

The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

THE PERFECT SAVIOUR.

November 9.]

[1 John i: 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth from all sin.*

HOME READINGS:—M. John 1: 1-14. T. 2 Pet. 1: 12: 21. W. John 12: 25-41. Th. 1 John 1: 1-10. F. Zech. 13: 1-9. S. Acts. 4: 1-12. S. Ps. 130: 1-7.

This epistle is thought to have been written at Ephesus about the year 98. This "beloved disciple," and the last of the apostles, seems to have had a clearer view of the divinity of our Lord than any of the others. Instead of commencing his Gospel by human genealogies as is done by Matthew and Luke, John goes back at once to the divine genesis of Jesus Christ—"In the beginning was the Word"—and the Word was "God."

Verse 1. *That which was in the beginning*—from all eternity, before the worlds were made. *Have heard*—not of Him, but from His own lips. For three years His disciples heard Him speak, "as never man spake," John 7: 46. *Have seen*—both with the bodily eye and by mental perception. They had seen His glory manifested—in His miracles, His transfiguration, His crucifixion, and ascension. They were eye-witnesses of His Majesty, 2 Peter 1: 16. *Looked upon*—had fixed their attention upon Himself and His work. *Handled*—a yet stronger evidence of His bodily presence, afforded to His disciples frequently, specially to Thomas, John 20: 27: contrasted with the heathen blindly groping if haply they might find Him, Acts 17: 27. *The Word of Life*—i. e. Christ who is the life of the world. V. 2, is in parenthesis. *Manifested*—in the manner just stated, seen, heard, handled. *We have seen it*—we ourselves, it is not hearsay with us. *Show*—declare. *That eternal life*—Jesus, "the word of life," co-eternal with the Father. Vs. 3, 4. *May have fellowship*—may share with us the blessings that accompany and flow from faith in Jesus Christ. *And truly*—we have no doubt about our own fellowship with the Father and with His Son—two distinct persons. It is not added "and with the Holy Ghost," for it is by the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, that we have this fellowship. *That your joy may be full*—abound, Christ is the source and centre of His people's joy. "The disciples were filled with joy," Acts 13: 52. V. 5. *The message*—as the Son announced to His disciples the purpose for which he was sent into the world by the Father, so they transmitted the same message to others. *God is light*—All material life and growth depend on natural light: spiritual life and increase come from God. Christ was, and is, the true light, John 1: 9. *Darkness*—spiritual darkness means stagnation, error, ignorance—death. Eph. 2: 1. Vs. 6, 7. *If we say*—profess to have, *fellowship with God*—we deceive, not God, but ourselves, Gal. 6: 7. Without fellowship with Him there can be no fellowship with one another. *But*—walking in the light, we have fellowship with both. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth*—freed us not only from the punishment but the pollution of sin. It shall no longer have dominion over us. Rom. 6: 14. Vs. 8, 9. *If we say we have no sin*—Repentance and faith do not remove sin from our natures: believers are sinners still. The chief apostle declared himself the chief of sinners, 1 Tim. 1: 5. *If we confess* we need never be ashamed to confess our sins to God, (1) because He already knows them all, (2) He is faithful and just to forgive us. V. 10. *If we say that we have not sinned*—different; put from v. 8 which refers to present guilt from our inherent sinfulness; this refers rather to the commission of actual sin after regeneration. *Make Him a liar*—impossible, Heb. 6: 18. In v. 6, "lie;" in v. 8, "deceive ourselves"; but here the climax—we make Him a liar by denying His word that all men are sinners.

THE LOVE OF THE FATHER.

November 16.]

[1 John iv: 7-16.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*We love Him, because He first loved us.*—1 John 4: 19.

HOME READINGS:—M. 1 Jno. 2: 1-29. T. 1 Jno. 3: 1-21. W. 1 Jno. 4: 1-21. Th. 1 Jno. 5: 1-21. F. 2 Jno. 1: 1-13. S. 3 Jro. 1: 1-14. S. Isa. 12: 1-6.

In this chapter the beloved disciple discourses upon his favourite theme—LOVE to God, and love to man as inseparable from each other—the only true basis of all successful teaching. "The love of God" should always be regarded in its three fold aspect:—(1) God's love toward us; (2) Our love to God; (3) The love of God through us to others. The reasonableness and logical limitation of our love appears by the consecutive reading of these passages:—John 15: 13. Rom. 5: 8. 1 John 3: 16.

Verses 7-8. *Beloved*, for the Father's sake, for that of the Son and for your own sake—a suitable introduction to what follows. *Let us love one another*—by so doing we best give evidence that we love God. *Love is of God*—it emanated from Him as its source. *Is born of God*—except a man be born again, &c., Jno. 3: 3. The new nature in the children of God is the offspring of His love. *Knoweth not God*—never knew Him. *God is love*—love is His pre-eminent characteristic. In the same way the carnal mind is emphatically styled "enmity," Rom. 8: 7. V. 9. *In this*—conspicuously; of all the proofs of God's love this is the most manifest. *That God sent His Son*—a clear proof that His Son existed before He was sent into the world. *His only begotten*—see Jno. 1: 18 and 3: 16 18. Such a grand exhibition of God's love is the grand motive to our mutual love. *That we might live*—By nature we are dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2: 1. V. 10. *Herein is love*—in the abstract—disinterested and boundless. *Not that we*—not because we. The love was all on God's side, none on ours. Had we loved Him, His would have been less amazing. But while yet sinners Christ died for us, Rom. 5: 3. *Sent His Son*—The Son was willing to be sent, and makes frequent allusion to His divine mission, Matt. 10: 40. John 4: 34. *Propitiation*—His propitiatory sacrifice of Himself that we might live. It is only by the atoning blood of Christ that we are delivered from the guilt and punishment of sin. V. 11. *If God so love us*—which cannot be gainsaid—here is an argument appealing to our sense of what is right and reasonable. *We ought to love one another*—we cannot resist the conclusion that in proportion to our appreciation of God's love to us, we should love the brethren—the children of regeneration by the same Father. V. 12. *No man hath seen God*—with the natural eye, Exo. 33: 20. 1 Tim. 6: 16. But he was visibly represented by His Son, John 14: 9, and his children are visible recipients of our love to Him, Matt. 25: 40. *God dwelleth in us*—by His Spirit, 1 Cor. 3: 16. *His love*—the love of, or to, Him. *Is perfected*—reaches full development, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, Heb. 13: 21. V. 13. *Hereby know we*—we are sure, for we have the testimony of His Spirit, and the first fruit of the Spirit is Love, Gal. 5: 22. *Of His Spirit*—In Jesus alone the spirit dwelt without measure, John 3: 34. V. 14. *And we*—The apostles themselves were eye witnesses to the facts concerning Him, and were therefore credible witnesses, John 2: 24. They had not only seen His miracles but heard the attestation of God Himself,—"This is my beloved Son," Matt. 3: 17 and 17: 5. Vs. 15, 16. *Shall confess*—By faith accepting the great truth: acknowledging the same by the mouth before man; and also by a consistent walk and conversation. *We have known*—and do now know and believe—All believers know experimentally, in some measure, the love that God has to them. God is Love—and because love is His essential attribute, he hates sin—its opposite, and will most certainly punish it, Rom. 2: 3-9.