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With gifts of love divine
There comes at times a whisper,
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We fill our barns to bursting,
We clutch the world with greed;
The voice cries, "Oh, remember,
The Lord who gave has need."

We load our dainty tables,
We wear our silks and gold,
We dwell "in ceiled houses,"
Like those who lived of old.

We gather up the blessings
The hand of God has strown,
But do we well remember,
The Lord may claim his own?

O Jesus, blessed Master,
Whose mercy gives us all;
When thou hast asked a pittance,
Have we refused thy call?

And is it so, dear Saviour,
That we let thee stand and plead?
Asking of our abundance,
For what thy poor doth need?

—*F. R. Ramsey, in Missionary Helper.*

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BIBLE LESSONS.

FROM PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES

Fourth Quarter.

Lesson IX.—Nov. 29. 2 Kings 20: 1-17.

HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble.—Ps. 20: 1.

I. Hezekiah's Sickness.—Ver. 1. 1. *In those days.* About the time of the invasion of Sennacherib. That it did not occur after the departure of the Assyrians, but at the commencement of the invasion of Sennacherib, *i. e.*, in the 14th year of Hezekiah's reign, is evident from verse 6. *Was Hezekiah sick unto death.* Sick of a malady which, in the natural course of things, would have prove fatal: From ver. 7 we learn that the disease was probably a carbuncle. *Came to him.* There is no species of cruelty greater than to suffer a friend to lie on a dying bed under a delusion. *Set thine house in order.* Arrange your affairs so that they will go on without you; referring to his family, his plans, his successor, and his kingdom. *For thou shalt die.* Death was the natural result of his sickness. A message, thus addressed to a person, not spoken of him to others, is a call to repentance and prayer, not the revelation of a fixed, unalterable decree.

II. Hezekiah's Prayer. 1. *Then he turned his face to the wall.* Away from those who were present, in order that he might pray more freely and collectedly.

3. *Remember now.* The old covenant promised temporal prosperity, including length of days, to the righteous. *I have walked before thee.....with a perfect heart.* Though, as a man, he might be deeply conscious of imperfection, yet, as a king, his influence has been wholly on the side of religion, and he had not declined from the ways of God. *Hezekiah wept sore.* Literally, "with a great weeping." Hezekiah's sorrow at the approach of death was natural and right. (1) The desire to live one's full term of years is right. God himself promises it as a blessing. (2) His work was unfinished. Hezekiah had passed his whole life up to this point in anxiety and trouble; he was now, for the first time, in a position to look forward with courage and hope to a period of peace, rest, and prosperity, and to the opportunity of doing more for his country than he had hitherto been able to do. (3) He had no son, as yet, to whom he could leave his kingdom. (4) The consciousness of sin, and the need of better preparation to die (Isa. 38: 17). (5) In those days even the best of men had but faint assurance and realization of the resurrection and immortal life brought to light afterwards by Jesus Christ.

III. The Answer to His Prayer.—First,—the Promise. 4. *Afore Isaiah was gone out.* The answer was immediate. *Into the middle court.* That is, of the royal palace.

5. *The captain of my people.* The one who under God, leads and commands God's people. *Behold, I will heal thee.* Means were used (ver. 1), but the healing was God's direct gift. Who can tell but that he *often* thus spares useful lives when worn down with toil, and when the frame is apparently sinking to the grave, in answer to prayers? He may direct to remedies which had not before occured; or he may himself give a sudden and unlooked-for turn to the disease, and restore the sufferer again to health. *Unto the house of the Lord.* It is assumed, from the known piety of Hezekiah, that his first act, when he has recovered, will be to return thanks to Almighty God, in the temple.

6. *And I will add unto thy days fifteen years.* As if the Lord had said to him, "You have more work to do as king of my people, and also more of a useful, devoted life to enjoy. I assign its limit; work diligently while you may." *And.* God gave him not only what he asked, but more. *I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria.* Either out of the hands of Sennacherib, as related in the previous chapter (2 Kings 19: 35-37), or it was a general assurance of protection and deliverance from this overgrown power which was continally threatening Judah. *For mine own sake, and for thy servant David's sake.* In order that he might be known and revered in the world as the true God, and for the sake of the promises made to David.

