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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1872.

JESUS, AFTER HIS ASCENSION.

SUNDAY, March 17th, 1872.

The Lamb in the midst of the throne,—Rev. vii. 9-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." vs. 17.

SCRIPTURE SELECTION.—Psalm. xxiii. and xxvii.

SUMMARY.—The blood-washed saints, here scattered, there gathered; here in a godless world, there in the heavenly society; now dishonored, then exalted; now in tears, then tearless.

ANALYSIS.—I. *The Worshipping Host.* vs. 9-12. (a) The Redeemed. (b) The Angels.II. *The Condition of the Redeemed.* vs. 13-17. (a) Past. (b) Present. (c) Future.

EXPOSITION.—*The connection.*—Our last lesson brought before us the Lamb taking the seven-sealed scroll, and receiving the homage of saints, angels, and all creation. In the sixth chapter we see him break the seals one by one until six are broken, and with John we mark the successive disclosures. When the sixth seal is broken there appears first a scene of wide spread universal commotion, change and judgment, Ch. vi. 12-17. Then follows the gracious act of God in sealing by his angel the number of the elect among the tribes of Israel, Ch. vii. 1-8. Then we have the magnificent vision which forms our lesson, vs. 9-17. We are thus looking upon that which was brought to light in revealing the sixth division of the roll or "book," and indeed the very last of the division, as the eighth chapter begins with the breaking of the seventh seal, Ch. viii. 1. We are to keep in mind the place and the general character of the scene revealed in the last vision, as these remain the same for this.

The assembly.—vs. 9. (1) *Its extent.* Innumerable. A vast congregation. Those sealed from the twelve tribes were 12,000 for each tribe (vs. 4-8) in all 144,000, a mighty host; but the natural import of John's words is that those now under his eye were far more numerous. (2) *Its origin.* Manifest, not from the Jews only, but from every nation. This view stands in contrast with the preceding. There were the tribes of one nation, here all the tribes and diverse tongues of all nations. It is the bringing together of the Spiritual Israel, born of God into the family of Christ, who is the true head of both Abraham and all other believers. (3) *Their position.* "Before the throne," as priests coming near the altar, as kings welcomed to the great King's presence, as subjects worshipping. (3) *Their garments.* "White robes," symbolic of spotless righteousness. Just in proportion to our hatred of sin will be the attractiveness of this view. (4) *The palms.* This mention of palms, with several other features of to-day's Scripture, has led to the conviction that the feast of Tabernacles is in mind. See Ex. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 34-43. Palm branches, fit symbols of the prosperous state, and betokened joy and rejoicing. See John xii. 13; Neh. viii. 15.

The ascription.—vs. 10. (1) *The manner.* "With a loud voice," indicating high, exultant joy. Very significant is that word "loud;" past sorrow, present bliss, and the coming felicity are all mirrored in it. (2) *The substance.* Two things,—the blessing and its author; the saint will in heaven forget neither. The blessing is "salvation," or rather "the salvation." Here even Christians may so far forget themselves as to think well of what they have done, but hereafter they will have a clearer eye.

Angels worshipping.—vs. 11-12. (1) *Their position.* As in the last lesson, outside the redeemed, and in a circle beyond them, and yet close to them, showing both separation and sympathy, difference and unity. (2) *The object.* God, not the Lamb, is mentioned, but in Ch. vi. 12, it was the Lamb, and such is the relation of God and the Lamb in this whole representation that if one is worshipped the other must be. See also Heb. i. 6. (3) *Their words.* The first "Amen" may be in approval of the words of the redeemed in vs. 10. Here, as in Ch. v. 12, there are seven ascriptions, the same except that here "thanksgiving" is used where that passage has "wishes." The symbolic seven here

imports that all excellence and perfection is to be ascribed to God.

The question.—vs. 13. The Elder asks John, not for information, but to prepare him for the explanation, "What [or rather who] are these?" Who are they that they, rather than others, have this honor? "Whence came they?" Not out of what country, see vs. 9, but out of what experiences,—what have they passed through in coming to this place?

The answer.—vs. 14. (1) *By whom.* "Sir, thou knowest." In the Greek, "thou" is emphatic, as much as to say, "It is not for me, but for thee to answer; I hear, speak thou." (2) *Its extent.* It is very full, running through the rest of this chapter.

