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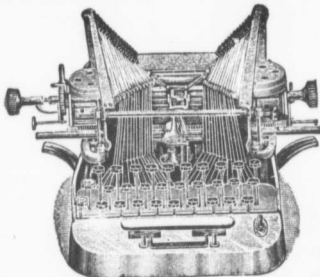
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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXIII.

DECEMBER 1899.

No. 12.

## A Christmas Song.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

Over the hills of Bethlehem.

A white star hung one night;  
The low, gray walls of the little town  
All lay in a silver light.

Over the hills of Bethlehem

Three wise men came from afar;  
"Where is the baby King," they said,  
"Who leadeth us by his star?"

Over the walls of Bethlehem

The great, white star hung low;  
And they found the King on a manger  
throne,  
And the kine in a kneeling row.

Around the Baby of Bethlehem

The heavens once touched the earth,  
And choirs of angels came thronging  
down,  
To carol the Saviour's birth.

Oh, where is the cradle of Bethlehem?

And where is the baby King?  
Thy heart, dear child, is the cradle  
throne,  
And around it the angels sing.

And the King—the stars are under his  
feet,

All worlds are within his hand.  
And when thou art grown in the grace  
of him,  
Thy heart—it shall understand.

## Better Bible Study.

The convention of the Ontario Sabbath-school Association, at Galt, was one of the most successful ever held in this country. Dr. J. J. McLaren, who, not-

withstanding his busy life, finds time to attend the annual meetings of our Missionary Board, the Sunday-school Conventions, the important temperance and Sabbath observance meetings, and those of the College Boards and Senates, reports that the Galt convention was a season of great spiritual power and profit.

A prominent feature of the association work for the present year is promoting the Normal class study. Its secretary issues a strong appeal for more and better work in this direction, and offers valuable help in its promotion. Write for circular to Corresponding Secretary S. S. Association, Room 25, Manning Arcade, Toronto.

The American Institute of Sacred Literature, of which President Harper, of the University of Chicago, is Principal, has also for some years been conducting special studies in the Scriptures. In a single month over a hundred classes, representing two thousand adult persons, have been organized for the systematic study of the four years' course in sacred literature. The secretary of this institute asks for pastors and teachers specially to take up this work, and offers material for one year's study free to any minister who will organize a class in his church. The secretary, G. L. Chamberlin, Chicago, will furnish further information.

The Presbyterian Church will signalize the coming of the new century by making a vigorous effort to bring 500,000 more children into their Sunday-schools, which now number about 1,000,000. Let us emulate their example.

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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1899.

The Lessons for 1900.

It is a significant fact that the last year of the nineteenth century and the first half year of the twentieth century will be spent in the consecutive study of the life of our Lord. For eighteen months the schools of Christendom will be studying that Matchless Life as it never was studied before in all the centuries since Christ came to save the world. It means very much for that twentieth century, whose portals are opening before us, that this sacred theme shall be for so long a period the subject of such devout study.

"And I if I be lifted up," said our Lord, "will draw all men unto me." Never was he so lifted up in all lands, and among all peoples as he will be during the next year and a half. In the crowded cities and the rural hamlet, amid the teeming populations of the great mission centres of Indian and China, and in the lonely outposts and frontiers of Christendom, that holy life,

the work and words of our Lord, shall be pondered as they never were before.

Assuredly the Divine and Eternal Spirit, the source of all illumination, will seal these holy truths upon myriads of souls, will lead to a consecration of the young life of Christendom, to loyal love and service to him who gave his life for us.

What a grand opportunity to walk in the very footsteps of our blessed Lord, to lean like John upon his bosom, to drink deeply of his spirit, to be conformed to his image. One of the great books of the ages which has moulded the thought and life of Christendom is the "Imitation of Christ," by Thomas a Kempis. Let us each write our Imitation of Christ by the thoughtful, loving study of his life and conformity to his will.

The mode of this study will differ from that heretofore followed. The custom has been to take the lessons from the writings of some one of the evangelists, and to confine the attention exclusively to that book.

The method to be adopted in 1900-1901 is to select from the four evangelists, as nearly as may be, in chronological order and in logical connection, the events of our Lord's life and ministry. In this way a more complete rounded and full-orbed conception of that sacred life will be secured.

Lesson Helps for 1900.

The testimony of experienced teachers is that no help is more valuable for the study of the life of our Lord than a Harmony of the Gospels. The advantages of such a Harmony, or Montessoron, will be shown by the following extracts from an article by Prof. Amos R. Wells, in The Sunday-school Times:

"Far above concordance, Bible index, Bible dictionary, I count the Montessoron the very best help to Bible study. The Montessoron, it might be parenthetically remarked for the benefit of the lexicon-lazy folk, is a harmony of the four gospels, so arranged as to make one continuous and complete story, in Scripture words alone. Speaking for one, I may say that through recent first acquaintance with a Montessoron, that Matchless Life has shone upon me with an entire splendour of beauty and majesty before unimagined."

There are several harmonies from \$1.00 to \$1.50, but the general testimony is

that none surpass in fulness and accuracy that published by the Editor of The Banner, new edition, with map and geography of Palestine, by Prof. Hamil. For sale at Methodist Book-Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax. Price, 50 cents.

Teachers willing to accept agency for schools will please communicate directly with Rev. Dr. Withrow, Toronto.

### Christmas Number of Onward.

The Christmas double number of Onward last year was very highly appreciated by our schools. This cost us more than double the expense of our ordinary issue, but so warm was the welcome it received that we are determined if possible to surpass it in our double Christmas issue of the present year, that for December 2. This will be a large sixteen-page paper, full of Christmas stories, pictures, and poems, and will be, we believe, the most attractive number of Onward we have ever issued. It will be furnished in any quantity at the rate of \$1.00 per hundred. Every scholar in our schools should have a copy. Send in your orders at once that you may secure this Christmas souvenir which we offer at far below cost.

### Methodist Magazine and Review for November.

The November number of this Magazine contains six illustrated articles. Among those of special interest is a graphic account of the Boers and their stormy history, by Rev. J. T. Pitcher; a beautiful tribute of personal recollections of "Queen Margherita of Italy," by Mrs. M. E. Lauder; "Methodism at Gibraltar," by R. W. Allan; an account of the successful "Indian Mission at Metlakahtla," and a sketch of Albert Durer, the famous painter, by Dr. Lubke, the distinguished art critic. Chancellor Burwash contributes an article of splendid optimism on "The Progress of a Century—the contrast between 1799 and 1899, and the outlook for the future." Bishop Thoburn's "Centennial Forward Movement," and Rev. W. Harrison's "Christianization of Money," are fine Twentieth Century Fund articles. Professor Conn, in "The Battle of the Pigmies and the

Giants," describes the conflict between the forces of life and death in the human body. Dr. Ross has a strong article on "The Old Testament Under Fire." Several stories, the World's Progress, etc., complete an admirable number.

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### Methodist Magazine and Review for 1900.

This Magazine will round out the century with the best programme of contents it has ever presented. Sir John George Bourinot's series of articles on the Progress of Canada during her Majesty's Reign will be of special importance, and will be profusely illustrated. A feature of much interest in early numbers will be a retrospect of this most marvellous century the world has ever seen, especially of its moral and religious, social and scientific progress, and the development of two of its most conspicuous features—the growth of Methodism in our own and kindred countries, and of missions throughout the world. It will also be a record of the world's progress—of the stirring events of the times—and of the trend of religious thought and work. It will specially endeavour to help the great forward movement of Methodism, the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund, and the great religious and missionary revival for which our church is so earnestly hoping and praying.

The purpose of both Publisher and Editor is to make this Magazine and Review a welcome visitor—a bright, cheery, inspiring and instructive guest—in Methodist households of this Dominion. A gentleman who sees a great number of magazines states that it is the best and the best read of any that comes to his family. The Uplook says: "It is the best Magazine for a Christian family of which we have any knowledge. The November and December numbers will be given free to new subscribers. See full announcement in this number of The Banner.

We ask the cordial help of our readers to place this excellent home magazine into many Methodist homes where it is not now taken. Subscription price, \$2.00 per year. When taken in connection with either The Guardian or Wesleyan, \$1.75 per year.

### Christmas Hymn.

BY REV. JOSEPH PASCOE.

Let us with the angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King;  
Sound his praise through earth and sky,  
Glory to the Lord most high.

Let us now extol his name,  
All salvation from him came,  
He is worthy of our praise,  
Sing we him in heavenly lays.

Sing we with the angel-choir,  
Love divine our songs inspire,  
God's good will to us made known,  
Peace from the eternal throne.

Peace divine, through Jesus given,  
Peace divine, the gift of heaven,  
Jesus, Saviour, Prince of Peace,  
Bless us with thy love's increase.

May it here in us abound,  
Till at last we shall be found,  
With the ransomed ones above,  
Blest with thy eternal love.  
Petitcodiac, N.B.

### The Making of Methodism.

MAKERS OF METHODISM. Methodist Book-Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax. Pp. 307. With 38 engravings. Price, \$1.00. Usual discount to schools.

This book has not heretofore been obtainable except with sets of the Epworth League Reading Course for 1898-1899. It may now be procured singly, printed on superior paper, with special binding.

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ful narratives of surpassing faith and love, they hold the reader spellbound, whether read for the first time or the thousandth. The volume is fully illustrated by portraits of the heroes of Methodism and views of the places which they have made forever memorable by their noble words and works."—New York Christian Advocate.

Dr. Withrow's stories of Canadian Methodist life, BARBARA HECK, and LAWRENCE TEMPLE, with numerous illustrations, are specially suited for schools and family reading. Price, 75 cents each.

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These books can be procured from the Methodist Book-Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax, at the above rates, with the usual discount to schools, or may be ordered at any book store in the Dominion. Persons willing to accept agency for their sale will receive very liberal discount. A specimen copy forwarded on application. Please communicate directly with Rev. Dr. Withrow, Methodist Publishing House, Toronto.

### A Primary Sheaf.

BY MRS. G. T. COOK.

While considering what best method to advise in order to make the Sunday-school lesson of October 29 both attractive and instructive, the thought occurred to me to propose having a "Primary Sheaf," and with this thought in view, and a prayer for helpful suggestions, I met my class, and, after the usual lesson exercises, I approached them on the subject, and was greeted with hearty approval and willingness by all. The plans proposed are as follows: Every scholar to bring a slip of paper (any pretty colour) with a Bible promise written on one side and their name on the other. Slips to be brought every Sunday. This, we feel sure, will prove interesting and helpful, and we hope out of 31,000 promises to have a very interesting Sheaf.

## An Excursion to Europe.

An excursion to Europe is always one of great interest, but once in eleven years this interest is doubled by the holding of the Universal Exposition at Paris. At the request of a number of friends Dr. Withrow, who has six times visited Paris and Rome, will personally conduct an excursion party to Europe during the summer of 1900. He will have rooms secured in London, and in Paris near the Exposition, before leaving Toronto, and will thus avoid the difficulties which would, in the congested state of the latter city, be otherwise inevitable. Dr. Withrow is preparing his programme of travel, which will give full details of routes and rates, etc., and will be happy to send a copy to any one interested in the subject. Address Rev. Dr. Withrow, Methodist Publishing House, Toronto.

## Christmas Day Acrostic.

BY J. PASCOE.

Christ the Lord is born to-day,—  
 Heard ye not the angels' lay?  
 Righteous offerings let us bring,  
 Incense to the Saviour—King.  
 Sing we, too, the angels' song,  
 Triumph with the holy throng.  
 May our grateful praise arise  
 As sweet incense to the skies.  
 Saviour, Christ, we will adore,

Daily we His love implore.  
 Always may we holy be;  
 Yearning Christ our Lord to see.

## Lessons and Golden Texts.—Studies in the Old Testament.

- I. October 1.—JOY IN GOD'S HOUSE. Psalm 122. *Commit vs. 6-9.* (Read Psalm 84.) GOLDEN TEXT: I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psalm 122, 1.
- II. October 8.—HAMAN'S PLOT AGAINST THE JEWS. Esth. 3, 1-11. Psalm 5, 6. (Read chaps. 1-3.) GOLDEN TEXT: If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. 8, 31.
- III. October 15.—ESTHER PRAYING FOR HER PEOPLE. Esth. 8, 3-8 and 15-17. *Commit vs. 15-17.* (Read chaps. 8-10.) GOLDEN TEXT: Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Psalm 57, 5.
- IV. October 22.—EZRA'S JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM. Ezra 8, 21-32. *Commit vs. 21-23.* (Read chap. 7, and 8, 15-36.) GOLDEN TEXT: The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him. Ezra 8, 22.
- V. October 29.—PSALMS OF DELIVERANCE. Psalms 85 and 126. *Commit* Psalm 126. (Read Jer. 31.) GOLDEN TEXT: They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Psalm 126, 5.
- VI. November 5.—NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER. Neh. 1, 1-11. *Commit vs. 8-10.* (Read chap. 2.) GOLDEN TEXT: Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day. Neh. 1, 11.
- VII. November 12.—REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. Neh. 2, 1-13. *Commit vs. 15-18.* (Read the chapter.) GOLDEN TEXT: Watch and pray. Matt. 26, 41.
- VIII. November 19.—PUBLIC READING OF THE SCRIPTURES. Neh. 8, 1-12. *Commit vs. 1-3.* (Read the chapter; also Luke 4, 16-22.) GOLDEN TEXT: The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. Neh. 8, 3.
- IX. November 26.—WORDS OF TEMPERANCE. Prov. 23, 29-35. (Temperance Sunday.) *Commit vs. 29-32.* GOLDEN TEXT: Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Prov. 20, 1.
- X. December 3.—KEEPING THE SABBATH. Neh. 13, 15-22. *Commit vs. 15-17.* (Read the chapter. Compare Isa. 56, 1-3; Jer. 17, 19-27.)
- XI. December 10.—LESSONS IN GIVING. Mal. 1, 6-11 and 3, 8-12. *Commit chap. 3, 10.* (Read chap. 1; also 2 Cor. chaps. 8 and 9.) GOLDEN TEXT: God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9, 7.
- XII. December 17.—FRUITS OF RIGHT AND WROUGHT DOING. Mal. 3, 13 to 4, 6. *Commit vs. 16-18.* (Compare Mal. 3, 1-6; also Matt. 11, 7-15.) GOLDEN TEXT: Whosoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Gal 6, 7.
- XIII. December 24.—CHRIST'S COMING FORETOLD. Isa. 9, 2-7. *Commit vs. 2-7.* (Read Isa. 11, 1-10.) GOLDEN TEXT: Unto us a Saviour is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2, 11.
- XIV. December 31.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Psalm 103, 2.

## Order of Services.—Fourth Quarter.

## OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psalm 121.)  
 SUPT. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.  
 SCHOOL. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.  
 SUPT. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.  
 SCHOOL. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.  
 SUPT. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.  
 SCHOOL. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

- III. SINGING.  
 IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.  
 V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.  
 VI. SINGING.

## LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.  
 II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.  
 III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.  
 IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.  
 V. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings).

## CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.  
 II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.  
 SUPT. My son, forget not my law: but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee.  
 SCHOOL. The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

## FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

## LESSON X. KEEPING THE SABBATH.

[Dec. 3.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Exod. 20. 8.

## AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the chapter. Compare Isa. 56. 1-8; Jer. 17. 19-27.]

Neh. 13. 15-22. [Commit to memory verses 15-17.]

15 In those days saw I in Ju'dah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Je-ru-sa-lem on the sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Ju'dah, and in Je-ru-sa-lem.

17 Then I contended with the nobles of Ju'dah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Is-ra-el by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Je-ru-sa-lem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Je-ru-sa-lem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Le'vites, that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 In those days saw I in Ju'dah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses therewith; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Je-ru-sa-lem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them

16 in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought in fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Ju'dah, and

17 in Je-ru-salem. Then I contended with the nobles of Ju'dah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the

18 sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Is-ra-el by profaning the

19 sabbath. And it came to pass that, when the gates of Je-ru-sa-lem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut, and commanded that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I over the gates, that there should no burden be brought in

20 on the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Je-ru-sa-lem

21 once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no

22 more on the sabbath. And I commanded the Le'vites that they should purify themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember unto me, O my God, this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

Time.—Perhaps about B. C. 433. Place.—Jerusalem.

## Home Readings.

- M. Keeping the Sabbath. Neh. 13. 15-22.  
 Tu. The Sabbath appointed. Gen. 1. 26 to 2. 3.  
 W. Sabbath to be hallowed. Jer. 17. 19-27.  
 Th. Sabbath-breaking denounced. Ezek. 20. 10-20.  
 F. Blessings in keeping. Isa. 56. 1-7.  
 S. Sabbath joy. Isa. 58. 8-14.  
 S. Christ's teaching. Luke 6. 1-10.

## Lesson Hymns.

## No. 285, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lord of the Sabbath, hear our vows,  
 On this thy day, in this thy house;  
 And own, as grateful sacrifice,  
 The songs which from thy servants rise.

## No. 286, New Canadian Hymnal.

With joy we hail the sacred day  
 Which God has called his own;  
 With joy the summons we obey  
 To worship at his throne.



No. 287, New Canadian Hymnal.  
Safely through another week,  
God has brought us on our way;  
Let us now a blessing seek,  
Waiting in his courts to-day.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

#### 1. The Sabbath Broken, v. 15-18.

Who was it who saw Sabbath desecration?  
What forms did it assume?  
Why was testimony given against Sabbath-breakers.

What commandment was broken? GOLDEN TEXT.

Why were the nobles of Judah blamed?  
What warning came from the past to them?  
What are modern forms of Sabbath desecration?

Is it on the increase?  
What should the Church do against the evil?  
What is the duty of the Christian citizen?  
What is your individual duty?

#### 2. The Sabbath Kept, v. 19-22.

What measures did Nehemiah take?  
Whom did he set to watch the gates?  
Why did not the gatekeepers do their work with those servants?

Why did men in those days wish to violate the sanctity of the Sabbath?  
Why do they wish to do so in these days?

For what reason did Nehemiah pray that God would remember him?

Why is the Lord's Day binding upon us?  
How should Christians spend it?  
How do you spend it?

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

1. One good man in an evil community is a blessing. If he holds office and is firm and resolute, he is a double blessing. Executive officers should execute the laws. Popularity is not the first thing such men should seek. Dare to do right.

2. Evil comes to a community which does not respect the Sabbath. God sends evil in the sense that he ordains that men shall reap what they sow. A nation without a Sabbath wears out with unceasing work and loses the saving salt of morality.

3. Sometimes the rulers, like the nobles of old Jerusalem, need to be argued with—"What evil thing is this that ye do?" Pray for good men to be officeholders, and vote for such.

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. The Sabbath Broken, v. 15-18.

How was the Sabbath broken by the Jews?  
What did Nehemiah do when he saw this?  
What foreigners profaned the day, and how?

To them what did the governor say?  
What had the fathers of the "nobles" done?  
What prophet had warned the fathers, and how? Jer. 17. 21-23, 27.

What evil were these people bringing?  
What commandment had they broken? GOLDEN TEXT.

#### 2. The Sabbath Kept, v. 19-22.

What order was given about the city gates?  
Why were the gates closed at dark? Lev. 23. 32.

Who were put in charge of the gates?  
Who lodged without the walls?  
What threat did the governor make?  
What was the effect of his words?  
What were the Levites told to do?  
What prayer did Nehemiah make?  
When was the Sabbath instituted? Gen. 2. 3.  
For whom was it instituted? Mark 2. 27.  
How should the Sabbath be kept? Isa. 58. 13.

#### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The duty of Sabbath-keeping?
2. The sin of Sabbath-breaking?
3. The blessedness of Sabbath observance?

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How long did Nehemiah stay in Jerusalem?  
**Twelve years.**

Where did he then go? **Back to Persia.**  
What did he find when he came again to Jerusalem? **That the law was being broken.**

What did he find people doing on the Sabbath?  
What is the law of the Sabbath? GOLDEN TEXT.

Who gave this law?  
Where was the Sabbath first spoken of in the Bible? Gen. 2. 3.

What did Nehemiah say this would bring?  
**Trouble and sorrow.**

What did Nehemiah command should be done?

What did he tell the Levites to do?  
Why did Nehemiah do these things? **Because he knew it was right.**

What should we never do? **Shut our eyes to sin.**

### THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

**1. Against whom did Nehemiah testify? Against those who worked and sold on the Sabbath.**

2. What is the divine command concerning the Sabbath? GOLDEN TEXT: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

3. What did Nehemiah say to the nobles? "What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?"

4. What was the prayer of Nehemiah? "Remember me, O my God."

#### NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

12. What is the work of creation?

The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, and all very good.

Genesis i. 1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

### THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.

#### How to Reform Popular Evils.

##### I. WATCHFULNESS.

*Saw I... on the Sabbath.* v. 15.

A watchman unto... Israel. Ezek. 3. 17.

Look... things of others. Phil. 2. 4.

##### II. REMONSTRANCE.

*Contended with the nobles.* v. 17.

Them that sin rebuke. 1 Tim. 5. 20.

Unto the great men. Jer. 5. 5.

##### III. PROHIBITION.

*Commanded... and charged.* v. 19.

Exhort and rebuke. Tit. 2. 15.

Warn them that are unruly. 1 Thess. 5. 14.

##### IV. ENFORCEMENT.

*My servants set I.* v. 19.

A man under authority. Matt. 8. 9.

Not the sword in vain. Rom. 13. 4.

##### V. PREVENTION.

*Levites... keep the gates.* v. 22.

They are God's ministers. Rom. 13. 6.

Abstain... appearance of evil. 1 Thess. 5. 22.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

December brings to us four lessons of supreme importance: on the Sabbath; on giving; on moral consequences, and on the coming of Christ. They are fundamental lessons in ethics and religion, and were learned by the people of God in almost the order in which they here come before us. Around the institution of the Sabbath the earliest Hebrew ritual pressed, as the ripened fibers of an apple cluster about its core. Ritualistic and prophetic training through centuries developed the moral sense of the Hebrews, and at length we hear, as in Lesson XI, distinct statements of the duty of self-sacrifice, the doctrine of love for God with soul, mind, and strength, and of love also for our fellows. Parallel with this, and its needed complement, comes a clear conscience of right and wrong, and recognition of moral consequences (Lesson XII). All which training gradually brings about the "fullness of time," when the Prince of Peace comes (Lesson XIII). But at the very outset was the doctrine of the Sabbath. What was thus true of the holy nation is true, in a measure, of each devout soul; and though the order in time may not always be the same, these four lessons are deeply, and often successively, learned by every faithful Christian. It gives new force to the lessons of the month to recall how basal they are to all religious experience; and this is especially true of the Sabbath. The historic background of our lesson for to-day begins with the public reading of the Scriptures, of which we studied November 19. After that noble service came the feast of tabernacles; a little later a day of humiliation for the sins of the people, and a renewed national pledge of faithfulness to God; then an organized endeavor to populate Jerusalem; twelve years of prosperity, ending in the temporary withdrawal of Nehemiah, and the growth of abuses in his absence; lastly, the return of Nehemiah, who promptly entered upon a vigorous course of reform, and, with clear head, considered first the neglected sanctity of the Sabbath. Sabbath desecration and marriages of the Jews with their heathen neighbors seemed to this man of vigorous virtue to be the two greatest moral dangers of the nation, and he set his face like a flint against both. Our lesson tells of the obstacles he met, and how he overcame them, bringing both the religious sentiment of the people and the force of civic law into enthusiastic support of Sabbath observance.

Verse 15. In those days. During Nehemiah's second term as governor. Saw I in Judah. Most conscientiously and closely did he supervise his tiny satrapy. Treading wine presses. Wine was a staple product of Palestine. The manner of extracting it from the grape was simple. Ruins of "presses" are everywhere in the East, each of which consists

of two huge vats or tanks, the upper vat large enough to hold whole vinefuls of grapes. In this the grapes are trodden, and the juice flows into the lower vat. Such labor was exhilarating. The wine pressers danced upon the grapes, holding themselves by hanging straps as they circled round each other. The work, being rhythmical, was accompanied by singing. It was all in the open air, in the balmy days of the delightful Palestinian atmosphere, and no wonder that such exhilarating exercise became almost a synonym for hilarity. To tread grapes on the Sabbath was grossly to violate the Sabbath law of Exod. 20.8-11. **Bringing in sheaves.** Grain of all sorts gathered from surrounding fields. It was usually threshed within the city walls for fear of robbers. **Lading asses.** The Revised Version here supplies the word "therewith." Some of these donkeys bore heaps of grain, others skins of wine, great baskets of grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens; for the Sabbath was no longer kept, and the people who should have been in the temple worshipping God were, in spite of their recently renewed covenant, pushing their secular business on the holy day without a blush. **I testified against them.** With the authority of a great office and the earnestness of a sincere soul. **In the day wherein they sold victuals.** When and where he saw the crime, then and there Nehemiah denounced it, without waiting for legal forms.

**16. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein.** Men of Tyre were Phœnicians, who, like modern Jews, only to an even greater degree, were the world's merchants. That a colony of Phœnicians had established itself in Jerusalem was in itself an excellent fact, making for increased prosperity. But Tyrians did not worship Jehovah; Baal was their god and Ashtoreth their goddess, and Jewry had had more than enough of their licentious influence. **Brought fish.** Probably by rapid messengers from the seacoast; but much of the fish sold in ancient Jerusalem was "preserved," like the sardine of modern commerce. **Sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah.** Tyrians might be expected to sell on any day; but it was shocking that Jews would buy on the Sabbath. Had their exile, then, taught them nothing?

**17. I contended with the nobles.** Because the common people naturally followed the nobles' example. Those who are shocked by the Sabbath-breaking of the common people today have need to rebuke the untitled nobles of our land, the stockholders and managers of great corporations. **Evil thing.** Sabbath-breaking is always evil. It breaks one of the Ten Commandments and opens the way for all sins. It

tends to the enfeeblement of the body, to the overstrain of mind, and to the debasement of soul. It has very direct and very evil secular effects, slowly demoralizing society, enslaving the weaker classes, and tending at once to greater financial expenditure and to lower wages. All lovers of mankind, whatever their creed, agree as to the value of a weekly rest day; and God says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

**18. Did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city?** The very ruins that they had been rebuilding were reminders of the punishment that God had inflicted upon the nation for its sins, of which Sabbath-breaking was one of the chief. **Ye bring more wrath upon Israel.** And poor Israel could not stand much more. Its national existence was narrowly saved by Nehemiah, Ezra, and the later prophets.

