**Metro Men’s World Ministry**

## Sabbath School Notes: April 5-11

The following are the main Scripture references it this week’s Sabbath School Lesson. May the Lord bless you study as you prayerfully consider the following Spirit of Prophecy statements corresponding to these verses.

This week’s lesson is on Jesus and the Mosaic Law. We find in the following material that Jesus kept the laws of Moses, but He refrained from the traditions of the rabbis.

# Sabbath Afternoon

# Luke 2:21-24 Mary's Acceptable Offering

“It is the heart service that makes the gift valuable. When the Majesty of heaven became a babe, and was entrusted to Mary, she did not have much to offer for the precious gift. She brought to the altar only two turtledoves, the offering appointed for the poor; but they were an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. She could not present rare treasures such as the wise men of the East came to Bethlehem to lay before the Son of God; yet the mother of Jesus was not rejected because of the smallness of her gift. It was the willingness of her heart that the Lord looked upon, and her love made the offering sweet. So God will accept our gift, however small, if it is the best we have, and is offered from love to Him.”--R. & H., Dec. 9, 1890.

# Exodus 13:2, 12 Always Putting God First

“Even before the tithe could be reserved there had been an acknowledgment of the claims of God. The first that ripened of every product of the land was consecrated to Him. The first of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, the first of the oil and the wine, was set apart for God. So also were the first-born of all animals; and a redemption price was paid for the first-born son. The first fruits were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary, and were then devoted to the use of the priests. {PP 526.2}

“Thus the people were constantly reminded that God was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that He sent them sunshine and rain for their seedtime and harvest, and that everything they possessed was of His creation, and He had made them stewards of His goods.” {PP 526.3}

# Luke 2:41-52 Jesus Keeps His First Passover

“Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem every year to the feast of the Passover, according to the requirements of the Jewish law. Christ's childhood days were ended. He had entered upon the period of youth. Joseph and Mary, as was their custom, prepared to take their long journey to Jerusalem. They took Jesus with them. They went in company with many others who were on their way to Jerusalem to observe this solemn festival. {LHU 31.2} ……

“While the institution of the Passover was pointing backward to the miraculous deliverance of the Hebrews, it likewise pointed forward, showing the death of the Son of God before it transpired. In the last Passover our Lord observed with His disciples, He instituted the Lord's Supper in place of the Passover, to be observed in memory of His death. No longer had they need of the Passover, for He, the great antitypical Lamb, was ready to be sacrificed for the sins of the world. Type met antitype in the death of Christ.” (Youth's Instructor, May 1873).

# Matthew 17:24-27 Jesus and the Temple Tax

“Soon after they reached the town, the collector of the temple revenue came to Peter with the question, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" This tribute was not a civil tax, but a religious contribution, which every Jew was required to pay annually for the support of the temple. A refusal to pay the tribute would be regarded as disloyalty to the temple,--in the estimation of the rabbis a most grievous sin. The Saviour's attitude toward the rabbinical laws, and His plain reproofs to the defenders of tradition, afforded a pretext for the charge that He was seeking to overthrow the temple service. Now His enemies saw an opportunity of casting discredit upon Him. In the collector of the tribute they found a ready ally.” {DA 432.3}

“Peter saw in the collector's question an insinuation touching Christ's loyalty to the temple. Zealous for his Master's honor, he hastily answered, without consulting Him, that Jesus would pay the tribute.” {DA 433.1}

“But Peter only partially comprehended the purpose of his questioner. There were some classes who were held to be exempt from the payment of the tribute. In the time of Moses, when the Levites were set apart for the service of the sanctuary, they were given no inheritance among the people. The Lord said, ‘Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance.’ Deuteronomy 10:9. In the days of Christ the priests and Levites were still regarded as especially devoted to the temple, and were not required to make the annual contribution for its support. Prophets also were exempted from this payment. In requiring the tribute from Jesus, the rabbis were setting aside His claim as a prophet or teacher, and were dealing with Him as with any commonplace person. A refusal on His part to pay the tribute would be represented as disloyalty to the temple; while, on the other hand, the payment of it would be taken as justifying their rejection of Him as a prophet. {DA 433.2}

“Only a little before, Peter had acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God; but he now missed an opportunity of setting forth the character of his Master. By his answer to the collector, that Jesus would pay the tribute, he had virtually sanctioned the false conception of Him to which the priests and rulers were trying to give currency.” {DA 433.3}

“When Peter entered the house, the Saviour made no reference to what had taken place, but inquired, ‘What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?’ Peter answered, ‘Of strangers. And Jesus said, ‘Then are the children free.’ While the people of a country are taxed for the maintenance of their king, the monarch's own children are exempt. So Israel, the professed people of God, were required to maintain His service; but Jesus, the Son of God, was under no such obligation. If priests and Levites were exempt because of their connection with the temple, how much more He to whom the temple was His Father's house.” {DA 433.4}