The past.—vs. 14. (1) *Tribulation.* Our version reads, "great tribulation;" it should read, "the great tribulation," definite, some particular tribulation already in mind. The Feast of Tabernacles looked back to the flight from Egypt, and the forty years in the wilderness. Bengel makes the tribulation here refer to the earthly trials of all saints in their escape from sin's bondage, and their journey to the heavenly land. It refers directly to the judgments of God upon the earth, mentioned in Ch. vi. 12-17, which brought to the chereb also trials and affliction. (2) *Escape.* Mark the words "came out of." Others were swept away by the floods and drowned in perdition; never truly came out of tribulation. (3) *Purified.* How? Not by the tribulation; not by their own works, troubles, or blood, but by Christ's blood, through God's grace.

The present.—vs. 15. (1) *Their place.* In the temple and before the throne. The temple is God's house, his home, place of his presence, where he gathers his sons and daughters, where is high, holy, sweet, free, loving communion. Ps. xxiv. 2. (2) *Their employment.* Continuous service, "day and night." No weariness, it is a spontaneous, glad, grateful service, not irksome, of constraint, compelled. When God's Spirit writes God's law in the heart, service is liberty. If we are saved it is as natural to serve God as to breathe. Notice, too, that heaven is not a place of sleep, or sluggishness, but of life, action, intense action. (3) *The reason.* "Therefore," because cleansed in Christ's blood they have this place and render this service. No man ever did or ever will take that place in any other way, for "the carnal mind is enmity against God."

The future.—vs. 15-17. (1) *The divine presence.* "Dwell among them," literally "tabernacle upon them." See Ex. xl. 34-38. Comp. Is. iv. 4, 6. "Shall dwell," i. e., without end or interruption, permanent abode. (2) *No more tribulation.* Once endured, never returning, "light affliction which is but for a moment," compared with eternity. (3) *Divine care.* The Lamb appears here not as a Lamb only, but a shepherd, no less than the great and good Shepherd. Ps. xxiii. and John x. "Feed," literally "to act as shepherd," i. e., to pasture, tend, care for.

ILLUSTRATION.—"I long to see home," says the sailor, when the ship rocks to and fro from the violence of the storms. "I am going home," thinks the tired merchant, when at night he bars the heavy doors of his store. "I must hurry home," says the mother whose heart is on the baby in the cradle. "Oh, how I long to get home," says the school boy, disconsolate over his task. "Don't stop me, I am going home," says the bright-eyed girl, skipping along her path. "Oh, that I could see home again," cries the wanderer, lost in the pathless forest. "Almost home," says the dying Christian. "I shall soon come home, and then no more sorrow, no more sighing; almost home."

QUESTIONS.—In the last lesson who broke the seals? Ch. vi. 1. The vision of to-day's lesson follows the breaking of which seal? Ch. vi. 12. What first appeared after it was broken? Ch. vi. 12-17. What then appeared? Ch. vii. 1-8. What follows this vision? Ch. viii. 1.

Whom did John see before the throne? vs. ix. Their number? Origin? Garments? At what Jewish feast were palm-branches carried in the hand? Lev. xxiii. 34-43. Of what is the palm a symbol? Ps. xlii. 12. Comp. John xii. 13. What did the multitude cry? vs. 10. Why?

What was the position of the angels? vs. 11. What did they do? What did they say? vs. 12. Are these the same as their words in ch. v. 12? Do they speak in either case of their own salvation? Why?

What questions were put to John by one of the elders? vs. 13. His answer? vs. 14. Its meaning? Whence did the redeemed multitude come? vs. 14. Comp. ch. vi. 12-17. Do all the saved come from this? What are meant by the white robes? Rev. xix. 8. Why had there been need of

this washing? Isaiah lxiv. 6. What is meant by washing them "in the blood of the Lamb"? Heb. ix. 14. Why did Christ die? 1. Cor. xv. 3.

Could they have stood before the throne if they had not been thus cleansed? vs. 15. Can any of us unless we are? Where would God's children wish to dwell? Ps. lxxiv. 10. Repeat vs. 16. Were pilgrims in the wilderness of a hot climate liable to these evils? What are the last words of this chapter? Does not this seem like a tender mother's care?

Scripture Catechism, 23, 24.

Youths' Department.

FOUR SERVANTS OF SATAN.

Dear young friends,—Satan has a great many servants, and they are very busy running about doing all the harm they can. I know four of them, and some of the mischief which they have done. I found out their names, and I want to put you on your guard against them, for they are very sly. They will make believe to be your friends. They appear sociable, easy, good-natured, and not too much in a hurry. They seem to wait your own time, and entice you when you least expect it.

