

Unit 13: Cults

Unit 13 Introduction

During this unit of this course we will take a look at four different religions: the Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Science, Unity, and Mormons. We will examine their teachings in the light of God's Word, and see that no matter who you are witnessing to, it will always come down to grace vs. works.

Unit Outline

Unit 13: Cults

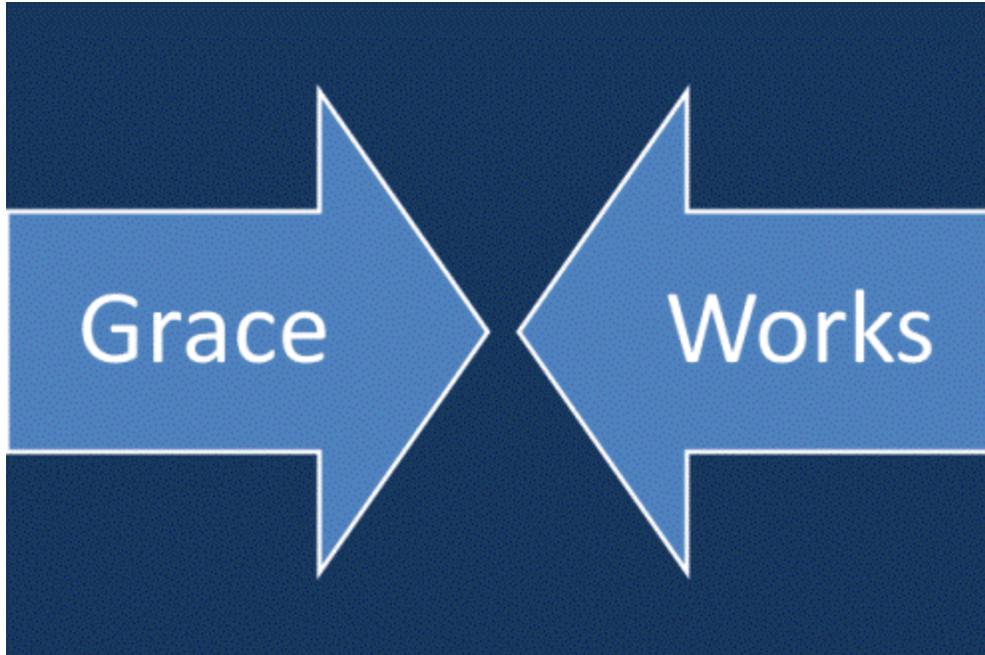
Lesson 33: Seventh Day Adventists

Lesson 34: Christian Science & Unity

Lesson 35: Mormons

Lesson 33: Seventh Day Adventists

Lesson Introduction



In this lesson we will take a look at a religion that seems to be pretty good on the surface. The Seventh Day Adventists can seem to be just “another little branch” of Christianity, but as you examine their teachings you will find that they are way off on grace vs. works.

We will look at the origins of the group, some of their basic teachings, see the danger of half-truths, and answer the question, “Should we be keeping the Sabbath?”

Lesson 33: Seventh Day Adventists

Topic 1: Basic Doctrines

The Finished Work of Christ

Topic 2: The Danger of Half-Truths

Grace vs. Works

The Yoke of Bondage

Soul Sleep

Topic 3 The Sabbath

Guilty of the Whole Law

A Day of Rest or Worship?

Why Meet on Sunday?

Topic 1: Basic Doctrines

I hope no one will take this that we dislike anybody. That’s not the question. I think probably the Seventh Day Adventists are as good of people as anybody. They’re not, what you call, one of the “loonies”. You know, one of the people that shave their head and stand out in the street, or Jimmy Jones-type people.

