



TO THE RESCUE.

**LESSON NOTES.**

**FIRST QUARTER.**

**ISRAEL AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.**

**LESSON IX.—FEBRUARY 26.**

**READING THE LAW.**

Neh. 8. 1-12.] [Memory verses, 5, 6.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.—Psalm 119. 18.

**OUTLINE.**

1. Reading the Word, ver. 1-6
2. Teaching the Word, ver. 7, 8.
3. Receiving the Word, ver. 9-12.

**TIME.**—About B.C. 445. In the month of October.

**PLACE.**—Jerusalem.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**

In fifty-two days the wall is finished; and at the first opportunity the population of the city and the surrounding country gathers in a city square to hear the reading of the law.

**EXPLANATIONS.**

“Street . . . before the water-gate”—An area in the south-eastern part of the city, south of the temple. “Book of the law”—The Old Testament Scriptures. “Pulpit of wood”—A “tower of wood” is a better rendering. A raised platform built in the street, where the speaker could stand and be plainly seen. “Lifting up their hands”—With their hands raised toward heaven, palms upward and faces upward. “Gave the sense”—They explained and expounded the law as it was read, so that all could understand. The old Hebrew in which Ezra read was obsolete, and these Levites rendered it into the popular dialect. Verse 10 is an ideal programme for all thanksgiving occasions. “Mirth”—Should be rejoicing.

**TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.**

Where in this lesson have we a good example—

1. For Sunday-school scholars?
2. For Sunday-school teachers?
3. For all of God's people?

**HOME WORK FOR YOUNG BEREANS.**

What great men re-arranged the Old Testament Scriptures?

How were the Scriptures written in those days? What sort of type? What sort of paper? Any peculiarities that you can think of.

What was the difference between the priests and the Levites?

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. What did the people ask Ezra to do? “To read the book of the law of Moses.” 2. On what did he stand? “On a pulpit of wood.” 3. How did he read? “Distinctly, giving the sense.” 4. What did he tell them? “Not to weep.” 5. Why? “For the joy of the Lord is your strength.” 6. What is the Golden Text? “Open thou mine eyes,” etc.

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The authority of Holy Scripture.

**CATECHISM QUESTION.**

What is his warning to them? That his word shall condemn them at the last day.

John 12. 48.—He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.

**THE PEARL RING.**

A LITTLE rap at the door, and at Aunt Mary's invitation, a bright face was thrust in, and a merry voice said:

“Good morning, auntie, I came for my birthday kiss and good wishes.”

“Oh, yes, my little Lucia, I was just waiting for you. Here is your kiss, and with it accept my warmest wishes for to-day, and for every future birthday of your life. Thirteen to-day, are you not?”

“Yes, auntie; am I not getting old?”

“Not exactly ‘old,’ dear; yet when one enters her teens, time seems to fly faster, and birthdays to come quicker. Here is a little keepsake for you dear, to commemorate the advent of this day.”

“Oh, auntie, how beautiful! How can I thank you for this lovely ring? How I have longed for a pearl ring. How large, soft and pure the pearl is; and how lovely the setting! Dear auntie, I shall love to wear this ring for your sake, and it will always be such a sweet reminder of you.”

“And yet, my dear child, when your eyes rest upon it, rather than think of me, I want you to think of that ‘Pearl of great price,’ and question yourself, ‘Do I possess it?’ Jesus is this pearl, of such unspeakable brightness and glory, of such inestimable value, that the paltry wealth of earth is nothing in comparison. The world is seeking ‘goodly pearls,’ yet lives are spent gathering counterfeits, while this one precious pearl is offered without money and without price.”

**The Story of Grumble Tone.**

THERE was a boy named Grumble Tone, who ran away to sea. “I'm sick of things on land,” he said; “as sick as I can be! A life upon the bounding wave will suit a led like me!”

The seething ocean billows failed to stimulate his mirth, For he did not like the vessel, nor the dizzy, rolling berth, And he thought the sea was almost as unpleasant as the earth.

