7). What a marvellous thing, that a man may be made worth as much as God Himself, because he was purchased with His life: “God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9)! His design for us is that we shall continue as long as He does, because filled and clothed with His own incorruptible life, and not that we should perish as a worthless thing. Whoever keeps the faith that is tried in the fire, also keeps the life that is unconquerable, and whose value cannot be estimated in earthly coin. Happy is the man whose value is in himself, that is, in the life that is in him, and not in something which can be stripped from him, leaving his soul naked and ashamed.

Monday: The Passion of Christ – The Lesson writer says, “The word passion comes from a Greek verb that means ‘to suffer,’ and the phrase the passion of Christ usually refers to what Jesus suffered in the final period of His life, beginning with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.” In 1 Peter 2:21-25, we learn how Christ never took self-defence in His suffering.

There are many professed Christians who, while they would not countenance a willful attack upon another, think that it is perfectly right to go to almost any lengths of violence to self-defence. There need be no doubt about this matter, for both the words and the example of Christ are very plain. “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously” (1 Peter 2:21-23). “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also” (Matthew 5:39-40). Christ “emptied Himself,” and represented only the Father, who dwelt in Him. If we likewise have given up self to Him, we shall have no occasion for *self*-defence, for self will be dead. Therefore it is an impossibility for Christians to engage in any war, even of self-defence. And this principle also applies to verbal self-defence, – the disposition always to set one’s self right before others. Love of self, and lack of confidence in God, and unwillingness to wait for Him to give us righteous judgment, are at the bottom of all kinds of self-defence.

Tuesday: The Resurrection of Jesus – “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:26). Those who are dead are in the land of the enemy; God has promised they shall return “to their own border” (Jeremiah 31:15-17); that is the hope of Israel. Paul was seized by the unbelieving Jews because he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he said, “For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20), and to another group of Jews he said, “Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question” (Acts 23:6). There is no hope for Israel except in the resurrection at the coming of the Lord; but that hope is a “lively hope,” to which we are begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). Christ’s resurrection is the surety of the resurrection in general.

Wednesday: Jesus as the Messiah – The “Christ” means “anointed” or “Messiah.” Jesus asked Peter and the other disciples, “Whom say ye that I am?” Promptly came the answer from Peter, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Anybody else might have known this, as well as Peter and the other disciples; for Peter did not know it by any wisdom or shrewdness that he possessed. Jesus explained this: “Blessed art thou Simon, son of Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.” God is no respecter of persons, and is as willing to reveal the truth to all men as to any one person.

Thursday: Jesus, the Divine Messiah – The Lesson writer says, “Seventh-day Adventists include the doctrine of the Trinity as one of their 28 fundamental beliefs. Thus, we see in

Peter a clear depiction of Jesus, not only as the Messiah but as God Himself.” The Lesson writer is here invoking the trinity dogma: Father and Son are of co-eternal age, and the terms “Father” and “Son” are metaphorical. A Seventh-day Adventist Church official paper sent to all churches worldwide in 1996 in the Week of Prayer stated that the Father-Son relationship is a mere role-play: “In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, one of the divine beings accepted and entered into the role of the Father, another the role of the Son” (Gordon Jenson, *Adventist Review*, 31 Oct 1996). They say that “the sonship of Jesus, however, is not ontological, but functional” (Gerhard Pfandl, *BR* 1999); that the Sonship of our Jesus “should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense” (Max Hatton, 2001). Our Church leaders through their publications are allying with Satan to “obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God” {TDG 128.1}. But the Bible is clear: “He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22).

Christ said, “the Father is greater than I” (John 14:28); the Father was greater than the Son in that He was first. Christ “thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:6); the Son was equal with the Father in that He had received all things from the Father. “Christ claimed God as His Father in the very highest sense” {RH March 5, 1901 Par 9}. If Jesus and Peter were members of your local Seventh-day Adventist Church today, with our trinity doctrine, and Jesus were to ask Peter, “whom say ye that I am?” (Luke 9:20), and Peter were to answer, “thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16), and Jesus were to affirm Peter’s answer, would you have understood Jesus as making this claim in the role-playing sense (*Review and Herald*, 31 October 1996, p. 12) or would you have “understood Him as making this claim in the highest sense” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 207)?

For many years, doctrines in our Church have been shaped through the Sabbath School Lesson, which is studied worldwide. If a true doctrine is put in the Lesson, the worldwide Church is edified, when a false doctrine is put in the Lesson, the worldwide Church is defiled. Satan knows well that if he may corrupt Lesson writers from the headquarters of our Church, he would easily defile the worldwide Church, and this he spares no effort to achieve. “If the heart of the work becomes corrupt, the whole church, in its various branches and interests, scattered abroad over the face of the earth, suffers in consequence” {4T 210.4}.

Paul says, “For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Corinthians 11:4). Like Paul, our Adventist pioneers preached that Jesus was “begotten” of His Father, and “that it is necessary that God should have antedated Christ in His being, in order that Christ could have been begotten of Him, and sustain to Him the relation of Son” (W.H. Littlejohn, *Review and Herald*, 17 April 1983). Unlike Paul, Adventist theologians preach “another Jesus,” denying the Sonship of Jesus to uphold the trinity dogma! They say, “Our study has made it crystal clear that Jesus has always existed. Obviously, He has not always been the Son of God. He could not be the Son of God literally because He is God. He could not be the Son of Yahweh (Jehovah) because He is Yahweh (Jehovah). Ellen White says, ‘*Jehovah is the name given to Christ.*’ His Sonship can only be figurative” (Max Hatton, *The Trinity Doctrine*, 18).

It is very sad that our Adventist theologians, in denying the literal Sonship of Jesus, they dare misapply what Ellen White says to support their error! “Jehovah is the name given to Christ” does not mean that Jesus is “Jehovah” but rather the name of His Father, “Jehovah,” is “given to Christ.” This is what Moses wrote about Christ, that “Angel” who led Israel, that Jehovah’s name was in Christ, “for My name is in Him” (Exodus 23:21). To these Adventist theologians, like to ancient Jewish leaders, Jesus says, “I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43). Jesus came in Jehovah’s name, just as Moses had been inspired to write of what Jehovah said of His Son that “for My [Jehovah’s] name is in Him,” so Ellen White simply says the name of Jehovah was given Him. The Bible is very clear that Jesus received from His Father not only Jehovah’s name, but ALL THINGS that is His Father’s. “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands” (John 13:3), All things: His life (John 5:26; 6:57), His name (Heb 1:4; Phil 2:9; Exodus 23:21-23), His glory (John 17:22), His throne (Rev 3:21), and His power of authority (John 10:18; Matt 28:18). All things, Christ has received from the original life, God, the Father who is “the great Source of all” {DA 21.2}.