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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1872.

JESUS, AFTER HIS ASCENSION.

SUNDAY, March 10th, 1872.
The Sealed Book.—Rev. v.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing.

SCRIPTURE SELECTION.—John i. 29-51; Isaiah xi. 1-10.

SUMMARY.—Jesus, in bearing the world's sins, has become the world's Ruler, the Church's Head, the Revealer of destiny, and the object of human and angelic worship.

ANALYSIS.—I. Challenge vs. 17. (a) Made. (b) Unanswered. (c) Answered. II. The Adoration. vs. 3-14. (a) By Saints. (b) By Angels. (c) Universal.

EXPOSITION.—“On the throne.”—A throne is a king's seat. The one here meant was surrounded by twenty-four thrones or seats. Ch. 4: 4. It was central, for the Supreme King—the Triune God. Ch. 4: 8.

The book.—vs. 1. (1) Its place, “in God's right hand”; the hand of power, of execution. The book, i. e., all events of which it treated, were at God's kingly disposal. (2) Its form. It was not like one of our bound books, but a roll, i. e., a long parchment written upon and then rolled up. Ez. 2: 9, 10; Is. 34: 4; Rev. 6: 14. (3) Its writing. “Within and on the back side.” Parchment usually was written only on one side, and when rolled up the part seen was unwritten. (4) The seals. Seven, the perfect number, indicating completeness, not in the sealing only, but in the matter of the roll, as it was sealed in seven divisions. Chs. 6, 7, 8. The manuscript was long, divided into seven parts, and in rolling it up, a seal was put on at the end of each part. Hence, the last seal put on must be the first broken, and then the roll could be read to the second seal, and so on through the seven, (5) Its nature. The book of God's decrees respecting our world, as related to the church. This appears from the following chapters.

The challenge.—vs. 2. (1) To what. “To open [i. e., unroll] the book” or roll, scroll, in order to read it and reveal its contents, “and to loose the seals thereof.” Not loose or break them after it was unrolled, but before and in order that it might be unrolled. (2) For whom? One “worthy,” who had the right, or authority to do this. A seal is either an engraved instrument used for stamping upon wax, or the wax bearing the impression stamped upon it. Every king had his own seal with which he sealed documents, doors, etc. 2 Kings 21: 8; Deut. 32: 34; Matt. 27: 66. (3) By Whom? An angel here, as elsewhere, represented as busied about man's redemption—the welfare of the church and its several members. “Ministering spirits.” “A strong angel.” The angels are of unequal rank and power. Theas. 4: 16; Eph. 6: 12. This one needed to be strong in order to make his voice heard through the universe, as according to the vision he did.

The failure.—vs. 3. “No man,” better “no one;” no being, man, fiend or angel. “In heaven,” “in earth,” “under the earth,” i. e., anywhere in the whole realm of created existence. “Was able,” had authority, as above, or had without authority, as above, or had, without authority, the power, for no man can wrench from God his eternal secrets. “To look thereon,” i. e., upon the opened roll and what it contained. The closed roll John and all others present saw in the King's hand. vs. 1.

The sorrow.—vs. 4. “Wept much.” The word rendered “wept” implies not only the shedding of tears, but also every external expression of grief—a strong word including wailing and lamentation. It shows how mightily oppressed was the church, how dark was the future, and how anxious were the Christians; for this betrays the mind of the Apostle as he had toiled, and suffered, and labored.

The comfort.—vs. 6. (1) By whom? “One of the elders.” See ch. 4: 4. David divided the priests into twenty-four classes, each with its head, and these head priests, representing both the priesthood and the people, the whole Israel of God, probably correspond to these twenty-four elders. (2) What? One is found able to answer the challenge. On these titles see Gen. 49: 9, 10; Is. 11: 1-10.

The Lamb.—vs. 6, 7. (1) His place. Compare ch. 4. The “four beasts,” or living creatures, were in immediate connection with the throne, ch. 4: 6, and hence led in worship. vs. 8 and ch. 4: 9, 10. (2) His character. A lion and a root, indicating power and increase, he is here also a Lamb, and that too as one which had been slain. This shows Christ as our sacrifice. Though once slain, he now stood, and stood where he did because slain. The horn is the symbol of power. Ps. 132: 17; Dan. 8: 3-5. Seven horns of perfect power. Matt. 28: 18. The seven eyes, which were the seven spirits, show Christ's fitness to be the world's Judge. (3) His act. “He came,” i. e., to the throne, as the high priest to the ark. The word “became flesh,” a coming from God. Crucified and risen, he went to God. Our Mediator, he is viewed as having perfect access to both the Father and us. “And took the book.” The Head of the Church, and Lord of the world because of his atoning death, God's purposes concerning the world are fitly given into his hand, or both execution and, if he wills, to revelation.