Second,—The Means. 7. *A lump of figs.* It is usual in the East, even at the present day, to employ a poultice of figs as a remedy for ordinary boils. But such a remedy would not *naturally* cure a dangerous tumor or carbuncle. Thus the means used in this miracle may be compared with those adopted by Elisha when he raised the Shunamite's child (2 Kings 4: 34), or by our Lord when he satisfied the hunger of the multitudes, means having a tendency towards the result wrought by them, but insufficient of themselves to produce that result. Such means as this are employed (1) as an aid to faith; (2) as showing that true faith in God uses means; (3) as showing that true faith in God uses means; (3) as showing that the power in all means is from God; (4) the means here were inadequate, in order to lead Hezekiah to trust in God and to feel that his healing was the direct gift of God.

Third.—The Assurance. 8. *And Hezekiah said.* Not after the recovery mentioned in the last verse, but after the promise of recovery. He probably was deathly sick, and felt no immediate signs of improvement.

9. *Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?* Hezekiah is given his choice between two signs. The ten degrees are literally "ten steps."

10. *It is a light thing for the shadow to go down.* That is down the steps, or forward on the dial. This was its natural direction. It is easy to make the day of life shorter. *Let the shadow return backward.* (1) The king chooses that which appears to be more difficult in order that the proof may be the clearer. (2) The retrograde movement of the shadow upon the sun-dial indicated that Hezekiah's life, was to be put back by a miracle of divine omnipotence. (3) It was a symbol of the arrest of the downward course of the kingdom, and a return to prosperity.

11. *And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord.* Even a prophet must pray, and for the very things which had been promised. This necessity of prayer kept the prophet's soul in communion with God. *The dial of Ahaz.* See under ver. 9. The dial which Ahaz set up, and which he probably obtained from Babylon, for he appears to have been fond of foreign objects of art (2 Kings 16: 10). The Assyrians "were the first to divide the day into twenty-four hours, the hours into sixty minutes, the minutes into sixty seconds."

Fourth.—His Song of Thanksgiving. After his restoration to health, Hezekiah wrote a hymn expressing his gratitude to God for his mercy. It is recorded in Isa. 38: 9-20.

Note in this answer to prayer, (1) it was immediate; (2) it was given with assurance; (3) by the use of means; (4) it was abundant, giving more than was asked.

IV. Ambassadors from the King of Babylon. 13. *At that time.* In the period following Hezekiah's recovery. *Berodach-baladan.* The same as Merodach-baladan of Isa. 39: 1. *Sent letters* of congratulation. *And a present.* Which was usual under such circumstances. *For he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.* He had heard of his marvellous cure, and perhaps of the backward turning of the shadow on the dial (2 Chron. 32: 31. But, as Josephus has shown, and the Assyrian records confirm, the true object, no doubt, was to make sure of Hezekiah's friendship in anticipation of his intended revolt from the Assyrian rule.

13. *Hezekiah hearkened unto them.* The Jewish king lent a favorable ear to the proposals of the ambassadors. *Shewed them.* He exhibited to them the resources which he possessed, in order to induce them to report well of him to their master. *House of his precious things.* His treasure house. *Silver and gold.* For a description, see 2 Chron. 32: 27-29.

The Sin of this Illness. God, from whom nothing is hid, saw in his joy (1) ingratitude, because he was unmindful of the distress which lately pressed him down; (2) pride, that he sought to gain reputation by magnificence and riches. But (3) his chief fault was ambition, which almost entirely banishes the fear of God from the hearts of men. (4) It was seeking an alliance with the world, heathen idolatries, contrary to the frequent warnings of God through the prophets. Hence (5) it was a failure in faith and obedience.

14. *Then came Isaiah.* The prophet saw the king's sin and danger, and was as faithful to warn as he had been to comfort. And he could warn with greater effect because he had given the comfort.

15. *Hezekiah answered.* He was perfectly frank and free, and tried to hide nothing.