"Oh, we want you to enjoy yourselves," they say, "and not be so particular," and the arguments they use are very taking; at least, I must think so, since so many of the young listen to them and are led away by them.

And all, I believe, because they did not know, in the first place, who was speaking to them. They were deceived. They did not see it was Satan's uniform they had on. Do you ask for their names? Here they are:

"There's no danger." That is one.
"Only this once." That is another.
"Everybody does so," is the third; and
"By-and-by," is the fourth.

If you are tempted to leave God's house, and break the Sabbath-day to go for a sail or a ride, and "Only this once," or "Everybody does so," whispers at your elbow, know it is false. The great evil of one sin is, that you bring your heart and conscience into such a state that you will be likely to go on sinning; for there is not half so much to stop you as there was to prevent you from setting out at first. Hold no parley with "Only this once" or "Everybody does so." Listen to their dangerous counsels, no, not for a moment.

Are you thinking seriously about the welfare of your soul? Has the Holy Spirit fastened upon your conscience the solemn warnings of a faithful teacher, and brought to mind a tender mother's prayers for your conversion? Does the tear start in your eye, and are you almost persuaded to choose Christ and that better part which cannot be taken from you? That is a moment when "By-and-by" hovers near to snatch your confidence, and persuade you to put away serious things. It succeeded with poor Felix when Paul preached to him, and the Roman ruler was "almost persuaded" to become a Christian. "By-and-by" whispered in his ear. He put off his soul's salvation to a more convenient season, and it never came.

"By-and-by" is a cheat as well as a liar. By putting you off, he means to cheat your soul of heaven. God says now: "Now is the accepted time, and the day of salvation." He never asks you to postpone it. He makes no promises and no provisions for a "By-and-by."

Dear children, be on your guard against these four servants of Satan, in little things as well as in great ones, for their only aim is to harm and ruin you.—*British Messenger.*

LOVE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

"O, it's just as different as can be," said one of my young friends.

"What is?" I asked.

"Why, being a Christian. Everything is so different from what I expected."

"What did you expect?"

"When you used to talk with me about being a Christian, I used to say to myself, 'No, I can't now, for I shall have to do so many hard things, and I never can do them.'"

"What hard things?"

"O, I used to think, 'Now, if I become a Christian, I shall have to walk just so; shall have to go to church and prayer-meeting, shall have to pray and read the Bible.' It is so different from what I thought."

"Why, James, what do you mean?" I exclaimed. "You do go to church and to prayer-meeting; you do read your Bible

and pray; you do try to walk just right, do you not?"

"O, yes," answered James, looking up with a bright smile: "but then I love to do them—that makes the difference. I love Jesus, and I love to do as he wishes me to."

O, I thought, if all professed Christians would learn this lesson, how delightful the change! We should no longer hear brother A. say in prayer-meeting: "It is crossing for me to speak, but I know I ought." We should not go to our closets with a weary step, and leave them with a sigh of relief. We should no more hurry over the blessed Bible—read only as a duty. The word for Christ would be spoken easily, because lovingly. Christ's yoke would indeed be easy, and his burden light.

Yes, Love does makes all the difference. Love is the fulfilling of the law.—S. S. Times.

THE ONE TALENT.

In a napkin smooth and white,
Hidden from all mortal sight,
My one talent lies to-night.

One poor talent—nothing more!
All the years that have gone o'er
Have not added to the store.

Some will double what they hold,
Others add to it ten-fold.
And pay back the shining gold.

Would that I had toiled like them!
All my sloth I now condemn;
Guilty fears my soul o'erwhelm.

Lord, O teach me what to do!
Make me faithful, make me true,
And the sacred trust renew.

Help me, ere too late it be,
Something yet to do for thee.
Theu who hast done all for me.

Teacher's Treasury.

AN ALLEGORY.

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart."

