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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1872.

JESUS, AFTER HIS ASCENSION.

SUNDAY, January 14th 1872. The Great High Priest.—Hebrews iv. 11-16.

SUBJECT.—Confidence in the sympathy our exalted Saviour is a source of strength, and an aid in times of suffering and trial.

GOLDEN TEXT.—We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS.—Numbers xiv. 20-39; Psalm xcvi.

ANALYSIS.—The priesthood of Christ is superior to any human priesthood.

1. In knowledge of our wants.

2. In his own freedom from all imperfection and sin.

3. In his earnestness to the throne of God and consequent ability to secure for us the blessings needed.

As there are several acknowledged inaccuracies in the common English version of the epistle to the Hebrews it may assist some to a clearer view of this lesson, and the truths it contains if we give a translation of it, and a few of the preceding verses, by Dr. Ripley:—

(6) Since, then, it remains that some are to enter into it, and they to whom the glad tidings were before proclaimed did not enter in, on account of disobedience. (7) he again marks out a certain day, namely, To-day saying in David after so long a time, as has already been said, To-day if ye will all hear his voice, harden not your heart. (8) For if Joshua had given them the rest, then God would not have spoken, afterward, of another day. (9) There still remaineth, therefore, a resting to the people of God: (10) for he who has entered into His rest, also, himself rested from his works like as God did from His own.

(11) Let us be in earnest, then, to enter into that rest, lest any one fall after the same example of disobedience. (12) For the word of God is living, and effective, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing through even an oiled dividing of soul and of spirit, of joints also and of marrow, and judging the thoughts and intents of the heart: (13) and there is not a creature that is unseen in his presence; but all things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

(14) Having, then, a great High-priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the profession.

(15) For we have not a high priest who cannot feel with us in our infirmities, but one who has been tempted in all things like ourselves, without sin. (16) Let us, then, come with freedom to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace for reasonable aid.

EXPOSITION.—The typical character of the Sabbath Rest is here shown. The original institution Gen. ii. 2 was referred to as a continued remembrance of some future good to be enjoyed.

The Rest so long sought and eventually obtained, by the weary Israelites, as they journeyed in the wilderness, is here shown to have been but a temporal and temporary settlement, and still only indicating that a future and more abiding rest might be expected. In the Old Testament references to the Rest in the land of Canaan, there is no indication that it was intended to teach of a future rest, but in chapter iii. 18, 19, and iv. 1-10, the progress of thought goes out into the glorious rest of heaven, and regards that as the only adequate rest that could be considered as the full bestowment of blessing from God to his believing and obedient people.

Labor.—The greatest earnestness is demanded in the pursuit of such large blessing.

The Word of God.—This term could not have so limited a meaning as the written word—the Bible—but includes all the communications that have been sent from heaven to mankind. ch. xiii. 4.

Quick, &c.—In the above translation it will be seen that this word is rendered living. See Acts xi. 3; 1 Peter iv. 5.

Two edged sword, cutting both ways. The word of God goes even deeper than any cutting instrument, and discovers more than what is apparent to the eye of man entering into the inner parts even beyond the inside of the bones. There is no escape of any part from its searchings, so that an application of it to man's thoughts and intentions will show whatever is wrong even there. The motives and springs of thought are laid open by a free reception of its truths.

Neither is there any creature, &c.—The commands of God are from Him who is present at all times, to observe what reception is given to them, and how they are attended to, Psalm cxxxix. 1-12.

In this condition what possible ground would there be for hope if we had not some powerful Intercessor.

Him with whom we have to do.—God. The Jews were exceedingly cautious in using the name of the Divine Being.

Infirmities.—Christ was perfectly united to mankind in his bodily presence and was rendered liable to hunger, thirst, sorrow, temptation, tears and pity. He was open to temptation and doubtless suffered under these trials, and under them poured out strong crying and tears.

Yet without sin.—The virtue of all he endured arose from the fact that he did not yield to the sinful suggestions of the enemy John iv. 30. He came forth from every fresh attack unharmed, ch. ii. 17; 1 Peter ii. 21-23. His unconquerable love to God and men sustained him in every assault, and showed that it was for others not for himself that he endured.

The sinless character of Christ is the great contrast with the Jewish High Priests, so that his official character was never placed in jeopardy, and his exaltation has rendered that office incomparably above all who ever came before him.

