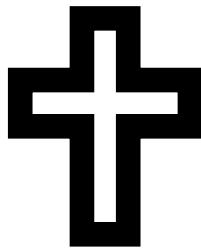


**Twelve Lessons**  
*on*  
***Bible Manners & Customs***

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## **HOW TO HAVE A HARVEST – LESSON 1**

### **Genesis 6:8-9, Deuteronomy 8:7-10**

**Introduction:** There are many scriptures on revival and soulwinning that are likened to a harvest.

1. Psalms 126:5 – *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.”*
2. Psalms 126:6 – *“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”*
3. Hosea 10:12 – *“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.”*
4. Luke 10:2 – *“The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few.”*
5. John 4:35 – *“Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”*
6. Three Stages for Israel – Egypt, Wilderness, Canaan – They were always shepherds but they also had other occupations.
  - a. Egypt – Ex. 1:14 – Manufactured Brick – Hard Bondage – They were brick makers in Egypt.
  - b. Wilderness – Ex. 16:15-17 – Gathered Manna – Survival – They were gatherers in the Wilderness.
  - c. Canaan – Deut. 8:7-10 – Land of Abundant Crops – Plenty – They were harvesters in Canaan. It was expected that the Israelites would become farmers harvesting crops after entering the land of Canaan.
7. God's perfect will is that we become farmers and gather a harvest. Spiritually this is God's best for us, that we are harvesters, not just survivors.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. To study the manners and customs associated with preparing for a harvest.
2. To make application of spiritual principles learned from the study of the manners and customs associated with sowing and reaping.

### **Definition of Terms or Phrases:**

1. Early Rain – Toward the end of October heavy rains begin to fall, at intervals, for a day or several days at a time. These are what the Bible calls the early or former rain (Heb. *yoreh*) literally the pourer. It opens the agricultural year.
2. Latter Rain – The latter rains (Heb. *malqosh*) of Scripture are the heavy showers of March and April. Coming as they do before the harvest and the long summer drought, they are of far more importance to the country than all the rains of the winter months, and that is why these are passed over in Scripture, and emphasis is laid alone on the early and the latter rains (Unger's Bible Dictionary).
3. “Rightly dividing the word of truth.” – “Cutting straight (in an orthodox manner), (rightly dividing or dissecting) the Word of truth.” Rightly administering the Word and work of God, or rightly handling it, Luke 24:44, according to the Lord's Commission, Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8 (Garner).
4. Yoke – A bar or frame of wood by which two draft animals, especially oxen, are joined at the necks or heads for working together, for drawing a load or pulling a plow (Unger's Bible Dictionary).

### **Biblical Procedures for an Abundant Harvest**

**I. PATIENCE FOR PLOWING** – You must wait for the early rain to have an abundant harvest.

**A. Hard Ground** – the ground is extremely hard in the Holy Land – According to Psalms 65:10, plowing is done after the early rains have softened the ground. The early rains came in October and November.

**B. The Rain** – it is typified in the Old Testament as the blessings and power of the Holy Ghost.

1. Luke 24:49 – *“but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”*
2. Acts 1:14 – Ten Days – They waited until the Holy Spirit came. It is true He would have come in fulfillment of prophecy but God blessed their tarrying and 3,000 were saved.
3. Experience of D.L. Moody – He was filled with the Spirit one day on a street in Chicago.
4. “Why Revival Tarrys,” a book by Leonard Ravenhill, has this statement, “With all thy getting get UNCTION!”

### **II. PREPARATION FOR PLOWING**

**A. Prepared His Plow** – sharpened his plow – II Tim. 2:15 – *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

1. Study to show thyself approved means to “be eager to present (stand up straight) thyself approved toward God,” or give diligence to present thyself and thy work to God, approved. What God approves, He

will bless.

2. He is to study that he may be able to teach or preach it without blushing, John 5:39; Acts 17:11; I Peter 3:15.
3. "Cutting straight (in an orthodox manner), (rightly dividing or dissecting) the Word of truth." Rightly administering the Word and work of God, or rightly handling it, Luke 24:44, according to the Lord's Commission, Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8 (Garner).

**B. Prepared His Goad** – Sharpened the point – This is a picture of Biblical Convictions.

1. Goad – An instrument for guiding oxen, the long handle of which might be used as a formidable weapon (Judges 3:31). The instrument, still used in southern Europe and western Asia, consists of a rod about eight feet long, brought to a sharp point and sometimes cased with iron at the bigger end, to clear the plow of clay.
2. Figurative – "*To kick against the prick*" or goads was a proverbial expression for unavailing resistance to superior power (Unger's Bible Dictionary).

**C. Prepared His Yoke** – He made it smooth and fitted so that it didn't callous the oxen. This represents the right methods and motives.

1. This alludes to the yoke work by an ox, a symbol of subjection to a master, to learn and serve Him, Jesus Christ.
2. To learn of Jesus was and is to lay aside the "yoke of bondage" of the law, to accept Jesus as both absolute Saviour and Master, Matt.6:24; Luke16:13.

