



THE TURTLE.

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The turtle's great body is so soft, that it would be sadly off without the thick, heavy shell that covers it all over. It can draw its head and feet under the shell, and be quite safe. So it would seem. But hear what I have to say.

It has many enemies. When it was a very little turtle, and had just come out of the egg, it ran down to the sea, for it lives in the sea, though it was not born there. Its mother laid her eggs in the sand, scooping out a place for them; and they were hatched by the warmth of the sun.

It was a weak little creature in those days, and the rough waves drove it back, and gave it a rude buffet; while the fierce seabirds hovered overhead, ready to pounce upon it, and the wild beasts sought to devour it.

But its greatest enemy was man. As it grew larger, it became fit for food. Its flesh was tender and delicate; and persons in the seaport cities, who were rich and dainty, looked on turtle-soup as a luxury. So ships were sent out to bring home as many turtles as could be caught.

How do men catch the turtle? They watch for the mother-turtle to come on shore and lay her eggs. She does this in the night, and as secretly as she can. The men hide themselves, and listen till they hear the turtle coming. Then they keep quiet; for, if the turtle heard the least noise, she would hurry back to the sea.

She stands still and listens; and if no sound is heard, she begins to scoop a hole in the sand with her fore-flippers. While she is busy, the men rush upon her, and turn her on her back. Then she cannot help herself, or get up; and her capturers leave her, and go to turn over as many more turtles as they can.

There is another way of catching the turtle. Men go out in a boat, as you see in the picture; and, when a turtle is seen to rise for air, a man who can swim well jumps into the sea, and fastens a rope round the neck or the foot of the turtle. Then the man swims back to the boat as fast as he can, and the crew pull all together, and soon get the turtle on board.

The boat in the picture is called a proa. The head and the stern are both alike. The proas are used by the people of the Ladrones Islands, and are so swift that they can go twenty miles an hour.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

LESSON IX. FEBRUARY 26.

CHRIST AT THE FEAST.

John 7. 14, 28-37. Memory verses, 28-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.—John 7. 37.

OUTLINE.

1. Our Lord, and him that sent him, v. 14, 28, 29.
2. Questions and Criticisms, v. 30-36.

3. The Great Invitation, v. 37.

Time.—Uncertain.

Place.—The temple courts in Jerusalem.

Rulers.—Herod in Galilee; Pilate in Judea.

Connecting Links.—The "carrying of water" on "the last, the great day of the feast" was one of the grandest ceremonies of the entire Jewish ritual. A procession of priests and pilgrims marched with responsive chanting from the Pool of Siloam to the great altar of burnt offering in the court of the temple. After the water had been poured out as the holy symbol there was a silence, and in the midst of that silence Jesus called out the words of the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses.

LESSON HELPS.

14. "About the midst of the feast"—The Feast of Tabernacles. This may have been our Lord's first appearance in the temple as a public teacher. Every student should carefully read verses 15-27.

28. "Cried aloud with indignation. 'Ye know whence I am'—Christ never made a secret of his earthly origin. 'I am not come of myself'—Because commissioned of God. 'True'—Genuine. 'Whom ye know not'—Because of hardness of heart.

29. "He hath sent me"—Jesus was the direct immediate representative of the Godhead.

30. "No man laid hands on him"—Although they persistently sought his arrest and destruction. "His hour was not yet come"—The hour fixed by the providence of God.

31. "When Christ cometh"—"Christ" is here a title; the anointed One. The question is a negative argument that Jesus is the Christ. "Do more miracles"—That is, can he present more convincing signs of his divinity?

32. "The Pharisees and the chief priests"—This phrase here means the Sanhedrin, which was at once the congress and the general conference of the Jews. This is the first official effort to arrest Jesus, and the endeavour never ceased until the day of the crucifixion. (1) How far toward hell will envy and malice lead men!

33. "A little while"—These words were uttered a few months before the crucifixion. How long a time will Christ, with his offers of salvation, be with us? (2) Let us make good use of time while it is ours.

35. "The dispersed among the Gentiles"—At this time there were more Jews in foreign countries than there were in Palestine. There were three great colonies of them (in Babylon, Egypt, and Syria), and they were represented in almost every country all over the world. "Teach the Gentiles"—Precisely what his apostles afterward did.

