

# OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION

**BIBLE TEXT** : II Corinthians 4:17, 18; 5:1-20.

LESSON 396 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them" (Isaiah 63:9).

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

<sup>17</sup> For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

<sup>18</sup> While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

### 2 Corinthians 5:1-20

<sup>1</sup> For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

<sup>3</sup> If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

<sup>4</sup> For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

<sup>5</sup> Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

<sup>7</sup> (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

<sup>8</sup> We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **In His Steps**

What is affliction? It is true that you are afflicted when you are sick; but if you are "talked about," if you are ignored, if you are disliked by your schoolmates because you are a Christian, that is affliction, too.

The very name Christian, by which we are called, means Christ-like — to live as Jesus did — and that brings persecution.

#### **Jesus' Example**

Perhaps if we consider the life of Jesus in view of our lesson today, it will help us to bear our "light affliction" with joy, for though the path that lay before Him led through trials and afflictions, and finally to death on the Cross, Jesus kept looking to God whose will He was fulfilling, and that gave Him joy to endure (**Hebrews 12:2** <sup>2</sup> Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.).

Jesus' first trial mentioned in the Bible came when He was led up of the Spirit of God into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. There He fasted forty days and forty nights. When He was tired and hungry the devil came to tempt Him.

It is the same with us today: the devil will come to you and me when we are the weakest, when we are tired, when we are hungry. But Jesus' example shows us how to overcome the tempter and gain the victory. Jesus quoted the Bible in answer to the devil's temptations, and the devil left. You see it is very important that we learn our memory verses. When the tempter comes, sometimes like a flood, to try to make us disobey God, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him (**Isaiah 59:19** <sup>19</sup> So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.); and that standard is the Word of God.

Jesus knew these temptations were not unusual. They come to everyone, "but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

#### **Great Reward**

One day when Jesus went up on a mountainside He called His disciples to Him and said: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:10-12). At another time He said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20).

Jesus knew trials and afflictions awaited Him, but He was happy in doing God's will.

#### **Jesus' Trials**

When Jesus healed the two demented men in the country of

may be accepted of him.

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

<sup>11</sup> Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

<sup>12</sup> For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

<sup>13</sup> For whether we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause.

<sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

<sup>15</sup> And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

<sup>16</sup> Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

<sup>18</sup> And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

<sup>19</sup> To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

<sup>20</sup> Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in

the Gergesenes, the people of the city begged Jesus to leave.

When He cast out the devils and healed the sick and afflicted, the Pharisees accused Him of being in league with the devil — casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

When Jesus' disciples were hungry and plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath Day, and when Jesus healed the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, the Pharisees complained that Jesus was not keeping God's commandment of the Sabbath.

They tried to entangle Him in His talk, so that they could find fault with Him. The Pharisees, chief priests and elders were jealous because Jesus did many miracles, and multitudes of the common people followed Him. In the end, it was they who caused Him to be crucified.

Jesus endured it all, even the cross, despising the shame, for He looked for the joy that was set before Him when He would have accomplished the mission God had sent Him to fulfil.

### **Paul's Example**

Paul, too, knew that trials and afflictions awaited him, for the Lord had said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Paul rejoiced in every circumstance of life, for he knew when he was in affliction, Jesus cared. Jesus knew how he felt because He had suffered, too. In speaking of Jesus' followers in Isaiah's time, the Bible says, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them."

Paul spoke of "light affliction." He did not think it was too hard to go through shipwreck, stoning, beatings, perils in the sea, perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in prayers and fastings, cold and nakedness, and even prison in order to preach Jesus to the people; for God had ordained him to preach, and it was Paul's joy to do what God wanted him to do.

### **Pleasing God**

When temptation comes we remember Jesus. He did not seek the pleasures of this world. He sought to please His heavenly Father.

Some boys and girls try to please themselves and their worldly friends. Girls sometimes cut their hair and paint their faces because their friends do, and boys sometimes wear their hair long or in some unusual style because it is the fashion.

If we are slighted and teased because we do not do the things the worldly-minded people do, remember that Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He knows how a boy or girl suffers when temptation comes, and He sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven even now, asking God to help you to be brave and strong for His sake.

### **For Our Good**

Do you sometimes wonder why you are sick and why hard trials come to you? If you are a Christian, it is because God loves you and wants you to be holy as He is. Afflictions teach us to be patient. They teach us to have sympathy for others who are in affliction. They strengthen our faith. Jesus helped us through one trial, and that gives us faith to believe He will help us in another. And trials help a Christian to remember how much Jesus suffered for him.

We are glad that God loves us enough to correct us. We cannot be good children in this world unless our parents correct us. Neither can we be good Christians unless God corrects us.

### **The Foretaste**

Paul knew that if he lived to be even a hundred years old, the time he lived here would be only a moment compared with the ages and ages — time without end — that he could be with His

Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Friend and Saviour. God had given him a little taste of Heaven when he was caught up into Paradise. And God gives us a little taste of Heaven in the sweet Spirit dwelling in our hearts.

Sometimes Jesus is so very near and precious to us that we feel as if we would like to go to Heaven to be with Him at once. Paul must have felt that way as he looked forward to the time when he would leave his "earthly house," to be in the building or "house which is from heaven."

### **Final Examination**

Paul would rather have left this earthly life to be with the Lord, but he knew that whether he lived until Jesus came or if he died, it was necessary for him to serve the Lord faithfully every day. Some day he would have to stand at the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of his life.

Every one of us, whether we are a Christian or a sinner, shall give account of himself to God for the things he has done in this life.

Every day we have opportunity to do some good thing for someone — visit a sick friend, be kind to our neighbour, be obedient to mother and father with a glad heart as if Jesus Himself had asked us to do it. Jesus said we would be rewarded for giving even a cup of cold water in His Name. But all these things must be done as unto Jesus if we are to receive credit for them. Things we do for the admiration of those who are watching us will not be rewarded in Heaven.

Let us study as Paul did for the final examination we all will have to take some day. Just as we study for an examination in school, so we must study God's textbook, the Bible, in order to learn His will; and we pray so He will help us to put into practice what we learn of His will each day.

Let us bear gladly for Jesus' sake the "light affliction" that comes our way, and do the things that we feel in our heart God wants us to do. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What is the "light affliction" to which Paul referred?
2. If we bear our afflictions gladly as unto Jesus, what will be our reward?
3. What is the "earthly house," to which Paul referred?
4. With what did Paul want to be clothed when his earthly house would be dissolved?
5. What does God give us that removes the fear of death?
6. Why do we labour, or study, that we might be accepted of Christ?
7. Before what must we all appear some day?
8. What will we receive when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ?