

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

First Quarter, 1905.

JANUARY TO MARCH.

Lesson II.—January 8.—The Witness of John the Baptist to Jesus. John 1:19-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.—John 1:29.

EXPLANATORY.

I. THE WITNESS TO CHRIST OF JOHN'S MISSION, AS THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY.—Centuries before his coming, the prophets had foretold the Christ, the Redeemer. With divinely illumined vision they had seen him, and pictured, in wondrous colors, the glories of his reign.

But two prophets foretold a sign which would bear witness to his coming. Isaiah (40:3) pictured the work of one who should immediately precede the Messiah, preparing the way before him. And Malachi showed the forerunner coming in the spirit and power of Elijah.

John the Baptist exactly realized the portrait, and did the very things the forerunner was expected to do, and thus bore witness that the promised Messiah was at hand, as the morning star is the forerunner of the sun.

II. THE WITNESS OF JOHN'S PREACHING.—Scene: The Wilderness of Judea. John preaching. Great crowds of all classes of men to hear him. Multitudes baptized confessing their sins. Indications of great expectancy and excitement.

John's preaching was well adapted to awaken a consciousness of guilt, danger, and need. He denounced the sin of men to their faces. His preaching was of the "Thou art the man" order. He told Herod that he was a criminal, the Pharisees that they were a brood of vipers; he bade the soldiers cease from violence, and the publicans from dishonesty. He appealed to patriotism, showing that the nation was a fruitless tree, and that the axe was already lying at its root.

III. THE WITNESS TO THE DELUSION FROM JERUSALEM.—Vs. 19-24. Scene: At Bethabara. On the Banks of the Jordan. Here begins the historical story of the manifestation of the Word made flesh, as recorded by John. The Baptist had been preaching some months. He had baptized Jesus, as recorded in Matt. 3:13-17, and seen the signs by which he recognized Jesus as the Messiah (vs. 33-34). Jesus had passed through his testing by the temptations in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11). The statements following the words "The next day" in v. 29 made this order certain.

19. THIS IS THE RECORD (the witness) OF JOHN ON THREE SUCCESSIVE DAYS. It was a time of excitement and ferment respecting the Messiah. The thoughts of the new dispensation were in the air but with a confusion of definite expectations. John's appearance, and preaching and great success had aroused even the rulers to enquire what it meant. The Jews. Probably the Sanhedrim, as the source of authority. It was composed of priests, elders and scribes, but they sent priests and Levites, probably because John's father was a priest. To ask him, Who art thou? Not his name, but who do you claim to be? For the questions of the people as to whether this reformer was the Messiah or not had reached their ears.

20. HE CONFESSED, AND DENIED NOT. As if he had been tempted to claim the honor the people might easily have been induced to bestow upon him, but "with earnestness almost horror, he disclaimed it."

21. ART THOU ELIAS? Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah (Matt. 17:10; Mal. 4:5-6). I AM NOT. Compare Matt. 11:14, where Christ says that John is Elijah. Christ speaks figuratively, John answers literally, and humbly, and in reply to the expectations of the people of a literal return of Elijah. ART THOU THAT (the) PROPHET? "The well-known prophet of Deut. 18:15, who some thought would be a second Moses, others a second Elijah, others the Messiah."

23. I AM THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS. He was the fulfillment of a prophecy well known to them. "John was a Voice making known the Word, meaningless without the Word." MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD. He prepared the way for Christ, as in the Orient with its shifting sands and imperfect roads, there anciently a straightening and repairing of the roads when the king was to travel over them.

IV. THE WITNESS OF JOHN'S BAPTISM.—Vs. 25-33. WHY BAPTIZED THOU THEN? "They expected a general purification before the coming of the Messiah" (Zech. 13:1; Ezek. 36:25). If John was not the Messiah, nor the divinely promised Elijah and prophet, what right had he to call men to repentance, and ask the Jews to join the kingdom of God by a rite used for proselytes in becoming members of the Jewish religion and nation.

John's Answer, 26. I (emphatic) BAPTIZE WITH WATER. The sign and symbol of the real purification, the preparation for the Messiah. BUT THERE STANDETH ONE AMONG YOU. At this time, though you do not recognize him. He has been standing on these banks mingled with the crowd, baptized in these waters, the one of whom I testified (27) WHO COMING AFTER ME IS PREPARED BEFORE ME, and who is so much greater than I that his shoe's latchet I am not worthy to UNLOOSE. The latchet was the leather thong or string by which the shoe or sandal was bound to the foot, and the untying it was one of the most menial services one could do for another.