**19. When the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark.** A beautiful picture of the twilight hour, and as definite a statement of time as could be made in an age when watch and clock were unknown. The hours of daylight were divided into twelve equal portions, which, of course, were longer at one period of the year than at another; and the last of the twelve hours was "the hour of the darkening gates." **Before the sabbath.** Which began at sunset. **The gates should be shut.** To stay shut for twenty-four hours. So the traffic was stopped. In the open places near the gates the merchants and their customers had been accustomed to congregate. **Some of my servants set I at the gates.** Nehemiah depended on his body-guard, until public opinion grew healthier. **There should no burden be brought in.** People might come in to worship in the temple, but not to buy or to sell.

**20. Lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.** No reformer need expect that his reforms can be made practicable at once. These men spread their wares for sale outside the walls, and sold to people who lived in the suburbs as well as to citizens who came out to purchase.

**21. Why lodge ye about the wall?** Which means "Scatter! Go!" **If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you.** While crime receives sharp rebuke, it should also be met by measures of prevention. Those who persist in defying God's law and man's law should meet with stern and determined dealing. **From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.** They had at length met a reformer whose will was as strong as theirs.

**22. The Levites.** To whom sacred duties

were in general referred. **They should cleanse themselves.** Purify themselves. Go through a ritual service which would make what they did a sacred rite as well as a secular service. **Come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day.** This would relieve Nehemiah's bodyguard, and would also place the closing of

the gates on a higher moral plane. It would no longer appear merely as an act of personal preference or of public policy, but as an outcome of the national religion. And now this part of our narrative ends by a touching appeal to God, "not to any degree a prayer of self-glorification, but of faith in God's truth."

### CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

**Verse 15. In those days.** From verse 6 we learn that Nehemiah returned to the Persian capital in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes—that is, B. C. 433. This was twelve years after his first visit to Jerusalem (see chap. 2. 6). Why he returned to Shushan or how long he remained there is not stated. Our lesson of to-day finds him back again in Jerusalem in the capacity of governor of Judah, and active as ever in his great reforms. It is probable that he ended his days in the holy city. **In Judah.** Not simply within the walls of Jerusalem, but in the country around. **Wine presses.** These consisted of two vats, placed over one another, the upper one large and shallow for the grapes, and the lower for the juice. These vats were often stationary, excavated in the solid rock. From pictures on the Egyptian monuments we see that in that country also the grapes were crushed by treading, just as in Judea. **Bringing in sheaves.** Fearing the depredations of thieves or robbers, the sheaves were often brought within the city walls to be threshed. This custom obtains to this day. **I testified.** The expression is somewhat obsolete; warned or protested would be a better rendering of the Hebrew. **In the day wherein they sold victuals.** This phrase is a little obscure; it probably means that he warned them on the spot not to engage in Sabbath traffic. Some, however, understand that Nehemiah protested on the day when these goods, brought into the city on the Sabbath, were sold.

**16. Men of Tyre.** Tyre was one of the chief cities of Phœnicia. The Phœnicians were great traders. As they lived close to the sea, it is quite natural that they should bring fish as well as many kinds of wares. It is very probable that there was a Tyrian colony in Jerusalem at this time. **The children of Judah.** The Jews living in the country around Jerusalem, the capital. **And in Jerusalem.** Under the very eaves of the temple, the last place on earth where the Sabbath should be desecrated. And in Jerusalem! The very thought must have crushed Nehemiah. Something like the triumph of the liquor party in a town full of Christians.

**17. I contended with the nobles.** With

the aristocracy, or what we should call the higher classes. Wherever Sabbath or temperance laws are violated it will be found that "the leading men of the town" do little to enforce them. This explains failures at our elections in the interest of good government.

**18. Did not your fathers thus.** Did they not break the Sabbath? (see Jer. 17. '3 ff. and Ezek. 20. 13.) Take warning therefore from their fate. **Did not our God bring all this evil upon us.** Sabbath desecration leads to all kinds of evil. It helped to enslave the Jews, it made them subject to a foreign rule, and added much to their misery. So in our day. The Sabbath-breaker has little or no communion with God. Thus his moral, his spiritual nature becomes dwarfed. The animal in man is developed at the expense of the soul. "Sabbath desecration is the surest road to ruin," whether personal or national. Sabbath observance is the best agency for wiping out crime of every kind. **Ye! ye bring more wrath.** The more enlightened a sinner is the greater his responsibility and the more certain his downfall. Woe be to the careless Christian who helps break down the Sabbath and its glorious privileges.

**19. When the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark.** Literally, "when the gates made a shadow." The Jewish Sabbath began with sunset of the previous day (our Friday evening); hence in speaking of the day in Gen. 1 the word "evening" precedes "morning." So also in Exod. 12. 18 and Lev. 23. 32. **Gates should be shut.** He made it as difficult as possible to violate the Sabbath law. It is the duty of all lawmakers to make it as hard as possible to do wrong and as easy as possible to do right. **Some of my servants.** His own trusted men, persons in whom he had faith. These were to watch at the gates so as to see that no merchandise or burdens of any kind could be brought in.

**20. So the merchants . . . lodged without.** The Sabbath-breaker was quite as enterprising then as now. He went as far as he could. If he could not sell within the gates, he might perhaps do some business without. He stationed himself at a point where he could tempt the weak.

21. **Then I testified against them.** Nehemiah was not to be baffled nor to be discouraged. Having succeeded on the inside, he now extends his conquests. **I will lay hands on you.** Will use force and drive you away. A few more Nehemiahs would be very helpful in every State in the Union to-day. **From that time forth came they no more.** When lawbreakers are made to believe that the authorities are in earnest they are not apt to keep on defying the law. That is the reason the British law is more respected than that of the Romans.

22. **And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves.** The Levites were set apart for religious work; it was therefore eminently fit that they should help in maintaining Sabbath observance. They were, however, first of all to purify themselves by some religious ceremony for this additional work. Those engaged in any work for God need constant purification. This applies to the ministry as well as to laymen. **Remember unto me.** We find the same expression in verse 14, and also in chap. 5. 19. Remember what I have done, and reward my efforts.

### Thoughts for Young People. Concerning Sabbath-keeping and Sabbath-breaking.

1. *Man needs the Sabbath as a day of rest for the overtaxed body and mind.* Numberless evidences demonstrate the need of man for periodical rest. Beasts and machinery require it also, and last longer when the Sabbath is kept. Children can healthfully study for only five days in the week; and adults can healthfully toil with brain or muscle for six. Society should insist on the keeping of the Sabbath as one of the necessities for the good of the commonwealth.

2. *Man needs the Sabbath as a day of worship for the spiritual nature.* Without communion with God our souls shrivel up; and, while it is a blessed fact that communion with God is no more limited to certain hours than it is to certain places, we still need to have some time set apart for his worship exclusively.

3. *We must expect that those who make money by desecration of the Sabbath will oppose its sacredness.* It always has been, always will be so.

4. *We must not make ourselves responsible for and accessory to Sabbath-breaking by dealing with Sabbath-breakers.* We must not only discountenance, but also speak out against, those who would violate the Sabbath. We must not only have laws for the Sabbath, but personally attend to their vigorous and regular enforcement.

5. *We must make our crusade against Sabbath-*

*breaking not an occasional raid, but a steady, settled, determined warfare.* "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Satan's workers are persistent in evil; we should be as determined in good works.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

The most distinguishing outward thing between the Hebrews and the people of other religions around them was the observance of the Sabbath. This does not mean that the other nations did not observe some stated religious days. There is no evidence that the non-Hebrews had any conception of these religious days as days when they should cease from their daily toils; and though in Assyria and Babylon, where the Hebrews had been in captivity, some acts were not performed on their holy days, it was because these days were considered unlucky days, just as some superstitious people in Christendom think it unlucky to begin any journey or business on Friday. There are tablets of the time of Asshur-banipal, say B. C. 650, which show what days of the month were unlucky days. These are not strictly the seventh days of the month. They included the nineteenth day, as well as those days of which the multiple is seven, but on none of these was there interruption of the ordinary labor of the other days.

The Phœnicians would certainly not regard the Hebrew injunction to cease from labor on the seventh day, and so would bring fish from the Mediterranean as usual. The Hebrews had felt not only the competition of other nations in Palestine during these years, but the very example was contagious, and the agriculturists came to make it a market day, when they carried their "sheaves" or other agricultural products to Jerusalem. The Hebrews had been the "depressed" class, conquered and out of responsibility for the administration of the regulations of the city. Now all this was changed. Nehemiah had been appointed governor; he could make the laws; he did declare this Sabbath rest from ordinary occupation. The idolatrous people were not disposed to change their commercial customs of trading on a day which to them was like all other days. It required a severe object lesson to teach them that the Hebrew Sabbath law had now become the law of the land, and hence he locked them outside the city at sunset on Friday, and when he found the people inside the city would go outside on the Sabbath to traffic with these people he threatened to arrest the traders who gathered outside the walls on the Sabbath to carry on their business on that day. It was a

great kindergarten lesson to Hebrews and the idolaters in the Bible doctrines underlying the Sabbath.

### By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

*Need of Sabbath rest.* *Youth's Companion* has this note: "Scientists say that telegraph wires are better conductors on Monday than Saturday because of Sunday rest. It is a well-proved fact that human beings profit by a weekly rest day."

Lord Beaconsfield said: "Of all divine institutions the most divine is that which secures a day of rest for man. I hold it to be the most valuable blessing ever conceded to man."

Fifty leading men of England spoke into a phonograph utterances which are to be repeated in fifty years. Mr. Gladstone said: "I owe my life and vigor, through a long and busy life, to the Sabbath day with its blessed surcease of toil!"

*Sabbath-breaking is demoralizing.* A Boston street-car official, testifying in court, once said, "It is impossible to get honest men and keep them honest and make them work Sundays."

*A modern Nehemiah.* When the directors of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company met one Sabbath morning in a hotel in Chicago, and sent word to Mr. Charles G. Hammond, the superintendent of the road, that his presence was required, he sent back word by their messenger, "Six days in the week I serve the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord my God, and on that day I serve him only." Instead of discharging him, the directors were sensible enough to see that in Mr. Hammond they had a man who was simply invaluable. But a weaker man would have obeyed those men rather than God.

"*The Sabbath was made for man.*" In 1886 a thousand carpenters of Berlin petitioned the German chancellor for protection against Sunday work. At a Socialistic congress held at Ghent, in Belgium, 1886, one of the chief demands was for Sunday rest. In Holland, also, workmen are even now making a desperate effort for emancipation from Sunday work. In La Crosse, not long since, the Norwegians formed a Law and Order League to enforce the Sunday laws. They had lost their Sabbath rest and gained nothing in return. Every act of the workmen favoring Sabbath recreation "rivets the collar of Sunday labor more tightly around their necks."

Christians tunneling from one side of the mountain for the glory of God, and workmen tunneling from the other side for their own good, meet at the fourth commandment, which is

found to be as closely related to the nature of man and the necessities of society as any other of the Ten Commandments.—*W. F. Crafts*

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

I wish my class would make a thorough Bible study of this question of the Sabbath. There is nothing upon which the mind of the people seems so much confused. It is generally admitted that the keeping of one day in seven for rest from labor is good, and everyone who works hard through the week feels it a great wrong to be defrauded of it. But when the question touches individual gain, convenience, or pleasure, the opinion seems to be that a laborer has no right to Sunday rest if his employer demands that he shall work.

As to how the day shall be kept by those who do not work even Christians seem at sea, tossed about by the example and spirit of the society in which they chance to be. Now, what God says is suited to every age and to all sorts and conditions of men. To obey his commands is safe; to disobey is at our peril, no matter what men think or say. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," is as positive a commandment as "Thou shalt not steal." One was not given exclusively to the Jews any more than the other. The moral law in the Ten Commandments is based upon principles essential to the welfare of the whole human family. God said he gave these commandments that it might be well with us and with our children forever. If it is well for society that one should not rob or murder another, it is equally well that the Sabbath should be kept in the way God means it to be. He says, "Six days shalt thou labor; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." This settles it, then, beyond any matter of opinion, that it is wrong to keep up the six days' work on the seventh. He understands the machinery of hand and brain which he himself made, and he says it must have rest. If we break his law, we soon find it is not "well" for us.

As to how the day shall be kept, aside from the matter of labor, one cannot prescribe for another the details of conduct. We get puzzled and astray by teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. But the word of God is clear. Those who study and love it learn how to keep this day in a way to make it a delight—the blessing which God intended it to be. In that beautiful psalm of praise which we read in the ninth chapter of Nehemiah the priests sang of the love and care of God in the dividing of the sea, the pillar of cloud and fire, the manna, his good

spirit given to instruct them, good statutes and commandments, and the making known to them his holy Sabbaths. Strange that we should look upon this sweet gift of God as a burden when he meant it for one of our best blessings. Read the twelfth chapter of Matthew and the sixth of Luke, where Jesus, by the Scriptures, by reason, and by a miracle, shows the true spirit of Sabbath-keeping. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, good to your body, your mind, your soul; good to the body, mind, and soul of others. You can bring everything to the test of this principle and settle very clearly what is right to do or not to do on Sunday. But you must be fair and honest. You must consider the relative importance of the needs of your body, your mind, and your soul, remembering that the soul must have spiritual nourishment or it will die; and be careful that in all Sabbath-keeping you love your neighbor as yourself, for the Lord of the Sabbath says, "Go thy way and learn what this meaneth; I will have mercy and not sacrifice." In a certain market there were to be found baskets of fruit honest in measure and perfect in quality; but they could never be found on Monday, because the farmer who sold them would not gather his fruit on Sunday. A good Sunday conscience is a good market conscience, and can be trusted to make an honest trade.

#### The Teachers' Meeting.

Note the time and period in Nehemiah's life when this lesson appears. . . . State the various instances of Sabbath-breaking mentioned, and the various classes of people whom Nehemiah held responsible for them; the measures taken for the protection of the Sabbath; the motive which inspired them; the characteristics of Nehemiah shown in this lesson. . . . In the class give account of the institution of the Sabbath; reasons why and purposes for which we need a Sabbath; the most common forms of its violation at the present time; what we can do to maintain it; how it may be made happy as well as holy. . . . I. The Sabbath Broken. The motive of the Sabbath-breakers in old Jerusalem was desire for gain. As long as some men can make money by breaking the Sabbath they will do it. Give examples of similar conduct from the same motive at the present time. II. The Sabbath Kept. (1) Nehemiah took notice of its desecration. He did not consider that what is everybody's business is nobody's business, but made it his business to do right. (2) He spoke to the leaders of society and the men in charge first of all. Every citizen has an influence; let him exert it for righteousness. (3) He based his appeal upon a sure foundation, the law of God. (4) He caused the laws to be

enforced that were already on the statute book. (5) He was persistent in his efforts. . . . Take Nehemiah as an example of faithfulness in official position. Hewas at once governor of Judah and mayor of Jerusalem, and he used his power to make Judah a model province and Jerusalem a model city.

#### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Strains of music often greet me.  
O day of rest and gladness.  
With joy we hail the sacred day.  
Safely through another week.  
This is the day of light.

Softly fades the twilight ray.  
Welcome, delightful morn.  
Hail, holy morn.  
The Lord of Sabbath let us praise.  
We leave the world of care.

#### Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.

KEEP	MY	DAY
WHY?	HO	HOW?
MAN'S	L	REST
DIVINE	Y	WORSHIP
NECESSARY		DOING GOOD

He that is holy hath commanded the Sabbath, and as such we should keep his day. Draw answers as to how and why the Lord's Day should be observed and his commandment concerning it kept. It is one of the universal gifts of God to man, a divine institution, without which life loses its vigor. Its proper observance is necessary to our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The Sabbath was made for man, that we may rest from the toil of the week and worship the Lord our God. It gives us opportunity to go about doing good, ministering and witnessing for Christ. Wherever the sanctity of the day is profaned let us set ourselves, like Nehemiah, to restore its right use and meaning.

#### Library References.

BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

The literature of the Sabbath question is large, and the best books have been indicated here before. Cox, *Literature of the Sabbath Question* is exhaustive, but needs to be brought down to

date. The best book on the history of the Sabbath that I have found is by J. Hamilton, of Edinborough, entitled *Our Rest Day*. Crafts, *The Sabbath for Man*; Gillilan, *The Sabbath; Eight Studies on the Lord's Day*, and Briggs, *The Sabbath*, are among the very best.

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK OF BIBLE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS: Ver. 15, The wine press, 690.

SERMON ON THE LESSON.

Verse 18.—Anonymous, "First of All, the News," *The Homiletic Review*, August 1891, p. 185.

LESSON XI. LESSONS IN GIVING.

[Dec. 10.]

GOLDEN TEXT. God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9. 7.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read chapter 1; also 2 Cor. chapters 8 and 9.]

Mal. 1.6-11 and 3.8-12. [*Commit to memory chapter 3. 10.*]

6 A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.

8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor: will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

10 Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for naught? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for naught. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

11 For, from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

REVISED VERSION.

6 A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say,

7 Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar. And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is con-

8 temptible. And when ye offer the blind for sacrifice, it is no evil! and when ye offer the lame and sick, it is no evil! Present it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee? or will he accept thy person? saith

9 the LORD of hosts. And now, I pray you, entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he be accept any of your persons? saith the

10 LORD of hosts. Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors, that ye might not kindle fire on mine altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the LORD of hosts.

8 Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In 9 tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye the whole tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the

12 LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you happy: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.



**Time.**—About B. C. 433. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

### Home Readings.

- M.* Lessons in Giving. Mal. 1. 6-11; 3. 8-12.  
*Th.* "As He is able." Deut. 16. 9-17.  
*W.* The reward. Luke 6. 30-38.  
*Th.* Christ's example. 2 Cor. 8. 1-9.  
*F.* A willing mind. 2 Cor. 8. 10-21.  
*S.* A cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9.  
*S.* Ready to distribute. 1 Tim. 6. 6-19.

### Lesson Hymns

No. 118, New Canadian Hymnal.

Let him to whom we now belong  
 His sovereign right assert.

No. 121, New Canadian Hymnal.

Saviour! thy dying love  
 Thou givest me.

No. 115, New Canadian Hymnal.

Take my life and let it be  
 Consecrated, Lord, to thee.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

#### 1. False Worship of the True God, v. 6-11.

- How should one treat an earthly father?  
 How should we feel and act toward our heavenly Father?  
 How did the ancient priests despise Jehovah?  
 Why did they offer imperfect sacrifices?  
 Why would their prayers be unavailing?  
 What kind of a giver does God love? GOLDEN

#### TEXT.

- Should we give something to every cause presented?  
 What rules should determine our giving?  
 How may the giver receive a blessing?  
 What is the advantage of giving through a benevolent society?

What is the advantage of giving direct to the individual?

#### 2. Curses, or Blessings? v. 8-12.

- How was God robbed?  
 What were the people to bring into the storehouse?  
 Why were they to do so?  
 What blessing was promised to them if liberal?  
 Why would other nations call the Jews blessed?  
 What had they spoken against God?  
 Are wicked men prosperous?  
 If so, why?  
 Why should good people continue good?  
 What is the value of testifying to God's goodness?

When shall we most clearly discern between the righteous and the wicked?

### Teachings of the Lesson.

1. We should offer to God that which costs us something. He is worthy of this. The offering should be without flaw, and he who makes it should aim to be holy.

2. A covetous spirit is not pleasing in the sight of God. To give is to receive. A blessing comes to a liberal soul, though it may not be in the form of money. A dollar is not everything, and many dollars cannot bring peace of mind.

3. God's gifts are royal in their quality and abundant in quantity. Take the right means to secure them. When you receive them be grateful, and then in prayer ask for more, and receive, "that your joys may be full."

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. False Worship of the True God, v. 6-11.

- How can we honor God?  
 With what did the Lord of hosts charge the priests?  
 Did the priests know that they "despised" God's name?

How did they "despise" it?  
 Why did people offer polluted bread? [It was most easily got.]

Why did they offer lame and sick animals as sacrifice? [They were cheaper.]

Did these priests and people treat God as well as they treated their governor?

Are we as reverent and loving toward God as we are toward some of our fellow-beings?

Would God hear the prayers of these irreverent priests?

Will he hear our prayers if we are irreverent?  
 What does God say about his name among the Gentiles?

How can we make "pure offerings" unto God?

#### 2. Curses, or Blessings? v. 8-12.

- How had Judah robbed God?  
 How many had been thus guilty?  
 What was the penalty on them?  
 What does God command in verse 10?

What sort and degree of blessing were conditioned on obedience to this command?

What material blessings are promised?

How would others regard Judah?

Does God need our gifts to-day?

Does he want them?

How does he regard the cheerful giver?

### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That the Lord wants no gifts which we do not value?

2. That the prayers of those who shut their

hearts and pockets against God are not answered?

3. That our best blessings are conditioned on "bringing in the tithes?"

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Malachi?

When did he live?

Of what had he much to say? **Of the coming of Christ.**

Where is the prophecy of Malachi? **It is the last book of the Old Testament.**

To whom did God speak through Malachi? **To the people of Israel.**

Who had led the people back from their idol worship? **Ezra and Nehemiah.**

What had they now grown to be? **Careless and forgetful.**

Whom did they forget? **God, their great King.**

What did God say about their offerings? **That they offered the blind, and the lame, and the sick.**

By whom was this forbidden? **By God, in his law.**

What kind of an offering should we give? **A pure offering.**

How may we rob God?

What will he do if we give him all? **He will pour us out a rich blessing.**

### THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What was the divine accusation against the Jews? **"Ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible."**

2. In what had they robbed God? **In tithes and offerings.**

3. What was promised to them if liberal? **"I will pour you out a blessing."**

4. Whom does God love? **GOLDEN TEXT: "God loveth a cheerful giver."**

### NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

13. In what estate did God create man?

God created man in his own image, after his likeness, in knowledge and true holiness.

Genesis 1. 27. God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

### THE LESSON OUTLINE.

#### The True Sacrifice.

#### I. A FILIAL OFFERING.

*Son honoreth his father.* v. 6.

Now...the sons of God. 1 John 3. 2.

Led by the Spirit...sons. Rom. 8. 14-17.

#### II. A PERFECT OFFERING.

*Polluted bread...the blind.* vs. 7, 8.

Blemish...not sacrifice. Deut. 15. 21.

Present your bodies. Rom. 12. 1.

#### III. A PRAYERFUL OFFERING.

*And now...beseech God.* v. 9.

Continue in prayer. Col. 4. 2.

Come boldly unto the throne. Heb. 4. 16.

#### IV. A FREEWILL OFFERING.

*Among you...for naught.* v. 10.

His voluntary will. Lev. 1. 3.

Gave their own selves. 2 Cor. 8. 5.

#### V. A GENTILE OFFERING.

*Great among the Gentiles.* v. 11.

Come from the east. Matt. 8. 11, 12.

Of all nations. Rev. 7. 9.

#### VI. A LIBERAL OFFERING.

*Bring ye all the tithes.* chap. 3. 8-10.

With thy substance. Prov. 3. 9.

Give...shall be given. Luke 6. 38.

#### VII. AN ACCEPTED OFFERING.

*Pour you out a blessing.* chap. 3. 10-12.

They shall revive. Hos. 14. 4-7.

Thou shalt be fed. Psa. 37. 3.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

With the prophet Malachi comes to an end an order of writers and speakers more wonderful, perhaps, than any other class of contributors to any literature. We know little concerning Malachi. His name means Angel, and has given rise to strange conjectures, such as that he came direct from the heavenly world, and, on the other hand, that the name is simply a descriptive title and not a proper name. There is no reason, however, on which to found such conjectures. Malachi was evidently a plain Jew who lived in Nehemiah's day, and became a prophet only after the temple had been restored, for he makes no mention of the work of its restoration, while he alludes to its regular services. Last Sunday's lesson recorded the second coming of Nehemiah from Persia. Not

until after that, probably, did Malachi prophesy. His prophecies, as we have them in the book that bears his name, are in three series, the first of which is a stern rebuke to the priests who had been unfaithful to Jehovah; the second, a rebuke of Jewish intermarriages with idolatrous heathen; and the third, a warning of the coming of the God of judgment, to be preceded by the coming of the Messiah. Our lesson is taken from the first section, and therefore is addressed directly to the priests, though unfaithfulness on the part of the common people is throughout assumed. Formality alone can never please God, nor worship that is merely conventional. God demands at least as much sincerity from us as we demand from each other. If we will meet God's claim, he will pour out most liberal blessings upon us.

**Verse 6.** Malachi begins his prophecy with a startling dialogue. "I have loved you," God says. The priests ask, "Wherein hast thou loved us?" The Lord answers by comparing his dealings with Esau, Jacob's brother and the father of Edom, with his dealings with Israel. Edom was doomed to permanent overthrow, but "your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel." Then come the words of our lesson. **A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master.** If you are my sons, **where is mine honor?** If you are my servants, **where is my fear?** This appeal is to the **priests**, the professionally holy men, who, God says, **despise my name.** But they ask, **Wherein have we despised thy name?** A question which, if honest with themselves, they were well able to answer.

**7. Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar.** Bread stands generically for food. The sacrifices of the temple were of fruit and flesh meat, but included "showbread," which, however, was placed upon the table, not upon the altar. The priests were given elaborate instructions for the acceptance or rejection of sacrifices brought by the people, a portion of which was regularly to be used as food for the priests. Blind, lame, and sick animals were excluded. But these priests had accepted sacrifices which the spirit, if not also the letter, of the law had excluded, and what could not be either profitably sold or eaten by themselves they had contemptuously offered to God. They had thus degraded their holy office for gain. **Wherein have we polluted thee?** That is, **Wherein have the sacrifices been polluted?** **In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible.** Not that the priests used these words, but that their actions spoke louder than any words.

