

# The Sabbath School.

## INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

### THE HEAVENLY SONG.

December 7th.] [Revelations v : 1-14.

**GOLDEN TEXT** :—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing—Rev. 5:12.

**HOME READINGS** :—M. Rev. 4 : 1-11. T. Rev. 5 : 1-14. W. Rev. 14 : 1-12. Th. Exo. 15 : 1-19. F. Rev. 15 : 1-8. S. Ps. 96 : 1-13. S. Pa. 150 : 1-6.

*The Seer* is now favoured with a vision of the method of God's government as inscribed in "a book"; from which we learn that His decrees are not arbitrary, but stated and fixed, every detail adusted and planned in infinite wisdom. He is represented as holding this record in His right hand, signifying His readiness to execute all the counsels therein recorded.

**Verse 1. A Book**—rather a roll of parchment, written on both sides, as accords with ancient usage. This roll has been called "the title deed of man's inheritance." It is equally the history of the glorified church. *Sealed with seven*—the number seven, made up of four, for the four quarters of the Globe, and three representing the Trinity, and hence called the perfect number, runs all through the Bible, expressing completeness. Vs. 2, 3. *No man in heaven nor in earth*—no created intelligences. Such things, even angels, who have not been redeemed, cannot understand. Certainly no man is able, Job 1 : 7. *To loose the seals*—to unfold the counsels of God. *Nor to look thereon*—so as to be able to read them. Vs. 4, 5. *Wept much*—was distressed that he could not see more clearly of the divine mind and will. *One of the Elders*—one of the redeemed, a representative of the church militant. *Weep not*—what you know not now you shall know hereafter. 1 Cor. 13 : 9. *The Lion of Judah*—see Gen. 49 : 9-10. *Root of David*—see Matt. 22 : 42-45. He who is the mediator betwixt God and man is alone able to execute the counsels of God—for He has prevailed over the powers of darkness. Vs. 6, 7. *I beheld*—recognized, in midst of the shining throng—and of the four beasts—or living creatures—the sacrificial Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, John 1 : 29. *Seven*—thrice, intimating perfect wisdom. *He came*—prevailed by His merit and worthiness. V. 8. *Before the Lamb*—adoring saints and angels worship the Lord Jesus Christ. *With harps*—they praise Him. *The prayers of saints*—not addressed to angels, but to God. Neither saints nor angels are said to *intercede* for us, for there is *only one mediator*—they only present these petitions. Vs. 9, 10. *Sung a new song*—The heavenly hosts sang together at the creation, Job 38 : 7. But now they sing a new song. None of the songs of earth will do for heaven. This was the song of Redeeming Love—ever suggesting new thoughts of praise. *Out of every kindred, tongue, people, nation*—from the four quarters of the world. *Hath made*—the work of redemption is completed. *Kings and Priests*—to reign with Him in glory ch. 22 : 5 and to offer through Him spiritual sacrifices, 1 Peter 2 : 5. *We shall reign on the earth*—The saints shall with Him judge the world at the great day, 1 Cor. 6 : 2. Vs. 11, 12. *Many angels*—The idea conveyed is that of an innumerable company (Hebrews 12 : 22) ascribing everlasting glory and dominion, to the Sovereign of the Universe and to "THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN": while the ransomed saints would echo back the chorus,—*"Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,"* as in Rev. 1 : 5. *Worthy to receive, power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, blessing*—again seven ascriptions. They only who learn this song upon earth shall sing it in heaven.

## THE HEAVENLY CITY.

December 14th.] [Revelations xxi. : 21-27.

**GOLDEN TEXT** :—For he looked for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heb. 11 : 10.

**HOME READINGS** :—M. Isa. 65 : 17-25. T. Ezek. 47 : 1-12. W. Rev. 19 : 1-21. Th. Rev. 20 : 1-15. F. Rev. 21 : 1-8. S. Rev. 21 : 10-27. S. Rev. 22 : 1-5.

THE BIBLE begins with an account of the creation and of the earthly paradise. In it is bound up the only reliable history of the human race. It foretells the ultimate destiny of the material universe—to be burned with fire, 2 Pet. 3 : 10 : and, before closing, it lifts the veil to give us a glimpse of "the new Jerusalem." Whether this world, sublimated by fire, is to become the eternal habitation of God's elect, matters not, we are here taught to think of heaven as a *place*, and not merely a state or condition of future existence.

Verses 21, 22. *Twelve gates* abundant ingress to people of all nations and denominations. All the true Israel shall find entrance, as every tribe had access to Jerusalem. *Pearls*—costly and beautiful. *Gold transparent*—earthy gold is too dim to give a right conception of the glory of heaven. *No Temple*—The condition of things will be reversed. Here, God dwells in the hearts of believers—His temple 1 Cor. 3 : 17 and 6 : 19; there, the glorified church shall dwell in Him as her temple. *Means of grace shall cease* when the end of grace is come." Vs. 23, 24. *No need of the sun*—the presence of God and the Lamb shall more than supply the place of Gospel ordinances. *The Glory of God*—Of this glory the Jews had visible evidence in the pillar of fire, and in the tabernacle, 1 Kings 8 : 11. Saul, too at Damascus, Acts 22 : 1. *And the Lamb*—Christ is "the true light," John 1 : 9. *Nations saved*—some out of all the nations, and many out of some—aiding to the great multitudes who shall be saved, Rev. 7 : 9. *Kings*—all ranks and classes shall find admission. Vs. 23, 25. *Gates not shut*—no need to shut them, for there is no night—no sin, no ignorance. *They who come hither find*—"an abundant entrance," 2 Peter 1 : 11. *The glory and honour*—everything excellent and pure shall be found here—nothing good left out, nothing bad admitted. V. 27. *That defileth*—anything unclean. *Hypocrites, untruthful, impure, and protious persons may creep* into the church on earth but shall in *no wise*—under any disguise—enter heaven. Only those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 7 : 14. Chapter 22 : 1, 2. *A pure river*—as in Eden there was a river to water the garden, Gen. 2 : 10-14, so in heaven the River of Life—everflowing ensuring perennial beauty and verdure and exemption from thirst and unfruitfulness, free from any taint, because issuing from the fountain of Purity itself. *The tree of life*—rather trees lining the streets and the river. "Symbols of bestowed immortality" In Eden only one tree of life; here many. *Twelve manner of fruits*—emblematical of endless variety and ceaseless supply of blessings suited to the tastes and capacities of the inhabitants. Vs. 3, 4. *No more curse*—no serpent as in Eden, no Satan, no sin. *But the throne of God and the Lamb*—who redeemed us from the curse, Gal. 3 : 13. *His servants shall serve Him*—continually—ceaseless and joyous service—though what kind of service we do not precisely know: there will be no idlers there. *Shall see his face*—Matt. 5 : 8—shall enjoy precious intimacy as with a dear friend, 1 Cor. 13 : 9-12. Not only shall they know their sonship, but they shall be known to all the citizens of heaven, from their likeness to Him whose name they bear. 1 John 3 : 2. *For the Lord God*—see Ps. 27 : 1. *They shall reign*—as kings and priests, Rev. 1 : 6. *For ever and ever*—unto the ages of the ages."