

10
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

LESSON I, FOURTH QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, OCT. 1.

Text of the Lesson, Rom. 1, 8-17—Memory Verses, 16, 17—Golden Text, Rom. 1, 16—Commentary by the Rev. D. M. Stearns.

8. "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." Our last lesson in the Acts found Paul at Rome preaching Jesus to all who came to him, but from verses 11 to 19 of this lesson it is evident that he had not as yet been in Rome when he wrote this epistle. He writes as a bond slave of Jesus Christ, set apart to proclaim the glad tidings of God concerning the Son, and addresses his letter to all the beloved of God in Rome, called saints. By receiving Jesus we become saints, He becoming our righteousness, and this being the case we are therefore to live as saints. We are not told how the gospel was first preached at Rome, but there were at this time true believers there to whom Paul wrote this great epistle, emphasizing in the very beginning of it the great truth of the resurrection (verse 4). See how faith in God glorifies Him and becomes known abroad to His honor.

9. "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." One of Paul's motives was, "O that I might see you and tell you face to face, that I may share with you in the grace that is yours by the gospel." (Acts xxvii, 23), and it was no outward service as a man pleases (Gal. i, 10; I Thess. ii, 4; Col. iii, 22), but real heart work as in the sight of God, whom he loved to call upon as his witness (I Thess. ii, 10, 11). It was his custom to pray much for the saints in every place (Eph. i, 16; I Thess. i, 5; Phil. 4), and he loved to be prayed for (Col. iv, 3; I Thess. v, 25; II Thess. iii, 1). God was his intimate friend, and like a little child he told his father everything (Phil. ii, 6, 7). What he preached he practiced.

10. "Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you." Outwardly we have seen that as men do things his journey was anything but prosperous, but when we consider his sacrificial and the lives given him (Acts xxvii, 24, 27) it is truly prosperous in a false. Joseph in prison under a false accusation was a prosperous man, for God was with him (Gen. xxxix, 2, 3, 21, 23).

11. "For I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established." He repeats his longing and desire in the end of the epistle (chapters xv, 23; xxii, 29). He at one time put the Ephesians in mind of the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx, 35), and His whole life is an illustration of the joy of imparting spiritual things. The way to be established is found in II Chron. x, 20, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established." See the contrast in Isa. vii, 9, and be mindful of I Cor. xiv, 12, "Be ye one another's help, as ye help one another in the work of the Lord."

12. "That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." In writing to Philomena (Phil. 6) Paul said that the communication of faith becomes effectual by the knowledge of every good thing that is in us in Christ Jesus. Peter speaks of those who have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (II Pet. i, 1). Every believer knows how inspiring is the faith of a fellow believer and how refreshing it is to meet one who can truly say, "I believe God," or "I know whom I have believed" (Acts xxvii, 25; II Tim. i, 13). Confidence begets confidence both in temporal and spiritual things, so that in quietness and confidence we are strong in the Lord (Isa. xxx, 15) somebody will get a refreshing.

13. "Now, I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I proposed to come unto you (but was let hitherto), that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other gentiles." Our purposes may come to naught, but the purpose of God will stand, and all be in due time fulfilled. The way of rest, therefore, is to place ourselves wholly in His hands that He may work both to will and to do. The word "let" in this verse signifies to hinder. See II V. on the comparison II Thess. ii, 7. See also Isa. xliii, 13, where God says, "I will work, and who shall let it?"

14. "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." He did not take any credit to himself for preaching the gospel, but said, "Necessity is laid upon me—yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (I Cor. ix, 16). All who have heard the gospel and have received Christ for themselves are commissioned to make Him known to others, for it is written, "Let him that hears say come" (Rev. xxii, 17). Whether ordained of man or not, they are ordained of God (John xv, 16) and are put in trust with the gospel, which is to be declared, not as pleasing men, but God who trieth our hearts (I Thess. ii, 4).

