

## LESSON NOTES.

## FOURTH QUARTER.

B.C. 985-975.] LESSON XI. [Dec. 14.  
VANITY OF WORLDLY PLEASURE.

*Eccles. 2. 1-13. Commit to mem. vs. 10, 11.  
GOLDEN TEXT.*

Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.—*Eccles. 2. 13.*

## CENTRAL TRUTH.

Not in worldly things, but only in Jesus Christ, can be found true blessedness and satisfaction.

## DAILY READINGS.

M. *Eccles. 1. 1-18. Th. Eccles. 4. 1-16.  
T. Eccles. 2. 1-26. F. Eccles. 5. 1-20.  
W. Eccles. 3. 1-22. Sa. John 4. 1-14.  
Su. Matt. 6. 19-34.*

**THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.** (1) *The title.* Ecclesiastes means the preacher. Solomon was accustomed to speak to the assembled people. (1 Kings 4. 34.) (2) *The author.* Solomon. (3) *The time of writing.* In Solomon's later years, between B.C. 985-975. (4) *The structure.* This book is a record of Solomon's experience in seeking for the true object of life. Every statement is not to be taken as true, but as a true record of Solomon's experience and feelings.

**INTRODUCTION.** The last part of the first chapter is devoted to Solomon's qualifications for this search for the highest good. The second chapter, of which to-day's lesson is a part, is a record of Solomon's experience of the failure of this world to satisfy the world.

**HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.**—1. *Come now. I will prove thee with mirth—* I will test mirth and see if it will satisfy. *This also is vanity—* Mere breath, vapor. Not that all pleasure is wrong, but that when sought as a chief good, it is a failure. 3. *To give myself unto wine—* To taste sensual pleasure, but he did not use it to drunkenness, but still retained his intellectual wisdom in order to test its effects. *To lay hold on folly—* Foolish and wicked pleasures. 4. *I made me great works—* For an account of them, see 1 Kings 7. 1-12; 9. 15-19; 10. 14-27. 5. *Orchards—* Paradises, pleasure grounds. 6. *Pools—* Reservoirs, to water the gardens. 8. *Peculiar treasure—* Rare and costly curiosities. 12. *What can the man do that cometh after the king—* No one could have so good an opportunity as Solomon to test what pleasure could do. 13. *Wisdom excelleth folly—* Though he had found that wisdom could not satisfy, yet let no one imagine that it made no difference whether we were wise or foolish.

**SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.**—The Book of Ecclesiastes.—Pleasure unsatisfying.—Is all pleasure wrong?—When is it good?—Worldly riches.—Vanity.—What is the true object of life?

## QUESTIONS.

**INTRODUCTORY.**—Who wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes? Meaning of "Ecclesiastes." Why is this book so called? When was the book written?

**SUBJECT: THE SEARCH FOR MAN'S HIGHEST GOOD.**

**I. THE SEARCH.—IN THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE.**—Where did Solomon search for the highest good of man? (*Eccles. 1. 13.*) How was he qualified for this search? (*Eccles. 1. 16; 1 Kings 4. 29-34.*) What can science and knowledge do for us? Why can it not satisfy our highest needs? What is Solomon's conclusion as to it? (*Eccles. 1. 17, 18.*)

**II. THE SEARCH.—IN THE PATHS OF PLEASURE** (vs. 1, 2).—Where did Solomon next seek for the highest good? Was this search amid lawful or unlawful pleasures? What was the result of his search? Why cannot pleasure satisfy the soul? What is the testimony of experience on this point? Why do so many seek for happiness here? Is all pleasure wrong? Does it necessarily lead to unhappiness? When is it right? What is said of the Christian's joy? (*Prov. 3. 16; 2 Cor 6. 10; 1 Pet. 8; John 15. 11.*)

**III. THE SEARCH.—AMONG SENSUAL DELIGHTS** (v. 3).—What was Solomon's next experience? Why is sinful pleasure called folly? With what result? Was this a dangerous experiment? Why does it fail?

**IV. THE SEARCH.—AMID LUXURY AND WEALTH** (vs. 4-13).—In what way did Solomon next seek happiness? Describe some of his sources of worldly enjoyment. Could

any have a better opportunity to test this source of happiness? What did Solomon say about it? Are these good things to be despised? When are they good? What wrong inference from what he had said did he guard against? (v. 13.)

