

HOME STUDY

Spring Quarter
March | April | May 2024

Home Study

SPRING QUARTER

March, April, May 2024

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Editor in Chief: James M. Leonard, Ph.D.

Managing Editor: Michelle Birtasevic

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The Promise and Power of Jesus

TOM GREENE

Who is Jesus? That is probably the most important question anyone can answer, and so this quarter we are focusing on Jesus' identity. Many people have conflicting ideas about who Jesus was, so we will start by looking at what He said about Himself before turning to some of the evidence that demonstrates the truth of His claims.

Unit I covers two grand truths: Jesus' promise of eternal life and His power over death. In lesson 1, Jesus holds out the promise of eternal life, saying that if anyone keeps His Word, he will never see death. He also clearly declares Himself to be God when He says, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). So we must examine the evidence for His bold assertions.

Jesus' power over both disease and death is revealed in lesson 2. We first see Jesus heal a woman of a twelve-year affliction. This should encourage us to pray for those we know who are sick today. As astonishing as the miraculous healing is, however, His power over death itself is even more amazing, as next He raises a girl from the dead. We are encouraged, along with Jairus (the girl's father), not to fear but rather to believe (Luke 8:50).

Jesus' power over death is once again powerfully demonstrated in lesson 3, as He declares, "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). He further promises that anyone who believes in Him will live, even if he dies. Those around Him

do not fully understand, and Jesus proceeds to raise Lazarus from the dead, emphatically proving His point.

Lesson 4 focuses on the central point of history: the day that Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, dies on Calvary's cross. Even as He is dying, He is concerned for the welfare of others, praying for their forgiveness and promising a criminal being crucified beside Him that he will be in paradise. After that, He commits His spirit into the Father's hands and dies.

But the story does not end there! In lesson 5, we experience the exuberant joy of the resurrection. Angels triumphantly declare the message that Jesus Himself taught earlier: that it was necessary for Him to be crucified and rise again. After this, He appears to some of His still-confused followers with a new, heavenly body. Because Jesus has conquered death itself, we can joyfully trust the promises of a future bodily resurrection and eternal life with Him. His death paid the ransom for our sins, and His resurrection signals His everlasting triumph.

Lesson 6 is the first of His miracles, the one in which He turns water into wine. Although it takes place at a private event and does not gain public attention like His later miracles, it is here that Jesus first begins to manifest His glory to His disciples. Jesus begins in a humble way, providing for a wedding party. He cares for the details of our lives to-

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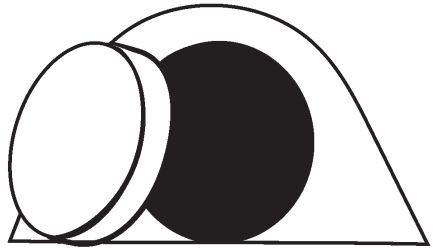
day as well, and we should bring all of our requests to Him freely.

In lesson 7, Jesus' disciples encounter an unclean spirit that they cannot cast out. The boy's father begs Jesus to deliver his son if He can, to which Jesus replies, "All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). The boy's father tearfully confesses his belief and begs Jesus to help him with his unbelief. Jesus graciously responds to the man's small faith and casts out the demon. From this we see both Jesus' authority to cast out unclean spirits and His compassion toward those who have little faith.

When the religious rulers of the day, standing on their own tradition, object to Jesus' disciples picking grain to eat as they pass through a field, Jesus could easily argue with them from the basis of Scriptures. Instead, He chooses to declare that He is the Lord of the Sabbath and that He has the authority to determine what is appropriate on the day. In lesson 8, He miraculously heals a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, demonstrating His authority.

Jesus shows His power over nature in lesson 9, in which He walks on water, gives Peter the ability to do so as well, and calms a raging storm. Here He not only proves that He has power over nature but also teaches His disciples a lesson on faith: they were only in the storm because they obeyed His command to cross the sea without Him, and He protected them.

Next we see Jesus forgive a paralyzed man of his sins (lesson 10). When the Pharisees complain that only God can forgive sins, Jesus does not disagree with them. Instead, He miraculously heals the man, proving that just as He has the ability to heal the man, He has the authority to forgive sins—He truly is God. Although Jesus did many other miracles that for lack of space are not included, these were chosen to help strengthen your faith in His power and



to demonstrate His absolute deity.

In Unit III, Jesus' deity is confirmed by His exaltation. Lesson 11 features a glorious declaration that Jesus is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3). Jesus created all things, sustains the universe by His words, and is the Heir of everything that is and ever shall be. He is far superior to even the mightiest of angels, and He is worthy of all worship.

Lesson 12 brings us into the very throne room of heaven. Jesus is the Lamb of God. Jesus willingly chose to set aside power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing when He came to earth to live among us. Yet He is infinitely worthy to receive all these back and be worshipped forevermore (Rev. 5:12). Heaven's thunderous praises ring with His name.

Lesson 13 is the triumphant conclusion of history. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last. He comes to judge both the living and the dead, bringing eternal joy and blessing to anyone who thirsts. He offers these gifts freely and without price to all today. We get just a glimpse of the new heaven and the new earth, enough to know that it is truly magnificent beyond anything that we have experienced or can imagine. We can only say with John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (22:20)!

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

JOHN 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom maketh thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

NOTES

Jesus' Claim to Deity

Lesson Text: John 8:31-38, 48-56, 58-59

Related Scriptures: Deuteronomy 13:6-11; Romans 6:15-23;
I John 2:1-6, 22-25; II John 1:9-11

TIME: A.D. 29

PLACE: Jerusalem

GOLDEN TEXT—"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

Lesson Exposition

This quarter, we will explore some of Jesus' bold claims about himself, and see how they are confirmed by his power over death. Today we will start by looking at one of his boldest claims of all, that He is the great "I AM" (cf. Ex. 3:13-15; Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4). We have to know the absolute truth about Jesus and believe it in order for it to transform our lives. Jesus alone can set us truly free from those things that bind and restrict us. Jesus calls these things sin.

JESUS IS THE TRUTH—John 8:31-38

The truth will set you free (John 8:31-32). This is a very bold statement to make, especially when you are saying this about yourself. This is exactly what Jesus did. People are seeking to be free from the things that bind them. Some go on pilgrimages to holy sites. Others punish their bodies. Others take the extreme step of isolating themselves in caves or on mountains in order to free themselves from temptation.

Jesus, on the other hand, said that there is only one thing that will truly set people free, and that is to trust in the

only undergirding truth there is—Jesus Himself (cf. 14:6). According to the Bible, Jesus is the epitome of all the truth there is and all that we will ever need.

Pleasure and sexual abandon never freed anyone, though people may feel a flash of freedom for a time. Money and other luxuries of life can also bring grief after the fun is over, as we know from the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15). What ultimately satisfies us is the peace that comes from knowing the One who is the truth, our Lord Jesus. Never at any time was any falsehood found in His life. He showed us who He truly is, and He lived up to what He said. Even His enemies could not find any fault in Him.

Notice that Jesus' declaration in our text was addressed to those who believed in Him. Jesus pointed out that discipleship is affirmed only when one continues in what He has taught. Obedience is the mark of true discipleship. It is therefore impossible to be a disciple of Jesus if one does not obey His teachings.

The word "disciple" means "learner." A learner always sits under the instruction of a teacher. Here