17. *All that is in thine house.....shall be carried into Babylon.* This was partly a result of what he had done, revealing to Babylon treasures worth their seeking so far to obtain. It was the punishment of the sins of the people, of which Hezekiah's sin was an example and a part. This prophecy, delivered while yet Babylon was scarcely an independent power, received (a full hundred years later) a very specific fulfilment. This message must be dated about B. C. 713. The first considerable deportation of captives occurred B. C. 606; the last, B. C. 588.

The Heritage of Prayer.

Dr. Austin Phelps, in his volume, "My Portfolio," mentions an invalid Christian woman from Richmond, Virginia, a person of education, culture, and judgment, who, debarred from other form of Christian service, often devotes herself to intercession on the behalf of friends, acquaintances, strangers, or persons whom she meets for an hour or a day and never to meet again. The following is one of many instances which illustrate her experience of the answers granted to believing prayer:

A few years ago, two strangers entered the car in which she was a traveller, and seated themselves so near her that she could not avoid overhearing their conversation. In the remarks of one of them she soon became intensely interested. She inferred from them that he was an impenitent man, sad for some reason supremely unhappy. This was sufficient to enlist her prayerful desires in his behalf. He became at once the subject of her intercessory converse with God. When she left the cars, that face, so full of the suffering of a turbulent spirit, remained with her. For weeks afterward, something moved her to pray for that stranger that he might find peace in Christ. As time passed on, her special interest in him gave place to more recent objects of supplication, and she thought no more about him. She had dropped the tribute of her prayers into the troubled current of his life, and left both it and him with God.

Some years afterward, she visited, hundreds of miles from her home, a friend who invited her to go and hear a celebrated preacher who had been laboring there with success. She went. When the preacher rose in the pulpit, she instantly recognized the face of the stranger who had years before, so deeply moved her sympathy in the cars—a face now no longer clouded by the disquiet of an impenitent spirit, but radiant with the joy of one who knew the peace of Christ and was striving to impart it to other souls.

At the time of their first meeting, he was, indeed, of all men one of the most miserable—crushed by affliction, but not subdued in heart; quickened by the Spirit of God, yet resolute in sin; with eyes opened to his lost state, but blind to the gift of a Saviour; whirled in the great crisis of his moral destiny which comes but once to any man yet without God, and having no hope; both worlds shrouded by the very blackness of darkness. Few men have ever needed prayer more sorely than he did in that juncture. It was one of those emergencies of moral conflicts in which it is like God to interpose with a singular rescue. The appearance of the stranger now is a Christian pulpit tells the issue. His conversion had followed within the year of his proximity to his praying fellow-traveller in the cars.

The choicest of all heritages is the heritage of prayer. How many such petitions have gone up and are to-day recorded before the throne! When no human voices can be heard in the tumult of earthly passion, or the confusion of worldly strife, there are whispers from pale lips that can be heard at the right of the Majesty on high. And when all earthly ears are deaf to the cry of human sorrow, "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open to their cry."—*The Presbyterian.*

The Religion We Want.—We want a religion that softens the step, and tunes the voice to melody, and fills the eye with sunshine, and checks the impatient exclamation and harsh rebuke—a religion that is polite, deferential to superiors, courteous to inferiors, and considerate to friends; a religion that goes into the family, and keeps the husband from being cross when dinner is late, and keeps the wife from fretting when he tracks the newly-washed floor with his muddy boots, and makes him mindful of the scraper and the door-mat; keeps the mother patient when the baby is cross, and amuses the children as well as instructs them; cares for the servants besides paying them promptly; projects the honeymoon into the harvest-moon, and makes the happy home like the eastern fig tree, bearing in its bosom at once the beauty of the tender blossom and glory of the ripened fruit. We want a religion that shall interpose between the ruts and gullies and rocks and highways of life, and the sensitive souls that are travelling over them.