V. WITNESS OF JOHN POINTING OUT JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES.—Vs. 29-34. Scene: On the Banks of the Jordan, at the Bethabara Ford. Great Crowds. Jesus among Them, Approaching John. The second of the three Successive Days. 29. BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD. Jesus was so named by John, because the lamb was used in three ways as a symbol of the deliverance which Jesus brought. (1) John and his hearers were familiar with the representation in Isaiah (53:7) of the coming one, "as a lamb led to the slaughter." (2) Still more, would the Jew think of the paschal lamb, as its type and the promise of national deliverance. (3) The daily sacrifice of a lamb was continually before the Jews, teaching them the meaning of all the sacrifices, and continually reminding them of their need of an atonement for sin. It is well worth noting that Jesus died for our sins at the Pasover feast, and at the hour of the daily sacrifice. WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD. "To bear away sin is to remove the guilt and punishment of sin by expiation, or to cause that sin be neither imputed nor punished." (1) The work of Christ is to do this for the whole world, till all sin is removed, and this sinful world is changed into the sinless Paradise Regained. (2) Jesus provides redemption enough for all the world. (3) He pardons the past sin, so that it is no longer remembered by him, but is blotted out forever. (4) He is actually removing sin from the world. Wherever he comes, sin is the process of removal from each heart that accepts him, and from the community.

31. AND I KNEW HIM NOT. Or, I also knew him not. "I, like you, did not at first know him to be the Messiah. He now proceeds to tell them how he learned who he was. BUT THAT WE SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST TO ISRAEL, THEREFORE AM I COME BAPTIZING WITH (the) WATER. "While John did not know Jesus as the Messiah, until the hour of his baptism he did know that his own work of baptizing in water was ordained for the purpose, among others, of manifesting the Messiah to Israel."

33. AND JOHN BARE RECORD. WITNESS. I SAW. Have seen, forty-two or more days before, when he baptized. The story is recorded in Matt. 3:16, 17; Mark 1:9, 11. THE SPIRIT DESCENDING FROM HEAVEN. Upon Jesus as soon as he had come upon the bank of the river after his baptism. LIKE A DOVE. (N. Y., "as a dove out of heaven.")

35. AND I KNEW HIM NOT. Did not recognize fully that he was the Messiah till this promised sign was given. Only by a divine revelation did he learn. HE THAT SENT ME. John was conscious of his divine mission. He was sent by God. THE SAME IS HE WHICH BAPTIZETH WITH THE HOLY GHOST, and therefore (v. 34), THIS IS THE SON OF GOD. God's own peculiar only begotten son. God's own

FOR TWENTY YEARS.

Not An Unusual Instance.

"I used Pyramid Pile Cure and have not had any trouble since. I have been a sufferer with piles for twenty years. I think it is the best remedy on earth for piles. Hoping this may help others to use this remedy, Mrs. J. D. Taylor, R. F. D. 30, Sparta, Mich. It is a singular fact that although many women suffer from piles, or hemorrhoids, they frequently do not have proper treatment because of a delicacy women have in mentioning such a subject. Especially is this the case with those who have no husbands or brother in whom to confide; and a physician is seldom consulted until the pain and agony incident to piles becomes unbearable.

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It is suggested that those interested write to Pyramid Drug Co., Marshall, Mich., for their little book describing the causes and cure of piles, as it sent free for the asking.

voice confirmed the sign to John and the people (Matt. 3:17). Luke (3:16) adds "and with fire," to "baptize with the Holy Ghost."

The Witness was (1) John's testimony entirely disinterested and self-sacrificing. He gave his whole life to bearing his witness to Christ, resisting every temptation to gain notoriety, and to make friends of the influential Pharisees. (2) It was the witness of facts that entirely convinced John himself. (3) It was the witness of a voice from heaven. (4) It was the witness of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "It was the token that in Jesus are fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament with regard to the pouring out of the Spirit in the Messianic age, and especially to the impartation of the Spirit to the Messiah himself (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18), prophecies which describe the crowning glory of the latter days."

LOVE.