**8. Is it not evil?** Whatever may be true of relations between human beings, it is manifestly wrong to give to the Lord's cause on earth, whether represented by ancient temple or modern church, contributions that are of no service to ourselves. "Cheap religion, costing little," is rejected by God. It was a wise man who said that God never despises the widow's mite, but always despises the miser's mite. **Offer it now unto**

**thy governor.** The upright, downright, straightforward man who was now governor, Nehemiah by name, was not grasping; he had repeatedly refused tributes which by all custom belonged to his office; but he was a just man, and "matter-of-fact," and he could not easily be imposed upon. He would have made short work with an insincere or presumptuous petitioner. **Treat God the way you treat the governor.**

**9. Now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us.** All orientals, going to a governor or judge for favors, take gifts with them. But, coming to God for spiritual blessings, these hypocrites bring stale bread and lame lambs and blind heifers. **This hath been by your means.** Read this sentence with the accent on "hath." Extraordinary as is this arraignment, it is true. **Will he regard your persons?** A question that has the force of its negative answer—No.

**10. Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for naught?** Utterly venal are ye all. But the best recent translators and commentators give us another meaning, which is well expressed by Dr. Smith: "Better that sacrifice should cease than that such offerings should be presented in such spirit. Better no worship at all than such false worship. Is there no one to close the doors of the temple altogether, so that the altar smoke not in vain?" The close of the verse gives a similar thought in strong affirmations.

**11. For.** Because. **From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles.** If you are bound to be hypocritical, there are at least plenty of sincere worshippers elsewhere. You bring the sick, and the blind, and the lame for sacrifice, but outcast Gentiles will presently sacrifice their lives for my sake. The time is coming, and "now is," when the people of Judah and Jerusalem will no longer be the exclusive worshippers of God, but whoever "worships him in spirit and in truth." **In every place incense shall be offered unto my name.** Incense is symbolic of prayer. **A pure offering.** The offering of humble and contrite hearts. **My name shall be great**

among the heathen. The gradual fulfillment of this prophecy has proceeded far enough to greatly strengthen our faith in its complete fulfillment.

[The charge made in the first division of the lesson, which we have already studied, was irreverence and negligence in sacrifices. Now, after a lengthy parenthesis, the prophet speaks of how God is dishonored by tithes.]

**8. Will a man rob God?** Could one dare to plan such robbery? Yes. Nebuchadnezzar had done so when, destroying the temple, he took to his own city its consecrated treasures. But surely priests would never think for a moment of such a crime, and we can hear their indignant voices asking, **Wherein have we robbed thee?** The answer is, **In tithes and offerings.** The "tithe" was an assessment of one tenth of all increase of property. Whatever source of wealth a man had in flocks, in vineyards, or herds, in merchandise or manufactory, two tenths of its profits were officially collected, one tenth being spent for the expenses of government and the support of the poor, the other going directly to the maintenance of religious worship and the support of the Levites and priests. The "offerings" were the sacrifices which the law required the people to make.

**9. Ye are cursed with a curse.** In robbing God they had expected to enrich themselves, but their crime had brought poverty.

**10. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.** Into the treasure chambers of the temple, which had been so empty that the public service had languished and rich men had used the chambers as dwelling-rooms. It is time now to call attention to the bearing of all

this on our present religious life. These treasure chambers answer to the missionary treasuries and local church funds of our time. And those who to-day refuse to contribute toward God's cause rob God as really as did the ancient priests. **Meat** is inclusive of all the tithes, which were paid in kind. **Prove me now.** If you were rich, you could not perhaps so well prove me; but you are poor, and all your efforts to make yourselves rich at the expense of God have failed. Now try the other way. **Herewith.** By bringing all the tithes. **Windows of heaven.** A poetical term for the sources of rain, the coming of which would renew fertility and national wealth. There are spiritual windows of heaven which we can open by fidelity in God's service, and so bring down showers of grace. **There shall not be room enough to receive it.** Rather, not room enough to store it. The heaven-sent treasure shall be "pressed down, shaken together, and running over."

**11. I will rebuke.** I will hold in check. **The devourer.** The locust, which was already devastating their farm lands. **The fruits of your ground.** All manner of vegetable growth. **Neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time.** Vegetable disease had caused the grapes to rot on the vines or to fall without ripening.

**12. All nations shall call you blessed.** Surrounding people shall hear that you are under the special care of the Lord. These promises are typical of God's dealings with individuals as well as with nations. **A delightful land.** Pure souls always dwell in a land of joy, peace, and pleasure. The sinner cannot help envying the saint whom he pretends to despise.

### CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

**Verse 6. A son honoreth his father.** This is the universal law. Honor thy father is one of the Ten Commandments. Perhaps no commandment is better observed by the Semitic people than this one. The oriental may not love but will, as a rule, respect and honor his father. That God is the father of Israel is clearly taught in the Old Testament, (see Exod. 4. 22; Deut. 32. 6; Isa. 63. 16, etc.), but that he is the father of all mankind is a doctrine of the new dispensation. **O priests.** The leaders of Israel. Those whose sole work was to teach the people love and obedience to Jehovah. He speaks to them so that they may speak to the people at large. Nothing harms the Church more than an unconsecrated ministry, or the Sunday school more than the careless, half-hearted officer or teacher. **Wherein have we despised thy name?**

"Thy name," or "the name of Jehovah," is an expression common to Old Testament writers; it is equivalent to God himself. This very question of the priests reveals a hardness of heart, a callousness difficult to understand. It is an awful state to be in when one becomes so engrossed in worldly affairs, so lost to real piety, as not to feel and know when he is deficient in his duties to God. Let this question of the faithless Jewish priests teach each one of us to examine his heart.

**7. Ye offer polluted bread.** Bread is used here, as often, for food in general. The reference is, therefore, not to the showbread (Exod. 25. 30), but to various sacrifices, which are frequently styled "the bread of God" (see Lev. 6. 1-8). The offerings are called polluted, because they are ceremonially unfit, maimed, or imperfect, as further specified in the next verse. **The table**

of the Lord is contemptible. The priests may not have used these very words, but their real thoughts are revealed by the poor quality of the offerings brought by them to the altar of Jehovah, which is here called his table (compare Ezek. 41. 22).

**8. When ye offer the blind, etc.** The offerings enumerated here were prohibited by the law (see Lev. 22. 19-25), therefore not pleasing to God. **It is no evil!** The Authorized Version incorrectly reads this as a question. The words are evidently explanatory and ironical. Let the teacher read them that way and see how forcible they are. **Present it now unto thy governor.** To the Persian satrap or pasha. Not to a king, or the highest official in the state, but to a subordinate ruler of a province. No subject would dare bring such a present to the lowest oriental official. **Accept thy person?** Literally, "lift up thy face." The petitioner is conceived of as coming with bowed head and covered face into the presence of the Lord. To lift up the face is to be assured of favor, or the granting of the request.

**9. Entreat the favor of God.** This again, as the context shows, is ironical, as much as to say, Yes, yes, go on; offer your defective sacrifices, and in your perfunctory way pray for the people. **This hath been by your means.** Literally, "from your hand this has been;" that is, this is the way in which you have treated God. You priests are directly responsible for present conditions. **Will he accept any of your persons?** Will he, for your sakes, simply, because you are priests, show favor? Or will Jehovah answer such priests as you are?

**10. Oh that there were one, etc.** The Authorized Version is misleading. The verse has no thought of the selfishness or mercenariness of the priests, unwilling to perform the least service, even the closing of a door, without due compensation. We have here rather a well-known Hebrew idiom, expressive of a wish that some one should close the temple door and thus put an end to such heartless worship. "Better a temple closed than a temple profaned."—*Peroume*. **In vain.** For Jehovah cannot accept such worship. **An offering.** The Hebrew word used refers generally, but not always, to vegetable offerings. Here it is used for sacrifice of any kind.

**11. For from the rising of the sun, etc.** From one end of the earth to the other. **In every place incense is offered unto my name.** Incense formed an important part in the Jewish ritual. It was typical of prayer (Psa. 141. 2). The verbal form rendered "is offered" is participial. The participle is used for both present and

future. It would therefore be quite as correct to translate "will be offered." It is not probable that Malachi regarded the worship of the devout heathen around Israel as pleasing to Jehovah, and for that reason it is better to regard the words as prophetic of what was to take place than of what was actually occurring (see Deut. 32. 17 and 1 Cor. 9. 20). **My name is great.** The Hebrew has no verb in this clause. So it would be just as proper to employ the future as the present, as in the Authorized Version and the margin of the Revised Version.

**8. Will a man rob God?** Rob him on whom we depend for all blessings. **Ye rob me.** Literally, "you are robbing me." The pronoun rendered "you" is emphatic in Hebrew. **Tithes.** Tithing, or giving one tenth of one's income, especially in products of the field and stock, is of very ancient origin, and was well known to the ancient Semites long before Israel became a nation. For the Jewish system of tithing see Lev. 27. 30-33; Deut. 14. 22-29. We are not living under the Mosaic dispensation, nor are we bound by its legislation, but we ought to give no less than the ancient Jew. Let each one give conscientiously, systematically, as God has prospered him. Withholding from God is always a proof of unbelief. A stingy church member has little or no communion with God. The millionaire who gives his thousands may be just as penurious as the poor man who dislikes to give his pennies.

**9. Ye are cursed.** God still rules. He can send or withhold the rain, the sunshine, the locust and the destroying insect.

**10. Storehouse.** The rooms in or near the temple to receive the offerings of the people (2 Chron. 31. 11 ff.; Neh. 10. 38 ff.). **Windows of heaven.** Through which the rain (Gen. 7. 11) and other blessings (2 Kings 7. 2) descended.

**11. The devourer.** Literally, "the eater." That is, insects of any kind, such as are destructive to the growing grain and the orchard fruits.

**12. Shall call you happy.** Your prosperity will attract the attention of the surrounding nations (Deut. 33. 29). **Delightful land.** Land of happiness, and pleasing to everybody.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### On Tithes and Offerings.

It is safe to assume that he who calculates how small a sum will do to give to God's cause has vitiated his gift. "God loveth the cheerful giver."

**1.** The giving of tithes was binding on the Jew. One tithe, or tenth, was given to the government and to the poor, for to the Jewish mind nothing within the limits of Israel was secular. A second

tithe was given directly to support the services of the sanctuary. The ancient Jew lived under the law, when every detail of their lives was ordered, and therefore they were told just how much to give.

2. *The Christian should give not less than a tenth for God's cause.* But we must remember that the government now is secular, and attends by taxation to its own needs, including institutions for the amelioration of want, so that the Christian's tenth should include all that is given for the maintenance of the cause of the Lord, and for human suffering, which we relieve for his sake.

3. *Christian giving should be proportionate,* and that for the simple reason that the Christian religion is a religion of the heart. There are no prescriptions in it. If we say the Christian should give a tenth, it is simply because he owes more to his Lord than did the most blessed Jew of ancient times. Nevertheless, it is well to give systematically.

#### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The tithing system of the Hebrews seems to have permeated all Eastern nations of the ancient days. Dr. Lansdell, the well-known Siberian traveler, and a scholar of eminence, in a paper read before the Victoria Institute, said that the giving of the first fruits obtained in Egypt as early as B. C. 2500. The domain of the gods formed one third of the whole country; in Ptolemaic times it was one sixth. He offered uncensored testimony to show that in Babylon, Nabonidus, Belshazzar, and Tiglath-pileser paid tithes, as did many others, more than four thousand years ago. The Phœnicians sent a yearly tithe of their increase to their mother city, Tyre.

Dr. Lansdell traced tithe-giving in Europe from B. C. 1300 through Greek and Roman history, treating of the customs of the Pelasgi, Samothracians, Sicilians, Gauls, Britons, and German Saxons. He adduced evidence that the Greek and Roman sovereigns, Spartan generals, Roman dictators, lawyers, farmers, Greek shepherds, sailors, merchants, and others down to the lowest classes in the scale of civilization thought it right to offer a portion of their increase to the gods. Examples were furnished from Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Aristophanes, Demosthenes, Plutarch, Varro, Julius Cæsar, Pliny, and other authors.

Professor Hommel, a member of the Institute, confirmed the illustrations of Dr. Lansdell and specifically illustrated the accuracy of the events recorded in Abraham's time, about B. C., 2000 when the Bible record shows that a tithe was given. He also testified to the universality of the custom among the ancient nations.

In times of religious declension the people neglected to pay tithes. Hezekiah in his day, and now Malachi in his time, called the people to repent of the religious relapse which was implied in their lack in tenth tribute. Malachi says they must bring all the tithes into the "storehouse." The first and the second temple were each provided with chambers for storing the substance brought as tithes. Under Mosaic law the fruits of the ground and cattle were subject to tithing. That of the fruits and that of the grain need not be paid in kind. The owner might sell these at the market value and pay in money, adding one fifth to the receipts from sales. But the tenth of the sheep and cattle could not be sold; they must be actually brought to the temple. These animals were not presented according to one tenth of the value of the whole flock, for the flock or herd could not be parted with in market. The custom was to pass the whole of them in line and mark every tenth one for the Lord. When the Israelites were in the wilderness it was a simple thing to carry their tithe to the sanctuary. When they entered the land of Canaan many of them would reside at a distance from Jerusalem, and they would find it more difficult actually to deliver it at the sanctuary; but it was still insisted on, and of course this contributed to unify the several tribes as one nation. They were obliged, also, to eat the tithe of grain, wine, and oil as an offering before the Lord, in Jerusalem. One modification, however, was allowable if the distance was very great. They might sell the tithe at home and buy an equal amount in Jerusalem, thus not saving any money, but saving the trouble and cost of transportation of the actual article.

Every third year the tithe might be laid up in the town where the person lived, and the Levites, the widows, and the fatherless might go to the storehouse and eat. This was known as the "tithing year," but between two Sabbatic years this was intermitted twice. They were obliged to make a solemn oath that they had been exact in their observance of this third-year tithe.

#### By Way of Illustration.

*Versé 6. Fatherhood of God.* It is hard to believe that the infinite God, who holds the seas in his hand and controls the stars in their courses, should care for each individual soul. Sitting in the central aisle of the main building at the World's Fair, I watched the crowds of people pass hour after hour, and I said: "How hard to believe that God knows about all these people—there are so many! Can it be that he knows and cares about all the little things in their lives?" And the answer was: "It is a proof of

God's greatness that he cares for the tiny animalculæ that swim in a dewdrop, that he provides for birds and flowers. How much more will he care for the souls and bodies of his children—dreaded made in his own likeness! "

*Versé 10.* It is the experience of individuals and nations that God is generous to those who are generous to him. The richest nations to-day are the most benevolent nations. The Gospel, when accepted by heathen peoples, immediately creates new physical needs; a demand is made for clothes, household comforts, farming implements, books, manufactures; and a nation that has entered a heathen land with Christian truth may follow it up with trade. A new avenue is thus opened for commerce.—*E. S. Tead.*

The flowers which give the most honey have their pollen carried most widely by the bees, and thus are sown far and wide and are carried to new fields to be perpetuated there.

The Tenth Legion was formed in 1896 in New York city. Cæsar's valiant and trusty Tenth Legion rendered unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. This Tenth Legion takes for its motto, "Unto God the things that are God's." It may easily grow more famous in history than that splendid Tenth Legion of the Romans and prove infinitely more useful and noble. It is an enrollment of Christians whose practice it is to give to God for his work not less than one tenth of their income. In two years it had ten thousand members.

#### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Do you ever think when you bring—or do not bring—offerings for missions, church expenses, or any good work for which money is needed, that God is as much pleased or displeased with the way you do it as he is with the way you pray or live every day? Somehow we seem to think giving money to carry on God's work is a matter wholly apart from spiritual religion, an affair of our own that we may attend to or not, as we please, and that the heartiness of our gifts has nothing to do with the favor of God toward us nor the sincerity of our love to him. God is the infinite Giver. We are like him only when we give, according to our measure, with the same love and liberality. When we all get right views of the duty and privilege of giving there will be no anxious cry of "deficit" in any of the good works which are making the world happier and better. Just think of ten thousand people in India ready to give up their idols and be baptized in the Christian faith, waiting because there is not money enough to support men and women who could teach them, though very little is required for each one! Think of churches

groaning under debt, afraid to undertake any broad and beautiful work for the perishing world lest they cannot pay their own current expenses!

There is something wrong in our principles and methods. With noble exceptions Christians are selfish and sinful in the measure and spirit of their giving. In this Christian age Malachi's stern words are in point. He says neither love nor fear moved the people to a sense of their obligations. God was their Father, yet they did not honor him nor return his love in any worthy way. He was their Master, yet they did not fear to withhold what they really owed. And if they did bring a gift, it was something they could not use themselves or would not very much miss; and instead of feeling it very much a pleasure they said, "Behold, what a weariness it is!" He says they would not insult an earthly ruler as they dishonored God with their mean, unworthy offerings. Isn't there something personal for us in this? What about the dollar, or ten, given grudgingly for the Lord's work, and the two or three dollars spent for some luxury we could as well do without? We are naturally selfish; generous giving is a Christian grace. Two little children were playing with a Noah's ark. When they brought the animals out after the flood they built an altar for sacrifice, as Noah did; but they took a lamb that had lost one of its legs to lay on the altar, because it could not walk in the procession!

Study the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians to see what sort of giving pleases God. If there is the loving heart and willing mind, he does not ask how large or small is the gift. A poor leper once brought a few coins to help others poorer than himself. "I hope God will see my little gift," he said. God did see, for that poor man with a grateful heart is the sort of giver that he loves.

#### The Teachers' Meeting.

Make a word-picture of Judaism in the times of Malachi.... Consider how men robbed God then, and consider those who rob him now: (1) Swearers; (2) Sabbath breakers; (3) Neglecters of worship; (4) —; (5) —.... Explain the tithes.... The rewards of liberality in giving as here shown.... How men murmured against God.... Who are like them at the present time?... A picture of "those that feared the Lord".... Their example to us.... How honored and rewarded.... Sins rebuked by this lesson.... Duties urged.... How are righteous and wicked distinguished here?... How hereafter?... What God expects of men: (1) Reverence. The reverential fear of God is the basis of all true wor-

ship. (2) Sacrifice. The essence of religion is the offering of one's best to God. (3) Prayer. The best of God's gifts to men is the privilege of calling upon him at any time, in any place, for any need. (4) Service. It is not wrong to receive a salary for work done whether that work be sacred or secular, but it is wrong to refuse to do good without pay, and God would rather have no worship than corrupt worship. (5) Universal religion. To the ends of the earth shall be the knowledge of God. (6) Giving. We should regard our gifts to God not a burden, but a privilege.

#### OPTIONAL HYMN.

When I survey the wondrous cross  
Love divine, all love excelling.  
Just as I am, thine own to be.  
Take my life and let it be.  
O God, my youth is thine.  
Saviour! thy dying love.

All the promises of Jesus.  
Jesus, only Jesus.  
My body, soul, and spirit.  
All for Jesus.

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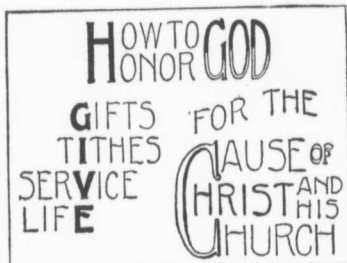
**TITHES.**—Sayce, *Patriarchal Palestine*, page 175. Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. vi, pages 86, 522. Hengstenberg, *Kingdom of God in the Old Testament*, vol. i, page 231. *Systematic Beneficence*. Wray, *Fun and Finance*.

#### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

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Verse 12.—Ormiston, William, "Our Country; a Delightful Land," *The Homiletic Monthly*, October, 1888, page 335.

#### Blackboard.



God loves and blesses a cheerful, willing giver, whose motive is to honor him, and not merely to seek the praise of men or to conform to a regulation. Let us consider how we may honor God. Do we render to him that which is his due, the gifts of real self-sacrifice, which are more acceptable than whole burnt offerings? Neither should we withhold tithes of our substance, and the reasonable service which our Master asks. The consecration of our lives demands that we give all we possess for the cause of Christ and his Church, to be at his disposal.

### LESSON XII. FRUITS OF RIGHT AND WRONG DOING. [Dec. 17.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Gal. 6. 7.

#### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Compare Mal. 3. 1-6; also Matt. 11. 7-15.]

**Mal. 3. 13 to 4. 6.** [Commit to memory verses 16-18.]

13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance,

#### REVISED VERSION.

13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein have we 14 spoken against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his charge, and that we have walked 15 mournfully before the LORD of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are built up; yea, they



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and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

1 For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Remember ye the law of Mo'ses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Is'ra-el, with the statutes and judgments.

5 Behold, I will send you E-li'jah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

16 tempt God, and are delivered. Then they that feared the LORD spake one with another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the LORD, and that

17 thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in the day that I do make, *even* a peculiar treasure; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son

18 that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that

1 serveth him not. For, behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them

2 neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall.

3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I do make, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Remember ye the law of Mo'ses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Is'ra-el, even statutes and judgments.

5 Behold, I will send you E-li'jah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite

the earth with a curse.

**Time.**—About B. C. 433. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

#### Home Readings.

M. Fruits of Right and Wrong Doing, Mal. 3, 13 to 4, 6.

Th. The mystery explained, Psa. 73, 1-20.

W. Folly of rejecting God. Job 22, 12-27.

Th. God knows his own. 2 Tim. 2, 19-26.

N. Certainty of judgment. Eccles. 8, 1-13.

S. Remember! Deut. 4, 5-13.

S. Sowing and reaping. Gal. 6, 1-10.

#### Lesson Hymns.

No. 175, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lo! the fields are white for harvest,  
Ready is the golden grain;  
And the Master's voice is calling,  
Calling off, *hoas!* in vain.

No. 170, New Canadian Hymnal.

The sheaves are falling, swift closeth the  
day  
I hear a voice calling, it seemeth to say,—  
O! soul, hast thou gleaned well to-day?

No. 176, New Canadian Hymnal.

In the harvest field there's work to do,  
For the grain is ripe and the reapers few;  
And the Master's voice bids the workers trow:  
Hed! he call that he gives to-day.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. A Stern Arraignment, v. 13-15.

What had the people said about serving God?

Why did they think it vain to serve him?

Why did they say that proud people were happy?

What is meant by the phrase "tempt God"?

Why do the wicked prosper?

Why are good men afflicted?

2. A Precious Promise, v. 16-18.

About what did the Lord's people speak?

When the Lord hears does he hear only?

What does he to those who fear him?

How will the Lord spare them?

When shall we most clearly discern between the righteous and the wicked?

3. The Refining Fire, v. 1.

What is the day spoken of in verse 1?

Who shall be destroyed?

How complete will the destruction be?  
What attribute of God calls for the punishment of evil doers?

**4. The Sun of Righteousness, v. 2-6.**

Who is the Sun of righteousness?  
What is the healing his presence brings?  
What is the effect upon those who experience it?  
What law was to be remembered? Where given?

Did Elijah the prophet appear a second time?  
Who was like him?

Give the GOLDEN TEXT.

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

1. Lack of faith makes the service of God seem of little profit. It fills us with doubt about the divine providences. It makes one live for the present and undervalue the future.

2. They who fear the Lord with holy childlike fear have to commune with others concerning him. The art of Christian conversation should be cultivated.

3. There is a divine "book of remembrance," and the prayer should be, "May my name be written in it!" God will not, he cannot, forget his own. He may for wise reasons permit them to suffer for a season, but he will gather them safely. Then will they know that righteousness is both a sure and an eternal reward.

**QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.**

**1. A Stern Armaignment, v. 13-15.**

How had the people spoken against God?  
What did they say concerning God's service?  
What change of sentiment had come concerning the proud? And the wicked?

**2. A Precious Promise, v. 16-18.**

What did they who feared the Lord do?  
What should all do who fear God?  
Who heard and remembered their words?  
What precious promise is given them?  
What further promise is given them?  
Is this promise to us as well as to them? Heb.

6. 12.

What knowledge is given to those who fear God?

**3. The Refining Fire, v. 1.**

There is a day coming for which all other days were made; what shall it be like?

What shall the proud and the wicked be like?  
How thorough shall be their destruction?

**4. The Sun of Righteousness, v. 2-6.**

Who have hope in the coming of the Lord?  
What is it "to fear his name?"  
What has Jesus declared himself to be? John  
18. 12.

What does the Sun of righteousness secure to godly men?

What promise of spiritual prosperity is given them?

**Practical Teachings.**

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That public opinion is not always safe?
2. That God loves those who think and talk of him?
3. That God's blessing is ever on the good and his punishment on the wicked?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

Why could Malachi see such wonderful things? **Because God showed them to him.**

Why were they all written in this book? **So that we might see and know them too.**

What two kinds of people are there in the world? Why does it often seem to us that bad people have a good time? **Because we cannot see the end.**

Who can see the difference between the righteous and the wicked? **The one who knows and loves God.**

What does God say the wicked are like? **Stubble.**

What is stubble good for? **To be burned up.**

What shall rise upon the righteous? **The Sun of righteousness.**

Who will tread down the wicked? **The good.**

Who is promised to come before Christ?  
**Elijah or John the Baptist.**

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

(For the entire school.)

1. What did the ancient doubters say? **"It is vain to serve God."**
2. What did those do who feared the Lord? **They spake often one to another.**
3. How will God spare his own people? **"I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son."**
4. Recite the GOLDEN TEXT: **"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."**

**NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.**

14. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein God created them?

Our first parents did not continue in the estate wherein God created them, but fell therefrom by sinning against God.

Romans v. 12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that they have sinned.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

## A Lesson of Contrasts.

## I. WORDS CONTRASTED.

## 1. Words of Unbelief.

- (1) *It is vain to serve God.* v. 14.  
Will not do good. Zeph. 1. 12.
- (2) *We call the proud happy.* v. 15.  
Ungodly who prosper. Psa. 73. 12.

