

THE HOLY TRINITY

BIBLE TEXT : John 1:1-14,29-51; Matthew 3:13-17; Genesis 1:1,26

LESSON 262 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19)..

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

John 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² The same was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

⁷ The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

⁹ *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:29-51

NOTES:

Jesus as a Man

The Apostle John, known also as the disciple whom Jesus loved, was close to the Saviour during the three and a half years of His ministry. They walked together along the hot, dusty roads; they sat down to the same simple meals, and were satisfied with the same kind of food. John may have stayed occasionally with Jesus, as did Peter and Andrew.

Jesus lived among men as a man. He had probably worked for years in the carpenter shop of Joseph, and knew what it was to be tired. He sympathised with people. He watched their sufferings, and suffered and wept with them; He noticed their joys and rejoiced with them.

From Heaven

Yet, John knew that Jesus was different from other men. Often in their intimate talks with Peter and James, Jesus told them about the life He had lived before He came to earth. One time He took them up into a mountain and let them catch a glimpse of the glory He had enjoyed in Heaven. "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." And Moses and Elijah, who had gone to Heaven hundreds of years before, came and talked with Him. They knew Jesus. They had known Him in Heaven before He came to be born in Bethlehem as a baby. After a while Moses and Elijah disappeared; and then the Apostles heard the voice of God speak to them from a cloud: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5).

The Son of God

That was a truth that John could not forget. Jesus was the Son of God; and it was that point, which John emphasised in the books he wrote, which we have in the Bible.

John wrote many things to prove that Jesus was more than an ordinary man, the son of Mary and Joseph. John opened his Gospel by saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 14). The Word, which was "made flesh" was, Jesus. He had been with God in the beginning of time, at the creation. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3).

In the first verse of the Bible we read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And John tells us that Jesus was with **God** at that time, and was God Himself. The Apostle Paul said much the same thing: "God, . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1, 2). And when man was created, God said, "Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness" (Genesis 1:26). We speak of more

²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

³⁰ This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

³¹ And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

³² And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

³³ And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

³⁴ And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

³⁵ Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

³⁶ And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

³⁷ And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

³⁹ He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

⁴⁰ One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

⁴¹ He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

than one person when we use the pronouns **us** and **our**.

Three Persons Have Part in Creation

The Holy Spirit also was present in the creation: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). Job wrote also: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath give me life" (Job 33:4); and, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent" (Job 26:13). All three Persons in the Godhead had part in the creation.

We cannot understand the meaning of "three Persons in One"; but they are spoken of again and again in Scripture which describes their work, and declares that each is eternal, all-powerful, all-wise, and ever-present. We call these Three the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

The Need for the Second Person

Why is it necessary that we believe in the Trinity? Why is it so necessary that we believe that Jesus was the divine Son of God? Why did the Son have to come to earth and live among men?

God's foremost attribute is holiness. And a holy God cannot look upon the sins of man. God's law is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." God is high in His Heaven, ruling the universe, all-powerful, knowing everything.

Way down upon a sin-cursed earth is man. He was created for the glory of God. God enjoyed companionship with man in the Garden of Eden before sin ruined the man. But Adam's sin brought a separation between God and man. There was nothing man could do by himself to bring himself into favour with God again. He deserved to die for his sins, because he had broken the commandment of God.

We learn at this critical point the reason for Christ's coming to earth. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). A mediator is a go-between, one who tries to bring agreement between two disagreeing persons or principles.

Man is in no condition to face a holy and just God. Man has sinned and must die. Then Jesus comes to the rescue. He stands between the guilty man and the just God. The law of God is thereby satisfied.

Jesus, the second Person of the Trinity, took upon Himself the guilt of the world and died in the sinner's stead. No man could have been the mediator, because all men have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23** ²³ **For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**). Every man needs a mediator. So the Son of God, holy and sinless, had to be the Mediator between God and man.

Through Jesus alone can we be saved! Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). If we ask Jesus for pardon, he will save us from our sins.

Unbelief

The Jews in Jesus' time were just as unbelieving as many professing Christians are today. They said that they believed in God the Father, and they worshiped Him; but Jesus they would not receive.