He wandered into foreign lands, he saw each wondrous sight, But nothing that he heard or saw seemed just exactly right; And so he journeyed on an on, still seeking for delight.

He talked with kings and ladies fair; he dined in courts they say; But always found the people dull, and longed to get away To search for that mysterious land where he should like to stay.

He wandered over all the world, his hair grew white as snow, He reached that final bourne at last where all of us must go, But never found the land he sought. The reason would you know?

The reason was that north or south, where'er his steps were bent, On land or sea, in court or hall, he found but discontent; For he took his disposition with him everywhere he went.

—N. W. Christian Advocate.

**A CUP OF COFFEE.**

A VESSEL had just come from the other side of the world. “Wild Jim,” as he was called, was going to return to his old Devonshire home.

“You'll astonish the natives a bit,” was the good-bye his comrades gave him, as handsome Jim, with his cap on one side, went up the street of Southampton.

He had not gone far on his way to the station, when a bright-looking shop, with a lot of tempting bottles in the window, caught his eye. A jolly landlord standing by his door cried, “Hullo, my brave British tar! welcome back to Mother Earth! Come and have a glass for your safe return!”

“Wild Jim,” always ready for a glass, turned in. He sat on hour after hour till his pocket-money was spent, and his head was aching, and he did not know what he was saying. All at once he became aware of the landlord's heavy hands on his shoulders, and a shocked voice saying, “No, no! this is a respectable house. Never allow too much to be drunk on the premises.” And then he was shoved off into the street, and a policeman gave a knowing wink to the landlord.

“Just in time,” he whispered; “the superintendent is coming round. I'll get him into the field outside; he'll soon come to.”

But Jim was more “to” than they knew; and he felt in his pocket, and found that out of all his money he was going to take to his parents only 2s. 6d. was left. He waited till he was all but sober, and then he retraced his way, as he thought to the station; but somehow the way was not very clear, and he found himself before another bar.

He threw down his 2s. 6d. for “a glass of half-and-half, and make it stiff.”

The woman's answer was, “We have not your half-and-half. Will you try ours, hot or cold?”

“A jorum of something hot!” he cried, wondering what spirits she would give him.

“Are you Devonshire?” she said with a ready tact.

“To be sure I am! to my backbone.” “Then would you like some Devonshire Cream?”

“Aye! that I would! It's many a day since Devonshire Cream and I have met.” And then he sat down and enjoyed the first cup of coffee he had had for many a long day. When he had finished he pushed his half-crown across the counter, but to his intense astonishment the woman gave him back 2s. 5d.

“Wall, you will soon have to give up

shop if you give away things in this fashion!” he cried.

And then he sat down again; and this time the hours went by, but how differently from the sad morning.

Instead of going to his old Devonshire home, he went back first to his ship-mates to try and induce them to join the “new-fangled public.”

And when he went back to his parents and his old village, “Wild Jim's” name was changed to “Sober Jim.” He became a temperance man, “All along,” he would say, “under God, and those kind words of that woman and my first cop of coffee.”

**COLUMBUS AND TOBACCO.**

WHEN Columbus discovered the island of Cuba in 1492, smoking was first made known to the civilized world. The sailors, when sent out to explore the island, returned and declared that “the natives carried with them lighted firebrands and puffed smoke from their mouths and noses,” which they supposed to be the way the savages had of perfuming themselves. They also said they “saw the native savages twist large leaves together and smoke like devils.” So wonderfully impressed were the sailors with what they witnessed that they repeated the story everywhere, tried the effect of the habit upon themselves, and were the means of spreading abroad over the world the most useless and expensive, not to say dirty and hurtful, custom known among men. In China, Japan, Persia and other portions of the East the habit soon became general, and all Europe speedily joined in giving it universal popularity. Strong drink excepted, no other commodity has so degraded the taste of man. He smokes the weed, and chews the weed, and snuffs the weed. He cares little for its deleterious effect upon his own body, and nothing for its offensive influence upon others. At work or play, at home or abroad, by night and day, he places himself under the sedative influences of the famed narcotic. Will it be so in four hundred years from now?

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