## 2. Words of Faith.

- (1) *Spake often . . . to another.* v. 16.  
Hear all ye that fear God. Psa. 66. 16.
- (2) *The Lord hearkened.* v. 16.  
Knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
- (3) *They shall be mine.* v. 17.  
I . . . know my sheep. John 10. 14.

## II. CHARACTERS CONTRASTED.

1. *Righteous . . . that serveth.* v. 18.  
Shall be well with him. Isa. 3. 10.
2. *The wicked . . . serveth not.* v. 18.  
It shall be ill with him. Isa. 3. 11.

## III. DESTINIES CONTRASTED.

## 1. The Wicked.

- (1) *Proud . . . shall be stubble.* v. 1.  
The fire shall try. 1 Cor. 3. 13.
- (2) *Day . . . burn them up.* v. 1.  
Depart . . . into everlasting fire. Matt. 25. 41.
- (3) *Shall be ashes.* v. 3.  
As the mire of the streets. Mic. 7. 10.

## 2. The Righteous.

- (1) *Sun of righteousness.* v. 2.  
That was the true Light. John 1. 9.
- (2) *As calves of the stall.* v. 2.  
Fear not, little flock. Luke 12. 32.
- (3) *Ye shall tread down.* v. 3.  
Saints shall judge the world. 1 Cor. 6. 2.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The fervid exhortations of Malachi were uttered—according to the best conjectures—not very long after Ezra and Nehemiah had reformed the Jewish nation. And a truer use of the word “reform” could hardly be made than by its application to the work of these two men. Jointly they rebuilt the capital city of their nation, rearranged its sacred Scriptures, reorganized its political life, refortified its frontiers, revolutionized its morals, revived its old traditions, and wrought out of hopeless ruins a new and noble nation as distinct from the kingdom of their fathers as it had been distinct from the patriarchal life of their more remote ancestors, and yet essentially the development of both these. After Ezra and Nehemiah it was impossible that the old semi-idolatrous condition could ever again prevail; but while the new forms could never be displaced, the new life soon flickered and gave signs of dying. God sent Malachi to declare the bald truth in an age of hypocrisy and hollow service. As we have already seen, his preaching was not altogether a protest against evil. He points out the path of duty, and promises God’s blessing upon faithfulness to the covenant. He proclaims the coming of One who shall restore Israel to its former glory. The advent of the forerunner, who was to appear with all the suddenness and severity of an Elijah, was soon to be followed by One greater, who was to be the King himself, refining the precious metal of the nation, and casting away the base. In the coming dawn the Sun of righteousness should arise, bringing life and healing and peace in every ray. Thus does the Old Testament end with the promise of the New.

**Verse 13. Your words have been stout against me.** They had murmured against God’s government. Their rites were religious, but their spirit was that of practical atheism. Every class of the Jewish nation shares in Malachi’s denunciation—priests, scribes, rulers, and common people. **What have we spoken so much against thee?** This question reminds one of the question of Matt. 25. “When did we?”

**14. It is vain to serve God.** It is useless for us to give up anything for God’s service. **What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance.** They had sordid conceptions of their religion, and wanted to bargain with their

God as if he only were another customer. Shocking as the thought is, it is an effort to cheat whenever we offer to God what would be discounted by a fellow-being. This the Jewish priests and people had done in the useless sacrifices already noted, and in other ways. The word “ordinance” refers generically to the prescriptions and restrictions of the law. **Walked mournfully.** On days of fasting, showing sorrow for sin.

**15. Now we call the proud happy.** God had just said that they who obeyed him would be happy, but “We see,” insisted these impatient arguers, “that it is the men who go their

way in this world, disregarding their God and their fellows, who are happy." Their minds are set on secular success only, and so they say, **they that work wickedness are set up, made prosperous and successful; they that tempt God are even delivered.** Directly contrary to what the prophet states. Probably, as a matter of fact, the Samaritans and Edomites were in better prosperity than the Jews, and it required spiritual insight to understand that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." These men "judged by the outward appearance;" the prophet and his followers endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

**16. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.** Dr. G. A. Smith substitutes "Such things" for "Then," and makes the whole verse refer to a blessed future which shall answer all problems of the present. The Lord keeps before him the names of those who talk and act on his side in this world, and "when the day of his action comes they shall be separated from the wicked and spared." It is, according to this view, an Old Testament statement of the truth contained in the parable of the wheat and the tares. Amid the universal neglect and scoffing there were found a faithful few who still revered and obeyed God. They held their little gatherings for mutual encouragement, and frequently conversed together concerning the interests of true spiritual religion. **The Lord hearkened.** Their words of comfort were heard not only by each other, but also by the listening ear of God. Christians should oftener talk with each other upon spiritual themes. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I." **A book of remembrance was written before him.** God is figured as doing what the old kings of Persia did, registering the names of such subjects as had distinguished themselves for loyalty to his cause. "Every godly attention and duty is kept in remembrance by God as punctually and particularly as it written in a book," wisely says old Matthew Henry. **That thought upon his name.** His name stands for his character. Thinking upon the character of God purifies one's life.

**17. Jewels.** Literally, "peculiar treasure." The marginal reading of the Revised Version is the preferable form of this verse: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day wherein I do make a peculiar treasure." **I will spare them.** Have for them special compassion and regard. It means much more than merely spare, as we see from the next clause, **as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.** We are God's greatly beloved children.

**18. Then shall ye return, and discern.** The more one studies the providence of God the more he sees that God is on the side of the righteous. **Between the righteous and the wicked.** The complaint had been that God made no distinction between his foes and his friends.

**1. Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven.** Or furnace. A figure of speech which comes readily to those reformers who foresee a day of test and punishment. So John the Baptist warns the Jews of the sifting and the burning. **All the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly.** Those who antagonize God openly, as well as those who, without defying him in words, defy him practically by disobedience. **Stubble.** The stalks and leaves left after reaping. **Leave them neither root nor branch.** Another phrase adopted by John the Baptist.

**2. You that fear my name.** Those mentioned in verse 16. **The Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.** The wings of the sun are its beams. God, especially as represented in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the sun of the moral and spiritual world, the source of all light. **Grow up as calves of the stall.** Gambol as calves. Ye shall overflow with happiness.

**3. Ye shall tread down the wicked.** Godliness shall triumph over all the evil forces of the world. **They shall be ashes under the soles of your feet.** Their evil doings shall be held in universal contempt. **In the day that I shall do this.** The day of the perfection of Christianity.

**4. Remember ye the law of Moses.** That is, obey it. **Horeb.** Sinai.

**5. I will send you Elijah the prophet.** Our Lord repeatedly interpreted this promise as referring to John the Baptist. Elijah was the great prophet of the earlier day, as John was of the later. **The great and dreadful day of the Lord.** The time when God should come in judgment. It is prophesied more in detail in Matt. 25. It began in our Lord's day, and included the awful overthrow of Jerusalem.

**6. He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.** "The new era must be prepared for by a return to the sincere use and true understanding of the old, and that which was the essence of the old must not grudge to develop into new forms, and attain its designed end and fruit. Not by getting rid of the law, but by fulfilling it, is preparation made for the grace and reality that come by Jesus Christ."—*Marcus Dod.*

## CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

**Verse 13. Your words have been stout against me.** These words are addressed to rebellious and skeptical Israel, to those who could not see the advantage of serving Jehovah according to the prescription of the law. The word rendered "stout" has often the meaning of "harsh," or "presumptuous." **Wherein have we spoken.** So accustomed had they been to find fault with God's moral government that they had really lost sight of the sinfulness of their conduct. Wretched is the man who cannot distinguish between right and wrong.

**14. It is vain to serve God.** As much as to say: "We have tried it, but it does not pay. Wicked men prosper; we suffer adversity." The relation of godly life to prosperity and happiness, or of suffering to sin, has ever troubled the superficial. But he who looks below the surface cannot fail to see that it is never vain to do right. **His charge.** The laws of God, especially concerning tithes and sacrifices. **Walked mournfully.** With bowed head and long faces, in sackcloth and ashes. We probably have a reference here to the numerous fasts which sprang up after the exile.

**15. We call the proud happy.** The "we" is emphatic, as much as to say: Whatever Jehovah or his prophets may say, we call the proud happy; yes, those who are indifferent to the ordinances of God prosper more than we. **Are built up.** Are prosperous and successful in all their enterprises. **Are delivered.** Though wicked yet flourish, though constantly tempting God, they are always delivered from the consequences of their sin. The prosperity of the wicked is still a stumbling-block to those who are not rooted and grounded in faith. Blessed is he who can see the superiority of spiritual over temporal blessings, and is able to say, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

**16. Then.** After the skeptical words spoken by the ungodly in the preceding verses. **Spake one with another.** The faithful few, who in the hour of trial and adversity, and who, amidst all the scoffing, had kept their garments white, encouraged one another. This should teach every discouraged person to counsel with God's people. There are many noble hearts, with grand experience, that are willing to help and direct in the hour of gloom. And then, should all these fail, let us never forget the great burden-bearer. Every loyal Methodist knows full well the value of religious conference, as found in class and prayer meeting. **The Lord hearkened.** God never deserts his children. He hears not only the great crowds, but also the

faithful remnant. "When two or three are gathered in my name" (Matt. 18. 20). **Book of remembrance.** The Persians, as we learn from Esth. 6. 1 f., and the classic writers, kept a book wherein was inscribed the names of those who had rendered real service to the state and king. We also find such references in the cuneiform inscriptions, as well as in the Bible (see Exod. 17. 14; Psa. 69. 28; Dan. 7. 10; Rev. 20. 12). **For them.** That is, to their benefit. **Thought upon his name.** Meditated upon his character and attributes, his infinite goodness no less than his infinite righteousness. The easiest way to serve God is to think of him all the time.

**17. They shall be mine.** They shall be my property. **In the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure.** Let the reader compare the two versions. They are quite different. Most commentators prefer the Revised Version, which makes "peculiar treasure" the predicate of "they shall be," and not the object of "make." "The day," on the other hand, is the direct object of make, as in chap. 4. 3. The first part of the verse might be rendered thus: "They shall be my peculiar treasure, saith Jehovah of hosts, in the day which I am preparing." The Jews were called Jehovah's peculiar treasure in Exod. 19. 5 and Deut. 7. 6, and the prophet evidently had these passages in mind. The day is the day of God's visitation, whether the day of death or of the last judgment, or, indeed, the day of any severe conflict. **I will spare them.** Will be gentle and merciful to them, will not treat them as the wicked (see chap. 4. 1).

**18. Then shall ye.** The scoffers, who professed their inability to see the value of piety, those who had murmured against God's government. **Ret... and discern.** This is a Hebraism, for "you will again see [the difference]." People may pretend that they can see no difference between the fate of the good and the wicked. All they have to do, however, is to observe, and to read history. Sooner or later men everywhere recognize the justice of God and the reward of piety and right conduct.

**1. The day cometh.** The day already referred to in chap. 3. 17, and again mentioned in verse 3. **It burneth as a furnace.** A favorite expression for great heat. **All the proud.** The haughty, presumptuous sinners; not this class alone, however, but also all that **work wickedness, shall be stubble.** Unsubstantial and worthless, utterly unable to withstand the fire of God's wrath. **Root nor branch.** Apparently more enduring than stubble, but equally helpless in the hour of judgment.

**2. The sun of righteousness.** Most commentators regard this passage as Messianic. The title, if applied to Christ, is especially appropriate; for he is the light and life of all mankind. With the advent of Christ a new era dawned upon the world, the era of righteousness and love.

**3. And ye shall tread down the wicked.** This results from the coming of Christ. Wickedness will now gradually cease. Righteousness must triumph and will majestically step over the remains of every kind of evil.

**4. Remember the law of Moses.** Had they kept the law, their misery would have been less. The law of Moses is the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible. Whatever modern critics may say regarding Moses and the law, Malachi evidently believed that the law was given by Moses, and so did Christ and the apostles. **Which I commanded unto him.** Unto Moses. Such language does not favor the view that what is called the Mosaic law was invented by priests and others centuries after the time of Moses.

**5. Elijah the prophet.** The Jews expected the return of Elijah (see Eccles. 48. 10 and Matt. 17. 10). Our Saviour interpreted this passage as referring to John the Baptist (Matt. 17. 12).

**6. Shall turn the heart of the fathers,** etc. The old patriarchs will once more have pleasure in their descendants. So, also, will the children turn back to the law of Moses and to the pious teaching of their ancestors; they will once more delight in the good old ways. **Lest . . . curse.** Unless there is a return to God, the earth must be cursed. The word translated "curse" here is the same that is often used of the extermination of the Canaanites (see Lev. 27. 29; Deut. 2. 34; 7. 2). The verb is rendered "to devote."

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### God's Jewels.

1. *God's jewels are those who are faithful,* even in a time of general unfaithfulness. Malachi lived when many had lost faith, when sinners stood in high places, when the wicked monopolized most of the good things of earth, and men called the proud happy. But God's special treasure was not in the wicked rich; it was in those who were faithful. It is so to-day.

2. *God's jewels have communion with each other.* Sorrow brings human souls together. Blest is the tie that binds in sacred love the hearts of those who have one endeavor—to hasten the coming of the kingdom of the Lord.

3. *God's jewels are known to the Lord.* The world may not know them; the Church may not know

them; sometimes they may doubt each other; some, so weak is human nature, may doubt themselves, but God will make no mistake. He will never forget them.

4. *God's jewels will shine in honor in God's great day.* When sinners hide in terror,

"Like the stars of the morning  
His bright crown adorning,  
They shall shine in their beauty,  
Bright gems for his crown."

5. *God's jewels shall endure when God's enemies shall be destroyed.* When the fire burns up all wickedness the Sun of righteousness shall gently shine on these.

6. *Who are God's jewels?* Those who keep God's law, listen to God's messengers.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The triumph and reward of goodness in the final adjustments of the government of the world are among the things which the human heart through all the generations steadfastly clings to; even when metaphysical speculations befog people with a Buddhist or Hindu philosophy they cannot stamp out the heart faith. It will assert itself, however inconsistent with the metaphysics or the misleading philosophies. And thus, too, with the irony of "fate," which dominates the teaching and much of the practical life of all the Bible lands. The Moslem may believe that inside the frontal bone is written in advance everything he will do in his life, but alongside of this belief is that of unwavering confidence that he will be rewarded for his good doings and punished for his evil deeds. The stoutest pantheism is still matched by and accompanied by faith in rewards and punishments. Even the nihilism or atheism of the worst form of Buddhism accepts the cheerless faith in consequence coming after every cause. No atom of energy can be ungained from its corresponding result. As good trees produce good fruits, good deeds produce good results, sooner or later, in this state of existence or in some other.

There is no solution in the non-Christian religions of the suffering of the righteous or the prosperity of the wicked. They are always puzzled over the "proud" being "happy" and the wicked being "delivered," and yet here again the heart cannot be drowned; it will assert its faith in the final triumph of the good.

In verse 16 there is reference to a "book of remembrance," written before the king; in other words, a book of chronicles. The reference is, doubtless, to the records of the Persian kings. These were not mere dry records, as in our courts,

but historical and current events written in finest rhetoric and in poetical rhythm. They are written in this way down to the present time. The great epic of the Persian nation is "Ferdusi," which is in the Persian language and peoples their Homer. No book has fascinated all the Semitic nations of the East more than this great poem. It is quoted in every bazaar in the western half of Asia. Boys, men, scholars, rulers, the rich and the poor, delight in it. But it is only chronicles from the beginning of history down to the tenth century. It was a composite production, weaving as much as the author pleased of the productions of former poets into it. It was finished A. D. 984.

Now, to return to what is said of the Lord keeping a book of remembrance. We must not merely think of this as a faithfully kept account, dry, unimpeachably correct annals, deposited in a recorder's office for testimony, nor merely as a book from which judgments can be awarded. It is more. It is the Lord's delight, the pleasing poem of each faithful soul, the grand epic of the goodness of the world, which Jehovah himself ponders as one might a poem which worthily narrates the doings of a beloved.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 13-15.* We are not able to promise every man who becomes a Christian that he will get rich. If we could insure this, we should have to stake off church pews like claims in the Klondike and guard them with Gatling guns. There are already too many Christians "for revenue only." But so much as the prophet affirms we may safely affirm—that righteousness tends to success and happiness in life. The Book of Job is designed to meet the perpetual objection of the ungodly that the believer is religious because he is able to convert his religion into some marketable commodity. Not a few good people when they meet adversity at once inquire, "What have I done that this should come upon me?" Nothing, perhaps, and yet the disposition to ask the question shows the need of the affliction that faith may rebuild itself on a surer foundation.—*W. E. Barton.*

*V. 16.* A large part of our wisdom and strength and hope comes from conferring with others. Two are often more than twice one. Several parts in music add harmony to the melody. Several pieces of wood together make a brighter and steadier flame than the same pieces could separately. Dr. Holmes says that he sometimes talked to others in order to clarify and crystallize his own thoughts.—*Moulet.*

*V. 17.* *God's people are his jewels.* As jewels

are taken out of the sand or common rock, because they are so precious, so God has taken his children out of the world. As jewels are shaped and polished most carefully and tenderly (it often requiring years to perfect a diamond in the rough), so God treats the souls of his people. He takes the utmost pains to keep them safely from all harm and from being stolen from him. He will cause them to shine in glory in his crown.—

#### Select Notes.

*V. 18.* *A standard of living.* One day when I was with a painter I saw on his table some high-colored stones, and I asked what they were for. He said they were to keep his eye up to line. When he was working in colors his sense of color was insensibly weakened, and by having a pure color near him he brought it up again, just as the musician by his test-fork brings himself up to the right pitch. In order that our work may be acceptable we need first of all to be tuned, borne up to the ideal of a pure and lofty life.—*Beecher.*

*Verses 1 and 2.* The day of wrath and burning to the wicked is to those who fear God the rising of the Sun of righteousness with health-giving beams. The same cloud that is darkness to the Egyptians gives light to God's people. In Harriet Beecher Stowe's little story, *He is Coming*, the message arrives that Jesus is coming that night. In a home where the husband is a worldly old miser he cries out in alarm: "I do not want him to come. What will all my gold be worth then? I have no desire to see him. I wish he would never come. I do not know him." The old miser's wife, whose life has been filled with good deeds, is full of joy. She longs to see the Jesus whom she has served. To know that Jesus is coming is the best news she could hear.

"*The Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings.*" A scientist was looking at the sunlight as it shone brightly for two hours down into a filthy street, and he said: "I can just see consumption germs dying by the thousand in that sunlight; there is no such germ destroyer as sunlight. It is true that the sun has healing in his wings." The sunny side of a house and of a hospital is the healthiest, as has been proven by experiments. So Jesus heals the diseases of the heart. In his presence the healthful moral nature revives.

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Should I never speak again to my class, I could wish my voice might linger with them long after my lips were silent, saying, "Read, read your Bible." Sit down like a little child with the great Teacher and hear what he says in his word. This is such a deceiving world. Its appearances are de-

lusive, its voices misleading. Opinions, beliefs, theories—what are they worth? They change with the climate, environment, education, associations of men. "Tossed about by every wind of doctrine" well describes human thought upon questions concerning vital issues of life here and hereafter. There is no point of view which takes in the whole horizon, except the word of God. No one but God sees the end from the beginning. He only can tell us how things began with us; what relation one bears to another, and how they will come out in that future far beyond our sight. "It makes no difference what you believe if you are sincere," say some. But it does make a vast difference. You may sincerely believe you are planting sweet alyssum in your garden and find you were mistaken when mignonette comes up. The same that you plant will inevitably come up, no matter what you believe about it.

This is one of God's unchanging laws in the world of matter and spirit. It is a law of sweet reward for the good, and terrible in punishment of evil. If we go by the sight of our eyes, it does look as if it might make no difference at the last whether we have served God or not. David was puzzled when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. He came very near losing his faith and taking the world's way of enjoying life without regard to consequences. We are all in danger from the same temptation. Men become rich and the world honors them without asking how they made their money. A girl is popular in society although her intimate friends know she is selfish and insincere. The proud are happy, and even they that work wickedness are set up. What profit is there in being good or doing good?

Sometimes we see the folly of this sort of reasoning in this present life, not always. But God assures us in his word that a day is coming when the difference between good and evil will be clear. Turn to the twentieth chapter of Revelation and read from the eleventh to the fifteenth verses. "Standing before God"—what a thought! The light there will be intense, searching. Things will look just as they are. There will be no hiding, nor calling sin by soft names. No one will say, "I never did that," or "I did not mean that." The judgment will be not according to what we profess, nor what men think, nor even according to what God chooses to say of us; it will be out of the things written in the books which we are now writing every day, by what we are doing, saying, thinking, by what we really are. Do not let us be deceived. There is an eternal difference between right and wrong, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The Lord sees the difference now, and a book of remembrance is written be-

fore him for those who fear him and think upon his name. Is your name written there?

### The Teachers' Meeting.

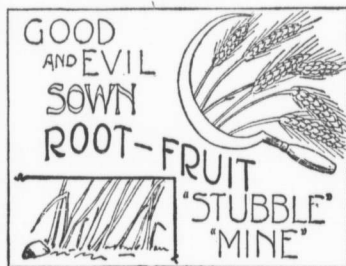
Call attention to the time when Malachi preached, as indicated in his book.... Show from this lesson the sins which were then prevalent, as (1) Formality; (2) Sorcery; (3) Immorality; (4) Swearing; (5) Oppression of the poor; (6) Neglect of God.... Show how these same sins are characteristic of this age.... Next present the teachings of the lesson concerning the messenger, and show how the traits here named belonged to John the Baptist.... Impress the truth that every teacher should be a John the Baptist, preparing the way for Christ.... How is the second coming of Christ foreshadowed in this lesson?.... Present the requirements of this lesson upon the followers of God.... Also the privileges of those who are on the Lord's side, especially as contained in the latter part of the lesson.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS

Come, thou almighty King,  
There's a wideness in God's mercy.  
When Jesus comes to reward his servants,  
Lord, I care not for riches.  
Called to the feast of the King are we.

Lord of the worlds above,  
Jesus, thou everlasting King.  
Glory be to God on high.  
Sowing in the morning.

### Blackboard.



Whatever is sown of good and evil will take root and grow until the harvest. The fruit will then declare the true nature of every life, and we shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Those who think it vain and without profit to serve God shall be as stubble; and they that fear the Lord and think



upon his name, those whom he shall garner in that day when he makes up his jewels. Though we sow in tears, we shall reap in joy, if we are among the righteous, of whom he says, "They shall be mine."

#### Library References.

Consult the references on the last lesson.

PREMANN'S HANDBOOK; Ver. 16, The book of remembrance, 627. Chap. 4, ver. 3, Treatment of enemies, 628, 869.

#### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Chapter 3, verse 17.—McVay, Homer, "The Lord's Jewels," *The Homiletic Monthly*, June, 1879, page 514. Leech, S. V., "The Jewels of the King," *The Homiletic Monthly*, November, 1882, page 693. Howatt, J. Reid, "A Children's Sermon, When He Cometh," *The Preachers' Magazine*, 1865, page 182.

Chapter 4, verse 4.—Wright, Rev. J. K., "The Law, its Place and Power," *The Homiletic Review*, May, 1896, page 418.

### LESSON XIII. CHRIST'S COMING FORETOLD.

[Dec. 24.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2. 11.

#### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Isa. 11. 1-10.]

Isa. 9. 2-7. [Commit to memory verses 6, 7.]

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Mid-i-an.

5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of Da'vid, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

#### REVISED VERSION.

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as 4 men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast 5 broken as in the days of Mid-i-an. For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be 6 for burning, for fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince 7 of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of Da'vid, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.

**Time.**—Probably between B. C. 760 and 700.  
**Place.**—Jerusalem.

#### Home Readings.

- M.** Christ's Coming Foretold. Isa. 9. 1-7.  
**Tv.** Prince of Peace. Isa. 11. 1-10.  
**W.** The Lord our righteousness. Jer. 23. 1-6.  
**Th.** Good tidings. Isa. 40. 1-11.  
**F.** A blessed reign. Psa. 72. 1-17.  
**S.** A prophet. Acts 3. 18-26.  
**S.** Testified beforehand. 1 Pet. 1. 1-12.

#### Lesson Hymns.

No. 304, New Canadian Hymnal.

Joy to the world! His Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing.

No. 302, New Canadian Hymnal.

Hark! what mean those holy voices,  
Sweetly sounding through the skies!  
Lo! the angelic host rejoices;  
Heavenly hallelujahs rise.

No. 303, New Canadian Hymnal.

The Gospel bells are ringing,  
Over land, from sea to sea:  
Blessed news of free salvation  
Do they offer you and me.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. The Light of the World, v. 2-5.

What was the work of the ancient prophets?  
Who were the people that walked in darkness?  
What was the light alluded to?

What does light figuratively represent in the Bible?

- Who is spoken of as the light of the world?
- Why is Jesus the light?
- Why was there so much joy in harvest times?
- What was the spoil which was divided?

**2. The Son of God, v. 6.**

- What child is alluded to in verse 6?
- Why is Jesus called the Son of God?
- Why is he called the Son of man?
- What is the nature of Christ's kingdom?
- What are some of the ways to advance it?
- How is Jesus wonderful?
- How is he the "Prince of Peace?"

**3. The Kingdom of Peace, v. 7.**

How is Jesus said to be "upon the throne of David?"

Where is his government since he was on the earth?

- What are some of the causes of its extension?
- What are some of its hindrances?
- Does truth triumph because it is truth?

What is the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christ's truth?

Will Christ ever deliver up his kingdom?

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

1. God is good, and light comes to those who are in the darkness of sin and sorrow. Let us trust in him, and live in hope. The trust which rests on his "exceeding great and precious promises" is a true one.

2. Jesus is indeed Wonderful: (1) In his nature—the God-man; (2) In his character—holy; (3) In his work—the world's salvation; (4) In his mercy—which endureth forever.