The prostration.—vs. 8. (1) To whom? The Lamb. (2) For what? For adoration—supreme worship—showing that Jesus Christ is to be worshipped, and not merely imitated. He is our Lord, not alone our teacher. (2) With what? With “harps” to express the joyful service of praise, and “vials,” or rather “bowls having more breadth than depth,” such as were used in the temple service.

The new song.—vs. 9, 10. (1) The fact. Redemption wakens in the soul peace and joy, and the spirit of song, of everlasting song. (2) Its burden was Christ the Redeemer, not merely Christ the Revealer. The words, “shall reign on the earth” were, and are, of comfort, to a struggling, persecuted church.

The angels.—vs. 11, 12. (1) Their position. Outside and around the elders. The saints, not the angels, are the redeemed. Hence, the angels stand further from the throne and Lamb. (2) Their number. Literally “myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands.” (3) Their interest. Intense, cordial. They gather, they admire, they sing. In full sympathy. 1 Pet. 1: 12. (4) Their song. Not of their own redemption, but of the Lamb's worthiness. The emphasis still on his death.

The universal worship.—vs. 13. Jesus is crowned Lord of all, and Lord forever; joined inseparably in worship with “him that sitteth upon the throne.” The doctrine of the Trinity here, as so often elsewhere, appears.

Conclusion.—In vs. 14 is given the response of the universal church. We have here a beautiful and winsome exhibition of the society and companionship which true religion furnishes. See Heb. 12: 22-24. The great practical question is: Are we prepared or preparing for that society?—Condensed from Baptist Teacher.

QUESTIONS.—Where was the throne mentioned in vs. 1? Ch. iv. 1, 2. Who sat on it? Ch. iv. 10, 11. What had he in his right hand? vs. 1. Describe the books used in John's time? Ez. ii. 9, 10. What was the use of the seals? vs. 2. Compare ch. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7.

What was the angel's proclamation? vs. 2. What its result? vs. 3. Why did John weep? vs. 4. Who comforted him? vs. 5. Compare ch. iv. 4. What two titles did he apply to Christ? Explain the first? See Gen. xlix. 9, 10. The second? Is. xi. 1-10. What title does John give to Christ? vs. 6. Why this title? Is. liii. 7. Of what was the horn a symbol? Ps. cxxxii. 17. What then would the seven horns symbolize? Whether were the seven spirits sent? vs. 6. What do you suppose is symbolized by the seven eyes which are seven spirits? What did the Lamb do? vs. 7.

Who then fell down before the Lamb? vs. 8. Was this an act of worship? Ought Christ to be worshipped? Why? What had the elders in their hands? For what were harps used? Ps. xliii. 4. Ps. cxxxvii. 2. What name is given to the vessels for incense in Ex. xxxii. 3? Is it worship to offer to Christ praise and prayer?

Why was their song called “a new song”? What was the song? vs. 9, 10. By what does Christ redeem us? From whom does he gather his redeemed? Does this teach that all men will be saved? What does he make his redeemed? vs. 10. Explain.

Who next sung? vs. 11. What was their position? Do they call Christ their Redeemer? What leads them to offer praise? Of what do they declare him worthy?

Scripture Catechism, 21, 22.

“POOR HENRIETTE IS DEAD.”—Henriette has regularly attended at the terminus of the Orleans railway for months past, expecting the return of her lover, killed a year ago at one of the battles before Orleans. The railway people humoured the harmless lunatic, and gave her a seat on the platform, where she might be seen in her Sunday dress, with a bouquet of flowers and a packet of cakes. A few days ago, when her friends came to take her away—she was dead.

Youths' Department.

MY BABY.

“Born to trouble!” Dinah sighed, and pressed her baby closer to her breast. “Yes, that is what the minister read last night: ‘Man is born to trouble.’ Well, I've had a sight of trouble in my time, mercy knows; and 't'ant pleasant that I know. But I've got through it, one way or another, so far, and I s'pose I shall get through to the end. But, seems to me I can't bear to have my baby here, blessed little honey; go over such a rough road. O God! can't you spare the child?” cried the fond mother, as she lifted her eyes up through the window where the golden sunlight was streaming in, as if she thought she could look straight up through the brightness into the face of her heavenly Friend.

“O God, you've sent lots of trouble to me, and I know I've deserved every mite of it; but oh, do n't let it fall so hard on the poor baby, please, dear Lord.” And the tears streamed down the mother's cheeks.

Doesn't every mother feel just as Dinah did? We can endure trouble ourselves, but we would fain shield our children from the rude blasts of sorrow. Mother, here is where we need faith. God sends trouble to us for our good, does n't he? And if he sees that our children also need trials he will send them. Can we not trust our kind heavenly Father? We know he will not hurt us, neither will he hurt them. He will not send a single pain more than they can bear; he is too kind for that. He never afflicts willingly. Then let us give our little ones to him as soon as they are born, and ask him to shape their lives just as he sees best in order to bring them safe home to heaven. That is the blessed end, to enjoy God, and to glory him for ever in heaven.—Morning Light.

