

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* God's love in the gift of his Son. 1 John 4: 9-16. *Tuesday.* The prophecy. Isa. 9: 1-7. *Wednesday.* Visit of the Magi. Matt. 2: 1-10. *Thursday.* Herod foiled. Matt. 2: 11-23. *Friday.* The Word. John 1: 1-14. *Saturday.* Message to the shepherds. Luke 2: 8-20. *Sabbath.* Simeon's Prophecy. Luke 2: 25-35. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. [We substitute the Christmas lesson for the Review believing that this will be more acceptable to our schools. The lessons for 1898, upon the Life of Christ, omit the narrative of his birth, apparently assuming that it has been the subject of study. This lesson may therefore be considered the first of the new series for next year].

John "the beloved disciple," tells us about God's love in sending his son. Love is the constant theme of his writings. His Gospel tells us much about the love of Christ; his Epistles urge brethren to love one another; and here he traces all love up to its source in the infinite love of God.

LESSON PLAN. I. God's Love to us. vs. 9-11. II. God's Love in us. vs 12, 13. III. Dwelling in Love. vs. 14-16.

9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him—God's love to us is shown in many ways, but there is one manifestation of it that surpasses all others. He gave his Son, yes, his only begotten Son, to die for us. There is only one Son of God and he was God's Son before he came into the world. How wonderful the love that surrendered such a treasure! The world lay under sentence of death on account of sin. Christ died that the sentence might be removed and sinners live by believing on him.

10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins—Purest love displayed in a most wonderful manner. Love that freely gives itself away and asks but love in return. His love was not called forth by our love to him, for the world did not want to be saved. No one can say that he loved God first. God loved the sinner first and therefore he sent his Son to bear his punishment for him, so that he might remove every obstacle to his return to his loving Father. The word for "propitiation" occurs in the N. T. only here and in ch. 2: 2, and points to the death of Christ as effecting a change in God's attitude as judge towards the sinner. If the atonement made on Calvary does not secure the salvation of the sinner it is not because of any limitation to its virtue but solely to his wilful rejection of the blessings secured by it (John 3: 18, 19).

ought also to love one another—If God loved us so much when there was nothing in us deserving of his love, we ought to love our brethren who are as much beloved by him as we are. Six times in this epistle John uses the affectionate term "Beloved."

12. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth (R. V., abideth) in us, and his love is perfected in us—Although we cannot see God yet we may have fellowship with him as really as if we saw him, by loving our christian brethren. If we love them, God will dwell in our hearts and we shall love him more and more. In our last lesson we were told that if we obeyed God we should love him perfectly, here we are shown another way by which to increase our love of him, namely, by loving our brethren whom we see.

13. Hereby know we that we dwell (R. V., abide) in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit—if we love the brethren God will come into our hearts and dwell there, and will let us know that he is our Divine Guest, by giving us the Holy Spirit. The more we love, the more of his Spirit do we receive, and thus we know that God is in us and we are in him.

14. And we have seen and do testify (R. V., have beheld and bear witness) that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world—John and the other apostles spoke from personal acquaintance with Christ. We cannot have true love to God and fellowship with him unless we accept Christ as our Saviour. God cannot receive

11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we