Come boldly to the throne of grace.—No doubt need be felt in coming to God under such circumstances. Consciousness of sin need be no barrier.—The fact of needing mercy is the one which qualifies us to come to God. Need of help in doing so renders us the proper objects of Christ's compassion and gives us a passport to the Divine presence. Christ's work would be a useless endurance of evil if it had not rendered him more approachable by us. And if no application be made by us we deny him in the character to which he is now exalted. See ch. iii. 1. He will give well-timed aid to his believing people. Those who have trusted their case in his hands have experienced this by various interpositions, and grace or favor bestowed at special seasons of necessity.

QUESTIONS.—When was the first indication of a rest day given? To whom was the gospel of rest first preached? To whom is reference made in verse 6? What is the example of unbelief or disobedience mentioned in vs. 11?

What is meant in vs. 12 by "the Word of God"? To what work is it adapted? What is the meaning of "a discernment"? To whom does it discover the motives of action? See Romans vii. 12-17? To whom is all known beforehand? What is God called in vs. 13? What office does Jesus now fill? For whom? What renders Jesus suited as a High Priest to the most sinful and feeble of mankind? What to the most powerful and blameless? How should this operate on our hearts in offering prayer to God?

Scripture Catechism, 1, 2, 3, 4.

SCIENCE WITHOUT RELIGION.

Had miracles never been performed, we should long ago have been left "having no hope, and without God in the world;" long ago, oppressed by the unbroken silence, we might well have believed that there was no living and personal God, or no God for us; and that behind the veil of the blue heavens, is behind the temple veil through which the rash Roman burst into the holy of Holies, there were *vacua omnia*. Shut up in the prison house of imperfect and exclusive sense—denizens of a universe, which, being abandoned to dead laws is but "a machine worn by the dust of its own grinding,"—struggling with irresistible forces, the least of which might at any moment annihilate our race,—haunted by ghastly imaginings which spring from the certainties of misfortune, the agonies of suffering, the grimming irony of death,—what without a knowledge of God, would life have been? Surely then

Diagon of the prime That tear each other in their slime Were mellow music matched with him.

But from all this,—which, as all history shows, would have been the inevitable result of a Science apart from Revelation,—God saved us. To admit us, as it were, into the very bosom of the Infinite, to quench for us the hopeless terror of the unknown, not to render us abject, but on the contrary, to make us the sons of God, possessors of all that is strong and beautiful in the visible creation, heirs of all that is bright and glorious in the hopes of Immortality and Heaven, God sent His Son.—Furrar

Who is Old?—A wise man will never rust out. As long as he can move and breathe he will be doing for himself, his neighbor, or for posterity. Who is old? Not the man of energy, not the day laborer in science, art or benevolence; but he only who suffers his energies to waste away, and springs of life to become motionless, on whose hands the hours drag heavily, and to whom all things wear the garb of gloom.

Youths' Department.

THE SEED AND THE SOWERS.

Ever so little the seed may be,  
Ever so little the hand,  
But when it is sown it must grow, you see,  
And develop its nature, weed, flower, or tree;  
The sun, the air, and the dew are free  
At its command.

If the seed be good, we rejoice in hope  
Of the harvest it will yield  
We wait and watch for its springing up.  
Admire its growth, and count on the crop  
That will come from the little seeds we drop  
In the great wide field.

But if we heedlessly scatter wide  
Seeds we may happen to find,  
We care not for culture or what may betide,  
We sow here and there on the highway side;  
Whether they've lived or whether they've died,  
We never mind.

Yet every sower must one day reap  
Fruit from the seed he has sown:  
How carefully then he comes to keep  
A watchful eye on the seed, and seek  
To sow what is good, that we may not weep  
To receive our own!

"Great men are not always great" is a proverb of which we frequently see illustrations. Perhaps like Aesop of old, Henry Ward Beecher finds it desirable to unbind the bow occasionally, that it may preserve its elasticity. Here is a little story of a cat from his pen which appeared in the N. Y. Christian Union, and will amuse our young readers as well as some older ones. It might do even for the children to tell to their little brothers and sisters, who are yet unable to read it for themselves:

A PIOUS CAT.

We always knew that it would turn out so. The fact is, that cats are an abused race, and always have been. But we have claimed for them many and distinguishing excellencies, and for doing so we have been confronted,—in our own house, too,—with inignant denials. "Cats are selfish and treacherous. They fawn on you without affection, and only for their own pleasure. They are sly, cruel, and hateful." To all of which we time and again have entered a denial. That a cat has a capacity of being sly and cruel, far beyond any vouchsafed to a rabbit, or a hen, we do not deny. But a good education will reduce these qualities to a condition about as respectable as they exhibit in the human race.