“If Jesus had paid the tribute without a protest, He would virtually have acknowledged the justice of the claim, and would thus have denied His divinity. But while He saw good to meet the demand, He denied the claim upon which it was based. In providing for the payment of the tribute He gave evidence of His divine character. It was made manifest that He was one with God, and therefore was not under tribute as a mere subject of the kingdom.” {DA 434.1}

"Go thou to the sea," He directed Peter, "and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for Me and thee." {DA 434.2}

“Though He had clothed His divinity with humanity, in this miracle He revealed His glory. It was evident that this was He who through David had declared, ‘Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof.’" Psalm 50:10-12. {DA 434.3}

“While Jesus made it plain that He was under no obligation to pay the tribute, He entered into no controversy with the Jews in regard to the matter; for they would have misinterpreted His words, and turned them against Him. Lest He should give offense by withholding the tribute, He did that which He could not justly be required to do. This lesson would be of great value to His disciples. Marked changes were soon to take place in their relation to the temple service, and Christ taught them not to place themselves needlessly in antagonism to established order. So far as possible, they were to avoid giving occasion for misinterpretation of their faith. While Christians are not to sacrifice one principle of truth, they should avoid controversy whenever it is possible to do so.” {DA 434.4}

# John 8:1-11 Jesus and the law concerning adultery

“A group of Pharisees and scribes approached Him, dragging with them a terror-stricken woman, whom with hard, eager voices they accused of having violated the seventh commandment. Having pushed her into the presence of Jesus, they said to Him, with a hypocritical show of respect, ‘Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou?’" {DA 460.4}

“Their pretended reverence veiled a deep-laid plot for His ruin. They had seized upon this opportunity to secure His condemnation, thinking that whatever decision He might make, they would find occasion to accuse Him. Should He acquit the woman, He might be charged with despising the law of Moses. Should He declare her worthy of death, He could be accused to the Romans as one who was assuming authority that belonged only to them.” {DA 460.5}

“Jesus looked for a moment upon the scene,--the trembling victim in her shame, the hard-faced dignitaries, devoid of even human pity. His spirit of stainless purity shrank from the spectacle. Well He knew for what purpose this case had been brought to Him. He read the heart, and knew the character and life history of everyone in His presence. These would-be guardians of justice had themselves led their victim into sin, that they might lay a snare for Jesus. Giving no sign that He had heard their question, He stooped, and fixing His eyes upon the ground, began to write in the dust.” {DA 461.1}

“Impatient at His delay and apparent indifference, the accusers drew nearer, urging the matter upon His attention. But as their eyes, following those of Jesus, fell upon the pavement at His feet, their countenances changed. There, traced before them, were the guilty secrets of their own lives. The people, looking on, saw the sudden change of expression, and pressed forward to discover what it was that they were regarding with such astonishment and shame.” {DA 461.2}

“With all their professions of reverence for the law, these rabbis, in bringing the charge against the woman, were disregarding its provisions. It was the husband's duty to take action against her, and the guilty parties were to be punished equally. The action of the accusers was wholly unauthorized. Jesus, however, met them on their own ground. The law specified that in punishment by stoning, the witnesses in the case should be the first to cast a stone. Now rising, and fixing His eyes upon the plotting elders, Jesus said, ‘He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.’ And stooping down, He continued writing on the ground.” {DA 461.3}

“He had not set aside the law given through Moses, nor infringed upon the authority of Rome. The accusers had been defeated. Now, their robe of pretended holiness torn from them, they stood, guilty and condemned, in the presence of Infinite Purity. They trembled lest the hidden iniquity of their lives should be laid open to the multitude; and one by one, with bowed heads and downcast eyes, they stole away, leaving their victim with the pitying Saviour.” {DA 461.4}

# Matthew 5:17-20 Least Among Human Agencies Who Teach Others to Break the Ten Commandments

“This is the judgment pronounced in the kingdom of heaven. Some have thought that the commandment breaker will be there, but will occupy the lowest place. This is a mistake. Sinners will never enter the abode of bliss. The commandment breaker, and all who unite with him in teaching that it makes no difference whether men break or observe the divine law, will by the universe of heaven be called least among the human agencies. For not only have they been disloyal themselves, but they have taught others to break the law of God. Christ pronounces judgment upon those who claim to have a knowledge of the law, but who, by precept and example, lead souls into confusion and darkness.” (RH Nov. 15, 1898).

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Compiled by Pastor Wehr