JOHNNY'S PRAYERS.

“Mamma,” said Johnnie Bourne one day, with a discouraged look, “I do n't think it's much use to pray, after all.”

“Why do you feel so, Johnnie?”

“Because I pray to God three times every day to bless my food, and I do n't see that he does it.”

“Why, Johnnie,” exclaimed mamma, “of course God blesses your food. Do n't you see how fast you grow? how stout and well you are? It is your food which God blesses, that makes you grow.”

“Is it?” asked the child with surprise.

“I did n't think of that.”—Id.

STORIES ABOUT LIONS.

The lion is strong and cruel, yet he will become attached to those who treat him kindly. A story is told of one who was brought from India, and who on the passage grew very fond of a sailor who had charge of him. His name was “Nero.” On being shut up in a cage in London, he grew sulky, and was very fierce when any one came near him, so that it was dangerous even for his keeper to approach him.

One day, a few weeks after Nero had been shut up in his new prison, a party of sailors visited the menagerie, and were warned by the keeper not to go near the lion, who every now and then growled savagely at those who were looking at him. All at once one of these sailors ran up to the cage, and thrusting in his hand, cried out: “What! old shipmate! don't you know me? What cheer, old Nero, my lad?”

The lion instantly left off feeding and growling, sprang up on the bars of the cage, and put out his nose between them. Jack patted him on the head, and the lion rubbed his hand with his whiskers like a cat, showing evident signs of pleasure.

“Ah,” said Jack, turning to the keeper and spectators, who stood frightened and in astonishment, “Nero and I were once shipmates, and you see he isn't like some folks; he don't forget an old friend.”

The following anecdote is told of a lion who was kept in a menagerie at Brussels. The den of this lion who was named Danco, needed some repairs. The carpenter who had to make them, on seeing the lion in the same cage as that in which he was to work, started back in terror.

“I can't go in beside that beast,” he said.

“But,” replied the keeper, “I will take him to the lower end of the cage, while you are at work.”

Upon this they entered the cage, and the carpenter fell to work. For a while the keeper amused himself with Danco, but

growing tired, dropped into a sound sleep. The carpenter worked on without fear, trusting to the keeper for protection from the beast he so much dreaded. Having repaired the lower part of the cage, he turned to ask the keeper's opinion of his work. To his horror, he saw the lion and his keeper sleeping side by side. The lion awoke at the sound of the carpenter's voice, and glared at him fiercely; after a warning growl, which seemed to say, “Don't come too near my master,” it placed its paw on the keeper's breast, and composed itself once more to slumber. To the carpenter's great joy, some of the attendants came up and awoke the keeper, who did not appear the least alarmed at his position, but shaking the lion's paw, led it off to another cage, and left the carpenter to finish his work without further alarm.—Children's House.

SILENTLY.

Flake by flake the snow falls through the air, so quickly that it appears as if it was afraid to make a noise. It has made no great stir, yet it causes others to stir about. It is one of the quiet forces. The travel by the road is sometimes entirely stopped, and the puffing engine is snowed in.

The sun shines, and the rays have a silent influence. There was no noise in the coming of that beam. But under the steady noiseless heat of the sun, the snow melts away. The earth is warmed, and the seed, without saying anything to anybody, in a spirit of humility, puts its roots down, and then shoots its head up through the dark earth, seeking the light.

The trees grow higher without making a boast of it, and bear their fruits in silence, never crying to all the world, “Come and see what we have done.”

All thinking is done silently. One person influences another almost unconsciously. Love is won, not by harsh peals from boasting trumpets, but by kind, soft, gentle words. He who works quietly works surely and effectively. Such a Christian can do great things by gentle means.—Christian at Work.

THE RUNAWAY KNOCK.

“Teacher,” said a bright earnest-faced boy, “why is it that so many prayers are unanswered? I do not understand. The Bible says: ‘Ask and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;’ but it seems to me a great many knock and are not admitted.”

“Did you never sit by your cheerful parlor fire,” said the teacher, “on some dark evening and hear a loud knocking at the door? Going to answer the summons, have you not sometimes looked out into the darkness, seeing nothing, but hearing the pattering of some mischievous boys, who knocked but did not wish to enter, and therefore ran away? Thus it is often with us. We ask for blessings but do not really expect them; we fear that Jesus will not hear us, will not admit, and so we go away.”

“Ah, I see,” said the earnest-faced boy, his eyes shining with the new light dawning in his soul; “Jesus cannot be expected to answer runaway knocks. I mean to keep knocking until He cannot help opening the door.”

SECRET OF HAPPINESS.