The Politeness of Swedes.—One great peculiarity of travelling in Sweden is the extreme quiet and lack of flurry. The Swedish are a taciturn and noiseless people. They do much by signs, and never shout; a Swedish crowd makes singularly little sound. Swedes, even of the lowest class, never push or jostle. It is the custom to do so much bowing and hat-lifting that one is obliged to move more slowly than in England to give time for all this courtesy. When a train leaves a platform, or a steam-boat a pier, all the lookers-on lift their hats to the departing passengers and bow to them, a compliment returned by the travellers. If you address the poorest person in the street you must lift your hat. A gentleman passing a lady on the stairs of a hotel must do the same. To enter a shop or a bank with one's hat on is a terrible breech of good manners. If you enter or leave a coffee-room you must bow to all occupants. Passengers on board the little steamers which ply about Stockholm invariably raise their hats to the occupants of any other boat which passes near them The very men in charge of the locks on the canal bow politely to the sailors as the boats go through.

What is this Disease that is Coming Upon Us?

Like a thief at night it steals in upon us unawares. Many persons have pains about the chest and sides, and sometimes in the back. They feel dull and sleepy; the mouth has a bad taste, especially in the morning. A sort of sticky slime collects about the teeth. The appetite is poor. There is a feeling like a heavy load on the stomach; sometimes a faint all-gone sensation at the pit of the stomach which food does not satisfy. The eyes are sunken, the hands and feet become cold and feel clammy. After a while a cough sets in at first dry, but after a few months it is attended with a greenish coloured expectoration. The afflicted one feels tired all the while, and sleep does not seem to afford any rest. After a time he becomes nervous, irritable, and gloomy, and has evil forebodings. There is a giddiness, a sort of whirling sensation in the head when rising up suddenly. The bowels become costive; the skin is dry and hot at times; the blood becomes thick and stagnant; the whites of the eyes become tinged with yellow, the urine is scanty and high coloured, depositing a sediment after standing. There is frequently a spitting up of the food, sometimes with a sour taste, and sometimes with a sweetish taste; this is frequently attended with palpitation of the heart; the vision be impaired with spots before the eyes; there is a feeling of great prostration and weakness. All of these symptoms are in turn present. It is thought that nearly one-third of our population has this disease in some of its varied forms. It has been found that medical men have mistaken the nature of this disease. Some have treated it for a liver complaint, others for kidney disease, etc., etc., but none of the various kinds of treatment have been attended with success, because the remedy should be such as to act harmoniously upon each one of these organs, and upon the stomach as well; for in Dyspepsia (for this is really what the disease is) all of these organs partake of this disease and require a remedy that will act upon all at the same time. Seigel's Syrup acts like a charm in this class of complaints, giving almost immediate relief. The following letters from chemists of standing in the community where they live show in what estimation the article is held.

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	Halifax,—leave,	7 00	7 15	2 35
1	Richmond,		7 20	2 38
14	Windsor Junction,	7 38	8 20	3 38
60	Newport,	8 55	10 00	5 20
66	Windsor,	8 35	10 50	5 35
83	Hantsport,	9 17	11 39	6 06
94	Wolfville,	9 40	11 58	6 26
98	Port Williams,	9 55	12 22	6 55
71	Kentville—Arrive	10 05	12 45	7 10
	Do—Depart,	10 25	1 15	
75	Berwick,	10 51	2 07	
88	Aylesford,	11 04	2 30	
95	Kingston,	11 19	2 15	
102	Middleton,	11 34	3 43	
116	Bridgetown,	12 16	4 45	
130	Annapolis—arrive	12 50	5 45	

Miles.	GOING EAST.	Acc. dy. A.M.	Acc. T.T.S.	Exp dy. P.
	Annapolis—leave		5 30	1
14	Bridgetown,		6 35	2 10
28	Middleton,		7 25	2 47
35	Kingston,		7 57	3 05
43	Aylesford,		8 38	3 30
47	Berwick,		8 55	3 32
59	Kentville—arrive	A.M.	9 45	4 00
	Do—depart,	5 40	10 40	4 15
54	Port Williams,	6 00	11 00	4 28
66	Wolfville,	6 10	11 10	4 34
77	Hantsport,	6 38	11 55	5 05
84	Windsor,	7 00	12 45	5 30
90	Newport,	10 00	5 10	5
116	Windsor Junction,	10 00	5 10	
129	Richmond,	10 42	5 31	
130	Halifax—arrive,	10 45	5 35	

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