

who has learned that in many cases Scripture illustrates Scripture, who knows how to seek out the parallel passages and to discern the difference between them, and the underlying unity which blends them together harmoniously, has mastered one of the most helpful of all methods of exploring the contents of the Book.

2. More than four hundred years ago among the religious dramas then in vogue was one which has been revived in our time, and has produced everywhere a deep impression by its message. It is called *Every Man*, and its plot centers about the appearance of Death, in his own personality, to summon mortals to their final hour. The point of the play hinges on the fact that no man is ready for the message; each one has something else to do first; and by one excuse or pretext after another each person summoned endeavors to postpone the call and escape from the summons. Thus the teaching of the old play, and the anguish of Hezekiah in view of death, combine to suggest the same truth.

3. That great English scholar, preacher, and poet, Richard Chenevix Trench, formerly Archbishop of Dublin, wrote many years ago a poem which stands alone, we judge, in English literature, in its pertinency to the theme before us. It is called *The Day of Death*, and can be found in full in Schaff and Gilman's *Library of Religious Poetry*. We cite the opening and closing lines:

"Thou inevitable day,
When a voice to me shall say,
"Thou must rise, and come away;
All thine other journeys past,
Gird thee, and make ready fast
For thy longest and thy last,
Day deep-hidden from our sight
In impenetrable night.
Who may guess of thee aught?
Art thou distant, art thou near?
Wilt thou seem more dark or clear?
Day with more of hope or fear?
Wilt thou come, unseen before
Thou art standing at the door,
Saying, 'Light and life are o'er'?"

"Little skills it where or how,
If thou comest then or now,
With a smooth or angry brow:—
Come thou must, and we must die;
Jesus, Saviour, stand Thou by,
When that last sleep seals our eye!"

4. "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die," is a message to be heeded by every one of us. Who knows at night whether the morning will find him in this world or in the next? Wise are they who before they sleep, night after night, calmly look death in the face, and, in view of his possible assault and approach during the darkness, are able to say, as the little child everywhere is taught to say:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

And, in the daytime and at our work, we have good reason to recall and ponder the words of the Preacher (Ecd. 9, 10), "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor devise, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." And may we not also profitably call to mind the words of the Master, "The night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9, 4)?

5. The example of Hezekiah in carrying his burden of anxiety and grief to the Lord in prayer is justified in many places in the Scriptures. The book of Psalms abounds with encouragements and examples in this respect: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (50, 15); "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation" (91, 15, 16). The apostolic injunction is also pertinent here, James 5, 13—which reads, when the ordinary and the Revised Versions are put together, "Is any among you afflicted, or suffering? Let him pray."

The School of Practice

1. Hezekiah in his sickness was distressed because, through ignorance of the life beyond, he stood in fear of death. This week, if I find the opportunity, I will try to cheer some one by a note or a visit, who is sick or has been bereaved, with the things that Christ has made known which have robbed sickness and death of their dread.

2. Seeing how little Hezekiah knew of the future life, I will this week study the New Testament that I may see what new knowledge Jesus has given us concerning it.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

General Preparatory Work

I. *Lesson Material*. Isa. 38, 1-22, especially the printed verses, 1-8.

II. *Parallel Passages*. 2 Kings 20, 1-11; 2 Chron. 32, 24-26.

III. *The Lesson Passage Naturally Divides* between verses 3 and 4, giving us, 1. The Prayer; 2. The An-