15. "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are Romans also." "Ready" was one of Paul's watchwords. Ready to every good work, ready to be bound or to die, ready to be offered up (Titus iii, 1; Acts xxi, 28; II Tim. iv, 6). The same word is prominent in the Saviour's teachings with special reference to His coming again (Math. xxiv, 44; xxv, 10). If King David's people could say to him, "My servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord, the king, shall appoint" (II Sam. xv, 15), how much more should we say it to our King?

16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." It is called in verse 1 the gospel of God and in verse 9 the gospel of His Son. It is also called the glorious gospel of Christ and the glorious gospel of the Blessed God (II Cor. x, 4; I Tim. i, 11), yet many preachers today have become ashamed of it or else seem to think it has lost its power, for they preach anything and everything but the good news concerning Jesus. They surely seem to forget Mark viii, 38. There is no benefit from the gospel unless we believe or receive it (Heb. iv, 2), and receiving it we receive Him (John i, 12) and thus become the children of God. If today, as in the days of the apostles, we gave more heed "to the Jew first," might not the blessing be much greater?

17. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Our own righteousness, which is only filthy rags, is opposed to the righteousness of God and must be laid aside before we can enjoy the perfect righteousness of God, which is Christ Himself (Isa. lxiv, 6; II Cor. v, 2; Rom. x, 3, 4). This complete and spotless righteousness was wrought out wholly by Christ and becomes ours by simple faith in Him—or, in other words, by our receiving Him (Rom. iii, 21, 22). "The just shall live by faith."

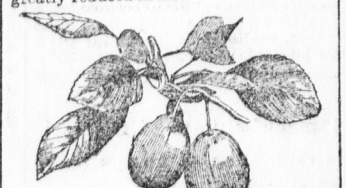
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NEW VARIETIES OF PLUMS.

Some Have Proved Valuable and Promise to Become Popular.

Of new plums there is no end. The great demand seems to be for very early and late sorts in the main, with some other better sorts to supplant the old midseason varieties like Lombard and others. Of these newer ones we have the Field, a seedling of the Bradshaw, 10 days earlier, otherwise resembling its parent in size and general appearance. It is very hardy, productive and promises well. Guili, Hudson River Purple Egg, Prince of Wales and Peter's Yellow Gage are all desirable and cover the ground well at the season of ripening, while Stanton Grand Duke and Monarch aid in extending the plum season late into September and early October and are wanted in all markets because of their size and style. The Black Diamond, for beauty and productiveness is unequalled. It ripens about Sept. 10. The illustration of the Grand Duke, from American Gardening, shows the general shape of both fruit and leaves, but all greatly reduced in size.



GRAND DUKE PLUM.

So far the newly introduced Japanese varieties show themselves very hardy and productive beyond our powers to describe. The name Botan seems to be a general name for a family, of which we have a number differing quite markedly in character. The earliest, which has been styled No. 26, is the poorest in quality, and yet by reason of its early ripening (July 15) meets with ready sales in our city markets. Botan (Abundance, as it is often called) is very good, but not equal to True Sweet Botan or the Yellow Japan, while as regards productiveness Burbank Japan excels them all. Those interested in growing Damsons, Mr. S. D. Willard—from whose report the foregoing is an extract—says that the French Damson is superior in health and productiveness to any of this family out of seven or eight varieties that he has tested.

The Newer Strawberries.

The members of the Western New York Horticultural society gave their views for and against a number, which have become widely known. The following may be mentioned as fairly reliable: Parker Elston succeeds well in most localities and fairly in some. The oblongity and the plants promise heavy crops, which are not always borne, and the berries are not quite large enough. The Greenville has nearly one united voice in its favor. The Lovett, erroneously called Lovett's Early, is generally commended for its value. Warfield has done well and would be good for market if its color were not so dull and dark. Haviland is generally approved, as well as Beder Wood. There are others as good in the localities suited to them, and occasionally better. As soils and varieties vary, fixed lists cannot be made.

Hedges for Shady Places.