**III. PRESSURE FOR PLOWING** – The plow in Bible times had only one handle. That plow represents the will of God for your life. Paul said, "*This one thing I do...*" giving a spiritual application to this illustration.

**A. Pressure of a Straight Row** – He would plow with one hand and goad the oxen with the other.

1. You will never do the will of God trying to plow without a goad. If you say you believe the word and do not practice the word, nobody will believe you.
2. Putting one's hand on the plow is a sign of committing himself to start plowing, Luke14:34-35.
3. Looking back is vacillating, looking back repeatedly, as Israel looked back at the leeks and onions of Egypt, etc., murmuring and complaining, and fell in the wilderness; and as Mark once did, Acts 15:37-38; II Tim.4:10-11; Psalms 106:25; Num. 11:5.
4. "Fit" – Fit for service in the labors of the kingdom of God, in that unstable world-loving attitude or disposition, Romans 12:1-2; 1:1-32; Joshua 2:17-19 (Garner).

**B. Pressure of Plowing** – The ground was so hard the farmer had to lean on the plow. If he "looked back" not only would he plow crooked, but he would make no furrow at all because the plow was so light.

1. Plow – It was constructed of two pieces of wood or a forked stick.
2. Plow – It was so light, a farmer could carry it two miles to the field. Matt. 11:30 – "*For my yoke is easy, and my burden (plow) is light.*" When you find God's will for your life, it is not a burden, but a blessing!

**IV. PRESSURE FOR PLANTING**

**A. Pressure of Sowing** – He sowed the seed by the broadcasting method.

1. I'm afraid we are too self-centered in our sowing because broadcasting is randomly casting seed.
2. Even if one sows indiscriminately, God promises a harvest.

**B. Pressure of Covering** – Someone followed directly behind the plow to cover the seed.

1. This is a picture of Love – I Peter 4:8 – "*charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*"
2. Just wrap up those seeds with LOVE and they will sprout.

**C. Pressure of Fertilizing** – In Biblical times they used no fertilizer.

1. Our biggest problem is trying to help God in the saving of a sinner.
2. O.T. – They used no artificial sweetener in the sacrifices. This is another picture of man trying to help God.

**V. PRESSURE FOR PROTECTION** – The harvest has many enemies.

**A. Birds** – Snatch up the Seed – Birds are always symbolic of false teaching.

1. The birds came (at will) and devoured the roadway and fencerow seeds.
2. The fowls represent the wicked ones, using "religious fowls," the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes in particular, to dislodge or snatch away what had been sown in hearts of certain hearers by the wayside (Garner).

**B. Tares** – Wild Wheat represents Counterfeit Christianity, Lost Church members.

1. Tare seeds were sown over the same ground where the good seed (the wheat) had been sown, Matt. 7:13-18; II Cor. 11:13-15
2. And went his way knowing that "every thing brings forth after his kind." Acts 20:29,30.

3. The tares of the wicked one could also be seeds of gossip, doubt, suspicion, malice, envy, jealousy left to grow.

**C. Fire** – Usually starts in the thorns – The Israelite farmer used these thorn bushes in the summer for the outdoor fires for cooking.

1. Thorns usually grew all around the fields. It was easy for a fire that was started with the thorns to spread to the wheat and it was difficult to keep a whole field from being burned.
2. God requires the one responsible for the fire to make restitution in Ex. 22:6. These thorns are a picture of the world. Worldly church members keep a lot of sinners from getting saved.

**D. Locusts** – Type of Demons – I Tim. 4:1– “*Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.*”

1. “Some shall depart from the faith” – “Faith” is the body of Christian truth, the system of faith (II Thess. 2:3; II Tim. 4:3,4).
2. “Giving heed to seducing spirits” – Those departing from the faith, falling away, or apostatizing, shall be hearers and followers of demon spirits that incite, seduce, speak to, and lead their hearers to turn their backs on the Word and ways of God – I John 4:1,6; Rev. 16:13,14.
3. “And doctrines of devils” – These deranged, fallen demon spirits speak through false teachers and prophets, leading them in moral anarchy against Christian principles – II Peter 2:1-22; Jude 1:4,8-16. (Garner)

**E. Thieves** – Judges 6:3 – “Amalekites” stole the harvest – Everywhere in the O.T. the Amalekites are a type of the flesh.

**F. So Many Enemies – Puts Light on Psalms 126:5-6**

1. Most of the farmers were poor and their supply of seed was very small.
2. The farmer would go forth to sow his seed in the soil.
  - a. He wasn't weeping because of the seed in the soil, he knew if he got it planted it would come up.
  - b. He was weeping because he was concerned that the enemy would take it from him.
  - c. He was weeping over the harvest he might lose.
  - d. He was not weeping because of lost labor, money, time or seed. He was weeping because of a harvest lost.