

## Sabbath School Lesson #9 – Reconciliation and Hope – 21-27 February 2026

**C**hrist was sinless; the law was in His heart. As the Son of God His life was worth more than those of all created beings, whether in heaven or on earth. He saw the hopeless condition of the world and came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). To do this he took upon Himself our nature (Hebrews 2:16-17); and on Him was laid “the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). To save us, He had to come where we were, or, in other words, He had to take the position of a lost sinner. Thus, the apostle says: “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). It was this fact that caused Him such anguish in the garden. He felt that the sins upon Him were shutting Him away from God. It was this that caused Him, when hanging on the cross, to utter that cry of bitter agony, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?” It was not physical pain that crushed the life out of the Saviour of the world, but the load of sin which He bore. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Sin will cause the death of very one who is not freed from it, for “sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15). Because Christ was “numbered with the transgressors,” He suffered the penalty of transgression. But the suffering of Christ was not on His own account. He “did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22). He was one who could safely appeal to the law to justify Him, for He had never violated it. The law had nothing against Him. “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5). He alone has done more than His duty – more than was required of Him; He has merit to impart to others. This grace is freely given to all who believe in Him.

**Sunday: Reconciled From Wicked Works** – Read Colossians 1:21-22, Ephesians 5:27; what do these texts teach about reconciliation? They teach that man must be reconciled to God, and not God to man. The only object that Christ could have in coming to earth and dying for men, was the reconciliation of man to God, so that he might have life. “I am come that they might have life” (John 10:10). “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight” (Colossians 1:21-22).

Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, “that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). “If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:10). But what about those who say that ‘the death of Christ reconciled God to man; that Christ died to satisfy God’s justice, to appease Him’? It is not that God needed to be reconciled to man. Stop a moment and think what reconciliation means. The existence of enmity is the only necessity for reconciliation. Where there is no enmity, there is no necessity for reconciliation. Man is by nature alienated from God; he is a rebel, full of enmity. Therefore, man needs to be reconciled – to have his enmity taken away. But God has no enmity in His being. “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Consequently, there is no necessity for Him to be reconciled; there is no possibility of such a thing, for there can be no reconciliation where there has been no enmity.

We read: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). They who say that the death of Christ reconciled God to men, have forgotten this blessed text. They would separate the Father and the Son, making the former the enemy, and the latter the friend, of man. But God’s heart was so overflowing with love to fallen man, that He “spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all” (Romans 8:32); and in so doing He gave Himself, for “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” Paul speaks of “the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). This effectually disposes of the idea that there was any enmity toward man on the part of God, so that He needed to be reconciled. The death of Christ was the expression of God’s wonderful love for sinners. In reconciliation, if one has enmity in heart towards another, a radical change must take place in him before he is reconciled. This is the case with man. “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:17-

18). To say God needed to be reconciled to man is to say He needed to change. If it were not in innocence of ignorance that men talked about God's having been reconciled to men, it would be blasphemy. God is absolute and unchangeable perfection. Hear Him: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6). He is the source of life, and the standard of life. When any beings are unlike Him, the difference is on their part, and not on His. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Hebrews 11:6).

**Monday: If You Continue in the Faith** – Read Colossians 1:23; how far had the early disciples spread the gospel in Paul's day? The early disciples were earnest students of the Word. The strength of their teaching was in the preaching of the Word. And they fulfilled their mission gloriously. In their generation, every creature under heaven heard the gospel. This is made plain in the text: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." How many people heard the gospel? – every creature under heaven. They Colossians were to continue in the faith after hearing the Word, "faith is from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

**Tuesday: God's Eternal Plan** – Read Colossians 1:24-25; what does Paul say about his suffering for Christ's sake? "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren" (Romans 9:3). To be "accursed" is to be separated to be without Christ is to be without hope and without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12). It was in that condition that Paul would have been willing to be placed for his brethren according to the flesh, if it would have done them any good. In the wish that Paul expressed, he showed how completely he was given up to the Lord, and how much he shared in His Spirit. Christ gave Himself for men, consenting even to be separated from God, in order that He might reach and save the lost. There is none other name under heaven whereby men can be saved, and consequently Paul's being accursed would not have saved his brethren, as he very well knew. But he simply showed how desperate was the case of the Jews, and how great was his solicitude. While no human sacrifice can avail, we are privileged to share Christ's sufferings for others.

**Wednesday: Mystery of God Revealed** – Read Colossians 1:26-27; what is the mystery that Paul talks about? It is the Gospel of Christ. The Lord's own definition of the Gospel is that it is Christ in believers, the hope of glory. And here it is: "Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard.... Whereof I Paul am made a minister ... to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints; to whom God would make know what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you, the hope of glory whom we preach" (verses 23-28). Christ in men, the hope of glory; God manifest in the flesh; this, and this alone, is the Gospel of Christ. And therefore Paul tells us that "it pleased God ... to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen" (Galatians 1:15-16). Not revealed to him only, but revealed in him, and revealed to him by being revealed in him. He was to preach Christ in men, the hope of glory; but he could not possibly do this unless he knew Christ in himself, the hope of glory. It was not enough to preach about this – he must preach this in very fact. It was not the thing to do to preach about Him, but to preach Him.

**Thursday: Power of the Gospel** – Read Colossians 1:28-29; who works perfection in men who come to Christ? It is God that works. "He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles" (Galatians 2:8). The Word of God is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). Whatever activity there is in the work of the Gospel, if there is any work done, is all of God. Jesus "went about doing good," "for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). He Himself said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30). "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John 14:10). So, Peter spoke of Him as "a Man approved of God" "by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him" (Acts 2:22). The disciple is not greater than his Lord. Paul and Barnabas, therefore, at the meeting in Jerusalem, told "what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them" (Acts 15:12). Thus, Paul declared that he laboured to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," "striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." This same power it is the privilege of the humblest believer to possess, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).