It is often desirable to have hedges along lines where large trees are already growing. Evergreens are why we need them for these situations. Only deciduous shrubs can be employed. Among the best of these are the various varieties of privet. They stand dry ground better than almost anything else. It is not so much the shade which injures the hedges in these situations as it is the drying of the ground by the roots of the trees. When we imagine the enormous amount of moisture transpiring from thousands of leaves of trees, we can readily see the dry ground must be which has to supply the practical experience understand this without even a thought of the philosophy involved, says Meehan's Monthly.

Floral Notes.

Give the fuchsia a thin shading and plenty of air, and with liquid manure water now and then.

The peony, like all herbaceous plants, is best planted in October or November and should be protected the first winter by a forkful of dung. This is important to prevent heaving by the frost.

Moss roses require good ground, and moderately close pruning helps them to bear strong wood and fine large buds.

American Gardening names the Harry May chrysanthemum as the best bronze variety yet known to the public.

The Japanese and Chinese peonies are well known to be the most showy flowers in cultivation and are particularly adapted to our climate. They are entirely hardy and bloom a long time. They are accordingly very much used now for large masses in cemeteries, parks and pleasure grounds.

The Mrs. Jerome Jones chrysanthemum is a beautiful white incurved Japanese variety, which was awarded the Taylor prize in New York for the best variety exhibited, having the necessary characteristics for a commercial flower.

Ivy geraniums are beautiful in foliage and flower and ought to be more generally cultivated.

The dwarf phloxes are of value for producing rich effects in color.

Rose Mme. G. Brunt is a hybrid between Rugosa and Soubroni, a vigorous scented rose. It is a capital rose for the garden. The flowers are white, loosely double, of good size and produced in many balled branches.

Magnolia punila is an evergreen Chinese species, with creamy white, very fragrant flowers.

Itch on humans or animals cured in 30 minutes by Woolford's Sanitary Lotion Sold by John Callard and all druggists.

WITH THE FAIR SEX.

PRIZE WINNERS.

To Mrs. Frances H. Williams, of Hartford, Conn., and Miss Marshall Saunders of Halifax, N. S., have been awarded two of the three prizes of \$200 each, offered by the American Humane Education Society of Boston for the best stories of equal length with "Black Beauty," and illustrating kindness and cruelty.

*

A RESERVE FUND.

In Germany every servant girl, by order of the Emperor, is obliged to own a little blank book for stamps. Each week the mistress pastes in the book a five-cent stamp. When the girl grows old, or is in need, these stamps are redeemed at the Government, so the girl has a sickness or old-age fund. This has only been in order two years.

*

GETTING THERE.

There were 6,285 women postmasters under President Harrison. If women had their full share there would be five times that number, but until they are allowed to prove their ability never have their equal portion of the offices. Experience shows that women make excellent postmasters, and we do not remember an instance where one of them in charge of a postoffice has proved unfaithful to her trust.—[Albany (N. Y.) Weekly.]

The sentiment of the country is approaching a general acquiescence in legislation conferring civil rights upon women. And the political party which first championed the cause of universal suffrage, lays its foundation deep and solid, even though endangering present success.—[Minneapolis (Minn.) North.]

*

RED HAIR IS ALL RIGHT.

Don't be ashamed of your red hair. The scientists say that it means that there is a superabundance of iron in the blood. And the analyst says that it is the cause of the red hair that imparts vigor, elasticity, the great vitality, the overflowing, thoroughly healthy animal life which runs through the veins of the red-haired, and this strong, sentient animal life which renders them more interested in all their endeavors than their colorless fellow-creatures. Philosophers notice it as a peculiar fact that red-haired maids are very rare; they seem to have some very strong attractions.

*

WEEP NO MORE.

Those women who weep when weeping is proper should weep no more. Weeping has gone out of fashion. It is held from time immemorial. When you sprain your ankle or lose your loveliest ring you must weep to shed tears. You should pucker up your lips, make your chin quiver a little, wink your eyes and choke desperately, as if keeping back the tears were a heart-splitting effort. Then Harry Horner, or whoever else happens to be with you, will say to him, "Dear girl, don't cry! She is so brave." I suppose her feet pain her dreadfully. Kissing away damp tears is a dismal failure. A girl usually looks about as miserable as a pettigrew when she cries. If she could only weep like a man, making such dreadful faces, disfiguring her teeth and getting a nice, bright, varnish-colored nose it would be different. As long as she can't, she had better try the deep-suffering, strong-hearted method. Besides, it is more fashionable now, and what fun would there be in weeping when it isn't fashionable?