An obscure but learned man in Bohemia, having made the mysteries of the microscope and all the secrets of ocular science his especial study, is said to have found a crystal which reflected faithfully the most hidden expression of the countenance, showing all its imperfections, and not only that, but also penetrated into the secret thoughts of the heart; so that the possessor of this mysterious glass, or moral telescope, could look into the hearts of the persons with whom he was conversing, and see if their thoughts were in accordance with their words. Thinking to confer a favor on a young stranger who had shown him some kindness, he presented him with this wonderful glass. The young man was delighted to receive such a valuable talisman. Alas, it did not bring him the happiness he anticipated. When talking with his friends he would use his glass, and it revealed to him sad truths; oftentimes their thoughts were not as favorable as their words, and he would show that he distrusted them: again, he sometimes gave offence by answering their thoughts, and this made his former companions shun him. In fact, people began to speak of him as a lunatic and a disagreeable person. Finding that his wonderful telescope brought him only trouble he locked it up, determined never to use it again, but be content to remain in ignorance of what God had hidden from him; he had learned the lesson that "hidden things belong to God"—if made known to us they would not bring the happiness expected. There is another moral. Learn from it that there is *One* before whom the secrets of all hearts are revealed, without the aid of such a glass; in all the natural deformity of sin they are open to His all-seeing eye; even our best services are filled with imperfections. How then dare we attempt communion with Him? We must throw away all thoughts of our own holiness, look up the glass that pierces into our neighbor's faults; and, remembering our own weakness and imperfections, come to Him with this heart-felt prayer:

"Search me, oh God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and lead me into the way everlasting."—*The Christian at Work.*

In the intoxicating cup, discontent seeks for comfort; cowardice for courage; bashfulness for confidence; sadness for joy; and they all find ruin.

A CUP OF COLD WATER.

A young English woman was sent to France to be educated in a Huguenot school in Paris. A few evenings before the fatal massacre of St. Bartholomew's day she and some of her young companions were taking a walk in a part of the town where there were sentinels placed—perhaps on the walls—and you know that when a soldier is on guard, he must not leave his post until he is relieved—that is, till another soldier comes to take his place. One of the soldiers, as the young ladies passed him, besought them to have the kindness to bring him a little water, adding that he was very ill, and it would be as much as his life was worth to go and fetch it himself. The ladies walked on, much offended at the man for presuming to speak to them—all but the young English woman, whose compassion was moved, and who leaving her party, procured some water and brought it to the soldier. He begged her to tell him her name and place of abode which she did. When she rejoined her companions, some blamed and others ridiculed her attention to a common soldier; but they soon had reason to lament that they had not been equally compassionate, for the grateful soldier contrived on the night of the massacre to save this young English woman, while all the other inhabitants of the house in which she dwelt were killed.

FOURTEEN AMERICAN GIRLS.

It will be remembered that about one year ago fourteen American girls, from all parts of the Union, started out from New York, with a lady named Mrs. Stone at their head, and a courier named Gilbert, who completed the party. Their object was to see things as they really existed, and not to take everybody's word for it. They first visited Ireland, not going in the conventional way, but mingling with the people, from whom they received every hospitality, as it might be expected such a bevy travelling in such unique fashion would. They then extended their patronage to Scotland, England, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, in the same way, romped over the Alps, and enjoyed everything without the trammels of society upon them. Now they are travelling in the East, and meeting with all sorts of pleasant adventures. In Egypt they met the Emperor of Brazil, and desiring his autograph, he kindly gave them each a photograph of himself fully endorsed. When they visited the pyramids, a photographer was employed in taking a negative of Don Pedro, with the mammoth mausoleums in the background. The lovely group was consequently taken at the same time, and the Emperor declared that he could wish nothing to remain immortal except a picture which had fixed him in the company of such a charming circle—not even the pyramids themselves. Whereupon the acquaintance was renewed, and each young lady was declared a natural princess. A week ago the party, accompanied by a dragoman, sailed from the port for Beyrout, where they will go overland to visit the Saviour's tomb. While at Cairo they received distinguished courtesies from Consul-General Butler. Now they are bound for Constantinople, intending to come home when they get ready.

LIVED IT DOWN.

An honest black-smith was once grossly insulted, and his character infamously defamed. Friends advised him to seek redress by means of law, but to one and all he replied, "No; I will go to my forge, and there in six months I shall have worked out such a character and earned such a name as all the judges, law courts, and lawyers in the world could never give me." He was right. It is by honest labor, industrious toil, manly courage, and a conscience void of offense, that we assert our true dignity, and prove our truth, honesty, and respectability.

WHAT ARE MISSIONS DOING?—There are now 6000 members of Christian churches in China; 40,000 in India; 20,000 in Burmah; 30,000 in Turkey, and 50,000 in the islands of the Western Seas. Forty Evangelical organizations are engaged in missionary work.

If a seaman should turn back every time he encounters a head-wind, he would never make a voyage. So he who permits himself to be baffled by adverse circumstances will never make headway in the voyage of life.