The cat is sly! Is not a hunter sly? Is not a fisherman sly, stealing along the brook with a gaudy and deceitful "fly," designed to inveigle trout? The cat is cruel! Is it because he kills rats and birds? What, then, must be the cruelty of man? No doubt a moral cat, of proper education, and belonging to the right Church, would prefer (infinitely prefer) to have its meals killed for it and properly dressed, and brought around daily in a butler's cart. But, if that is not done, why should not the cat kill its own little beef? One thing is certain, the cat kills only that it may eat. Neither does it dally over its food, praising its juices and smacking its lips, after the manner of men over this and that tidbit.

If each man and child were dependent every day for its food upon its own skill in securing game, if every one were obliged to be his own butcher and serve up his sustenance with bloody hands, is it likely that we should be as neat, select, and delicate in our methods of destruction as a cat is?

No, under proper treatment the cat is a gentleman. He carries himself with aristocratic self-respect. He has an instinctive knowledge of society,—social intuitions as one might say,—and perceives at a glance who is prejudiced against him and who is partial.

If a cat has not the capacity of distinguished friendship, then no animal has. To be sure, the cat does not gaze at you with the inquisitive or inquiring looks which an intelligent dog casts upon his master; but every one has his own way of showing affection, and a cat's way is not less genuine because it is unlike a dog's.

We have before this had occasion to discourse upon sundry and divers cats at Peekskill. But now we have another tale to tell, which ought to raise the cat high in moral position.

Bessie, Ie it known, is not only the Mother Superior of the place, but is a cat of unexceptionable record, and of the best manners. No cat ever reared her household with more anxious diligence. Woe to dog or other cat that approached the sacred precinct where her kittens were preserved! Her losses were borne with exemplary patience. One kitten a horse stepped on; one or two others, in the bloom and beauty of their youth, were

pursued by certain black and tan terriers, during their mother's absence, as they sported in the twilight, and were cruelly done to death. One or two others, the "city cat" (that fierce and might creature!) slew.

That Bessie was sustained under her great losses all could see. But that it should awaken in her mind a deep seriousness is as surprising as it must be gratifying.

Bessie is very fond of Mr. Turner; as, indeed, all the cats are and all the dogs, and all the calves, and everything else that dwells on the farm. Even flies and mosquitoes court him. It is no uncommon thing to see cats and dogs, a motley company big and little, white, black and gray, going forth with Turner to the fields.

It happened a Sunday or two ago that on starting for church, a mile distant, he found Bessie at the foot of the lane wending her way with him. Bless her fur, what use is there in a cat's going to church? If she had ever heard the proverb about the church-mice, it must have told her that they are always poor, and not worth so long a tramp.

She was admonished and sent back. The party went on, entered the sanctuary, and it is to be hoped, profited by its lesson of devotion. But what was their surprise, on rising at the close of the services, to find Bessie at the door waiting for their departure! It is plain that she had a realizing sense of her privileges. To church she would go, and to church she did go—the true church, too—no Presbyterian, no Methodist, no Baptist Church did she countenance, but the genuine Episcopal Church. Her conduct proved unexceptionable. She can now go whenever she desires, unrebuked.

On learning these facts I felt not only a great respect for Bessie, but a desire to learn her opinions on many questions. Accordingly, on a bright morning,—oh, how the sun did shine! and the great broad heavens above were full of brilliant ether,—I broached to Bessie some of the salient points of controversy familiar to our day.

"Is it your opinion that service should be said or sung?" I asked her,—at the same time patting her head gently. She at once opened up such a purring that it was plain she inclined to a service of song.

I could get no very positive answer as to whether she sympathized with the High Church party or the Low. She looked wise, as I had seen other people do on the same topic, and rather dumped her back, and walked very stiffly against my knee, with her tail held about to its uttermost length. She did not choose to say anything; but I could see by such a token that she inclined to the High Party.

I could not make out much upon the topic of baptismal regeneration. She licked her jaws and washed her face assiduously, and seemed anxious to be utterly clean; but further than that I could get no hint. It may be that she meant to say that baptism, if well rubbed in, might regenerate; or, she might have wished to show by signs that the whole thing was but superficial, and did not work inward moral change. She was entirely sound on the Catechism.

QUESTIONS FOR CURIOUS CHILDREN.