*

TALMAGE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

I know there are women of most undesirable nature, who wander up and down the country—having no homes of their own, or forsaking their own homes—talking about their rights, and we know very well that they themselves are fit neither to vote nor to keep house, writes the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage in an article headed "Male and Female Created He Them" in the September number of the *Home Journal*. Their conduct seems to be to humiliate the two sexes at the thought of what any one of us might become. No one would want to live under the laws that such women would enact, nor to have such women as they are, the best rights that women can own she already has in her possession. Her position in this country at this time is not one of commiseration, but one of congratulation. The greater and power of her realm she has never yet been appreciated; she sits to-day on a throne so high that all the thrones of earth piled on top of each other would not make for her a footstool. Here is the platform on which she stands, and the congressional assemblage, and the legislative hall.

*

THE GIRL IN THE CHURCH.

A home in which there is no daughter lacks an element which cannot be otherwise supplied, and a church that is not enriched with qualities which belong to the young girl, poor indeed, writes Mrs. Lyman Abbott in the September Ladies' Home Journal. Her hopefulness, her enthusiasm, her honest belief that what she wants to do she can do, make her at once the inspiration and the reliance of the members of the great church family. It is her voice in the choir which best stirs the congregation to express its devotion in sacred song. There is a ring of joy in it that cannot be gotten from either man or instrument, and which is not lost even when her heart is moved by sorrow, and a tender pathos gives sweetness to her tones. She loves to sing out her gladness and her sadness, and many a soul finds solace in her interpretation of anthem and hymn. It is her face, with the clear, questioning eye, the responsive smile and tear, which helps the preacher, when older and more self-controlled faces give him no response. If sometimes she is belittled and even trivial, when once her attention has been caught and her conscience stirred, she is quick to atone for her heedlessness and ready to acknowledge her fault, and is a most loyal disciple. The Sunday school depends upon her for that older sisterly teaching and affectionate persuasion which win the little ones to listen to the Gospel message. She becomes the ideal, and her personality is impressed upon her scholars beyond the ability of measuring. Many a boy is kept from evil because his chivalrous heart has been won by his Sunday school teacher, and reverence and truth become a part of the child's character, not so much because they are taught, as because they are lived by his heroine.

*

IN GENERAL.

When an Armenian maiden attains her 17th year and is not engaged to be married, she must undergo a strange punishment. She is forced to fast three days; then for 24 hours she fasts on salt fish and she is not permitted to quench her thirst.

Nothing seems to daunt the Western woman. Out in San Francisco a woman is devoting all her time to a shipping business, which she personally superintends

and controls. The schooner in which she is interested runs between San Francisco and ports on the opposite side of the bay.

About 40 French women have been decorated at different times by the Government. The first was Sergeant Virginia Choquiere, who was Sergeant Virginia Bonheur also wears the cross of the Legion of Honor, and Mme. Dieulafoy, the traveler, who effects male attire, wears her rosette in the buttonhole of her coat. Sœur Rosalie was decorated by Napoleon III. in 1852.

Mrs. P. W. Farmer, who wrote a carrier's address for Mark Twain when he carried papers for the Hannibal Courier, lives near West Plains, Mo. She wrote a book of poetry in 1856 and helped to mold the bullets which killed Joseph Smith and the Mormon apostles. She is a cousin of Alice and Phoebe Cary.

It is a law of good society in China that young widows never marry again. Widowhood is, therefore, held in the highest esteem and the older the widow grows the more agreeable does her position become with the people. Should she reach 50 years she may by applying to the Emperor get a sum of money with which to buy a tablet, on which is engraved the sum of her virtues. The tablet is placed over the principal entrance to her house.

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