We're not saying they're bad people. I wouldn't mind living next door to them. They'd probably be very good neighbors to have. Well we're going to look at what they believe and compare it with the Bible. As you see, you have quite a few verses. William Miller—he was not the one most identified with the movement, although he's the forerunner. The one most identified with it is Ellen G. White. [In] 1818, Miller, a New England farmer, predicted Christ was coming in March 21st, 1843. Where'd he get that date? Well, he got it from Daniel 8:14. And he started with 457 B.C. and he added each of those days as years. So he predicted the exact date that Christ was coming again, March 21st, 1843. Daniel 8:14, "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Then he made a mistake. You know, nobody ought to predict any date. If you do, you're going to be in trouble. You know, the Bible says you won't know the day or the hour. It says the season draweth nigh. It's okay to be looking at the season, but you better not be setting dates, because if you do, you're going to be in trouble. Now so he misinterpreted that. And then the date was changed to October 24th, 1844. Again, Christ did not appear and Miller was bitterly disappointed before his death in 1849. And he said, "We expect" and this is exact quotes, "the personal coming of Christ at that time, and now to contend that we were not mistaken is dishonest. We should never be ashamed frankly to confess our errors. I have no confidence in any of the new theories that grew out of the movement." That was presented on Good News Broadcasters June 1964. A pretty honest man. You say, "Well, a man that honest, you shouldn't be talking about his group tonight." Well, it wasn't his problem. It's the woman that took it up after that, which was Ellen G. White. Well, she said that Christ really did come in 1844, but He didn't come all the way. He kind of stayed up in the clouds. And He was still finishing the atonement. I guess the cross wasn't good enough, so He was still going to finish the atonement. So instead of coming back to Earth, He entered the heavenly sanctuary. He will come the rest of the way to the earth later.

QUESTION 1

William Miller, the founder of Seventh Day Adventism, predicted Christ would return on March 21st, 1843. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 2

It is okay to be looking at the seasons of Christ's return, but we must not try to set dates. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 3

Miller's successor, Ellen G. White, believed in the finished atonement of Christ. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

The Finished Work of Christ

Now we know, if you'll look at Hebrews 10:12, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Jesus didn't enter any sanctuary. Jesus did it once and for all. The issue that—we've gone over this over and over—the issue is always, what? Grace versus works. That is the issue, always. It doesn't matter which group, -ism, or spism, or spasms, or whatever—it doesn't matter; it's always grace versus works. It doesn't matter if it's Seventh Day Adventist or Roman Catholic. Some Baptist churches—it doesn't matter. If they add works to salvation, that's always an issue. These verses that we're going to give you tonight, I think they should get you quite excited. Mrs. White, now she did a lot of writing. And among her books are *The Desire of the Ages*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *The Acts of the Apostles, Prophets and Kings*, and a very popular book of *Steps to Christ*. This booklet had a distribution of millions. The attitude of those who follow her is that there are no errors in her writing. However, not all Adventists concede that she is a prophet in the same sense as Isaiah or Jeremiah, etc.

Now the Adventists are really working hard on getting credibility. They send out a newspaper to all the churches in America. And it's a credible paper. You read it, you say, "Man, they're just another little branch". But the problem is what they teach. It's not the people. I'm sure they're very nice people. Some Christian leaders of our day are saying that modern Adventists have departed enough from their original views that they no longer should be considered heresy. If its errors were completely minor, this may be true, but their errors are not minor, and they're major.

QUESTION 4

The issue when witnessing, even to some Baptists, will always be grace vs. works. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 5

Those who follow Ellen White believe that her writings: Answer: _____

- A. Are inspired by God
- B. Are equal with the Bible
- C. Contain no errors
- D. Should be canonized

QUESTION 6

The Adventists are guilty of only minor doctrinal errors. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

Topic 2: Danger of Half-Truths

Now in her book—Questions on Doctrine says [of] Ellen G. White's book, The Great Controversy, "This is the great controversy, and is one of our standard books. In this book are found many doctrines strange to the Word of God." Now let's look at what she says about salvation. Mrs. White says, "As the books and records are opened in judgment, the lives of all who have believed in Jesus come in review before God." Now I want you to watch real closely and listen, because some might not catch this heresy because it's slick. See if you'll catch it. "Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any . . ."—now remember, this is a direct quote out of her book—"When any have sins remaining upon the books of record unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the Book of Life and the record of their good deeds will be erased." Now salvation by grace, is it by Jesus on the cross? And I'm still quoting, "All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of Heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be counted worthy of eternal life." Now doesn't that sound good, though? I mean part of it. They have the righteousness of Christ. See, this is where some people get so confused. But with that, she also says there's works. Don't ever be fooled by someone saying half-truths. Half-truths are dangerous because half-truths will get you killed. So we've got to be very careful about that.

QUESTION 7

Which Ellen G White book do Seventh Day Adventist's claim as one of their standard books?