A negro in Virginia, who was remarkable for his good sense and his knowledge of the essential truths of Christianity, and especially for his freedom from all gloomy fears in regard to his eternal state, was once addressed in this wise: “You seem to be always comfortable in the hope of the Gospel. I wish you could tell me how you manage it, to keep so steadily in this blessed frame of mind.” “Why, massa,” he replied, “I just fall flat on de promises, and pray right up;” an answer that would do honor to the head and heart of a philosopher, and that contains in it the true secret of earthly happiness.

THE SCHOOL AND THE HOME.

The Sunday school releases no parent from the obligation to train his offspring in the Scriptures. It, in some instances, ignorant and careless parents feel absolved from the parental effort by this auxiliary of modern times, there are contrary instances tenfold more numerous, of parents and families who, from the connection of their children with Sunday schools, have first become awake to the duty of instructing them, and first learned the best methods of performing it.

THE BROKEN SAW.

A boy went to live with a man who was accounted a hard master. He never kept his boys; they ran away or gave notice they meant to quit; so he was half his time without, and in search of a boy. The work was not very hard—opening and sweeping out the shop, chopping wood, going errands and helping round. At last Sam Fisher went to live with him. “Sam's a good boy,” said his mother. “I should like to see a boy now-a-days that had a spark of goodness in him,” growled the new master.

It is always bad to begin with a man who has no confidence in you; because, do your best, you are likely to have little credit for it. However, Sam thought he would try; the wages were good, and his mother wanted him to go. Sam had been there but three days before in sawing a cross-grained stick of wood, he broke the saw. He was a little frightened. He knew he was careful, and he knew he was a pretty good sawyer, too, for a boy of his age; nevertheless, the saw broke in his hands.

“And Mr. Jones will thrash you for it,” said another boy who was in the wood-house with him. “Why, of course I didn't mean it, and accidents will happen to the best of folks,” said Sam, looking with a very sorrowful air on the broken saw. “Mr. Jones never makes allowances,” said the other boy; “I never saw anything like him. That Bill might have stayed, only that he jumped into a hen's nest and broke her eggs. He daren't tell of it; but Mr. Jones kept suspecting and suspecting, and laid everything out of the way to Bill, whether Bill was to blame or not, till Bill couldn't stand it, and wouldn't.”

“Did he tell Mr. Jones about the eggs?” asked Sam. “No,” said the boy; “he was 'fraid; Mr. Jones has got such a temper.” “I think he'd better owned just at at once,” said Sam. “I suspect you'll find it better to preach than to practice,” said the boy. “I'd run away before I'd tell him;” and he soon turned on his heel and left poor Sam alone with his broken saw.

The poor boy did not feel very comfortable or happy. He shut up the wood-house, walked out into the garden, and then went up to his little chamber under the eaves. He wished he could tell Mrs. Jones; but she wasn't sociable, and he had rather not. “Oh, my God,” said Sam, falling upon his knees, “help me to do the thing that is right.”

I do not know what time it was, but when Mr. Jones came into the house the boy heard him. He got up, crept down stairs, and met Mr. Jones in the kitchen.

“Sir,” said Sam, “I broke your saw, and I thought I'd come and tell you 'fore you saw it in the morning.”

“I should think morning soon enough to tell of your carelessness. Why do you come down to-night?”

“Because,” said Sam, “I was afraid if I put it off I might be tempted to tell a lie about it. I'm sorry I broke it; but I tried to be careful.”

Mr. Jones looked at the boy from head to foot, then stretching out his hand, “There, Sam,” he said heartily, “give me your hand. Shake hands; I'll trust you, Sam. That's right; that's right. Go to bed, boy. Never fear. I'm glad the saw broke; it shows the mettles in you. Go to bed.”

Mr. Jones was fairly won. Never were better friends after that than Sam and he. Sam thinks justice has not been done Mr. Jones. If the boys had treated him honestly and “above-board” he would have been a good man to live with. It was their conduct which soured and made him suspicious. I do not know how this is; I only know that Sam Fisher finds in Mr. Jones a kind and faithful master.

THE WINE QUESTION.

If I burn my fingers in the fire, I do not hasten to the Scriptures to seek chapter and verse forbidding me to do such a thing. Neither, if I cannot find such chapter and verse, do I feel myself compelled to go back and roast my fingers. So, if I were a missionary to China, looking through my Bible and finding not a single syllable on opium-eating or smoking, would my soul melt within me at the thought that I could not now speak a word against it? No; seeing that giant evil stalking through the land, I would feel called of God to smite it with all my soul. And now Intemperance is desolating our land. What eye will read these words that has not looked into the grave of some dear friend who died of drink? And shall we look for chapter and verse? Are not the means of broken hearts, the agonizing prayers of mothers, the despair of wives, and the wails of starving little children, enough for us?—Presbyterian.