**V. THE SEARCH SUCCESSFUL.**—What is the true source of happiness? Is there a life here that is not vanity and vexation of spirit? How may we get the best good out of life? What does Christ say of the life in him? (*John 4. 13, 14.*) What is Solomon's conclusion? (*Eccles. 12. 13, 14.*)

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Every one must have some supreme object in life.
2. Worldly things can never satisfy the soul.
3. But they are good in their place, when they are wisely used for God.
4. Living for God and with God alone can satisfy the soul and make life worth living.
5. Enough have tried the experiment with the world; let us learn from them what is the true life to live.

**REVIEW EXERCISE.** (For the whole School in concert.)

14. What is the Book of Ecclesiastes? **Ans.** A record of Solomon's experience. 15. Where did he seek for true happiness? **Ans.** In knowledge, and pleasure, and wealth. 16. What was the result? **Ans.** Behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit. 17. Where only can true happiness be found? **Ans.** In loving God, in trusting Jesus, and in doing good to men.

B.C. 985-975.] LESSON XII. [Dec. 21.

## THE CREATOR REMEMBERED.

*Eccles. 12. 1-14. Commit to mem. vs. 1-14.*

## GOLDEN TEXT.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.—*Eccles. 12. 1.*

## CENTRAL TRUTH.

Youth is the time to serve the Lord.

## DAILY READINGS.

M. *Eccles. 7. 1-29. Th. Eccles. 10. 1-20.  
T. Eccles. 8. 1-17. F. Eccles. 11. 1-10.  
W. Eccles. 9. 1-15. Sa. Eccles. 12. 1-14.  
Su. Matt. 25. 31-46.*

**ECCLESIASTES.**—Written by Solomon B.C. 985-975.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The preacher now gives some practical advice, as the result of his observations of life in the light of his experience.

**HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.**—1. *Remember now thy Creator—* Remember that He is our God, to be worshipped; our Father, to be obeyed, our Benefactor, to be loved; our Judge, to be revered. *When thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them—* i. e., in the years. To the bad there comes a time when sin will bring no pleasure, only sorrow. 2. *What the sun, etc., be not darkened—* Referring to the mental decay of age. *Nor the clouds return after the rain—* Do not wait till the pleasant days are few, and the clouds of sorrow come again after a brief sunshine. 3. *In the day—* An old man is now compared to a decaying house and household,—a once rich and beautiful palace. *The keepers of the house.* The guards. *The hands and arms.* The strong men. *The labourers.* the legs. *The grinders.*—Those who grind corn in the mill for food;—the teeth. *Those that look out of the windows.* The eyes. 4. *The doors shut in the street.*—The avenues of communication with the outer world,—the lips and ears. *Sound of the grinding is low—* Scarcely heard by the dull ears of age. *Rise up—* The least noise awakens. *Daughters of music—* The power of singing and enjoying music. 5. *Almond tree shall flourish—* The white hairs, alluding to the white blossoms of the almond tree. *Mourners go about—* Hired mourners, waiting for the old man's death. 6. *The silver cord that holds the golden bowl,* the life, the brain. *The pitcher broken at the fountain—* An emblem of death; the heart, that holds the life blood, ceases to act. *The wheel, etc.*—The circulation of the blood. 9. *Set in order many proverbs—* 3000 (1 Kings 4. 32). 11. *4. Goads—* To spur and incite to better work. *Nails—* Fixed in the memory. *By the masters of assemblies—* The preachers or teachers.

**SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.**—Remembering our Creator.—Why in youth?—Old age like winter.—Old age like a decaying house.—Verse 6.—To whom, whether

Christian or sinner, this description refers. —Verse 11.—The conclusion of the whole matter.—The judgment.

## QUESTIONS.

**INTRODUCTORY.**—Who gives the advice in this lesson? What was the result of his experience as given in our last lesson? How would his experience lead him to give the advice with which our lesson begins?

## SUBJECT: EARLY PIETY.

**I. REASONS FOR BEGINNING TO SERVE GOD IN YOUTH** (vs. 1-8).—What does Solomon advise all young people to do? What is it to remember our Creator? What reasons can you give why we should do it in youth? Why not wait till old age? How is age compared to winter? (v. 2.) To what is it next likened? What is represented by the keepers? the strong men? the grinders? those that look out of the windows? the doors? the daughters of music? the almond tree? What is the picture of age in v. 5? What is represented by the silver cord? the golden bowl? the pitcher at the fountain? the wheel at the cistern? Is this the description of the old age of the good or of the wicked? What compensation have the good? (2 Tim. 4. 8.)