Answer: _____

- A. Questions on Doctrine
- B. The Desire of the Ages
- C. The Great Controversy
- D. Patriarchs and Prophets

QUESTION 8

This book contains heresy and half truths. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 9

According to Ellen G White, your sins must be _____ of to enter Heaven.

- A. Forgiven
- B. Forsaken
- C. Repented
- D. Reformed

Grace vs. Works

They're still believing in works for salvation, and it's something that we've got to be very careful of. According to this statement, Mrs. White, "Even though one believes on Jesus, he will still be lost if he dies with any sins on his record that he has not repented of. But if a person believes in Jesus and his character is good, God will give him what he has earned through his faith and worthy deeds, eternal life." You see the danger? Do you see the danger, even amongst some of our brethren? We believe everything alike. But they'll say, "Yes, salvation's free, but if you're not living it, you're not sure that you have it. And if you're not sure that you have it, you don't have it." Remember Romans 11:6, and I think most of us know this verse: "[And] if by grace, then [is] it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then [is] it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." You can't mix it. You can't have ice and steam. You can't mix it. It's either all by grace, or it's all by works. It's not half grace and half works. Romans 4:4-5, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." If you were to say, "I have to work my way to Heaven," [you're] never going to make it to Heaven. You would be surprised how many people have gone to church all their life—a good church, they've enjoyed their church—but they still believe if they don't have their own good works, if they don't have good works, they're not going to make it to Heaven. A very dangerous thing to believe. God says no man deserves salvation. God does not owe man anything. We deserve Hell. There's not a man on earth or woman on earth, boy or girl on earth, that has ever deserved Heaven. We've got to understand that. If it doesn't come through faith alone in Christ's finished work, you don't have it.

QUESTION 10

Ellen G White made this statement: "Even though one believes on Jesus, he will still be lost if he dies with any sins on his record that he has not repented of. But if a person believes in Jesus and his character is good, God will give him what he has earned through his faith and worthy deeds, eternal life." *True or False?*

QUESTION 11

The Seventh Day Adventist will tell you that to get to Heaven you must have: *(Select all that apply.)*

Answer: _____

- A. Repentance
- B. Forgiveness
- C. Works
- D. A life to back it up

The Yoke of Bondage

I think this next verse, Galatians 5:1—I tell you, this is such an incredible, incredible verse, and I want all of you to really think on this one—“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free”. Now just stop there. Stand in the liberty. Christ has given us liberty. Now, “Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” See the bondage is sin. The bondage is that world hanging over you. Of course, the more you come to church, the more you have liberty. Verse 2, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if [ye] be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” In other words, if you believe in keeping the law—circumcision was the Jewish keeping of the law—if you believe in keeping the law, you will be profited zero. If you say, “Well, I believe in Christ, and I believe He paid for my sins, but I still believe you have to have good works,” Christ will profit you zero. Get that in your head. Now remember, I’m reading this out of the Bible. Verse 3, “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.” In other words, if you believe in keeping part of the law, you ought to keep all the law, and the law condemns you. Verse 4, “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; [ye] are fallen from grace.” Christ is become of no effect. See, if a person says, “I believe in any kind of works,” Christ is no effect. Look at some more quotes from Ellen G. White. “As a priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed upon the head of the scapegoat,” now listen to this—“so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. Satan, bearing the guilt of all sins which he has caused, will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in fire that shall destroy all the wicked.” They say that Satan will pay the sin debt, not Christ. Now let’s look at Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD [hath] laid [on] him the iniquity of us all.” 2 Corinthians 5:21 that I quote every Sunday: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Who paid the sin debt? Jesus Christ. Satan does not pay the sin debt. Satan caused the sin. Satan can never pay the debt. Yes, Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever, but he will never be able to pay the debt.