37. "That great day"—Nearly all Jerusalem poured into the temple arcades. "Stood and cried"—See Connecting Links. "If any man thirst"—It was burning autumn weather, and the early rains had not yet set in. "Let him come unto me"—Human lips could not utter a more direct assumption of perfect divinity than was expressed in these words, spoken amid such surroundings.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Divided opinion.—John 7. 1-13.
- Tu. Christ at the feast.—John 7. 14-27.
- W. Christ at the feast.—John 7. 28-37.
- Th. Enemies defeated.—John 7. 40-52.
- F. Boldness in teaching.—John 8. 12-20.
- S. Convincing words.—John 8. 21-30.
- Su. Free invitation.—Rev. 22. 13-17.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Our Lord, and Him that Sent Him, v. 14, 28, 29. To what feast does our lesson allude? At what time of the year was this feast held? What did Jesus do? In the midst of his teaching what did he cry out? Why did not the Jews know him that sent Jesus? Who was he?

2. Questions and Criticisms, v. 30-36.

What did the angered people do? Why did they not succeed? What question did many of the people ask about Jesus? Who heard of these questions? What measure did they take to arrest him? What did Jesus say about his going away? What about seeking and not finding? What three questions did the Jews ask? What did they think he intended to do? See John 8. 22.

3. The Great Invitation, v. 37.

What gracious invitation did Jesus give to the thirsty? Golden Text. On what day was this spoken? Does it apply to us as well as to ancient Jews?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That Jesus knew he came from God?
2. That Jesus knew he must soon die?
3. That Jesus can supply all our need?

Watch the people passing a fountain in a park. There is water enough for all to drink, but only the thirsty ones stop. They know the water will quench their thirst; they want it; they take it.

If, when very thirsty, two persons offered you a drink, one a stranger, who might have poison in his cup, and the other your loving brother, whom would you trust? From which would you take? Do you not know Jesus well enough to trust him, and to take what he will give? Do you want the water of life? We will put "trust" in our lesson chain, and below will spell from



the letters the reasons for trusting Jesus. He is:

- True,
- Ready to save,
- Unchanging,
- Strong,
- Tender.

Do not think that anyone else can help you, can save you, can forgive you, cleanse you, comfort and keep you. Jesus is the only one who can do all this for all who long for help and need it. He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me."

AN OBSERVANT CHILD.

It is said that once when Bismarck was leaving home in 1866, his youngest son asked him how long he was to be away. He replied that he did not know. At that moment a servant came in to inquire how many bottles of cognac were to be packed up in the Prince's luggage. "Twenty-four," was the answer. "Ah, papa," cried out the terrible infant, "now I know how long you are to be from home—twenty-four days."

GET INTERESTED.

Why be so wrapped up in yourself like a mud-turtle? If you do a kindness it will return to you and maybe more. How many poor sufferers there are who need your aid. You can smile on them and it will be appreciated. If you are strong, help the weak; God will reward you, for it is written, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor." Prayers do not avail if we do nothing for others. Oh, how meagre are the gifts of some people for God's dear helpless ones; our brethren, too, if we are his!

A lawyer, noted for his laconic style of expression, sent the following terse and witty note to a refractory client who paid no attention to reiterated demands for the payment of his bill: "Sir,—If you pay the inclosed bill you will oblige me, if you don't I shall oblige you."



LADY DOLEFUL.

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We wonder what has happened to the dog to make her look so doleful. She looks as if she had lost all her friends, doesn't she? Perhaps she is sick, or maybe she is only sulky, and if that is the case she must be a very naughty dog, and a very foolish one to make her face look so sombre.

A Conundrum—Two Spaniards went up in a balloon. The balloon burst. What nationality were they when they came down? "asked the conundrum man. "Give it up."

"One came down a Russian, and the other got tangled up in the telegraph wires and came down a Pole," was the response.

Visitor (at the goal)—"Poor, poor man! May I offer you this bunch of flowers?" Man Behind the Bars—"You've made a mistake, miss. The fellow that killed his wife and children is in the next cell. I'm here fur stealin' a cow."

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