3. The kingdom of Christ is like himself, wonderful. It is unlike earthly kingdoms; more glorious than they, because unlike. It has loving subjects; it is spreading over the earth; it will not decay; its weapons are truth and prayer, and they are world-subduing.

**QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.**

**1. The Light of the World, v. 2-5.**

- What people saw a great light?
- Upon whom had the light shined?
- Who is the Light of the world? John 8. 12.
- How far has this light shined? John 1. 9.
- Of what increase without gain are we told?
- What was the measure of joy?
- What was the occasion of joy?
- What features usually mark a battle?
- How would this battle be won?
- What is John's description of the leader? Rev.

19. 11-16.

**2. The Son of God, v. 6.**

Who first told of the birth of this Son? Luke 2. 10, 11.

In what city was he born? Luke 2. 4.

What does the prophet say of this Son as ruler? By what names should he be known?

**3. The Kingdom of Peace, v. 7.**

Whose rule would this continue?

In what spirit would the kingdom be ruled?

Who would bring about this result?

What should be our desire about the kingdom? Luke 11. 2.

**Practical Teachings.**

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That Jesus is the Light of the world?
2. That Jesus is the Son of God?
3. That Jesus is the Prince of Peace?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

Who was Isaiah? **A prophet.**

What is a prophet? **One who can see things in the future.**

How long did he live before Christ came?

Whom did he see was coming to this earth?

What did he say about this world? **That it was a dark place.**

When is a heart a dark place? **When Christ has not come to it.**

How did Christ come to this world? **As a little child.**

What is true about his kingdom? **That it is growing all the time.**

Why is Jesus called "Wonderful?" **Because he could do miracles.**

What is a counselor? **One who can tell us what to do.**

Why is he called the Prince of Peace? **Because his peace can keep the heart.**

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. Who have seen a great light? The people that walked in darkness.

2. What is the Golden Text? "Unto you is born this day," etc.

3. Name one of Christ's titles. Prince of Peace.

**NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.**

15. What is sin?

Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Romans vii. 7, 8.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

## The Wonderful Kingdom.

## I. A KINGDOM OF LIGHT.

*Have seen a great light.* v. 2.

The dayspring from on high. Luke 1. 78, 79.

That was the true Light. John 1. 9.

## II. A KINGDOM OF JOY.

*Hath increased the joy.* v. 3. (Revised Version.)

Obtain joy and gladness. Isa. 35. 10.

Sow in tears....reap in joy. Psa. 126. 5, 6.

## III. A KINGDOM OF LIBERTY.

*Hast broken the yoke.* v. 4.

Truth shall make you free. John 8. 32.

Jerusalem....is free. Gal. 4. 26.

## IV. A KINGDOM OF PEACE.

*The Prince of Peace.* v. 6.

We have peace with God. Rom. 5. 1.

Peace I leave with you. John 14. 27.

## V. A KINGDOM OF GROWTH.

*There shall be no end.* v. 7.

From sea to sea. Psa. 72. 8.

Uttermost parts....earth. Psa. 2. 8.

## VI. A KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*With judgment....justice.* v. 7.

With righteousness....judge. Isa. 11. 3, 4.

A right scepter. Psa. 45. 6.

## VII. AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM.

*From henceforth....forever.* v. 7.

Shall stand forever. Dan. 2. 44.

All....under his feet. 1 Cor. 15. 25.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Isaiah lived long, long before Malachi. The tiny nation of Judah was in Isaiah's day relatively strong. God gave to him marvelous visions of the future. The scenes of coming days, like a panorama, passed before his eye. It was, as Dr. Barnes says, a tumultuous picture of battles and sieges, noise, dimness, and thick darkness. To him were given glimpses of the coming downfall of his own nation, and of that terrible exile in which Malachi's father and mother probably suffered. With prophetic power he saw the whole land enveloped in the night of sorrow. Suddenly in distant and darkened Galilee he saw the golden dawn; he saw the joy of the people; armor and weapons laid aside, peace succeeding war, the light expanding and becoming more intense, until the Sun of righteousness itself was visible. On that scene the eye of the prophet gazes intently. So closely does he see the coming Messiah, the Prince of Peace, that he describes him as already come.

**Verse 2. The people that walked in darkness.** A phrase that the people of Isaiah's time would recognize as descriptive of themselves. Mists of political uncertainty and shadows of great national crimes had darkened their sky. Egypt threatened their country on the south and west, Assyria on the north and east. Israel and Syria, most exposed to the inroads of Assyria, had in their ignorance of Assyria's strength joined forces to antagonize it. The king of Judah refused to join these allies, and, as a consequence, Syria and Israel made war on Judah. That caused a terrible national danger. "The king's heart shook, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest shake before the wind." There seemed nothing to do but to appeal to the king of Assyria, who was not slow to help, but demanded at the same time terrible pay, and the wealth of the temple and the royal palace and the independence of the nation were sacrificed. Many of the citizens were captured, war was declared by Edomites and Philistines, Judah was deserted, overthrown by strangers. Added to this political trouble was a paralysis of true religion. Nearly all sorts of false gods were worshiped. Men turned to astrologers and ghosts

instead of the true God. The temple was neglected and allowed to fall into decay. It was a dense moral darkness through which the little nation unsteadily walked, staggered, one might say, toward an unknown and dreaded future. But what is this the prophet says? They have **seen a great light.** What light? The light of hope; the promise of redemption; the hope of the coming of Immanuel. **The land of the shadow of death.** The land of the nightshade, or deathshade, of hopelessness. **Upon them hath the light shined.** A promise that doubtless had two fulfillments: at the moment to Isaiah's own hopeful foresight, centuries later by the actual coming of Jesus of Nazareth.

**3. Thou hast multiplied the nation.** He was looking through the centuries and saw the teeming millions that dwelt in the land in our Lord's day. **And not increased the joy.** This should read as in the Revised Version, "Thou hast increased their joy." **They joy before thee.** Like two classes of joyful citizens, victorious soldiers and enriched harvesters, the whole nation rejoiced in the Messiah.

**4. Thou hast broken the yoke of his burden.** Destroyed the power of the oppressor.

Throughout there is the double meaning, referring to Assyria in the first place and to sin in the second. **The day of Midian.** The time when Gideon with three hundred men overthrew the Midianites.

**5. Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise.** "All the armor of him that noisily armeth," or "every hoof of him that noisily trampeth." **And garments rolled in blood.** Every garment that is blood-stained. In short, every sign of battle; all military accouterments. **But this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.** Revised Version, "shall be for burning, for fuel of fire." That is, peace shall everywhere reign, and the only thing to do with weapons and battle flags will be to burn them up.

**6. Unto us.** For our benefit. **A child is born.** The beginning of the life of the Saviour of the world. **The government shall be upon his shoulder.** Scepters, and swords, and keys were borne upon the shoulders of dignitaries. So all government shall be vested in him. **His name shall be called.** And therefore, according to Jewish custom, his character shall be thus described. **Wonderful, Counselor.** The preferable reading is in the margin of the Revised Version, "Wonderful counselor," Guide of infallible wisdom. **The mighty God.** This

is one of many instances in which the title God is applied to the Messiah. **Everlasting Father.** Or, Father of eternity. **The Prince of Peace.** This last and greatest of all his titles explains the figures of verse 5. If wars have not ceased with Christ's advent, it is because in the hearts of his people he has not yet fully come. Over the manger angels sang, "Peace on earth." Our Lord, the King of kings, is the only conqueror who declines to be known by the success of his wars. He brings peace that passeth understanding.

**7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.** The growth of his power shall be limitless, the peace that it brings shall be limitless. **The throne of David** means government over the people of God. **To establish it with judgment and with justice.** To establish the kingdom of God on righteousness, on sincerity, on holy living. **From henceforth ever forever.** That is, from the time when the accomplishment of the prophecy was to begin, which the preceding verses show to have been the beginning of Christ's preaching in Galilee. **The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.** God's intense desire for the accomplishment of his purpose to save mankind.

### CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

**Verse 2. The people that walked in darkness.** Darkness is a very common figure in the Bible for misery and calamity, especially for mysterious suffering (see chap. 47. 5; 50. 10; 58. 10, and often). The people referred to here are those mentioned in the concluding verses of the preceding chapter. The Jews at this time were in constant turmoil, and assailed on every side (see chap. 7. 1, 2). The ever-increasing power of Assyria was extending its domain in all directions, and as one by one the petty kingdoms around Judah and Israel were subjected the outlook for God's people was becoming darker and darker. Moreover, idolatry and heathen practices were casting the shadow of their black wings over Jerusalem and Judah (see 2 Kings 16. 1 f.). **The land of the shadow of death.** That is, Palestine. The expression "shadow of death" is a Hebraism, and very misleading, since the idea of death, in the sense of separation of soul and body, is absolutely foreign to the word *tsalmaveth*. It simply means, as correctly given in the margin of the Revised Version, "deep darkness." **Upon them hath the light shined.** The people see once more signs of prosperity and peace, especially as they catch a glimpse of the

Sun of righteousness, going up with healing in its wings.

**3. Thou hast multiplied the nation.** Under the Messiah's reign the remnant of Israel is to become a great nation. **Thou hast increased their joy.** The Authorized Version gives just the opposite sense. The particle *to* in Hebrew means either "to it," or "to him," or "not;" hence the two opposite meanings. The context is decidedly in favor of the reading adopted by the Revised Version. **According to the joy in harvest.** The joy of harvest was proverbial (see Psa. 4. 7; 126. 5, 6). The feast of tabernacles, at the end of the wine-harvest, was the most joyous of all the Jewish festivals. **As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.** The division of spoils is the work of the victor after the battle, when the joy is doubly great; exultation over the treasures and booty won, as well as over the peace and victory secured.

**4. For the yoke of his burden.** The tyranny under which Israel was suffering. **The staff of his shoulder.** Either that part of the yoke which came in immediate contact with the neck or the rod used to smite the poor slave. **The rod of his oppressor.** This recalls Exod.

title God  
**Father.**  
**Peace.**  
 explains  
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2. 11 ; 5. 14, which sec. **The day of Midian.** The time when Gideon's little band routed the hosts of Midian (chap. 10. 25 ; Judg. 7. 1-23). As Jehovah, in the most unexpected manner, gave Israel victory over the immense hordes of Midian, so again, under the generalship of the Prince of Peace, he will deliver his people from all their foes.

**5. For all the armor of the armed man.** This verse as translated in the Authorized Version is not only obscure, but misses the meaning intended by the original. Let every reader therefore carefully compare the two versions. The verse simply means that arms of every kind and even the military clothes worn by the warriors—yea, everything suggestive of war—are to be gathered into a heap and consumed by fire (see Psa. 49. 9 ; Ezek. 39. 9 f.).

**6. For unto us a child is born.** The conjunction "for" at the beginning of the verse gives the reason for the burning of arms and clothing. These are consumed because a new king has come. This is the child, Immanuel, born of a virgin, promised in chap. 7. 14. **A son is given.** The Messiah is the gift of God to fallen humanity, groaning under the tyranny of sin. **The government shall be upon his shoulder.** He, being mighty to save and strong to deliver, assumes all the burdens. Every honest governor carries a mighty load. Some think that we have a reference here to some outward sign, some decoration thrown over the shoulder, emblematic of royal power. (See chap. 22. 22.) **His name shall be called.** Or, more literally, He shall call his name. The "he" may refer to God, or indefinitely to the people, like our indefinite "they." **Wonderful.** He who could deliver Israel from its foes at this critical time must be wonderful. Christ the Lord, no matter from what standpoint we view him, baffles human comprehension. His power, his influence, his humiliation, his love—everything about him is unfathomable. **Counselor.** Unerring in counsel, needing not a group of wise ministers, like ordinary rulers, to aid him in his deliberations. Whoever follows his wise counsels will never go astray. Many commentators combine these two words and read "Wonderful Counselor." And indeed this reading has much in its favor. **Mighty God.** The phrase rendered mighty God, *El gibbor*, is often used as one of God's titles. (See chap. 10. 21 ; Deut. 10. 17 ; Jer. 32. 18.) The reader is convinced ere this, that we have here a genuine Messianic prophecy. Isaiah is not speaking of a mere man, of a human king, who was about to rule over Israel. **Everlasting Father.** As a king is to protect his subjects, so a father is to nourish and care for his children. Earthly parents die,

but here is one who is eternal. **Prince of Peace.** Or a peaceful prince. One who can govern without war. To this end Christ was born. His loyal children, constituting an empire greater than any other, experience a joy and peace past understanding.

**7. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.** This great ruler is to restore order and to extend his peaceful dominion everywhere. This is precisely what has been gradually but steadily going on, since the birth of Christ. **Upon the throne of David.** This clause should be immediately connected with the preceding, for the government and peace are to be upon David's throne. **To uphold it with judgment and with righteousness.** Judgment (that is, upright, impartial decisions and just laws) and righteousness (that is, unbiased administration of these impartial decisions and just laws) are the two pillars upon which the Messiah's throne rests. **The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.** The word translated "zeal" is from a root meaning to glow, to burn, and, figuratively, to be angry or jealous. The term is often used of the jealousy of a husband against his rivals, or of God against idols, which divided the attention of his people. The love of Jehovah for Israel is so intense that nothing can withstand it. It has that power which unites his people to loyal obedience, and "consumes every opposing foe." The expression "Lord of hosts" is used to emphasize the greatness of God's power, which extends over all the armies of heaven and earth.

All but the extreme destructive critics agree that this beautiful prophecy is Messianic. No human being is described in the above verses, but one free from all the limitations of earthly rulers. The names applied to him are "names which, according to Old Testament ideas, belong to God alone—are intentionally transferred to him. This is an enigma when one considers that the prophets elsewhere jealously guard the limits between the holy God and sinful man ; and Isaiah especially insists unceasingly that all human greatness must perish and the Lord alone be exalted. The enigma is solved only in the New Testament fulfillment, when the limit is in fact broken through by the incarnation of God's son."  
 —Orelli.

### Thoughts for Young People. The Kingdom of Christ.

**1. Christ's kingdom was long expected, foreseen, and predicted.** It is of supernatural and miraculous origin and appointment. Prophets and kings desired it long, but died without the sight.

In the fullness of time the Wonderful Counselor appeared.

2. *Christ's kingdom is one of growth and advancement over the hearts of men.* Not by visible conquest, not by arbitrary overthrow of the powers of evil, but by enthronement in individual hearts has this kingdom extended itself.

3. *Christ's kingdom brings order and peace into the world.* It is founded upon justice and righteousness. Other kingdoms and republics are too often advanced by force of arms, and too often are subjected to corrupt administration; but Christ's kingdom is justice, is peace, is love.

4. *Christ's kingdom is eternal.* Of every nation in the past and in the present it may be written, "This also shall pass away;" but this has no end.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

#### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The heathen and the Moslems are constantly reinventing stories which express more or less dimly the old Hebrew ideals, like this of Isaiah's. Only two years ago (1897) the story gained wide acceptance in India that a Hindu was worshiping in a temple in Benares, when a piece of paper written in letters of gold came down to him from heaven, on which was inscribed the following: "This is a very wicked age, but soon it will end and another begin, when there will be much less sin, and a great king will come from heaven and reign a thousand years. The news of this will be spread all over the world, and whosoever believes it will be blessed, but if any disbelieve it, great harm will come to him."

Even the Druses on Mount Lebanon look for a glorious time when El Hakim shall return and his reign shall insure plenty and righteousness. The Druses believe in a tenfold incarnation of the divinity in human form; the last is to be that of El Hakim, who ascended the Moslem throne in A. D. 996, and persecuted the Christians and Jews most bitterly. When he comes to reign every faithful Druse will live in prosperity and happiness for one hundred and twenty years. And this kingdom shall continue without end.

Another illustration of this great anticipation is found with the Gadites in Jerusalem, a fine class of Jews greatly esteemed by Europeans, who have much to do with them in various ways. They are said to be honest and industrious. They came in a body to Jerusalem from Yemen, Arabia, under the conviction that the time of Messiah's advent was at hand. Mr. Wallace, in *Jerusalem the Holy*,

tells us that a number of them, employed by an English hotel keeper in making improvements on his hotel, rejoiced that soon all these fine things would be theirs. Still another recent instance of this expectation occurred in 1898, in India, when the end of the world was thought to be near and people of the Punjab expected a thousand years of happiness to be ushered in by a new ruler soon to appear.

The sect of Mohammedans which accepts Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, as the true successor of the prophet expect Ali's return to establish a Messianic rule under the Mahdi; and there is ever recurring some one who claims to be the Mahdi, as the one who so recently has been defeated by the British in the Sudan. In western India, in 1898, a Mohammedan was preaching the second coming of Christ and was persecuted as a Christian as the consequence. Miss Thomas, a missionary of Colombo, Ceylon, says that Buddhists, Mohammedans, and heathen are looking for the advent of some great one who shall bring in an era of peace and joy. In China Buddhists exhibit the belief, however dim, of both a forerunner and a Messiah, which assigns the second place to Gautama Buddha, and after his last incarnation a greater than he shall appear, for whose entrance the great gate of the temple avenue, which has been kept closed ever since its erection, shall be thrown open.

Dr. Tristram properly says, "A similar anticipation of the reappearance of some great prophet or teacher of the olden time, before the restitution of all things, forms part of the creed of almost every religion of man's invention."

*Verses 5.* Under the phrase in verse 5 the reference to the celebration of victory by burning the weapons of war, with the shields and chariots, seems to have numerous illustrations in ancient usage. Dr. Adam Clarke speaks of the custom of burning of heaps of armor gathered from the field of battle as an offering made to the god supposed to be the giver of the victory. The Romans did this as an emblem of peace, which perfectly well suits with the design of the prophet in this place. He also speaks of a medal struck by Vespasian on finishing his wars both at home and abroad which represents the goddess Peace holding an olive branch in one hand and, with a lighted torch in the other, setting fire to a heap of armor. There are indications of the same custom having been observed among the Israelites and some other ancient nations. Among the promises to Joshua of his victory in Canaan was the command, when it was accomplished, that he should "burn the chariots with fire" (Josh. 9. 6). So the Messianic reign is depicted by David when Messiah shall break the bow, cut the spear asunder, and burn

the chariots in the fire (Psa. 46. 9). Thus, too, Ezekiel promises that Jehovah will set on fire the armor, the shield, the buckler, the bow, the arrows, the clubs, and the lances (Ezek. 39. 8-10).

### By Way of Illustration.

*Christ our Light.* Have you ever been in the caverns of Luray? Enter them in the gloom, they are damp, dark, dreary, dismal, and it is impossible to imagine their grandeur and beauty. Turn on the electric lights and you stand amazed. As you look upon columns white as snow, on bronzed stalactites hanging like giant icicles, on marble draperies looking like a succession of glistening tents, you feel that the scene is too grand for description. So when Jesus comes a light into our lives, that which was dark, and dreary, and dismal, becomes beautiful, and all the outlook is bright.

*Verses 3-5.* Years are now reckoned not from the beginning of the world, nor from the beginning of our country, but from the birth of Jesus Christ. And thus the very dates that we use in our daily intercourse bear witness to the fact that this day is indeed the second birthday of the human race, because it is the birthday of him who was the second Adam of mankind, the firstborn of God's new creation. Those who have traveled in mountainous countries know how the highest crest of the mountain range is always known by seeing from that point, and that point only, the streams dividing on either side. Even so it is with the event of this day.—*Dean Stanley.*

*Verses 6.* Immanuel, "God with us." If you have a friend at a distance whom you have never seen, a letter from him might give you some idea of his personal appearance, but not the clearness of impression which you could get from a single glance at his portrait. So we could never have known the character of God through any description of his attributes as vividly as through a life which exemplifies all these attributes, the life of Christ, who, as the Scripture says, was "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." He is not an awful God up in the sky somewhere. He is our friend, able to understand our human nature.

When an English ship went down in the channel, and the queen visited kindly the captain's widow, it was heralded abroad as a wonderful thing. It was said, as though it was a very strange thing, that she actually went into the humble home of the widow, and told her how sorry she was, and asked what she could do to help her. People forgot that, although a queen and an empress, she was a woman. We

might have a feeling like that toward God if he knew him only as a great king, the Almighty. But we know him as a friend. He has come into our homes, and we have known his sympathy and help.—*T. J. Holmes.*

"Of the increase of his government there shall be no end." Of the five great divisions of the modern world Christianity is now dominant in three, is widening in the fourth—Asia—and in Africa has effected an important lodgment. With every rising sun and closing day his kingdom is coming.—*Farrar.*

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Our last was a solemn lesson; and if that were all we could learn from God's word of a future day of account, we should be left in hopeless spiritual night. But stars are in the sky. One, most bright and beautiful, rises, the herald of glorious day. To-morrow will be Christmas. Let it be full of joy, good will, and thankfulness, because unto us is born this day a Saviour.

There is indeed a judgment to come, so just and true that every conscience will say it is right. But you remember those beautiful verses (16-18) in the last lesson. In that day of decision and division there will be the sorted-out ones, the jewels, the Lord's peculiar treasure, of whom he will say, "They are mine." He has kept their record in his book of remembrance; not one little child has been overlooked nor one poor unknown man or woman forgotten. He knows them every one by name. No one can lay anything to their charge, because in the midst of a sinful world, tempted to do wrong, weak, unable to help themselves, they feared the Lord and thought upon his name, that great name, Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; the name of Jesus, who saves his people from their sins. There is nothing to dread, even standing before God in the searching light of justice and truth, if we humbly and sincerely trust in that strong and precious name. Blessed truth, beyond the power of the greatest finite mind to explain, yet understood by a simple, believing heart.

I have read that Dr. Curry, whose name is well known in the Church, told once of a vision he had of "the great day of final account," when he stood awe-struck and trembling before the Judge, not knowing how to answer, and a radiant figure with a countenance like the Son of God came and stood beside him, saying, "I am here to answer for Daniel Curry." O, think of Jesus saying in the midst of the holy angels, "I never knew

you!" And think of the bliss of hearing him say, "Thou art mine." No heart grieves more than the loving heart of Jesus when he cannot call us his own. He never has turned any away from his tender pity and forgiveness, nor will he in the last judgment, unless they refuse his love. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."

This is "my prayer, my hope, and my sufficient creed." May the joy of it make for us all tomorrow a truly merry Christmas!

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Notice the circumstances of this prophecy: (1) More than seven hundred years before Christ; (2) In a time of humiliation and trouble; (3) By a prophet inspired of God.... Give a view of the kingdom of Judah at the time of this prophecy.... Notice what is here prophesied concerning Christ.... Notice the characteristics of Christ's kingdom as here presented... See how completely these predictions have been fulfilled.... What are our privileges in Christ's kingdom?... Present this as a "Christmas Lesson," in the view it gives us of Christ born a king.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Calm on the listening ear of night.  
Joy to the world.  
Hark the herald-angels sing!  
This is the winter morn.  
Waken, Christian children.

Hark! what mean those holy voices.  
Prince of peace.  
The joyful morn is breaking.  
Once in Bethlehem of Judah.  
Once when the world lay a weary.

### Library References.

**THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.**—Consult the commentaries of Delitzsch, Cheyne, Smith, Driver. *Isaiah, His Life and Times.* Sayce, *The Times of Isaiah.*

**PROPHECY OF THE CHRIST.**—Riehm and Delitzsch have written the best books on Messianic prophecy. Consult also Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets.*

**TITLES OF CHRIST.**—Randall, *Titles of Our Lord.* East, *My Saviour.*

**FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK:** Ver. 6, Use of the term Father, 1; Government on the Shoulder, 502.

### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 3.—Austin, F. J., "Joy in Harvest," *The Treasury*, vol. vii, page 473.

Verse 6.—Fawcett W., "The Wonderful," *The Treasury*, vol. vii, page 618. Parish, Elijah, *Sermons*, page 97. Payson, Edward, "Titles of Christ," Works, vol. iii, page 62.

### Blackboard.



Long years before it came to pass the coming of our Prince and Saviour was foretold by prophets of old. The government was to be upon his shoulder, and he was to wield the scepter of universal empire. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. When at last in the fullness of time Jesus was born in the city of David few were prepared to receive their king. As we hear the good tidings again let us open our hearts to Christ, that he there set up his everlasting kingdom.

### FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

December 31.

#### Golden Text.

**Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.** Psa. 103. 2.

#### Home Readings.

- M.* (Christmas.) Joyful news. Luke 2. 1-11.  
*Tu.* Haman's Plot Against the Jews. Esth. 3. 1-11.  
*W.* Esther Pleading for Her People. Esth. 8. 3-8, 15-17.  
*Th.* Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. Ezra 8. 21-32.  
*F.* Nehemiah's Prayer. Neh. 1. 1-11.  
*S.* Rebuilding the Walls. Neh. 4. 7-18.  
*S.* Public Reading of the Scriptures. Neh. 8. 1-12.



## Lesson Hymns.

No. 342, New Canadian Hymnal.

Conducted by the band  
Safe through another year.

No. 343, New Canadian Hymnal.

Sing to the great Jehovah's praise!  
All praise to him belongs.

No. 350, New Canadian Hymnal.

God be with you till we meet again;  
By his counsels guide, uphold you.

## REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

I. Recall the TITLES and GOLDEN TEXTS of each lesson.

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. J. in G.'s H.       | I was glad—           |
| 2. H. P. A. the J.     | If God be—            |
| 3. E.'s P. for Her P.  | Commit thy way—       |
| 4. E.'s J. to J.       | The hand of our—      |
| 5. P. of D.            | They that sow—        |
| 6. N.'s P.             | Prosper, I pray thee— |
| 7. R. the W. of J.     | Watch—                |
| 8. P. R. of the S.     | The ears of all—      |
| 9. W. of I.            | Wine is a—            |
| 10. K. the S.          | Remember the—         |
| 11. L. in G.           | God loveth—           |
| 12. F. of R. and W. D. | Whatsoever a—         |
| 13. C.'s C. F.         | Unto you is born—     |

II. State picturesque facts of the lessons as suggested by the following hints:

1. A beautiful woman prostrate before a king.
2. A crowd of worshippers gathering in the temple.

3. A great bonfire of battle-axes, spears, and sheaths.
4. A large congregation listening to the reading of the word of God.
5. A party of soldiers attacking a party of laborers.
6. They that feared the Lord talking together about him.
7. A drunken man.
8. Priests offering sick and infirm animals as sacrifices.
9. A crowd of merchants and hucksters outside the city wall.
10. A Persian noble alone in prayer.
11. Returning captives laughing and singing with delight.
12. A man dressed in blue and white with a crown of gold on his head.
13. A man weighing and counting out gold and silver to twelve priests.
14. A king giving his signet ring to a man.