QUESTION 12

If you believe in keeping the law, Christ can still profit you. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 13

If you believe in keeping the law, you ought to keep the whole law. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 14

The Seventh Day Adventists teach that the sin debt will be paid by: _____

- A. Christ
- B. Satan
- C. The Father
- D. The Sinner Himself

Soul Sleep

The Seventh Day Adventists teach “soul sleep”. They teach that the unsaved will be annihilated and not spend eternity in the Lake of Fire, as the Scriptures teach. Neither do they believe that a person has any consciousness after death. The belief is called soul sleep, and contradicts precious Scriptures on behalf of the believers who have gone home to be with the Lord. Now I want us to look at quite a few verses here that teach that we don’t soul sleep. In other words, they say you put you in the grave and you’re going to soul sleep. No, when you die, you go to be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds”. Okay what does that say? This is talking about the Rapture. “We are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds”—not those that are, you know, [in] soul sleep—“to meet the Lord in the air: so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 5:6, “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, [whilst] we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, [and] willing to be absent from the body, and to be” –what?—“present with the Lord.” You don’t soul sleep. The minute you die, you’re going to be with the Lord. Glorious, precious, wonderful—to be with the Lord. The minute you die, no soul sleep. Philippians 1:21, “For [to] me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Can you imagine him saying, “For me to live is Christ, to die is soul sleep”? That wouldn’t exactly be fun, would it? I can’t wait to get to the grave and know nothing. Well, even when you sleep at night, you dream. I mean, you don’t just cease to exist. You never will. Believe me, you will be conscious forever [in] either Heaven or Hell. Philippians 1:23, “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better,” or to stay, is what he was saying. Revelation 6:9, “[And] when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held”. He opened the fifth seal. “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain”. Psalm 116:15, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” Now it wouldn’t be precious if they died and they soul slept. I hope all of you get that.

Assignment:

Memorize Philippians 1:23

QUESTION 15

What is meant by “soul sleep”?

Topic 3: The Sabbath

Now the unique issue, though, we haven’t even got to about the Adventists, is the Sabbath. Now when’s the Sabbath? The Sabbath is not Sunday. I don’t think any of you would say that. The Sabbath is Saturday. If you go over to Israel and say, “Well, the Sabbath is Sunday,” no, the Sabbath is not Sunday. The Sabbath is Saturday. Don’t you ever think that the Sabbath is Sunday. Now the unique issue among Adventists is their teaching that one must keep the Sabbath, Saturday, to be saved. The issue, again, is law

versus grace. Any of the following Scriptures answer this, and you should learn to apply them to any issue, such as this, when you witness. Keeping the Sabbath, or any other work of the law, has nothing to do with salvation. Look at Acts 13:38, “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which [ye] could not be justified by the law of Moses.” We’re not under the law of Moses. Romans 3:20, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is [the] knowledge of sin.” So how many deeds are going to be—how much are going to be justified by the law? How much? None. Romans 3:28, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law”. Pretty clear, isn’t it? Let’s look at Galatians 3:10, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.” So if you’re going to keep the law, you have to keep it all. If you don’t keep it all, you’re not going to be saved.

Assignment:

Memorize Galatians 3:10-12

QUESTION 17

For the church age, the Sabbath is Sunday. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 18

In keeping the Sabbath, the issue becomes “What day is the Sabbath?” *True or False?*

Answer: _____

Guilty of the Whole Law

Now, if they want to keep the law, how are they going to do it? If they fail in just one point, then they’re not going to be able to do it. And they’ve got a real serious problem. Let’s look at a few more of these verses. Look at James 2:10, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, [he] is guilty of all.” That’s pretty strong. I don’t think I want to put myself under that, cause you’ll never make it. Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Christ asked a point. In John 7:19, He said, “Did not Moses give you the law, [and] yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go [ye] about to kill me?” Why go about to kill me? Did not Moses give you the law? If you offend in one point, you have broken in all points. Galatians 3:3, “Are [ye] so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Now, they say that you’ve got to keep the Sabbath. I think the best verse that you could ever show them is the next verse that we have here, is Romans 14:5. “One man esteemeth one day above another: another man esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” God never said that we had to keep the Sabbath. We’re free from the law. That’s very important that we understand this. God doesn’t give the power to the local church to tell you that you must observe a particular day above another. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or [in] drink”—if you want to look at Colossians 2:16--“or in respect of [an] holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.” We’re not under the law. Begin with them that Saturday is the Sabbath, the seventh day, because the Sabbath has never been changed from the seventh day. But the day one chooses to worship God is not really the issue. You should worship Christ every day. You know, under grace, you should worship Christ seven days a week. You should worship Christ tomorrow morning at work. You should worship Him all the time. ‘How is one saved’ is the most important point. Incidentally, the Sabbath was given as a day of rest, not as a day of worship. They got a problem.

QUESTION 20

If you fail in one point of the Law, you cannot keep the whole law. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

A Day of Rest or Worship?