The Jews knew from reading the Scriptures that God would someday send the Messiah, and that He would be born of a virgin. The Prophet Isaiah, whom they honoured, had written, "The Lord

⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

⁴³ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

⁴⁴ Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵ Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

⁴⁶ And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

⁴⁸ Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

⁵⁰ Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

⁵¹ And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

Matthew 3:13-17

¹³ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee,

himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). And yet, when that happened in the birth of Jesus, they would not believe. They could not reason in their minds that a child could be born without an earthly father, and they refused to believe with the heart that He was the divine Son of God.

Believing Witnesses

Andrew was one of the first Apostles called. When he was telling Peter about Jesus, he said: "We have found the Messiah," which meant the Christ, or Anointed One, who would bring salvation to this world. The next day Philip followed Jesus, and he said to Nathanael, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." Nathanael believed, and said, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Those Apostles believed from the beginning that Jesus was the divine Son of God. Jesus later told them, "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (John 16:27).

Proof of Deity

Jesus proved His deity by the miracles He did. His first miracle was at the marriage of Cana of Galilee where He changed water into wine. By doing this, He "manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11), believed that He was the Son of God. He fed 5,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two small fishes. He brought the dead back to life.

Jesus walked on the water, which no ordinary man can do. When the disciples, who were in the boat, saw Him coming to them they were afraid, thinking that they were seeing a ghost. But Jesus told them, "It is I; be not afraid." Immediately after Jesus stepped into their boat, they were at the other shore. That was another miracle.

But the greatest proof of His deity was that He could lay down His life and take it up again; He could die and then come back to life in His glorified body. He said it this way: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews were surprised and annoyed at such a statement, but He was not talking about the marble Temple, which was their church. "He spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:21). His resurrection would not be of the spirit, but His body would come forth out of the grave. The disciples remembered these words after Jesus rose from the dead.

Even the devils bore witness that Jesus was divine. They once cried out: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matthew 8:29).

In the Mouth of Two Witnesses

Jesus had another witness that He was divine. "It is also written in your law," He said to the Pharisees, "that the testimony of two men is true" (John 8:17). He was one witness Himself through the miracles He performed. The other witness was the Father who had sent Him. Three times the voice of God spoke from Heaven, commending His Son. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Toward the close of John's Gospel, he wrote, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

and comest thou to me?

¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Genesis 1:1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:26

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the Apostle John's chief purpose in writing his books?
2. How well did John know Jesus?
3. What are the first words of the Book of Revelation?
4. How many Persons are there in the Godhead? And who are they?
5. Why did Jesus come to earth?
6. In whose name do we pray to God the Father?
7. Name some of the first believing witnesses that Jesus was divine.
8. Name some ways in which Jesus proved that He was the Son of God.
9. Describe what took place after Jesus was baptised in water.
10. Quote the words Jesus said should be used at water baptism (Matthew 28:19).

Working Together

Jesus worked together with the Father. He said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30); "I can of mine own self do nothing"; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." But He gave honour to the Father: "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). John wrote more than one hundred instances of Jesus' calling God His Father.

The night that Jesus was betrayed He had a long talk with His Apostles. He told them many things about His relationship with the Father. He knew that the whole plan of the Atonement was in His hands, and that "he was come from God, and went to God." His brief life on earth was almost over, and the hour of crisis for which He had come was at hand. He knew that for a little while His Apostles would forsake Him, but He said: "Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32).

The Baptism of Jesus

We have emphasised the relationship between God the Father, and God the Son, proving that there are two Persons who work together. But right from the very beginning there is evidence of the Third Person of the Trinity. When Jesus was baptised in Jordan by John the Baptist, He walked down into the water and was proclaimed by John, "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." When the service was finished, the Spirit of God (the Holy Ghost) rested upon Jesus in the form of a dove; and the voice of God in Heaven was heard speaking, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). John the Baptist said: "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

The Comforter

The last night that Jesus spent with His Apostles on earth, He explained the work of the Holy Spirit, whom He called the Comforter. He said He must go away so the Comforter could come to guide them. In John 14:26, we read of all three Persons of the Godhead: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." God the Father, in the name of God the Son, was going to send the Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, into the world to abide in His people. He would tell them more about Jesus, and would not speak of Himself. He would also give them power to be witnesses for Jesus.

In Jesus' last words of the great commission He recognised the three Persons in the Trinity, and sent His disciples into all the world to preach the Gospel to all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). This is the commandment of Jesus, and we must do as He commanded.