III. State what we are taught in the lessons:

1. About peace and harmony in the Church.
2. About the reign of Christ.
3. About God's providence.
4. About a man reaping what he sows.
5. About the feast of Purim.
6. About liberal giving in the Church of God.
7. About the Sabbath day.
8. About trusting in the Lord.
9. About the return of the Jews to Jerusalem.
10. About abstaining from intoxicants.
11. About studying the Scriptures.
12. About sowing in tears and reaping in joy.
13. About rebuilding Jerusalem.

## REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

No.	TITLES.	GOLDEN TEXTS.	WHAT ABOUT.	MY LESSON.
I.	Joy in G.'s H.	I was glad when—	Love for the Church.	I may meet God there.
II.	H.'s P. A. the J.	If God be for—	Pride must Fall.	God loves a humble heart.
III.	E. P. for H. P.	Commit thy way—	A Woman's Love.	Trust and obey.
IV.	E.'s J. to J.	The hand of our God	A Good Man's Work.	To forget my own ease.
V.	P. of D.	They that sow in—	Cause for Praise.	God loves a thankful heart.
VI.	N.'s P.	Prosper, I pray thee—	Going to God for Help.	Only God can help.
VII.	R. the W. of J.	Watch and—	A Great Work for God.	I need God to help me build.
VIII.	P. R. of the S.	The ears of all—	A Great Meeting.	God is my Teacher.
IX.	W. of I.	Wine is a—	Our Great Enemy.	Touch not, taste not.
X.	K. the S.	Remember the—	A Man Strong for the Right.	"Thou God seekest me."
XI.	L. in G.	God loveth a—	How to Give.	Give all to God.
XII.	F. of R. and W. D.	Whatsoever a—	A Harvest Story.	Live right, and be happy.
XIII.	C.'s C. F.	Unto you is born—	The Coming of a King.	His coming brings peace.

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Shoulder,  
rvest," The  
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Elijah, Ser-  
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REVIEW.

forget not

ke 2. 1-11.  
Esth. 3. 1-11.  
Esth. 8. 3-8,  
Ezra 8.21-32.  
1.  
-18.  
Neh. 8. 1-12.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

"Forget not all his benefits."

[One of God's benefits from each lesson of the Fourth Quarter.]

## I. THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

*Let us go into the house.* Psa. 122. 1.

One thing . . . desired. Psa. 27. 4.

Better than a thousand. Psa. 84. 10.

## II. DELIVERANCE FROM ENEMIES.

*There is a certain people.* Esth. 3. 8-11.

If God be for us. Rom. 8. 31.

No weapon . . . against thee. Isa. 54. 17.

## III. A ROYAL ADVOCATE.

*Esther spake yet again.* Esth. 8. 3.

We have an Advocate. 1 John 2. 1.

A great High Priest. Heb. 4. 14, 15.

## IV. ANSWER TO PRAYER.

*We besought our God.* Ezra 8. 23.

I cried . . . he heard me. Psa. 3. 4.

He hath heard the voice. Psa. 28. 6.

## V. FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

*Thou hast forgiven.* Psa. 85. 2.

The Lord . . . forgiving. Exod. 38. 6, 7.

The east . . . from the west. Psa. 103. 12.

## VI. FULFILLMENT OF COVENANT.

*That keepeth covenant.* Neh. 1. 5.

Keeping the covenant. Dan. 9. 4.

My word . . . not pass away. Luke 21. 33.

## VII. STRENGTH FOR LABOR.

*Every one unto his work.* Neh. 4. 15-18.

As thy days . . . thy strength. Deut. 33. 25.

Power to the faint. Isa. 40. 29.

## VIII. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

*They read in the book.* Neh. 8. 8.

Given by inspiration. 2 Tim. 3. 16.

A more sure word. 2 Pet. 1. 19-21.

## IX. WARNINGS AGAINST DANGER.

*Look not . . . upon the wine.* Prov. 23. 31.

Woe unto them. Isa. 5. 11, 12.

Be not drunk with wine. Eph. 5. 18.

## X. THE HOLY SABBATH.

*To sanctify the Sabbath.* Neh. 13. 22.

Sabbath was made for man. Mark 2. 27.

Hallow my Sabbaths. Ezek. 44. 24.

## XI. SALVATION TO GENTILES.

*Great among the Gentiles.* Mal. 1. 11.

To the Gentiles . . . life. Acts 11. 18.

Gentiles . . . fellow-heirs. Eph. 3. 6-8.

## XII. TRIUMPH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*Sin of righteousness.* Mal. 4. 2, 3.

Good tidings unto the meek. Isa. 61. 1.

All rule and authority. 1 Cor. 15. 24, 25.

## Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The last day of the year has always a peculiar interest. I hope never to grow so accustomed to the passing of these waymarks as not to feel their significance. Mortal life is measured by years. In the ordinary course of nature these are limited to threescore and ten. The last day of each marks off one less in the allotted portion. Precious years, each one is a chalice filled with the wine of experience pressed from joy and sorrow for the enrichment of character which must abide when years have ceased to be counted. To-day, the last of 1899, is especially impressive. Our thought lingers with it, loath to part, as we would hold the hand of a friend, whose visit has been full of inspiration and fellowship, and whom we never expect to see again. Only one year more of this wonderful twentieth century. Do you know what a privilege it is to live now, and to be young with such an outlook before you? History does not repeat itself in the present light and knowledge, flashing into the farthest corners of the earth. The past fifty years have been unlike any others since the world began; the past ten have been the most wonderful decade of all, and those just before us will be

grand with discoveries and events bringing to consummation God's purpose for the race redeemed! by our Lord Jesus Christ. I wish I could touch your eyes and make you see what it means to live! If you could see, you would never be dull, or listless, or frivolous, or selfish. You would be alert, glad, earnest, ready to serve, and joyously appreciative of all your opportunities. I cannot show you, but the Holy Spirit can. I pray that he may.

The Golden Text says, "Forget not all his benefits." We do forget some; we can hardly remember all; but surely we will not forget all. If we had kept through the year a notebook, marking with red each day in which more good and pleasant things than evil and unpleasant had come to us, and marking with black the days we might call dark and evil, I am sure the red days would far exceed the black. All his benefits! how many they are! Air, light, beauty of color in sky, trees, grass, and flowers: food, clothes, home, love, friends, books, power to work, a mind to think, a soul to know God, a thousand mercies unnoticed that have fallen round us like the sunlight. Of how many benefits the Golden Texts of the past quarter remind us! The services of God's house; the joy of having him dwell

in the temple of our hearts—the assurance that if God is for us, nothing can do us harm; if we commit our way to him, he will bring to pass things beyond our power, for his hand is always for good upon them that seek him; and even though we have days of weeping, the sun is sure to throw rainbows over the clouds after a while, because we can talk with our heavenly Father about everything, and he will prosper us if we seek his will and give attention to all that he says in his word, watching against temptation, such as that of wine and strong drink, and disregard of the holy Sabbath. One of the sweetest benefits which we must not forget is the opportunity to give, remembering that from every good deed and generous gift we sow we shall reap a harvest of love and blessing for ourselves and for others. Our benefits are too many for our finite memory. Let us put them all into one sweet word, easy to remember, a glad note of gratitude with which to close our heart-psalm for the year—JESUS.

### The Story of Little Mary.

(As told by a Bible colporteur.)

WHILE working in the little town of Claymont I called at the house of one of the laborers in the brickyards located there. Only the wife was home. And such a home as it was! A mere shanty, tumble-down and dirty. A great, coarse, ignorant-looking woman let me in.

No, she had no Bible and did not want one. The only thing in the world which she cared for, and which had ever brightened her life, she had lost—her little six-year-old Mary. "See," she said, pointing to a framed wreath of wax flowers hanging on the wall, and kept immaculate amid all the squalor of the place, "they were on her coffin when she left me. But she was too good for the likes of me. She had lots of good books she used to bring from Sunday school. I keep them all because she had them. She is dead now, and that's the end of it—she was too good for us." And a great tear washed a clean place on her cheek, and it seemed on her heart too.

"Do you know where Mary is?" I asked.

"Some people say there is a heaven, but I don't know anything about it, and if she is there, I can't ever go there; I don't know how. I don't know anything about that place."

"This book tells you all about where Mary is now, and how you can go there too, and how you can live together forever."

The book at which she refused to look before began to assume a new interest in her eyes. And while she listened carefully I read: "Let not

your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.' And also, 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.' Was Mary pure in heart? Then she sees God, and the promise of the mansions in our Father's house is hers, and she is there waiting for you." "But I ain't got a pure heart like hers; I can't go there." And again I read, "'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' If we are cleansed from all unrighteousness, are we not pure in heart?" She now felt she must have the book. It was light to her. A thorough search of the house discovered but six cents, a copper and a nickel, the latter strung upon a piece of ribbon. Mary had worn it, and it was treasured as having been hers. The price of the book was forty-five cents. In her eagerness she wanted me to take the two pieces as a part payment for the book, though only a mother can know the value of the keepsake. But she was willing to let it go for the more precious knowledge of her darling. The man must have had a hard heart who could have taken that coin. But she insisted that she be allowed to pay at least the cent toward the book. I turned down the corners of the leaves I had read to make sure of her finding them, and as I left she was soiling the page with her tears.—*Bible Society Record*.

### Theory and Practice.

THERE are two kinds of knowledge—theoretical, practical. You remember the boy who had been taught that if one apple is worth two pence, two apples will be worth four pence. One day a new committee asked him the value of two pears at two pence each. He replied, "Please, sir, I don't know. I've always done my example in apples." There is a deal of that kind of teaching of Bible truth—getting the surface measurement, but ignoring the cubic contents of a truth. Nicodemus knew that Christ came from God because of certain signs. One of the signs that a man has come from God is that the truth held in the head distills into the heart, throbs in the pulse, lives in the life. The teacher must be a God-inspired epistle, known and read, translating the Gospel into the language of daily life. The six days following Sunday must buttress, not undermine, the Lord's day and the truth taught.—*Rev. O. P. Gifford*.

## RESPONSIVE SERVICE FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER.

(Let the Topic and Golden Text be given by single voices.)

*Supt. A member of Class 1 will give the Topic and Golden Text of Lesson I.*

*Member of Class 1. Joy in God's House. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."*

*Supt. Lesson II.*

*Member of Class 2. Haman's Plot against the Jews. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

*Supt. Lesson III.*

*Member of Class 3. Esther Pleading for Her People. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."*

*Supt. Lesson IV.*

*Member of Class 4. Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. "The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him."*

*Supt. Lesson V.*

*Member of Class 5. Psalms of Deliverance. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."*

*Supt. Lesson VI.*

*Member of Class 6. Nehemiah's Prayer. "Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day."*

*Supt. Lesson VII.*

*Member of Class 7. Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem. "Watch and pray."*

*Supt. Lesson VIII.*

*Member of Class 8. Public Reading of the Scriptures. "The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law."*

*Supt. Lesson IX.*

*Member of Class 9. Woes of Intemperance. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."*

*Supt. Lesson X.*

*Member of Class 10. Keeping the Sabbath. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."*

*Supt. Lesson XI.*

*Member of Class 11. Lessons in Giving. "God loveth a cheerful giver."*

*Supt. Lesson XII.*

*Member of Class 12. Fruits of Right and Wrong Doing. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."*

*Supt. Lesson XIII.*

*Member of Class 13. Christ's Coming Foretold. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*

## LESSON I.

*First Single Voice. Jerusalem is the type of the Church of God because of the religious forces which have gone out from it.*

*The house of God is the gate of heaven for the individual and for the nation.*

*True religion is never selfish. It desires to share its blessings. It builds the walls of Jerusalem "for my brethren and companions' sake."*

## LESSON II.

*Second Single Voice. Haman was hung on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Prov. 26, 27 says.*

*"Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that roll-eth a stone, it will return upon him." And Job 4, 8 says: "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."*

## LESSON III.

*Third Single Voice. In the Book of Esther the religious note does not sound so clearly as the patriotic note. The feast of Purim is more like our Fourth of July than it is like Christmas or Easter. But patriotism is a lesson we all need to learn. Suffering, living, working, for our country is as true patriotism as fighting for it.*

*Great trials and great dangers lead us to prayer and arouse heroism.*

## LESSON IV.

*Fourth Single Voice. Ezra brought the book of the law into prominence. He reinforced the service of the temple. His chief reform was the abolishment of mixed marriages.*

*He has been called "a Puritan of the Puritans." It is believed that Ezra had much to do in collecting, arranging, and revising the Old Testament, and in bringing the knowledge of the Bible to the people.*

## LESSON V.

*Fifth Single Voice. We sow in tears before we reap in joy. Before we can produce and enjoy the fine music we must have the long study and hard practice. So in the Christian life. The discipline of life must come before sainthood. We learn a lesson of hope and faith from the long and slow process of deliverance. The tears and present disappointments are God's highway to joy.*

## LESSON VI.

*Sixth Single Voice. Nehemiah's prayer grew out of a deep feeling of need.*

*There was confession of sin.  
There was a pleading of the promises.  
There was a pleading of past mercies.  
The prayer had a definite object.  
It was a prayer of consecration.  
It was the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, and therefore it availed much.  
It was the prayer of one who acted as well as prayed.*

## LESSON VII.

*Seventh Single Voice. In rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem we notice that progress was rapid because—*

*The people had a mind to work.  
Each one built over against his own house.  
The work was done by families.  
It was a national affair. Those who lived in the adjoining country joined in the work.*

These very things help in the building up of God's kingdom.

- The builders had to meet—
- Ridicule.
- Slander.
- A general conspiracy
- Discouragement of the workers.
- Bad advice from friends.
- The oppressive conduct of the richer Jews.
- Treachery.
- An appeal to fear.

LESSON VIII.

*Eighth Single Voice.* This lesson gives us the results of a careful study and teaching of God's word:

- First. Repentance.
- Second. Joy in the Lord.
- Third. Generous giving to those in need.
- Fourth. Consecration to God.
- Fifth. A higher plane of daily living.
- Every nation now existing is great, moral, and happy in proportion as the Bible is studied and obeyed.

LESSON IX.

*Ninth Single Voice.* We learn in this lesson that the wine drinker has—

- Woe.
- Sorrow.
- Contentions.
- Complaining.
- Wounds without cause.
- Redness of eyes.
- Wine, like a serpent, will be brilliant of color, and glide with easy motion, but, like the venomous serpents of the East, it will bite and sting.

LESSON X.

*Tenth Single Voice.* Jesus gives us the true principle of Sabbath-keeping. It must be for the whole of man, body and soul. Whatever uplifts, comforts, enlarges man is adapted to the Sabbath. There are times when this law of help is larger than the law of rest, as in the cases Jesus referred to.

Works of mercy are peculiarly fitting on the Sabbath. Seven of the recorded miracles of Jesus were performed on that day.

LESSON XI.

*Eleventh Single Voice.* God does need our gifts. The wealth of the universe is his.

All giving should be free, glad, joyous. No man can attain the highest success by robbing God.

There is a natural connection between giving and prosperity. "Give, and it shall be given unto you."

LESSON XII.

*Twelfth Single Voice.* A great part of our wisdom and strength comes from speaking often one to another about the things of the kingdom.

The contrasts of the judgment day show the death of the wicked and the rewards of the righteous.

Christ is spoken of as the Sun of righteousness.

1. He is the source of light.
2. He is the source of power.
3. He is the source of life.
4. He is the source of comfort and cheer.
5. He is the source of the beauty of holiness; all the glories of color come from the sun.

LESSON XIII.

*Thirteenth Single Voice.* The state of sin is always one of darkness.

The coming of Christ brings light and joy. The names given to Christ by Isaiah are—

- Wonderful.
- Counselor
- The mighty God.
- The everlasting Father.
- The Prince of Peace.

The golden age of the Bible is before us.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

Prepare thirty questions on the lessons of the quarter, and write each question on a separate slip of paper. As you sit in the center of the class, hold the slips in your hand, and ask each member to draw a slip and answer the question.

If they answer correctly, they can keep the slip, and if anyone fails, it goes to whoever answers it correctly. Thus at the close of the lesson each one can tell by her slips how many questions she has answered. This stimulates a very pleasant interest.

A LETTER REVIEW.

A teacher tried this plan with good success. She asked each member of her class to write her a letter telling which lesson she enjoyed the best, and why. These were read in the class by the teacher, omitting the name of the writer.

This insured on the part of the scholar a little review of all the lessons in this selection of one, and the careful study of that one.

A BIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW.

Get four persons each to write a brief sketch of one of these four persons prominent in this quarter's lessons:

- Esther, Nehemiah,
- Ezra, Malachi.

## Lessons and Golden Texts for 1900.

NOTE.—The Committee, by selection of parallel and related passages, have aimed to include in the lessons the records of Christ's life as they are given in the four gospels. It is expected that these passages will be considered by writers of Lesson Helps in connection with those selected to be printed.

### STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

#### First Quarter.

##### LESSON

- I. Jan. 7.—THE BIRTH OF JESUS. Luke 2, 1-16. *Commit vs.* 8-11. (Read Luke 1; Matt. 1; John 1, 1-18.) GOLDEN TEXT: Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. 1, 21.
- II. Jan. 14.—THE CHILD JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM. Luke 2, 41-52. *Commit vs.* 49-52. (Read Matt. 2; Luke 2, 21-38.) GOLDEN TEXT: And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2, 52.
- III. Jan. 21.—THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. Luke 3, 1-17. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) *Commit vs.* 3-6. (Read Mal. 3, 1-7; 4, 1-6.) GOLDEN TEXT: Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Luke 3, 4.
- IV. Jan. 28.—THE BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION OF JESUS. Matt. 3, 13 to 4, 11. *Commit vs.* 16, 17. (Compare Luke 3, 21, 22 with 4, 1-13.) GOLDEN TEXT: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. 3, 17.
- V. Feb. 4.—THE FIRST DISCIPLES OF JESUS. John 1, 35-46. *Commit vs.* 35-37. (Read John 1, 19-51.) GOLDEN TEXT: They followed Jesus. John 1, 37.
- VI. Feb. 11.—JESUS AND NICODEMUS. John 3, 1-18. *Commit vs.* 14-17. (Read John 2.) GOLDEN TEXT: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3, 16.
- VII. Feb. 18.—JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL. John 4, 5-26. *Commit vs.* 11-14. (Read John 3, 22 to 4, 45.) GOLDEN TEXT: God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4, 24.
- VIII. Feb. 25.—JESUS REJECTED AT NAZARETH. Luke 4, 16-30. *Commit vs.* 17-19. (Read Matt. 4, 13-16; Mark 1, 14, 15; John 4, 46-54.) GOLDEN TEXT: He came unto his own, and his own received him not. John 1, 11.
- IX. March 4.—JESUS HEALING IN CAPERNAUM. Mark 1, 21-34. *Commit vs.* 32-34. (Read Luke 5, 1-11.) GOLDEN TEXT: And he healed many that were sick. Mark 1, 34.

##### LESSON

- X. March 11.—THE PARALYTIC HEALED. Mark 2, 1-12. *Commit vs.* 9-12. (Read Matt. 4, 23-25; Mark 1, 35-45.) GOLDEN TEXT: The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. Mark 2, 10.
- XI. March 18.—JESUS AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE. Mark 2, 13-22. *Commit vs.* 15-17. (Compare Matt. 9, 9-17.) GOLDEN TEXT: He said unto him, Follow me. Luke 5, 27.
- XII. March 25.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Mark 10, 45.

#### Second Quarter.

- I. April 1.—THE BEATITUDES. Matt. 4, 25 to 5, 12. *Commit vs.* 3-9. (Read Matt. 5, 1 to 6, 18. Compare Luke 6, 17-36.) GOLDEN TEXT: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matt. 5, 8.
- II. April 8.—PRECEPTS AND PROMISES. Matt. 7, 1-14. *Commit vs.* 7, 8, 13, 14. (Read Matt. 6, 19 to 7, 29. Compare Luke 6, 37-49.) GOLDEN TEXT: Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. Matt. 7, 12.
- III. April 15.—THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS RAISED. Mark 5, 22-24, 35-43. *Commit vs.* 39-42. (Read Mark 5, 25-34.) GOLDEN TEXT: Be not afraid, only believe. Mark 5, 36. OR, EASTER LESSON, Matt. 28, 1-15. *Commit vs.* 5-7. GOLDEN TEXT: He is risen, as he said. Matt. 28, 6.
- IV. April 22.—THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED. Luke 7, 1-10. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. (Read Matt. 9, 27-34; Mark 2, 23 to 3, 19; John 5.) GOLDEN TEXT: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psa. 103, 13.
- V. April 29.—JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST. Luke 7, 18-28. *Commit vs.* 22, 23. (Read Luke 7, 11-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: He hath done all things well. Mark 7, 37.
- VI. May 6.—JESUS WARNING AND INVITING. Matt. 11, 20-30. *Commit vs.* 28-30. (Read Isa. 23.) GOLDEN TEXT: Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. 11, 28.
- VII. May 13.—JESUS AT THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE. Luke 7, 36-50. *Commit vs.* 44-47. (Read Matt. 18, 23-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: Thy faith hath saved thee. Luke 7, 50.
- VIII. May 20.—PARABLE OF THE SOWER. Matt. 13, 1-8, 18-23. *Commit vs.* 22, 23. (Read Matt. 12, 22 to 13, 23; Luke 8, 1-3.) GOLDEN TEXT: The seed is the word of God. Luke 8, 11.

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- IX. May 27.—PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM. Matt. 13. 24-33. *Commit vs.* 31-33. (Read Matt. 13. 24-53; Mark 4. 21-29.) GOLDEN TEXT: The field is the world. Matt. 13. 38.
- X. June 3.—THE TWELVE SENT FORTH. Matt. 9. 35 to 10. 8. (May be used as a lesson for Pentecost.) *Commit vs.* 36-38. (Read Matt. 9. 35 to 11. 1; Mark 4. 35 to 5. 21.) GOLDEN TEXT: It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Matt. 10. 20.
- XI. June 10.—DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. Mark 6. 14-29. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) *Commit vs.* 21-24. (Read Dan. 5. Compare Matt. 14. 1-12.) GOLDEN TEXT: Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit. Eph. 5. 18.
- XII. June 17.—THE FEEDING OF FIVE THOUSAND. John 6. 5-14. *Commit vs.* 9-12. (Compare Matt. 14. 13-21; Mark 6. 30-44; Luke 9. 10-17.) GOLDEN TEXT: Give us this day our daily bread. Matt. 6. 11.
- XIII. June 24.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Thy kingdom come. Matt. 6. 10.

## Third Quarter.

- I. July 1.—JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA. Matt. 14. 23-33. *Commit vs.* 25-27. (Compare Mark 6. 45-56; John 6. 15-21.) GOLDEN TEXT: Of a truth thou art the Son of God. Matt. 14. 33.
- II. July 8.—JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE. John 6. 22-40. *Commit vs.* 35-37. (Read John 6. 22-71.) GOLDEN TEXT: Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. John 6. 35.
- III. July 15.—THE GENTILE WOMAN'S FAITH. Mark 7. 24-30. *Commit vs.* 27-30. (Read Mark 7. 1-23.) GOLDEN TEXT: Lord, help me. Matt. 15. 25.
- IV. July 22.—PETER'S CONFESSION AND CHRIST'S REBUKE. Matt. 16. 13-26. *Commit vs.* 24-26. (Read Mark 7. 31 to 8. 30.) GOLDEN TEXT: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Matt. 16. 24.
- V. July 29.—THE TRANSFIGURATION. Luke 9. 28-36. *Commit vs.* 33-35. (Compare Matt. 17. 1-13. Read Mark 8. 31 to 9. 29.) GOLDEN TEXT: This is my beloved Son: hear him. Luke 9. 35.
- VI. Aug. 5.—JESUS AND THE CHILDREN. Matt. 18. 1-14. *Commit vs.* 12-14. (Read Matt. 17. 23-27. Compare Mark 9. 33-50.) GOLDEN TEXT: Suffer the little children to come unto

## LESSON

- me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10. 14.
- VII. Aug. 12.—THE FORGIVING SPIRIT. Matt. 18. 21-35. *Commit vs.* 21, 22. (Read Matt. 18. 15-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matt. 6. 12.
- VIII. Aug. 19.—THE MAN BORN BLIND. John 9. 1-17. *Commit vs.* 4-7. (Read Luke 9. 57-62; John 7. 2 to 9. 41.) GOLDEN TEXT: One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. John 9. 25.
- IX. Aug. 26.—JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD. John 10. 1-16. *Commit vs.* 9-11. (Read Psa. 23; John 10. 1-21.) GOLDEN TEXT: The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. John 10. 11.
- X. Sept. 2.—THE SEVENTY SENT FORTH. Luke 10. 1-11, 17-20. *Commit vs.* 2-6. (Read Luke 10. 1-24.) GOLDEN TEXT: The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Luke 10. 2.
- XI. Sept. 9.—THE GOOD SAMARITAN. Luke 10. 25-37. *Commit vs.* 33-35. GOLDEN TEXT: Love thy neighbor as thyself. Lev. 19. 18.
- XII. Sept. 16.—THE RICH FOOL. Luke 12. 13-23. *Commit vs.* 19-21. (Read Luke 10. 38 to 12. 34.) GOLDEN TEXT: What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Mark 8. 36.
- XIII. Sept. 23.—THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS. Luke 12. 35-46. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) *Commit vs.* 43, 44. (Read Luke 12. 35-50.) GOLDEN TEXT: Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. Matt. 26. 41.
- XIV. Sept. 30.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. James 1. 22.