Love is life, and lovelessness is death. As the grace of God changes a man's heart and cleanses and sanctifies him, this is the great evidence of the change, this is the great difference which it makes; that he begins to grow in love, to lay aside self-seeking, and to live for others—and so he may know that he has passed from death unto life. He may know it even here and now—yes, that great discovery of love, that learning to live for others and feeding the grace and gentleness that God is keeping up all over the world—even now it changes homes, it lightens every burden, it brings peace and gladness into the hardest day; it alters even the tone of a man's voice and the very look of his face. But all this, blessed and surpassing as it is, far above all else in the world, still is but the beginning. For that life into which we pass, as God's dear grace of love comes in us and about us, is the very life of heaven—Francis Paget.

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2—Exp. for Point du Chene, Halifax, Sydney and Campbellton.	7.00
26—Express for Point du Chene, Halifax and Pictou.	12.15
4—Mixed for Moncton and Point du Chene.	13.15
8—Express for Sussex.	17.10
134—Express for Quebec and Montreal.	18.00
10—Express for Halifax and Sydney.	23.35

TRAINS ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.

9—Express from Halifax and Sydney.	6.30
7—Express from Sussex.	9.00
133—Express from Montreal and Quebec.	13.50
5—Mixed from Moncton.	15.20
3—Express from Moncton and Point du Chene.	16.50
25—Express from Halifax, Pictou and Campbellton.	17.40
1—Express from Halifax.	18.40
81—Express from Moncton (Sunday only).	24.35

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D. POTTINGER,

General Mgr.

Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., Nov. 18th, 1904.

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THE CANADIAN NORTH-WEST.

Homestead Regulations.

Any even numbered section of Dominion Lands in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories, excepting 3 and 36, which has not been homesteaded or reserved to provide wood lots for settlers, or for other purposes, may be homesteaded upon by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one-quarter section of 160 acres, more or less.

ENTRY.

Entry may be made personally at the local land office for the district in which the land to be taken is situated, or if the homesteader desires he may, on application to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, the Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, or the local agent for the district in which the land is situated, receive authority for some one to make entry for him. A fee of \$10.00 is charged for a homestead entry.

HOMESTEAD DUTIES.

A settler who has been granted an entry for a homestead is required by the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act and the amendments thereto to perform the conditions connected therewith, under one of the following plans:

- (1) At least six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each year during the term of three years.
- (2) If the father (or mother, if the father is deceased) of any person who is eligible to make a homestead entry under the provisions of this Act, resides upon a portion of the land, the land entered for by such person as a homestead, the requirements of this Act as to residence prior to obtaining patent may be satisfied by such person residing with the father or mother.
- (3) If a settler was entitled to and has obtained entry for a second homestead, the requirements of this Act as to residence prior to obtaining patent may be satisfied by residence upon the first homestead, if the second homestead is in the vicinity of the first homestead.
- (4) If the settler has his permanent residence upon farming land owned by him in the vicinity of his homestead, the requirements of this Act as to residence may be satisfied by residence upon the said land.

The term "vicinity" used above is meant to indicate the same township, or an adjoining or adjoining township.

A settler who avails himself of the provisions of clauses (2) (3) or (4) must cultivate thirty acres of his homestead, or subdivide thirty acres of stock with buildings for their accommodation, and have between 50 acres substantially fenced.

The privilege of a second entry is restricted by law to those settlers only who completed the duties upon their first homesteads to entitle them to patent on or before the 2nd June, 1904.

Every homesteader who fails to comply with the requirements of the homestead law is liable to have his entry cancelled, and the land may be again thrown open for entry.

APPLICATION FOR PATENT.

Should be made at the end of the three years before the Local Agent, Sub-Agent, or the Homestead Inspector. Before making application for patent, the settler must give six months' notice in writing to the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa, of his intention to do so.

INFORMATION.

Newly arrived immigrants will receive at the Immigration Office in Winnipeg or at any Dominion Lands Office in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories, information as to the lands that are open for entry, and from the officers in charge, free of expense, advice and assistance in securing land to suit them. Full information respecting the land, timber, coal and mineral laws, as well as respecting Dominion lands in the Railway Belt in British Columbia, may be obtained upon application to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, the Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, Manitoba, or to any of the Dominion Lands Agents in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories.

JAMES A. SMITH,

Deputy Minister of the Interior. N. B.—In addition to Free Grant Lands to which the regulations above related refer, thousands of acres of waste Government lands are available for lease or purchase from railroad and other corporations and private firms in Western Canada.

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