When the Adventists go to meetings on Saturday, they're doing much more and traveling much more than the law governing the Sabbath allows. They were only allowed to go a Sabbath day's journey. They shut down in Israel now. They will not let you even drive a bus. All the buses are shut down on the Sabbath. They won't let you even ride a bus now in Israel. Well, I guess you could ride an Arab bus, but there's no Jewish buses running in Israel. Isn't that kind of an interesting thing? They don't want to break the Sabbath? A Sabbath day's journey was no farther than the Eastern Gate across the Kidron Valley. Now, Seventh Day Adventists should be killed every day, according to their own agreement, because they're going farther than they should. They're doing much more traveling than the law governing the Sabbath allows. If the Adventists followed the punishment Scripture attaches to disobedience of the Sabbath as described by the law, they would exterminate themselves very quickly. Now look at Numbers 15:32, "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they [that] found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and [unto] all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall [be] surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses." You say, "Wow!" I'll tell you what. We [should] be very thankful we don't live under the law. But you know, I think that would have a pretty profound effect on you. God said the Sabbath was a day of rest. Now if you have to keep part of the law, you have to keep all the law. That does not allow you to get in your car and drive. So they would have a serious problem, wouldn't they? Just gathering sticks. But let me tell you something. God was merciful to go ahead and kill that person, than to let them go ahead and profane God's law. That day is going to come, dear people, that we're going to give an account for everything we've done against God. You say, "But we're saved. We can't go to Hell." That's right. We are saved, and we can't go to Hell. But we're still going to give an account for what we've done in our body, whether it be good or bad. I think it's very important.

QUESTION 22

By going to a meeting on the Sabbath, you could be breaking the Law by traveling too far. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

QUESTION 23

Even though we are saved, we will give an account for what we do in our bodies. *True or False?*

Answer: _____

Why Meet on Sunday?

Look at Exodus 35:2, "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day, there shall be to you [an] holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever [doeth] work therein shall be put to death." Well we know that they would not last very long at all if this was taking place. Christians worship on Sunday because the apostles did. It's very simple. Why do we worship on Sunday? The apostles did. Do we have to worship on Sunday? No. We can worship any day, but of course, this has always been the tradition.

That's the day we ought to worship. But we need to pick a day. Sunday's the day. It's the Lord's day. But we don't have to. What if we were [in an] underground church, and we couldn't worship on Sunday, but we could worship on Monday night? Would God be concerned? No, He wouldn't. Now, I think if you've got a choice, you should worship on Sunday, but that's the liberty we have. That's why you can worship anywhere in the world, in any kind of place, because we are one body. We're not a temple. But in Israel's day, they could only worship God in that temple. Let's look at Acts 20:7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." Upon the first day of the week. Luke 24:1, "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices, which they had prepared, and certain others with them." Jesus rose on the first day. The disciples chose to worship on the first day, and then we have the Seventh Day Adventists come along and say, "No, we believe you ought to have your worship on Saturday." But no, Saturday was a day of rest. The Sabbath was a day of rest. And that's what made all the difference in the world.

QUESTION 24

According to _____, the Sabbath was not to be a day of worship but a day of rest.

- A. Exodus 12:3
- B. Genesis 2:5
- C. Exodus 35:2
- D. Leviticus 3:7

LESSON 33 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: True

QUESTION 2: True [It is a dangerous thing to do.]

QUESTION 3: False [She believed He was still in the clouds finishing the atonement.]

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5

C. Contain no errors

QUESTION 6: False [Their errors are major errors.]

QUESTION 7

C. The Great Controversy

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

C. Repented

QUESTION 10: True

QUESTION 11

A. Repentance

B. Forgiveness

C. Works

D. A life to back it up

QUESTION 12: False [Christ will profit you nothing.]

QUESTION 13: True [The law can only condemn you.]

QUESTION 14

B. Satan

QUESTION 15: *Your answer should be similar to the following:*

It is the teaching that the unsaved will be annihilated and not spend eternity in the lake of fire.

QUESTION 17: False [The Sabbath has always been Saturday.]

QUESTION 18: False [The issue becomes Grace vs. Works.]

QUESTION 20: True

QUESTION 22: True [The Law only allowed for a short distance.]

QUESTION 23: True

QUESTION 24

C. Exodus 35:2