## Fourth Quarter.

- I. Oct. 7.—JESUS DINING WITH A PHARISEE. Luke 14. 1-14. *Commit vs.* 12-14. (Read Luke 13; John 10. 22-42.) GOLDEN TEXT: Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke 14. 11.
- II. Oct. 14.—PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER. Luke 14. 15-24. *Commit vs.* 21-24. (Read Matt. 22. 1-14.) GOLDEN TEXT: Come; for all things are now ready. Luke 14. 17.
- III. Oct. 21.—THE LOST SHEEP AND LOST COIN. Luke 15. 1-10. *Commit vs.* 4-7. (Read Luke 14. 25-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15. 10.

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- IV. Oct. 28.—THE PRODIGAL SON. Luke 15. 11-24. *Commit vs.* 20-24. (Read Luke 15.) GOLDEN TEXT: I will arise and go to my father. Luke 15. 18.
- V. Nov. 4.—THE UNJUST STEWARD. Luke 16. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10-12. (Read Luke 16. 1-18.) GOLDEN TEXT: Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Luke 16. 13.
- VI. Nov. 11.—THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. Luke 16. 19-31. *Commit vs.* 19-22. (Read Luke 16. 19 to 17. 10.) GOLDEN TEXT: Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Matt. 6. 20.
- VII. Nov. 18.—THE TEN LEpers CLEANSED. Luke 17. 11-19. *Commit vs.* 17-19. (Read for connection, John 11.) GOLDEN TEXT: Be ye thankful. Col. 3. 15.
- VIII. Nov. 25.—SOBER LIVING. Tit. 2. 1-15. (World's Temperance Sunday.) *Commit vs.* 11-14. (Read Isa. 28.) GOLDEN TEXT: We should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Tit. 2. 12.
- IX. Dec. 2.—THE RICH YOUNG RULER. Matt. 19. 16-26. *Commit vs.* 23-26. (Read Matt. 19. 1 to 20. 16; Luke 17. 11 to 18. 14.) GOLDEN TEXT: Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! Mark 10. 24.
- X. Dec. 9.—BARTIMEUS HEALED. Mark 10. 46-52. *Commit vs.* 50-52. (Read Mark 10. 32-52.) GOLDEN TEXT: Lord, that I might receive my sight. Mark 10. 51.
- XI. Dec. 16.—ZACCHAEUS THE PUBLICAN. Luke 19. 1-10. *Commit vs.* 8-10. GOLDEN TEXT: The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19. 10.
- XII. Dec. 23.—PARABLE OF THE POUNDS. Luke 19. 11-27. *Commit vs.* 26, 27. (Read Matt. 25. 14-30.) GOLDEN TEXT: Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom. 14. 12. OR, CHRISTMAS LESSON. Matt. 2. 1-11. *Commit vs.* 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. 2 Cor. 9. 15.
- XIII. Dec. 30.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Thou crownest the year with thy goodness. Psa. 65. 11.

## Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

—No sooner do the shepherds hear the news of a Saviour than they run to Bethlehem to seek him. Those that left their beds to tend their flocks leave their flocks to inquire after their Saviour. No earthly thing is too dear to be forsaken for Christ. If we suffer any worldly occa-

sion to stay us from Bethlehem, we care more for our sheep than our souls.—*Bishop Hall.*

—The six days chain you as captives to the earth and do their best to keep the prison doors shut, that you may forget the way out. The Lord's day sets before you an open door, and bids you look forth into your immortality.—*Pulsford.*

—It makes a great difference in the force of a sentence whether a man be behind it or no.—*Emerson.*

—Cloth that is not well wrought in the loom will not wear well nor wear long. So a Christian that has not a thorough work of grace in the heart will never do much service.—*Mead.*

—To reprove a brother is like as when he has fallen to lift him up again. When he hath broken a bone to help set it; when he is out of the way to help put him in it; when he is fallen into the fire to pluck him out.—*Henry.*

—We have to do our little bit of work, and hand the unfinished task to others after us. Happy shall we be if we in the least degree "prepare in the desert a highway for our God."—*McLaren.*

—The requests we make of God interpret our character. They show us as we are. God reads our character in our prayers. What we love best, what we covet most, that gives the key to our hearts.—*Cuyler.*

—Distress is a great schoolmaster. It teaches many things, among them the greatest of all attainments—the power to pray.—*Glover.*

—We shall not love heaven more for loving earth less; the needful thing is not that we abate, but that we consecrate, the interests and affections of our life.—*Martineau.*

An ear quick to hear  
Eternal melody;  
An eye quick to see  
All beauty, Christ, in thee;  
A mouth seasoned with charity,  
Softer than soft wind of the south—  
Grant these, O Lord, to me!

—*Hamilton.*

There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week.—*Beecher.*

—Let God be your guide in the building of the vessel in which you expect to cross the ocean of life, and enter entirely without wreck. Use no timber that will not bear storm. Never sleep while you skirt the reef.—*Cook.*

—Only he who lives a life of his own can help the lives of other men.—*Phillips Brooks.*



## PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

## "A Child is Born."

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

How that Scripture phrase, "A child is born," stirs the reader! It not only has significance in the application to Christ, but makes the range of thought so wide that it shall include every tiny crib! Hark! there is a baby wailing up stairs! A baby's cry, and a moment ago there was stillness. Now a new life is in the world. How much it means to the child itself—to this small thing invested with all the possible bliss, and calamities, too, of life, honor and shame, joy and sorrow, sunshine and the storm, a cross coming here and maybe a crown hereafter.

For the parent, too, it means so much. What a heaping up of responsibilities, what an accumulation of possibilities, joy as a wing, or the shame of the mire. But how much it may mean for the country, for the Church of Christ, because a child is born. The Wesleys once were babies. Now close by the child as it goes forward to be made ready for its work appears the Sunday school teacher. How much this being has to do with the destiny of another. It startles us, but it should not overwhelm us. We ought to feel a stimulus here even as a traveler turns an upland corner to get a wider view and a sweep of a more bracing wind. Welcome your privilege; don't fear your responsibility. Meet it in the wisdom and power of Moses' God, Elijah's God, Daniel's God. Above all, let it be met in that spirit of love whose home was the bosom of Jesus Christ.

Christmas profoundly moves childhood. Two elements in the child nature are impressed. There is the wonder element. The lonely fields of Bethlehem, the drowsy shepherds, the bleating flocks, the flashing stars overhead, and then suddenly the angel messenger that is followed by the great golden choir flocking about him and singing the "Gloria in Excelsis!" Christmas appeals also to the sympathetic side of childhood. That little baby in a stable—just a stable, cows, asses, camels looking on—a baby now in a manger, then on a mother's breast—how all this stirs and takes hold of a child's sympathy and affection. Then what an appeal is made to a child's spiritual nature. It is God's love coming down at Christmas. It is heaven showing its interest in folks that don't lodge in an inn;

heaven "that makes just poor shepherds happy; heaven that gets into a stable." What will not God do for the folks that need him, for children, too, that some people with their heads in the stars overlook. God in the stars comes to earth to make everyday people his special care. Make wise use of the Christmas hours. Your children out on the road to Bethlehem will meet God's angels of blessing.

MRS. CRAFTS sends this suggestive word about the Christmas celebration; would that it might be heeded by all:

Two leading primary workers say, "There shall never again be a Santa Claus at my Christmas celebration." In this they are right. When some folks have gone so far as to introduce "Mrs. Santa Claus" it is time to call a halt. This character was actually brought forward in a Christmas exercise published in one of the leading Sunday school papers last season.

"The fool has said in his heart there is no Santa Claus" was the condemnation in print by one who essayed to criticize those who pronounce a Santa Claus unwise to have in Sunday school celebrations.

If there is a night in the whole year when the love of the children's hearts should still belong to Christ, it is on the celebration of his birth night. If Santa Claus is brought in for a share, he takes it all.

## A Christmas Window.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

WHEN I was a little child the thought of the unknown which darkness suggested was extremely oppressive; it was so deep and vast, and my fears often peopled it with strange shapes. After I had been tucked in my bed and the twilight began to deepen I used to try to forget the darkness by shutting my outward eyes and opening the eyes of my imagination—the habit of all imaginative children. These pictures called up for my own defense and entertainment were often more vivid than anything that I looked at with open eyes—a slowly gliding panorama of form and color that, after once being set in motion, seemed to create itself, and de-

stroy the great unknown spaces that I called "the dark."

Can we not utilize this faculty which is so clear and fresh in the child mind to convey the lessons that we wish to fix there?

The apostles of the new education more happily brought us to see that in the earlier work with children we must proceed from the known to the unknown if we would establish the true relation of things in their minds.

"How shall we do this," a teacher may ask, "when the story of the birth of our Lord is one that must be placed nearly twenty centuries away, and in a foreign land?"

It may be done in the way that the best teachers convey a knowledge of the world we live in to little children. Instead of first teaching that "the earth is round like a ball or orange, a little flattened at the poles," the teacher begins with the immediate environment of the child, following out the streets, the public buildings and their uses, as churches, schools, markets, manufactories, and by degrees leading the child out into an acquaintance with its own country, State, nation, and later the neighbor nations and the world.

To picture the Holy Trinity to a class of little ones begin with a familiar talk about the families represented in your class. To some of the children a baby brother or sister has been born, and they will know what you mean when you describe their own tiny baby brother or sister in its mother's arms as others come crowding around her to look at the little gift of God.

Then, in this home which is so familiar to your children, you may open a window and ask them to look out of it with you into another country and another time, and see a little group gathered around a baby boy lying in the arms of his young mother. You may describe the shepherds kneeling there who had come because they had heard angels singing in the night, one of whom had come near to them when they kept their flocks, and had told them of the birth of the Saviour in the nearby town of Bethlehem. You may describe the place where they found him and tell why it was so different from a home with pretty carpets, and white beds, and comfortable chairs. Tell them of God's great gift of himself to the world, and that it was because he "so loved" us all that he became a little child, and came to Mary and Joseph to be their own little boy, and to grow up and live the wonderful and beautiful life that we try to make our own, and to die the death that opened the door of heaven to us all.

In this way you will have led your class by a

familiar path from the known to the unknown, and you will have made use of a faculty possessed by all children in a greater or less degree in fixing the lesson for life.

You need not devise any window, or present any object representing a window, for your children to look through, for it would only divert their attention, and their own imagination would create one much more to the purpose.

Only present one simple and true picture from the word, and trust the God-given faculties of the children, and you may open a window every Sunday that will fix the picture in the child's mind for life.

### Christmas Pictures.

*An Exercise for the Primary Class.*

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

[If possible, let the whole class appear upon the platform and join in the closing song. Select the older children for the recitations. Some classes may own or may be able to secure the engravings "The Nativity," "The Star," "The Wise Men," and "The Flight into Egypt," in which case those reciting may hold the pictures up to view, but this is not essential. The oldest child of all should give the first recitation.]

#### NUMBER ONE.

Tell me, tell me, what do you see  
Looking back on the Christmas Day?  
What are the pictures, fair and sweet,  
Looking back o'er the long, long way?

#### NUMBER TWO.

I see a lovely picture  
Of a little baby boy,  
Upon sweet Mary's bosom,  
His mother's dearest joy.  
The precious baby Jesus,  
That in a manger lay,  
Is the sweetest Christmas picture  
Of this bright, happy day.

#### NUMBER THREE.

I see the fairest angels  
That ever sang on earth;  
They bend above the shepherds,  
To sing of Jesus' birth.  
I see the listening shepherds,  
Their flocks upon the hill,  
I seem to hear the angels  
Sing "Peace on earth, good will."

## NUMBER FOUR.

I see a wondrous picture  
Of deep blue heavens afar,  
And, brighter than all others,  
I see a shining star.  
I see the wondering Wise Men—  
The star shines out for them;  
I see them gazing on it—  
The Star of Bethlehem.

## NUMBER FIVE.

I see another picture  
Of those Wise Men of old;  
They stand before the baby  
With gifts of myrrh and gold.  
I see them bow before him,  
The little Holy Child;  
A King he is, though lowly,  
And gentle, meek, and mild.

## NUMBER SIX.

Look back on one more picture,  
God's care to understand,  
He sends the baby Jesus  
Far off to Egypt's land.  
The wicked king would kill him,  
But God will keep his own.  
He saved his Son, our Saviour,  
By his great power alone.

## NUMBER SEVEN.

The lovely Christmas pictures  
We find in God's dear book,  
And we can always see them  
If we but choose to look.  
To-day, when bells are ringing  
A tuneful Christmas chime,  
Our thoughts should all be turning  
To that sweet early time.

CLOSING SONG—All joining.

Air—"What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Happy Christmas! Happy Christmas!  
Day of gladness and of song,  
May we lift our hearts to Jesus,  
Unto whom these hours belong.  
Loving Saviour! Loving Saviour!  
Show us how to love thee more.  
We have heard the sweet old story,  
We would hear it o'er and o'er.

Happy Christmas! Happy Christmas!  
Hark, to-day, around the earth,  
Children sing, and hearts are joyful  
O'er the blessed Saviour's birth.  
As we see him in the manger,  
As we look to him above,  
We would praise our King forever,  
We would bring him gifts of love.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

### FOURTH QUARTER.

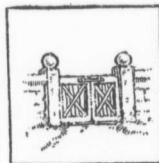
#### LESSON X. (December 3.)

#### KEEPING THE SABBATH. Neh. 13. 15-22.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Remember the sabbath day,  
to keep it holy." Exod. 20. 8.

#### Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

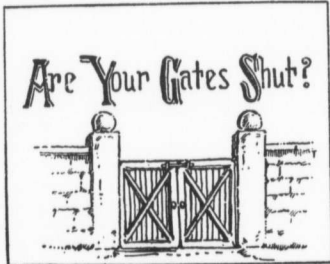


*Introductory.* Once upon a time there was a beautiful garden, with a high wall about it, and great white gates that shut very tight. Inside this garden grew all sorts of beautiful flowers and fruits, and there were so many of these, and the garden was so fair and large, that one could go again and again without growing tired of what was to be found within. No matter how hot the sun might be, there were cooling shade and beautiful resting places in this garden, so that tired people who had been hurried and busy and burdened with what went on outside the wall loved to come to this quiet place and rest. Besides all this those who came in were allowed to carry out with them some of the fruits and flowers gathered within the lovely borders. Now, this garden was open to all, but it was only open one day in the week, and there was one thing that always had to be done. When anyone came in he had to leave his work tools, his horses, his working clothes, and anything he had that belonged to the outside, and after he passed through the gates they had to be shut, so that nothing could come in to hurt the garden. Do you think this was at all unfair? Surely not. Yet, would you believe it? there were people who grumbled because they could not bring in their tools and horses and dogs and all manner of things that belonged to the great busy, dusty world outside and do just as they liked among the fruits and flowers. Whenever they could some people left the gates open, and often parts of the garden were spoiled by what came in. Was it not a pity? Would you do so, when the owner of the garden, who was so good as to let everyone come in, said the gates should be shut? This lovely garden is the Sabbath day, and God, who made it, says the gates must be shut so as to keep out work and play and all that be-

longs to the busy, hurrying week days. The lesson is a precept-lesson, and besides remembering the Sabbath, as our text says (we will write this teaching from God's word), "Call the Sabbath a delight." It is like a beautiful garden, and we ought to be happy in it.

*The lesson.* We go back again to Nehemiah's story. He was now the governor of Jerusalem, you remember, after building its walls with the help of all who had a mind to the work. We find in this lesson that he was much troubled because outsiders brought all manner of things to Jerusalem to sell on the Sabbath, which was God's own day. Worse than this, those inside, who were God's own people and knew better, bought the things. Nehemiah talked to them very earnestly about this, reminding them that it was very wrong. "What evil thing is this that ye do?" he asked, and told them that God had punished their fathers for not keeping his day holy. Then he arranged to stop the wrongdoing. When it began to be dark before the Sabbath—that is, the evening before—he had all the gates shut, so that no one could come in. Then he told those who came to sell that they should keep away. They hardly believed him, and came and stayed all night outside the gates once or twice, but when the governor said, "Why lodge ye about the wall? If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you," they thought it best to stay away, and came no more.

*Do we shut the gates?* How is it? Are the gates of the heart shut on the Sabbath against the week-day work and plans and play, and against all wrong, angry, unkind thoughts? Do we remember God's day and call it a delight because we love the dear Lord who gave it? Are we as glad to have Sabbath come as we are to go to a beautiful garden? Do we keep it holy by pleasing him in prayer and praise and in learning



about Jesus? Then the gates that shut out all wrong things shut in love and joy and peace and all things good and sweet.

## Kindergarten Hints.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

GOLDEN TEXT: "But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exod. 20. 10.

Let us make our lesson positive by teaching activity in Sabbath-keeping, rather than negative by giving warnings against Sabbath-breaking. Our very title and text are positive. To "remember" and "keep" implies action. Let us also bear in mind that a Sabbath profitable to the children's grandmothers would be an unprofitable one for the children. It is unprofitable to insist upon a day of rest for those who are not in the least weary. If their physical nature craves activity, let us give it to them in the shape of Sunday occupations sufficiently varied to keep little bodies stirring. A day of religious meditation is impossible to those who have not yet learned to think; yet, if we fill little hands with Sunday employment, their untrained thoughts are following the action of their fingers. They are watching and thinking about their Sunday occupation, the first step toward religious meditation.

The plan of our Sabbath lesson will depend largely on the make-up of our class. The greatest help in attempting the lesson is to learn how the Sabbath is regarded in the individual homes. In writing these hints it will be best to assume that we have both carefully taught and neglected children in our classes.

Let us call on parents who devote themselves to making the Sabbath a sacred and delightful day for their children; their good suggestions will help us in reaching our neglected children. Those whose parents regard the day as a time to get in all the amusement possible are hardest to reach, for they are antagonistic to any Sunday restriction. Call on those who are learning to love the day to tell the class how they spend its hours, for their enthusiasm will reach the antagonistic children where the teacher may fail.

Our children are just beginning to learn the names of the days of the week. Let us look at the week from the child's point of view. What are you doing on school days? How do you spend your Saturdays? How do you know when it is Sunday? To whom belong all the days? How does God ask us to spend all our days? Our Father asks us to work faithfully on our school or work days, and sends us all that we enjoy on our free play days, but asks us to spend Sunday with him, to stay (consciously) quite close to him.

Your earthly father is watching over you while you work or play. Does he not have you in mind every day and hour when you are occupied in work or play? There are times when he asks you to drop work and play and stay with him.

You have your happiest hours while you drop everything to talk with him. It is this way when we spend Sunday with our heavenly Father. He watches over us every minute of the days when we are at work or play. On Sunday he asks us to drop these things out of our hands and stay with him.

This simple parallel can be carried out at length, but will be practical only when the teacher shows the children how to occupy the hours of the Sabbath.

Should we preach too long a sermon on the text, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," the children might truthfully reply, "We are quite willing to keep it holy, but we do not know how." If this is the attitude of the class, our lesson may be full of suggestions of occupations for the day. With the aid of our King's Daughters and Epworth League we can provide at little expense an outfit of Sunday occupations. In class we can show the children how to make and how to use these things. Consult any trained kindergarten about this matter, for the kindergarten furnishes abundant material to keep children busy and interested, and the material will be found educational, a quality not possible in that furnished by untrained, so-called kindergartners.

With the kindergarten fifth, sixth, and seventh gifts, and also the kindergarten occupation of paper folding and cutting, many devices can be used to keep the children busy and interested in their kindergarten Bible studies. Send to New

Let the children memorize the words and take home the thought, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God."

Nothing so soon breaks down the barriers of moral restraint, as the habit of Sabbath breaking.

#### LESSON XI. (December 10.)

LESSONS IN GIVING. Mal. 1. 6-11 and 3. 8-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "God loveth a cheerful giver." 2. Cor. 9. 7.

#### Primary Notes.



*Introductory.* Once upon a time the kind owner of a great deal of land found a poor man in the streets who had nothing to eat and nothing to do. The rich landowner took pity on the poor, forlorn creature, and although he had nothing to pay, he made him one of the tenants of his land. He gave him a good piece of ground

and a house to live in. The land was so rich and good that it was easy to raise crops that would much more than pay the rent or the price for the use of the property, and until the crops were ripe the owner did not ask for any rent. At that time he said the man must give back a share of what he made. The man seemed to be grateful and promised well; but, would you believe it? when he really had something to give back it all looked so good to him that he was unwilling to part with it. The grain in his barn, the sheep in his fold—for the owner had given him everything—and the money in his pocket, all seemed to him to be his own. "I have worked hard for all this," he said, forgetting that he had nothing to work with till it was given him. When the time came to send some sheep the man chose out some that were blind and lame, and sent them, because he could not use them himself. When he ought to have sent a large sum of money he sent a part only of what he owed and kept the rest, saying, "Surely this is mine, for I earned it." But one day a letter was slipped under the door. It had but one sentence in it, but that was a terrible one—"You are a robber." The man was so troubled that he went to the landlord to ask him about it, saying, "I never come here to steal anything." "No," said the owner, "but you have kept back what was mine, and that is robbing me." When the tenant really saw how this was he paid all he owed, and afterward he was happier a thousand times, and richer, too, in what he had left.

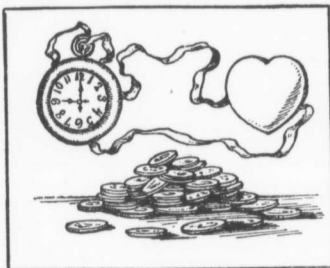
*The lesson.* The lesson for to-day is on giving. The Lord sent a message to his people one time by Malachi, a prophet, saying, "Will a man rob God? But ye have robbed me." He showed them how. It was by keeping back the tithes, or the part that God asked them to give him, and by giving to him that which was worth nothing. [Enlarge upon this.]

*How can we rob God?* By keeping back what belongs to him. He gave us our lives in the first place, and everything we have. He wants us to use all of it for him in a way that will please him, but he lets us use some of it in taking good care of ourselves. Part of all we have should go straight back to the Owner, to show our love and thankfulness.

*What and how should we give?* We will make on the board a watch to remind us of our time. We should give our time to Jesus—all of it; but a part should be used in doing special things for him, helping others, and earning money to do good with. We will make a pile of money, too. At least a tenth part of our money should go to Jesus for his poor and his wandering children. Then we will make a heart. That must not be

divided. It is all his. And these gifts must be made gladly and as long as we live.

This is a precept-lesson, and the precept is, "Bring ye all the tithes," etc.



### Kindergarten Hints.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."—Matt. 10. 42.

This lesson should be a preparation for the Christmas season. Our children who are absorbed in ideas of what they are to receive, and some of them in ideas of what they demand to receive on Christmas, may have a new world opened to them if taught to spend their best efforts at this season in making a Christmas for somebody else. Once they get a taste of the blessedness of giving, and are able to compare it in their concrete experience with the blessedness of receiving, they begin to apply it on general principles without limiting themselves to Christmas Day. We want to assure ourselves that they have practical experience and application in this Christmas season, and try to give them opportunity and suggestion that they may work out our lesson in daily life.

We talk of several ways of giving, and let the children discuss and decide which way they think right and best. Suppose we give because we must. The children readily decide that the gift we give "because we must" is no gift at all. Suppose we give because we see others giving, and like to be called quite as generous. Suppose we give because we love.

Suppose we give away something we do not want and do not like. Suppose we give something that we long to keep. Let the children speak freely in naming their treasures dear to them, and show respect for things they value, even to rusty nails and pebbles.

We discuss and decide about several kinds of gifts. We may give things (money or things

bought with money). Bible illustration: Gifts of the wise men (Matt. 2. 1-11). We may give thoughts (kindly attentions to others' needs, polite attentions, and thoughtful services). Bible illustration: Jesus washing the disciples' feet (John 13. 1-17). We may give self (give up pleasures to spend our strength in serving, expecting nothing in return). Bible illustration: Life work of the apostles.

The children will at first think that the best gifts are those bought with money. It will take time to instill the idea that giving self costs more than giving money. Illustrations from the Bible will be in order here. A gift of love not measured by its money value: The widow's mite (Mark 12. 41-44). Use the words of Jesus in making the application. "This poor widow hath cast more in than all." Self-denial story: Elijah fed by the widow who had only "a handful of meal" and "a little oil in a cruse" (1 Kings 17. 1-16).

How does God ask us to give? "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10. 8). "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down," etc. (Luke 6. 38).

How does God the Father bestow gifts on his children? Use the thought in verse 10 of our lesson. The windows of heaven are opened, and more blessings are poured down than there is room to receive. Continue the thought of the Father's lavish gifts by calling to mind and asking the children to name such free gifts as sunshine, rain, harvest, daily bread, flowers, or any of these things which we are apt to take as a matter of course, forgetting the source of our supplies. The teacher may find inspiration in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, where it speaks of the "treasures of snow and the treasures of hail," and asks, "Who provideth for the ravens?"

How much of love is there in God's gifts? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3. 16).

What has the Lord Jesus given to us? "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10. 11).

In view of all these things, how much of our treasure and how much of self are we to give one another?

### LESSON XII. (December 17.)

#### FRUITS OF RIGHT AND WRONG DOING. Mal. 3. 13 to 4. 6.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6. 7.

#### Primary Notes.

*Introductory.* Once upon a time there was the strangest man you ever heard of. He had a piece of ground and he wanted the best of crops, which

was not strange, but he thought it made no difference what he sowed. Instead of apple seeds he dropped some acorns



in the ground, and scattered seeds of weeds and field flowers where he wanted wheat to grow, with seeds of poison berries in the corners where he wanted blackberries to ripen. When anyone spoke to him about this

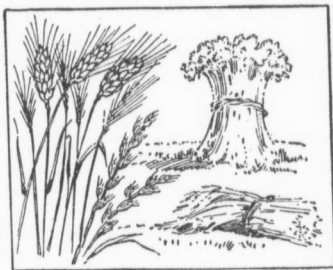
odd way of doing he said, "O, it will all come right some day if I wait long enough." Do you suppose it did? Did that man ever get what he wanted from the seed he sowed? Never, never. And really there never was such a man. No one ever did such a foolish thing in his field, but O, do you know there are many who are like this make-believe man, in the way they sow their heart-gardens with seed? They think that, no matter what they sow, by and by they will get what is good and worth having. They never will. [Drill on Golden Text.] This is a precept-lesson, and the precept or teaching is, "You shall reap." We will write it on our ladder. We have had before, "They shall reap," but this says, "You." You will surely have a harvest, and it will be like the seed you sow, or the seed you plant.