Gray, red, black, brown, or yellow, I am to be found on many a fellow. If it is an uncomforable seat like comfort? Because it is devoid of ease (c's). (There are no E's in the word comfort.)

What two letters do boys delight in to the annoyance of their letters? Two I's (to teach).

What single word would you put down for 240 borrowed from you? XL lent (excellent).

What American poet may be considered equal to three-fifths of the poets, ancient and modern? Poe.

Behind a country in Europe, and leave suffering. Spain. Behind a city of France, and leave repose. Best. Behind a city of Holland and leave theague. Inague.

I am a word of two letters: My first represents that which is dearer to me than house or lands.

My second is the name of an article which cheers my life, and adds to my enjoyment.

My whole is the most definite and the most indefinite word in the English language, which may apply to anything in the universe, and which can yet designate but a single thing. Eye—Tea; I-t, it.

What precious stone is like the entrance to a field? Agate.

Those who are ambitious of originality, and aim at it, are necessarily led by others, since they seek to be different from them. —Whately.

SINews OF THE SOUL.

There can be no high success in any kind of work without hearty belief in it. More than half the wisdom and nearly all the energy which make fortunes is due to a belief in the means by which they are made. If we take away a man's confidence in his business, we cut off his right arm.

A poor scheme succeeds when driven by a steady enthusiasm; while the best one possible fails under half-hearted management.

Herein is a lesson for a Christian. He has no right to give his time and strength to anything which does not enlist his Christian sympathies. To fall in with the theories and practices of unchristian people is to follow a losing game which he has no real desire to win. What satisfaction is it to one who has the love of Christ in his soul to succeed in being as rich as famous, or as fashionable as his utterly selfish neighbor? Riches for Christ's sake he may seek in all heartiness; he may welcome reputation as a lever to use in building spiritual temple; he may even be to a degree fashionable to fashionable men, if by that means he can save some from the perils of fashion; but he can never make successful compromises in a matter of principle.

Whatever is not of faith is sin; and he who tries to run while weighted with unbelief will find his heels lead and his heart stone and his joints stiff. Every trifling unchristianity is a mountain of difficulty to an unbeliever, but the steep mountain is only an incitement to him who trusts in his God and believes in his work. Faith and hope are the sinews of the soul.

APPOINTED TO ME.

A voice from the sick-room says, It helped me immensely last night, in my pain, to remember the text, "Wearisome nights are appointed unto me." The idea that they were no accident, no blunder of my physician, but appointed by my best Friend—this was strength to me. When all were sleeping, and His eye saw my weariness, then I was sure that, for infinitely wise and kind reasons, all were prepared for me. This stilled my soul. This is our life lesson. Property takes wings, friends fail us, good schemes miscarry, plans of usefulness are thwarted by most unlooked-for interventions, health gives out, action gives place to suffering. Where we were cheerfully doing, we can only wait, God's will. Darkness and doubt shut us in. For many days neither sun nor stars appear. But all is well; these things are appointed unto us. Only let us believe this—let a calm faith recognize the gracious Providence which shapes all our ways—and we can then endure until the dawn shall bring light and joy.

SABBATH PIETY.

There is a mystery about this effect of the weather on piety. Sabbath heat seems hotter, Sabbath cold colder, and Sabbath rain wetter than that of any other day; for the same measure of heat, or cold, or rain, on a week day, will not keep one from his usual business. We need a Sabbath Almanac, calculated for our churches, that will show by its weather scale when it will be safe or a vigorous Christian to expose himself on the Sabbath by going to the house of God. Such an almanac would enable pastors and superintendents of Sabbath schools to know when they could depend on in church, Sabbath school and prayer meeting. I have recently been examining microscopic views of the different snow flakes, a hundred or so of them. I would suggest to our curious savans an examination of Sabbath snow, to see if it has a peculiarly sharp injurious crystal.

SNAKES AND TIGERS IN INDIA.

We need not wonder at the engerness, says the Chemist and Druggist, with which physicians and authorities in India examine every new remedy put forth as an antidote to the poison of a snake bite, when we learn that in British India, including British Burmah, the deaths from snake bite during the past three years amount to 25,664. This statement appears in an official report published in the Gazette of India. From that report, we also learn that during the same period the deaths resulting from the attacks of all kinds of wild beasts in the same area numbered 12,554. The snakes killed more than twice as many as were slain by the tigers and all the other fierce forest rangers put together. Truly the serpent is still more subtle than the beasts of the field.