



LESSON,—SUNDAY, MAY 3, 1908.

Our Heavenly Home.

John xiv., 1-14. Memory verses 2, 3. Read the whole chapter.

Golden Text.

In my Father's house are many mansions. John xiv., 2.

Home Readings.

- Monday, April 27.—John xiv., 1-14.
- Tuesday, April 28.—John xiv., 15-31.
- Wednesday, April 29.—John xv., 1-11.
- Thursday, April 30.—John xv., 12-25.
- Friday, May 1.—Rev. xxi., 1-13.
- Saturday, May 2.—Rev. xxi., 14-27.
- Sunday, May 3.—Rev. xxii., 1-14.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Have any of you ever moved to a new house? The first thing you do is to run all over it, isn't it? You want to know all about it because you are going to live here for some time, and you want to see just what kind of a house it is. Perhaps mother and someone to help her went on before you, and you went to stay with auntie for a day or two until it was a little bit ready and more comfortable for you. When mother first told you about the new house you were going to, of course you said, 'What kind of a house is it, mother? Where is it? Are there many little children living near there? Will it be big enough for us all?' and all sorts of questions like that; then mother would smile and tell you something about it, but most likely say 'Wait and see. I can't explain it all now, and you will soon be there,' especially if there was a lovely surprise waiting for you in the new home, something you had never seen before. Now you will all remember how our lessons have been growing very sad lately, because Jesus knew he was going to die and the disciples did not understand. In our lesson to-day he saw how sad the disciples were about his leaving them and so he tells them about the beautiful heavenly home to which he is going and why he has to go and leave them behind. He tells them something about this home, that it is large, who it belongs to, how they are to get there, who will be there, how he is going to get it ready for them, how he is going to send some one to comfort and help them while he is away, and then that he will come again and bring them to this new home himself. Now let us see the different verses in the lesson that tell us all this.

FOR THE SENIORS.

A study of the accounts of the last supper as given in the four gospels will show sufficient reason for the blindly groping disciples to be in the depths of distress. Jesus has assured them, and assured them at last so convincingly that they now believe him, that he is about to die, and that, too, after cruel pain and ill-treatment,—this means the utter loss of all their hopes, a turning into blind bewilderment of all their supposed reasons for the mission into which they have so enthusiastically entered. He has told them that one of their very circle will be his betrayer,—bringing into their hearts a mistrust of each other and even of their own selves. He has definitely told the impetuous impulsively warm Peter that that night, before the crowing of the cock announces the dawn, he will have denied all knowledge of his Master,—and each is questioning, 'If Peter so fails,

what may not I do?' They are all bowed in silent misery, self-distrust and loss of hope in anything, when this chapter opens. Christ points their thoughts to the one faith that still holds strong—'Ye believe in God,' 'Think then of what God means to you, of how I have worked for God, lived for God, and glorified God at all times. God's will has been mine at all times. Ye believe in God, then you must believe in me.' 'Ye believe in God' then you must believe in a future life. It is this life into which I am about to enter again.' And so on go the pleading, tender, words linking always to where their weak faith holds strong. How deeply they affected John is evident in the detail and length in which he reports them so long afterwards, and in their persistent echo through all his own writings. The promise of verse 14 is often misconstrued. 'In my name' is the condition and only those things that can be done in Christ's name are implied. An influential friend desiring to help you in a difficulty may say, 'Go to Mr. Blank, he is a great friend of mine, and tell him he may use my name to secure you what you need.' You take the permission gladly and visit Mr. Blank. Your first request is that he buy certain shares which you believe to be of value. Mr. Blank, in a position to know better, says, 'Pardon me, but I could not bolster up a faulty concern with my friend's name, I have his good name to consider.' A request to place you at the head of a business for which you can show no fitness calls out much the same answer. A further request that he manage to ruin a financial rival of yours produces a still more indignant refusal from the man who is to use his friend's good name in these transactions. A humble, honest desire to do the best you can and fill some position for which you are fitted will lead Mr. Blank to recommend you in his friend's name to where such a position is open, but first, for the honor of his friend's name, he will satisfy himself that you are fitted for the place in question. Somewhat in that way we must trust to God's omniscience to answer the requests we make in humble reliance on Christ, not to accede to our demands merely because we mention Christ's name at the close of our supposed prayer.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'NOTES.')

