

For the Sabbath School.

International S.S. Lesson.

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 17.—Revelation i. 9-20.

THE GLORIFIED SAVIOUR.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.—Phil. ii. 9.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The once crucified Jesus is now the glorious, all powerful King, able to help His people in every time of need.

DATE.—The book of Revelation was written either about A.D. 68 or 96.

PLACE.—It was written on Patmos, a small rocky island in the Ægean Sea.

AUTHOR.—The apostle Paul, who lived a long time in Ephesus, and was banished by Nero and Domitian during a great persecution.

THE OBJECT was to comfort the churches in their weakness and persecutions, with the assurance that Jesus was alive, guiding all events, and would triumph in the end bringing complete redemption to the world.

NOTABLE PASSAGES.—ii. 7, 11, 17; iii. 5, 12, 21; v. 9, 14; vii. 13, 17; chapters 21 and 22.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—9. "Companion:" fellow sufferer. "In persecution:" when great numbers of Christians were martyred. "In the kingdom:" of Christ, for which he was suffering. "Patience:" waiting for Christ to interfere, and the day of triumph to come. 10. "In the Spirit:" in a trance, removed from bodily senses, into a higher realm of spiritual insight. "Lord's Day:" Sunday, exalted by being the day of the Lord's resurrection. 11. "Alpha and Omega:" The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus was the source of all, and the end to which all must come—likeness to Him and communion with Him. "Seven churches:" the perfect number, representing all churches. "Asia:" the Roman province in Asia Minor. St. John at Ephesus had probably known all these churches. 12. "Seven golden candlesticks:" or lampstands, representing the churches (v. 20) as the light bearers. Many in form, one in the light which shone from them. "Golden:" because purified and precious. 13. "Like the Son of Man:" showing that He was Christ, man as well as God. "Garments:" as high priest and king. 14. "Hairs were white:" expressing eternity and wisdom. "Eyes . . . a flame of fire:" seeing all things, looking into the inmost soul, and the farthest future. 15. "Feet like brass:" strong, active, powerful. "Voice . . . as many waters:" heard by all, comforting, manifold, commanding, universal. 16. "Seven stars," representing the ministers of the churches, shining, lighted from heaven, guided, loved, and protected by Christ. 18. "The keys:" the power of opening.

SUBJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND SPECIAL REPORTS.—The Book of Revelation.—Patmos.—The seven churches of Asia.—In the Spirit.—The seven golden candlesticks.—The seven stars.—The vision of Christ.—The meaning of the symbols of his hair, eyes, feet, voice.—The keys.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Who wrote the book of Revelation? When and where? With what purpose? In what language? To whom? What are some of the choicest passages?

SUBJECT: OUR SAVIOUR AS HE IS NOW.

I. VISIONS OUT OF TRIBULATIONS. (vs. 9-11.)—Who was John? In what tribulation was he? Where is Patmos? Why was John sent there? On what day were the visions shown to him? Meaning of "in the Spirit"? Who spoke to John? Why does he call himself Alpha and Omega? Where were the seven churches named? Does God sometimes now send brightest visions in time of trouble? Give some former examples. Gen. xxviii. 11-15; Acts vii. 54-56.

II. THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS (vs. 12, 20.)—

What did St. John see when he turned toward the voice? What did these represent (v. 20)? What is a candlestick for? What are Christians to do (Matt. v. 14-16; Phil. ii. 15, 16)? What is the light? (Ps. cix. 105; John i. 4, 9; viii. 12). Why were the candlesticks golden? How do they express the unity of the Church amid various forms?

III. THE GLORIFIED SAVIOUR (vs. 13-18.)—Who appeared among the seven golden candlesticks? Describe the vision of Jesus. What is symbolized by His white hair? (Rom. xi. 33, 44.) By His flaming eyes? (Prov. xv. 3; Heb. iv. 13.) By His feet of burnished brass? (Dan. iv. 35.) By His voice? (Ps. xix. 4; Isa. lv. 10, 11). By the two-edged sword? (Heb. iv. 12).

What does all this teach us about Jesus, the Captain of our salvation? Why does He again declare His divinity? Meaning of verse 18.

IV. THE SEVEN STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND (vs. 16, 20.)—Who are represented by the seven stars? (v. 20.) What by their being in the Saviour's right hand? In what respects are ministers like stars? Who shall shine as the stars? (Dan. xii. 3.)

V. THE MESSAGE (v. 19.)—What are some of the messages to the seven churches? What are some of the promises to those who overcome?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Even the best of men have their share of trouble.
2. Out of trouble sometimes come the brightest visions, as to Jacob and Stephen.
3. Christians are light-bearers for Christ, and in life and teachings should shine everywhere.
4. Christ keeps his human feelings and sympathies even in Heaven on the throne. He is still the Son of man, to help, reprove, comfort, and save; as well as God, able to give all good things to His people.
5. With a Saviour like ours, victory is certain in the end, the redemption of the whole world.
6. By this vision we obtain a glimpse of what our resurrection bodies will be.
7. God's ministers are like stars, shining with heavenly light, guiding the flock to Christ like the star of Bethlehem, and kept by the right hand of God's power.
8. All faithful we shall shine with the brightest of the firmament, or as the stars forever and ever.

God's ways are not as our ways. Our way is to punish those whom we hate and carefully protect those whom we love. God's ways is expressed in the words, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." True, they need this chastening and scourging, but they do not think they do, and when they meditate on the matter they sometimes say, "The Lord hath forsaken us, and my God hath forgotten me." But John Newton says it is only like the mother teaching her child to walk, who occasionally withdraws her hand and allows it to fall, that she may teach it the need of care and of her helping hand.

SINCERITY in our beliefs, though it will not make that which is false, true, nor that which is wrong, right, is nevertheless a good thing. It is said that Hume, the infidel, often went to hear John Brown preach, and when asked why he did so, since he did not believe what he preached, replied: "No, I do not believe all that he preaches, but *he does*." Yes, the man who sincerely believes what he preaches is sure to make an impression on his hearers, hence the necessity of being sure that *truth* is the basis of his belief. Every preacher should strive to know the truth and then preach it in sincerity.

Your immediate duty is to flee out of the sinking ship of sin to the everlasting rock. In Christ you are safe. In serving Him you are happy. He will give you the fullest, sweetest and most useful occupation for head and heart and hand as long as you live in this world. When you have finished your life in His vineyard your promotion will be: "Come up higher."—Dr. Cuyler.