**II. FITNESS OF THE PREACHER TO GIVE THIS ADVICE** (vs. 9-12).—How was Solomon prepared to give good advice? Can we help others without (1) wisdom from God? (2) experience? How many proverbs did Solomon set in order? (1 Kings 4. 31.) Why are the words of the wise like goads? like nails? What is the meaning of v. 12?

**III. THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER** (vs. 13, 14).—To what conclusion does the preacher come at last? What two parts to the whole duty of man? How are these "the whole of man?" Will a life so lived be "vanity and vexation of spirit?" What influence should a future judgment have upon our life? How strict will this judgment be? What does Christ say of it? (*Matt. 25. 31-46.*)

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTION.

1. The best of all times to begin the Christian life is in youth.—(1) Because youth is most impressible; (2) because we may never live to be old; (3) because old age is too full of weakness and burdens; (4) because if we begin in youth we have a longer time in which to serve God; (5) because piety will lead to a happier old age; (6) because for every sin we must give an account; (7) because the Christian life is the happiest and best life.

**REVIEW EXERCISE.** (For the whole School in concert.)

18. What was the advice of the preacher? (Repeat the Golden Text.) 19. To what does he compare old age? **Ans.** To the winter season. 20. What other comparison does he make? **Ans.** He compares the old man to a house fallen into decay. 21. To what conclusion does he come at last? (Repeat v. 13.) 22. What closing reason does he give? (Repeat v. 14.)

To trust God when our warehouses and bags are full, and our tables are spread, is no hard thing; but to trust Him when our purses are empty, but a handful of meal and cruise of oil left, and all the ways of relief stopped—herein lies the wisdom of a Christian's grace.

God can make the grief a grace, the burden a blessing, and light up the disappointment so that it becomes the torch of hope. The rod itself shall bud and blossom and bring forth almonds, so that the very thing that chastens us shall present beauty and fruit.

**BLESSED** is the man who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. Know thy work and do it; and work at it like Hercules. One monster there is in the world—an idle man.

A **LITTLE** child, becoming weary with the quarrelling of two younger children over a glass of milk, exclaimed, "What's the use of quarrelling over that milk? There is a whole cowful out in the barn."

## XMAS

AND

## NEW YEAR CARDS.

A Choice Assortment of X'mas and New Year Cards with appropriate

## SCRIPTURE TEXTS!

PRICES:  
(In Packages)

20c., 35c., 50c., 70c., &c.

Mailed post-free on receipt of Retail Price

## NEW BOOKS

FOR THE

## HOLIDAYS.

**Glenairlie; or, The Last of the Graemes.**

By **ROBINA F. HARDY**, author of "Jock Halliday," &c. 12mo, cloth, extra, with 6 Original Illustrations. \$1.50.

**More Bits from Blinkbonny.**

A Tale of Scottish Village Life between 1831 and 1841. By **JOHN STRATHESK**, author of "Bits from Blinkbonny," &c., with 6 Original Illustrations. 12mo, cloth, extra. \$1.50.

**Carlowrie; or, Among Lothian Folks.**

By **ANNIE S. SWAN**, author of "Aldersyde," with 6 Original Illustrations. 12mo, cloth, extra. \$1.50.

**Preston Tower; or, Will He No' Come Back Again?**

By **JESSIE M. E. SANBY**. 12mo, cloth, extra. Illustrated. \$1.50.

**Mr. Graham's Daughters.**

A Story of Home and School Life in France and Scotland. By **MRS. HENDERSON**. 12mo, cloth. 309 pp., Illustrated. 90 cents.

**Ursula Vivian, the Sister-Mother.**

By **ANNIE S. SWAN**, author of "Aldersyde." Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, 256 pp. 90 cents.

**Tom Telfer's Shadow.**

A Story of Everyday Life. By **ROBINA F. HARDY**, author of "Jock Halliday," &c. Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, gilt edges. 70 cents.

"A capital story for boys."—*Liverpool Mercury.*

**Ben Howson.**

A Story of George Watson's College. By **JESSIE M. E. SANBY**. Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, gilt edges. 70 cents.

**Jacob Jennings the Colonist;**

or, The Adventures of a Young Scotchman in South Africa. By **JANET GORDON**. Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, extra, gilt edges. 70 cents.

**Dorothea Kirke; or, Free to Serve.**

By **ANNIE S. SWAN**, author of "Aldersyde." Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, extra, gilt edges. 70 cents.

Any Book on this list mailed free of postage to any address on receipt of Retail Price.

**WILLIAM BRIGGS,**

78 & 80 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

C. W. COATES, Montreal, Que.

S. F. HUESTIS, Halifax, N.S.