

THE NEW YEAR.

Will it run over with laughter,
Or will it be filled with tears,
Will it be careless and merry,
Or saddest of all the years?
Will there be lowering storm-clouds,
Or will there be rainbows bright,
Will there be blackness of midnight,
Or blush of the morning light?

Who knows what the day or the morrow
Will bring to the waiting heart?
Thy duty is but to press onward
And steadily do thy part,
Nor dream that the curtained future
Will yield to thy puny power.
God's angel is holding that curtain,
And lifting it hour by hour.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

LESSON II. [Jan. 12.]

THE PROMISE OF POWER FULFILLED.

Acts 2. 1-11. Memorize verses 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The promise is unto you, and to your children.—Acts 2. 39.

THE LESSON STORY.

For ten days the disciples had waited and prayed together in an upper room in Jerusalem. There were many besides the eleven there, for there were the believing women and many who loved Jesus, though they were not called to be teachers. One day they were all together, and all with one heart and mind looking to the Lord. It was the day of Pentecost, which came just fifty days after the Passover. This was the day of bringing in the first sheaves of wheat to offer to the Lord. While they prayed there came a sound as if a rushing mighty wind had blown over them, and they saw a bright light coming down upon each one in the room, and they were filled with great strength of heart, and great joy, and were given the power to speak in other languages, which they had never learned, or even heard. God gave them this power so that they might preach the Gospel to the people who had come from other countries to the feast of Pentecost. Some wondered as they came crowding around the disciples, but Peter told them that this was spoken of long before by the prophet Joel, and that they were now filled with the Holy Spirit. This was a great gift, worth much more to the disciples than riches or earthly power could be!

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

What had Jesus promised his disciples? His Holy Spirit.

What did he tell them to do? To wait for it.

Where? In Jerusalem.

How long did they wait? Ten days.
What did they show by this? Their faith and obedience.

When did the Spirit come? On the day of Pentecost.

What did they do? They praised God joyfully.

Who heard them? A great crowd of people.

How did they speak? In many different languages.

What did Peter say? That the Holy Spirit had come.

Was Peter afraid now? No, not at all.

What prophet had told of this day? The prophet Joel.

LESSON III. [Jan. 19.]

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Acts 2. 37-47. Memorize verses 37-39.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.—Acts 2. 47.

THE LESSON STORY.

Do you remember that Peter was once a coward, and was so much afraid of the Jews that he said he did not even know Jesus? But God can make the weak strong when he gives them his Holy Spirit. Peter was not afraid now to stand up and tell the people that they had killed the Lord of glory! The Holy Spirit moved also those who heard Peter, as well as Peter himself. They were troubled, and asked what they should do to be saved. Peter told them to turn away from sin and be baptized, and they should also have the gift of the Holy Spirit. About three thousand were baptized that day, and they saw that they were all children of one Father and loved each other so much that they lived as one family, the rich helping the poor, and all studying and praying together. It was so wonderful to see this great family of Christians living for each other and for God that people said of them "See how these Christians love." This is the only way the world can know that we truly love God—when we love one another. God can see our hearts, and he knows what we really are; but men look at what we do. If we show by our deeds that we really love God, then the world will "take knowledge of us" that we have really learned the heavenly way.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

Who was once a coward and denied Jesus? Peter.

Who made him brave before enemies? The Holy Spirit.

Who can make us strong to do right? The same Spirit.

What made the people sorry? They saw they had done wrong in crucifying Jesus.

What did they do? They repented, and then they were baptized by the apostles.

How many were baptized that day? Three thousand.

How did they then live? Like brothers and sisters.

Who was their great Friend? Their Father in heaven.

What did they do with their riches? They divided them.

Why? So that the poor might enjoy them too.

What made them all rich? Faith in the Lord Jesus.

How may we be made rich? By believing in Jesus.

THE TARDY SANTA CLAUS.

I am a little Santa Claus
Who somehow got belated;
My reindeer didn't come in time,
And so of course I waited.
I found your chimneys plastered tight,
Your stockings put away.
I heard you talking of the gifts
You had on Christmas Day;
So will you please to take me in
And keep me till November?
I'd rather start Thanksgiving Day
Than miss you next December!

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"A happy, happy New Year," said Mother Gray to little Ruth.

"O mother," said Ruth very earnestly when she had returned the New Year kiss with interest, "I'll tell you what I am going to do. I'm going to be the best little girl that ever was all this year! I am, truly."

"That's good news, little daughter," said mother, cheerfully. "And when are you going to begin?"

"Now, this very minute," said Ruth, springing out of bed.

"That's good, too," said Mother Gray. "Who is going to help you be good? Sometimes you say when you are naughty, 'I can't help it.'"

"Oh, but I will help it! I will be good. I can if I try real hard," said Ruth.

Haven't you tried sometimes, little girl, little boy, to be good all by yourself? And have you found that you could not do it?

Then you have learned, as Ruth must, to ask the dear Heavenly Father every day to keep you from sin in thought, or word, or act.

George Washington is said to have stopped his horse as he was riding along a country road to administer this rebuke to an angry ploughman, who was cursing: "My friend, I am older than you, have many times been placed in positions of difficulty and danger, and have had many things to perplex and annoy me; but I have always found that it did no good to get angry, and that neither broken ploughs nor anything else can be mended or made better by the use of profane language."