*The lesson.* About four hundred years before Matthew wrote the story of Jesus the prophet Malachi wrote the last book of the Old Testament. Our lesson to-day is in this book. By the lips of his servant Malachi, God tells his people something about doing right and doing wrong, and what will come of each—that is, the fruit of the right and the wrong. He says their words have been stout against him, and they keep asking, "What shall it profit?" that is, "What good will it do to obey God?" Among the wonderful things God says through Malachi is this, that if his children love him so much in their hearts that loving words about him are the fruits of the thoughts, even this will never be forgotten. Those who speak often of him shall be written in his book of remembrance, and by and by, when the Lord makes up his jewels, or his especial treasure, that he cares most about, then these shall be his and he will care for them as a man cares for his only son. Can anything be more beautiful than that? The seed of love in the heart comes to fruit in loving words and deeds, and then God remembers it forever. Those who reap such fruit will have a harvest of joy. This is the fruit of right doing. But what comes of wrongdoing? It shall be like stubble, and those who do it shall not be worth any more either. O, the pity of it!

For stubble is just the short stumps of wheat after it is cut, and it is only fit to be burned. It feeds no one, it helps nobody.

*The harvest will show.* There is something that grows up in the field which looks like wheat, but it isn't. It is called "cheat." The harvest will show which is wheat and which is cheat. You can't get grain for flour out of cheat. We will make some growing on the board, a picture of wheat and a picture of cheat, then a sheaf of wheat and a bundle of cheat thrown down ready to be burned.

Do you want to be sure of the harvest? Now is the time to begin to sow love, and trust, and obedience in the heart.



#### Kindergarten Hints.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." John 15. 8.

The children take everything so literally that there is danger of a misunderstanding if we use the word "fruits" in the sense of "results" without explanation. As we have a good deal to say about a figurative sowing and reaping, we try to make our meaning clear, or they will take this literally also.

Let us study the methods of Jesus as he gave object lessons to his followers. Something within their sight and reach, some material thing quite familiar to all, is like this new spiritual thing or thought which until now has been beyond their grasp. The substance of his method was: Why is it like? Why is it different?

We review our recent thanksgiving lesson, and as the children name their harvest blessings and review the joyous occasion we recall their memory verse containing the Bible promise that while the earth remaineth seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease (Gen. 8. 22).

Where will our fruit come from another year when we have eaten and given away such quantities? This leads to the thought of literal seed

sowing, and shows us where to look for the beginnings of a great harvest.

An apple cut open crosswise shows the seeds arranged in symmetrical order. When the children count the seeds we show that each seed holds a tiny live thing (embryo) which gives promise of a tree with seed-bearing fruit. We show how a single tree gives promise of many trees, and call again for our verse about seed-time and harvest. With the thought of the promised harvest we teach that it is often greater than he who plants can estimate, greater in proportion than the amount of seed sown. We are particular in giving this thought because we wish its concrete illustrations to help us in showing that the results of our good or evil deeds go quite out of our reach, and are not possible to estimate or measure. We can do this by talking of such harvesting as is perfectly familiar to all the class.

That which grows out of a thing or thought grown people sometimes call its "fruit." For instance: That children's hospital to which we sent flowers is the fruit of a good man's thought. The children are able to name other (figurative) "fruits" which have grown out of good thoughts. Jesus said, "A good man is like a good tree." Why? "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit," etc. (Matt. 7. 18). Memorize, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7. 20).

We show that "pretended goodness" cannot bring forth good fruits, because ye shall know it by its fruits. We cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles.

After speaking of figurative good and bad fruit, and the kind of thought from which the fruit grows, and also allowing the children to speak of ways of bringing forth good fruit in the home, we announce that to begin at the real beginning we ought to study ways of seed sowing.

You have all picked dandelion heads when fluffy with winged seeds, and amused yourselves by blowing off the seeds, and, watching them fly off on white wings, have wondered where the wind would carry them. "Seeds with wings," a theme familiar to all kindergarten children. They have beautiful songs about them which would be in place in our Sunday school kindergarten as helping out our illustration. The children name thistles and other plants which have winged seeds. Their experiments in scattering the seeds teach them that with the help of the wind one little plant can scatter its seeds for miles, and that each seed is alive with the promise of a new plant.

We make our application by showing why seeds are like words. An unkind word is scattered

like the seed of a noxious weed. Planted in your heart it grows winged seeds which fly to your neighbor's heart, and from him will fly to others quite out of your reach and beyond your knowledge. Why?

Seeds are like words. A kindly word grows winged seeds. Kindly deeds are the fruit.

We cannot stop the flight of our good or evil words. They are like winged seeds. Why? God knows where the kindly words and where the evil words drop softly like winged seeds into a neighbor's heart, and God can measure the amount of good or evil fruit which they will bring forth. All the week we shall be scattering words which are like seeds. Let us ask that they may be good words which shall spring up and "bring forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

### LESSON XIII. (December 24.)

#### CHRIST'S COMING FORETOLD. Isa. 9. 2-7.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2. 11.

#### Primary Notes.



*Introductory.* Once upon a time a man received a present of a house by the will of one of his relations who had died and left his property to be divided. In this house the man found a box of treasure that was

worth much. The box, strangely enough, had a glass top, and he could see something of what was inside, but the key was lost, and he could not open the box to see everything, and to see plainly. He was very anxious to find the key, and at last, after great search, it was found. Then the box was opened, when the key that fitted the lock was found, and all these treasures could be taken out, examined, and used.

Now, the Old Testament is something like a treasure box, and the New Testament is the key that fits and unlocks it. We could not understand all that is written in the earlier book if we did not have the one that came later. The prophets told beforehand what should come to pass, but when the New Testament was written many of these things had come to pass, and as they fitted together perfectly, they were easy to understand. What could be seen before, as if covered with glass, can now be seen plainly, and can be used too.



*The lesson.* Our lesson to-day is in the book called Isaiah, because this prophet wrote it. His name has a beautiful meaning, "The Lord will save." He foretold, or told before, many things that were to happen, but the most wonderful of all was the coming of the Saviour.

About seven hundred and forty years beforehand God made it seem so real to Isaiah that he wrote, just as if it had happened, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." Hark! Can't you almost hear the angel tell the watching shepherds in the field, "Unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord?" Almost the same words, you see, though nearly eight hundred years apart, for Luke wrote down the angel's words after Jesus went back to heaven. How the foretelling of Isaiah and the telling of the angel fit together!

*The Prince of Peace.* A king's son is called a prince. God's Son is the Prince of Peace. He came to give love and quietness in the heart, to take away fear and anger. Isaiah said he would be the Prince of Peace, and when he came the angels sang, "On earth peace." Sin spoils our peace. Jesus came to take away sin, that we might be at peace with God, our dear Father, not like little rebels fighting against him in our hearts. It was for this he came a baby in the manger cradle of Bethlehem. This is a promise-lesson, and we will write, "He is faithful that promised." If God kept his word after hundreds of years had passed, and sent Jesus, will he ever break his word? O, never. Trust him ever.

*Gifts to the Prince.* Princes ought to have presents. It is always the way. Since the Prince of Peace is God's dear gift to us, what shall we give to him? This crown on the board is to remind



us that Jesus is our Prince. At the happy Christmas time does anyone go about to beat you and make you give presents to people? O no. Gifts are for love's sake. We give because we love to do it. When you go home please go by yourself a

few minutes and think out what you really mean to give Jesus.

### Kindergarten Hints.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2. 14.

Our Christmas decorations will absorb the attention of the children for the first few moments. Give them time to see all that is new, and then make each child feel that on him rests responsibility in these festivities, and present each with a "badge" of holly. At some time during the service let the children hear music of the best quality rendered by professional musicians. While they gaze upon our flowers and evergreens, and listen to the rare music, we are careful not to break the spell, allowing them to absorb the atmosphere of the place; we wait till the last note dies away and then place softly in each hand a picture of the nativity. Now we wait in silence while the beautiful picture speaks to them in words clearer than the eloquence of music and flowers.

Those who know something of the story of the birth of Jesus will begin to name the "people in the picture." Who is this beautiful babe? This is his birthday. Have we gifts to offer him? He is our gift. What is this written in evergreen letters? "On earth peace, good will toward men." We sing of a holy babe, of the angel's message to the shepherds. Two kinds of songs we sing to-day: songs which "tell the story," songs which give praise and thanksgiving.

Our program is so arranged that before we sing our "Halleluiahs," or "praise songs," we sing those which "tell the story." Understanding the words and feeling them, the children can be taught to sing with a good deal of expression. Next we recite the memory verses, which "tell the story in Bible words" (Luke 2. 8 to 14).

Their Scripture memory drill and song practice, together with the teacher's Christmas lesson, should enable the children to give in their own words a clear account of "the first Christmas." When a child is telling of the visit of the wise men, the angel's message to the shepherds, the manger cradle, etc., and pauses for a word, his neighbors all about him are eager to supply it. If we respond to the eager plea on all sides, "Let me tell it," we receive many a suggestion from the quaint and childlike accounts.

Christ's coming foretold is our connecting link with our Old Testament lessons. We get our connection as suggested in the closing paragraphs of the lesson for October 22.

"God's great gift to the world," the theme preceding our halleluiahs songs. Teach that

halleluiah means "Praise ye the Lord." When we hear of our gift, and tell the story over and over to each other, we sing with all our might "Halleluiah!"

The birthday of our Lord brings us many rare and beautiful gifts. Just at first do we think this is all there is of Christmas? When we sing "Halleluiah!" is it because our arms are full of treasures? Certainly not. This could be but a half-hearted song.

The real "Praise ye the Lord!" comes from the heart, and is sung with might and main when we hear the story of the Christ-child, our great gift. Our halleluiah songs grow sweeter still when we learn that we may offer the Christ-child a gift as real as were the golden gifts of the wise men.

What shall we give the Saviour on his birthday? What would he like to have? The hungry, cold, neglected little ones of our city are all his own. They are so dear to him that he says, "Whoever gives to one of the least of these gives to me. Whoever loves one of the least of these loves me."

If we give a Christmas festival for the poor, and each child in our class has made special effort to bring a gift, or to earn money toward the expenses of our festival, and considers it his Christmas party, for which he is responsible, each is making his own practical application of the Christmas lesson.

We need but to suggest that this Christmas party, which has cost us a good deal of hard work, of giving up, of going without things we wanted, this that we give Christ's little ones is a real gift to him. When we receive our own Christmas gifts we think we are really celebrating Christmas. We learn that this is the very least of our Christmas joys. The real celebration of the birthday of our Lord begins with the offering of such gifts as these which have cost us a labor of love, and hearing him whisper in our souls, "This ye have given unto me."

#### LESSON XIV. (December 31.)

##### REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Psa. 103. 2.

##### Primary Notes.

Sing the lesson hymn verse:

I will hear what God will speak,  
I will listen to his voice,  
Jesus' blessing I will seek,  
In his love will I rejoice.

Air, "Pleyel's Hymn."

The lesson ladder is now complete, with initials of titles, first words of Golden Texts, and with the special thoughts of precept, promise,



praise, or prayer filled in. The latter are as follows: First lesson, Praise—Rejoice and give thanks. Second, Precept—Trust God. Third, Promise—He will bring it to pass. Fourth, Precept—Seek of him a right way. Fifth, Promise—They shall reap. Sixth, Prayer—Hear the prayer of thy servant. Seventh, Precept—Be not ye afraid. Eighth, Precept—Hear the word of the Lord. Ninth, Precept—Touch not, taste not, look not. Tenth, Precept—Call the Sabbath a delight. Eleventh, Precept—Bring ye all the tithes. Twelfth, Promise—He is faithful that promised. Fourteenth, Praise—The Lord is good.

Below the ladder, as its foundation, put "The Word of God," and an open Bible if space allows. Above the ladder write "Heaven."

The lesson stories are so striking that they will no doubt be recalled, in brief, without difficulty, and with much delight. Resist the temptation to dwell too long on any story. Recall titles, texts, and truths, and emphasize precepts, promises, etc. Fasten these single thoughts upon the daily lives of the scholars. In few words call back any illustrations that have been used to fix any truth. Use the same words in telling, if possible. Children love to hear stories in the same form. After going over the rounds, let us look again at—

*Our ladder.* It rests on God's dear book. It cannot be shaken, because the word of the Lord stands forever and stands strong. People have tried to prove that the words were not true, but they never could. [Hold up a flower.] Do you see this? When it was on the stalk growing in the sun, could anyone have made you believe it was not alive? It showed that it was alive by growing. So the word of God in the heart grows, and that shows that it is a living word. We speak of it in many ways. We say it lives, yet we say it stands strong, so as to hold up whatever rests on it. These truths on our ladder rest on God's word. The ladder begins and ends with praise. A selfish heart that never gives thanks is one of the worst things in the world. We must learn the lesson of praise, for God is good. His mercy endures forever, and so we must give thanks forever and ever. We must begin here, or how shall we know how to praise him in heaven? Our ladder reaches from earth

to the heaven above. Do you remember the story of a tired traveler who once lay down alone in a strange and lonely place with a stone for a pillow, and dreamed a wonderful dream of a ladder reaching to the skies? On that ladder which Jacob saw angels of God went up and down. Now, if we learn the precious truths that make up our lesson ladder, the angels of blessing will come down to us—that is, God's blessings of love and help will come to us on the truths taught in his holy word.

A ladder is for climbing up. We ought to be nearer to Jesus and to heaven, our beautiful home, because we have studied these lessons.

*Our lives.* Of what use is a ladder if we don't climb? Are we going to live better lives after this, nearer Jesus, because of all we have learned? If we keep counting our blessings, how much time will be left to be cross and to fret? Not a minute. How happy that will be. Every lesson shows that God is good. Then let us praise him every day.

Closing hymn verse:

Jesus, Saviour, teach thou me  
Holy lessons from thy word;  
Make me more and more like thee,  
Since my heart thy voice hath heard.



### Kindergarten Hints.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4. 6.

We may prepare ourselves for surprises in this kindergarten review, for the children remember with remarkable clearness certain lessons which we considered too difficult; and lessons which were so simple as to require (seemingly) little effort on our part have sifted through the children's minds, leaving no trace behind. This

review will show us that a lesson which cost the teacher no effort in preparation or in teaching is practically valueless to the children.

Of course the children are eager to tell of their holiday week, full of Christmas festivities. After such a week of frolic and feasting it is always difficult to get their attention or to keep them still for a single moment. We have to take them just where we find them. We will allow the children to talk for a moment of their Christmas delights, and then merge their "talk" into the story of the first Christmas. The birth of Christ is always a good beginning for a kindergarten lesson covering long periods of Bible history.

Do you think Jesus celebrated Christmas when he grew to be a big boy? When Jesus was growing up few of his friends knew that he was Christ the Lord, or that his birthday was more important than the birthdays of any of his playmates.

His playmates could not possibly know that he was Christ the Lord, even when they were old enough to be told of God's promise of a Son. There are many stories of miracles which the child Jesus performed while playing with his mates, but we do not know that they are true. One story is that, while playing with other children, Jesus modeled birds out of clay, much as you do at school, and it is said that he gave life to the clay birds, and they flew away. We look in our Bible to find stories that we know to be true about the wonders worked by our Lord, and we find that he never used his great gifts of healing and life-giving except to help the lame, the blind, the hungry, the sick. Can you remember any of these miracles of mercy and healing? Review lessons for January 15, February 5, 19, March 12, April 2. The account of the restoring of the high priest's servant's ear might be grouped in this list (May 14).

Did the sight of these wonders make everybody believe that Jesus was the Lord? There were many who were cruel to him. Tell me about his true friends. Lessons for January 8, April 2. Who was it that pretended friendship while false and cruel? Lesson for May 14. Who was the man that washed his hands to show that he would take no blame for letting enemies hurt Jesus? Lesson for May 23. What happened then? Lesson for June 4 reviewed in close connection with the Easter lesson.

Once upon a time, long, long before the first Christmas, a large caravan crossed a desert. Show picture of a caravan which the children may describe. Where were all these men, women, and children going? Home. Where was home? In the land where Jesus was coming, even as God had promised. Where was the

starting point of this caravan? Lesson for August 27.

We can name some of the captives, and tell Bible stories about Daniel and the others. All these lessons for July are easily remembered, and the children will all speak at once in trying to tell of Daniel in the lions' den, the fiery furnace, etc. Interest begins to flag when we touch upon the August lessons, which were too abstract for the class. If the teacher can get a copy of "The Prophets," by Sargent (copy of the famous painting in the Boston Library), the children may get more out of the review, and possibly may remember a single incident in connection with each prophet, which is all that we can reasonably expect. We introduce the subject of the prophets by speaking of them as men sent by God to teach the captives to turn from tempting heathen ways and turn to the living God.

Review the topical lessons by their Golden Texts. The first three lessons in December are important and practical in their application. In reviewing these topical lessons the teacher tries to learn whether they are, to the children, a mere matter of memory drill, or whether the children are trying to live according to the precepts taught.

Whisper Songs for December.

TENTH LESSON.

This is my heav'nly Father's day.  
He leads me with a gentle hand  
Along a peaceful, happy way,  
The holy way of his command.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

This is my heav'nly Father's world.  
Its gold and lands are his alone.  
He lends me all I have, and I  
In giving give him back his own.

TWELFTH LESSON.

This is my heav'nly Father's word.  
He tells me all that I must know  
Of life and death, of right and wrong,  
While I am living here below.

THIRTEENTH LESSON.

This is the birthday of the Lord,  
And joy is ringing round the earth;  
For little children ev'rywhere  
Are singing of the Saviour's birth.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Fourth Quarter.

Teacher. Why do we come to Sunday school?

Class. To learn about God.

T. What book teaches about him?

C. The Holy Bible.

T. The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.

C. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

T. The Lord our God be with us: . . . let him not leave us, nor forsake us.

C. That we may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments.

T. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

C. For this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.

SINGING.

Safely through another week,  
God has brought us on our way;  
Let us now a blessing seek,  
Waiting in thy courts to day:  
Day of all the week the best,  
Emblem of eternal rest.

T. What is it to pray?

C. To speak to God.

T. Why should we speak to God?

C. Because he is our Father, and he wants us to tell him all our pleasures and all that grieves us.

All. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

T. We bring our offering to-day to Jesus.  
Why should we give to him?

C. Because he gives us all things, and we should love to give what we can to him.

Sing (while offering is taken) "Hear the pennies dropping."

BIRTHDAY EXERCISE.

BIRTHDAY SONG.—Tune, "Precious Jewels."

We praise thee, we praise thee,  
Our dear heavenly Father,  
For birthdays, for all days,  
The gifts of thy love.

Chorus:

Teach us how to spend them,  
Begin them and end them,  
Thy blessing attend them,  
Dear Lord from above.

We love thee, we love thee,  
Our dear heavenly Father,  
We lift up our voices  
Together in song.

Cho.

MOTION EXERCISE.

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING.

(Touch finger tips over the head.)

"As we raise our hands toward the sky above  
We remember God's banner o'er us is love.

(Fold hands in lap and bow the head.)

And we bow our heads again in prayer,  
Giving ourselves to his loving care.  
May the lesson learned in our hearts sink deep.  
May the Lord between us a loving watch keep.  
May we show this wish in our work and play,  
That we've learned of Jesus on this holy day.  
We pray thee to take each little hand,  
And lead us all to the better land. Amen.

## Advent.

Softly he cometh—

This King;  
No sound on the mountains afar;  
No herald save one silent star;  
Nor highway with triumph to ring.

Lowly he cometh—

This King;  
No robes of bright purple and gold;  
No pageantry royal and bo'd;  
No banner its glory to fling.

Meekly he cometh—

This King,  
To sit in our earth's shade of woe;  
To wear our humility, so  
That souls in their sonship may sing.

Quickly he cometh—

This King,  
Lord, even so! Longing we wait  
Outside of the pearl-built gate,  
Outside of the glory so great,  
Till thou our glad welcome shall bring,  
Thou—Brother, and Saviour,  
And King!

## Book Notices.

"The Land of Israel." A Text Book on the Physical and Historical Geography of the Holy Land, embodying the results of recent research. By Robert Laird Stewart, D.D. With seventeen maps and numerous illustrations. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co.; William Briggs. 12mo. Pp. xxix-352 Price, \$1.50.

It is absolutely impossible to understand the history of the people of Israel, and especially the journeyings of our Lord, without having a clear and definite comprehension of the geography of the Lord's Land. Upon the little area of Palestine has been focused the attention of explorers and archaeologists for many years. Their labours, especially those of the Palestine Exploration Fund, have been laid under tribute for the preparation of this up-to-date handbook of this important subject. The first part of this book treats the land of Israel as a whole, and the second part takes it up section by section. Part I. describes its physical features, natural history, early inhabitants, tribal and political divisions, highways and caravan routes, the present

condition, the history and associations, and the testimony of the land to the book. Part II. describes in detail the great natural features, the maritime plain, the mountain region, Jerusalem and its surroundings, the Jordan valley, etc. This book will be found an invaluable help to the intelligent study of the Word of God. It has thirteen sectional and two larger maps, and twenty-one other illustrations.

"The Miracles of Missions" (Third Series). By Arthur T. Pierson, D.D. (Editor of The Missionary Review of the World.) 12mo. Pp. 274. Illustrated. Price, cloth, \$1.00; paper, 35 cents. New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Co. Toronto: William Briggs.

The third series of Dr. Arthur T. Pierson's "Miracles of Missions," which has just been published, is a book of unusual interest to Christian workers. In the countries where God has reached out his hand to unenlightened peoples; providential interpositions are frequent, but the records of conversions and marvels which Dr. Pierson has gathered in this volume will be surprising even to those who are familiar with mission miracles. Authentic records are given of wonderful results in many fields of mission enterprise. There are stories of thrilling adventure and missionary heroism in the jungles of Africa and hardship and danger encountered in the vast forests of British America, each with impressive instances of answered prayer. These strong proofs of the truth and power of Christianity will be a help to many believers at a time when agnosticism and incredulity so frequently threaten the church. The book will be a welcome addition to the two preceding volumes of this series. It is printed and bound in similar style and illustrated with half-tone pictures.

## Speed on.

Speed on, O year, the time foretold,  
By bard and minstrel sung;  
Lead on the coming age of gold,  
And give its praise a tongue;  
So shall disension's voice be stilled,  
While strife and malice flee,  
And earth's green hills and vales be filled  
With sweetest charity.

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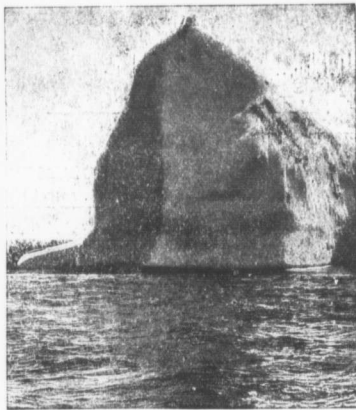
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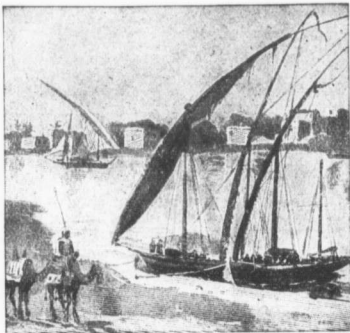
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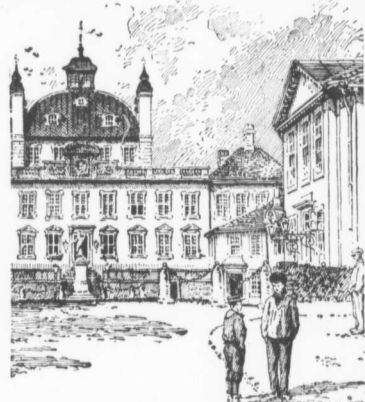
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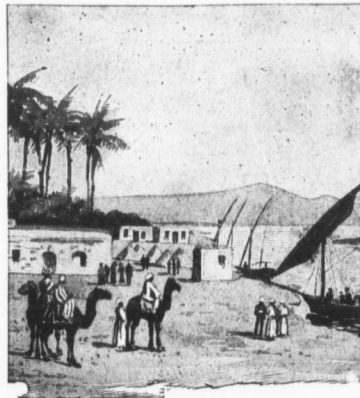
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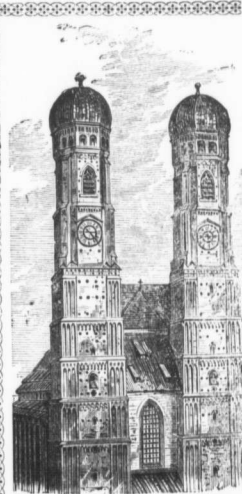
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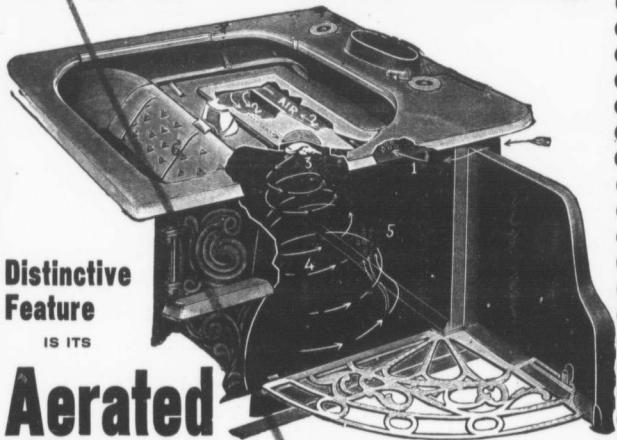
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