Verse 8. Philip was right in thinking that our best evidence of immortality comes from the vision of the Father. I cannot understand how any man who has a firm conviction of the fatherhood of God can be skeptical about the immortality of the soul. . . . The highest evidence of immortality is the vision of a God who has a relation to the human soul. The very incompleteness of that soul then becomes an argument in its favor. For, in the light of divine fatherhood, we say, 'God will not leave His structure unfinished; He must have determined to finish it elsewhere! Tennyson cries, "Thou art just; Thou wilt not leave me in the dust." If God be our Father, His mercy and justice are one.' The yearning of the human soul becomes itself a claim. The aspiration of the human heart becomes itself a right; the cry of the human heart becomes itself a call for the fulfillment of a promise.—George Matheson, Representative Men of the New Testament.

Verse 2. In adding that if hopes for the future life were baseless, He would have told them, Jesus seems to guarantee the deep instincts of human nature as correct interpreters of God's mind toward man, as well as to confirm any hope which His own words may raise.—George Reith.

Verse 12. What were the greater works that the disciples would do? 1. They are held by some writers to be greater even in the physical realm. Moreover, 'our Lord wrought miracles for three years and a little over, in a limited territory; but the disciples wrought miracles for a generation, in widely separated countries.'—R. S. MacArthur, D.D.

2. But still more remarkable were the triumphs of the apostles in the spiritual realm. Christ had at his death 620 disciples, so far as we are told; Peter won 3,000 to Christ by a single sermon. Soon the Roman Empire, which crucified Jesus, was submissive to the power of the cross. 'The existence of the

church is really the most wonderful of miracles. . . . The conversion of a soul is a still greater miracle than the healing of a body. . . . Evermore the harvest time must be greater than the seed time.'—MacArthur.

3. These greater works are no disparagement of Christ, but his glory, since they are all done by him. 'The Gospels are the record of what Christ began to do and teach' (Acts i., 1); later history is a continuation.

4. 'Never were the opportunities so great as now for doing great things for God and man. The whole earth is a whispering gallery making known the name of Jesus Christ. Telegraphs, telephones, steamships, and railways have girdled the earth as never before. Doors are opening into every heather nation. To-day India is as near to America as once Great Britain was. Oh, that God would arouse his church to do these greater works!'—MacArthur.

Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living: I am the Way which thou shouldest pursue; the Truth which thou shouldest believe; the Life which thou shouldest hope for.—Thomas à Kempis.

If we would have God hear what we say to Him by prayer, we must be ready to hear what He says to us by His word.—Matthew Henry.

Prayer must mean something to us, if it is to mean anything to God.—Maltbie D. Babcock.

Bible References.

- I. John iii., 2; Heb. xiii., 14; II. Cor. v., 1; John x., 9; Rom. v., 2; Heb. x., 20; Eph. ii., 18; John vi., 40; I. John v., 12.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, May 3.—Topic—Songs of the Heart. V. The silver lining of dark clouds. Ps. lxii., 43. (Consecration meeting.)

C. E. Topic.

- Monday, April 27.—Prayer of the humble. Ps. ix., 12.
- Tuesday, April 28.—Believing prayer. Matt. xxi., 22.
- Wednesday, April 29.—Praying with all the heart. Deut. iv., 29.
- Thursday, April 30.—Praying trustfully. Ps. xxxvii., 5.
- Friday, May 1.—Praying in trouble. Ps. l., 15.
- Saturday, May 2.—Praying together. Matt. xviii., 19.
- Sunday, May 3.—Topic—The kind of praying God likes. Matt. vi., 7-13. (Consecration meeting.)

The Golden Text.

I like to think, on Lord's Day morn,
Of the hosts of children far and wide,
Their faces fair and their brows unorn,
Who blithely sit at a mother's side,
Conning, in tones so low and sweet,
Over and over, with patient care,
Till by heart they know it and can repeat
The Golden Text, be it praise or prayer.

For praise or prayer it is sure to be—
The beautiful verse, a polished gem,
Culled from the sacred treasury,
And fit for a royal diadem.
I like to think, on Lord's Day morn,
Will know that truth when their heads are
gray,
That the hallowed phrase their souls will cheer
Many a time on the pilgrim way.

I sometimes muse on the Lord's Day eve,
When the Golden Texts have all been said,
And my tender fancies I like to weave
Over many a small white bed.
The children sleep till to-morrow's morn,
Armed for whatever is coming next;
Their strength and courage alike unshorn!
And the sword they will carry—the Golden
Text.

—Margaret Sangster.