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The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Fourth Quarter Lesson 2, Oct., 14, 1900

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.—Luke 14: 15-24.

Read Matthew 22: 1 14.

Commit Verses 21 24.

GOLDEN *Text.—Come; for all things are now ready.*—Luke 14: 17.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Probably in January, A. D. 30.

Place.—In a Pharisee's house in Perea, on the way to Jerusalem, by the fords of the Jordan near Jericho.

Jesus was still in the dining room of the Pharisee *One of them that sat at meat with him.* Reclining on couches around the table *Heard these things.* Which Jesus had been saying, as in our last lesson. *Said unto him.* Perhaps he felt assured that himself and the other Jews were sure of the blessing of him *that shall eat bread* (partake of a feast) *in the kingdom of God.* Either the expected kingdom of the Messiah in an earthly reign, or the future kingdom in heaven.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD COMPARED TO A GREAT FEAST.—V. 16. *Then said he unto him.* The remark of the guest gave Jesus opportunity for stating some practical and pointed truths *A certain man.* He represents God the Father who prepares every good for his children, and invites them to come and partake of his blessings. He wants every one to come. *Made a great supper.* This feast represents all the blessings which God has provided in his gospel.

And bade many. This was the preliminary announcement. For a great supper preparation is made beforehand. If an ox or a heifer is to be provided for the feast, a very large number must be invited, since the whole of the flesh must be consumed at once, meat in the East being never kept over night. Consequently the invited guests are notified beforehand.

The kingdom of heaven was at hand. The Messianic reign was about to begin. Its coming had been announced by the prophets, by John the Baptist, by the herald angels, by the star in the east, by Jesus and his disciples.

The holy men of old, the Scriptures, Jesus Christ, and his apostles, and Christians of all ages past, have been preparing the gospel feast for us. We have been trained under Christian influences, Christian homes, parents and friends, churches, Sunday schools, meetings,—all have been preparing us to come to the gospel feast.

THE INVITATION. Vs. 17. *And sent his servant at supper time.* When the evening approaches, the servants are sent round a second time to announce that the feast awaits them, and it is a slight, even a mortal offense, to disregard the summons. *Come; for all things are now ready.* The preparations were complete. Everything was prepared for the redemption of man. The time had come when the Jews must decide whether they would accept the Messiah or not. The fate of the nation, as well as of each individual, depended on their decision. To all men now comes the invitation. For each of us all things are ready.

I PRAY THEE HAVE ME EXCUSED. Vs. 18-20. *They all with one consent.* They agreed in spirit and motives, while they differed in the form of excuse. They had accepted the invitation when remote, when it did not call upon them to take any action or give up any pleasure, but refused it when a decision must be made; just as men now want to go to heaven; yet when the test time comes they are unwilling to accept the conditions, to take up the cross. *Began to make excuse.* The Greek word is the exact equivalent of our "to beg off." Not to give the real reasons, but the most plausible excuses they could find. *I have bought a piece of ground and I must needs go and see it.* Not look it over, but see to its cultivation. He had plenty of other times to see to his farms. It was plainly an evasive excuse. He was very courteous in his refusal, but decided

Applications. In modern times the rejection of Christ, because of property, arises (1) from the pressure of cares and anxieties that occupy the mind; (2) from the want of sense of need which property often gives; (3) from the fear that it may have to be used for the Lord instead of gaining for himself; (4) from the fear that it might become less profitable; for it often brings larger income if used for unchristian purposes. (5) In other cases it would have to be restored because it had been dishonestly obtained. The case of Zaccheus.

I have bought five yoke of oxen, etc. His oxen could have waited, but he made his plans so as to have an excuse.

Applications. The Jewish leaders were busy with their interpretation of Scriptures and control of the spiritual affairs of the nation. They did not want to give these up for Christ. It would require a great change in their conduct. They were "whited sepulchers." They must change their hearts as well as lives if they would partake of the gospel feast.

Modern business excuses for rejecting Christ are: (1) We are too busy to attend to his claims; (2) we would have to change our business if we become Christians; (3) we would have to change our methods of business, be always honest and truthful, and we could not compete with the world around us; (4) our partners are irreligious; (5) as soon as we have accumulated a fortune we will live a Christian life. *I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.* He relies doubtless on the principle of the exemption from war, granted to newly married bridegrooms, in Deut. 24: 5, for a year. He could not take his bride to a feast of men, nor did he wish to leave her at home.

Applications. The real reason why the Jews refused to accept the new kingdom was because they were wedded to their pleasures and selfish interests. They did not wish to accept a cross, and righteous living.

Home and family excuses are often given for neglect of religion, as: the pleasures of home; the fact that one of the partners of married life is not religious; the difficulty of carrying on family religious duties.

1. Reasons and excuses are often very different things. Men are often ashamed of their real reasons for their conduct, and for rejecting Christ, and have to hide them not only from others, but from themselves, by some plausible excuses. They are determined not to give up all and serve Jesus, and then they look around for some plausible excuse.

2. All were hindered by the wrong use of right things. There was no real incompatibility between the true enjoyment of farm, merchandise, or wife and accepting the invitation; nor is there any between discipleship and the fullest use and truest enjoyment of earthly good. But Jesus and his cause and righteousness must be first; and then comes an hundred fold more of good from earthly blessings than when these are placed first.

3. The men in the parable did not realize from what they asked to be excused from the best things that infinite love and wisdom can provide, from children and heirs of God, from heaven, from the highest character, the largest usefulness.

4. If you knew God—and what those 'things' are 'which he has prepared for them that love him,' all 'excuses' would be flung to the winds. It would not be, 'Have me excused!' but, 'I come!' 'I come!'

THE WIDER INVITATION.—Vs. 21 24. *Then the master of the house being angry.* The anger of indignation, the revulsion of a holy, moral nature, against folly and wickedness. *Go....quickly.* The feast was waiting. *Streets.* The broader streets and squares. *Bring ....hither the poor, and the maimed.* The picture is one impossible for us to realize in our land. In the East such a throng as is here described may be often seen in the city streets or squares

Application. As applied to the Jews, the classes now invited represent the publicans and sinners, upon whom the Pharisees looked down as outcasts.

And yet there is room. *The servant* reported that he had obtained all he could of these, but *yet there is room.* There were not enough people of these classes to fill the kingdom. The atonement is large enough for all; the love of God is inexhaustible; the invitation is limitless. If any one stays away it will be simply because he will not come. *Go out* Beyond the city walls; that is, beyond the confines of Judaism to the Gentiles; beyond the limits of civilization into the lands where the gospel is not heard. *Into the highways and hedges.* The highways are the broad ways of the world, where are the notorious sinners. The hedges shelter the loungers, the inactive. *And compel them to come in.* Not by force, by persecution, but by persuasion, by persistent and untiring efforts, by the attractions of the feast, by the goodness of him who gave it. *That my house may be filled.* It was regarded as a disgrace to hold a feast and the company not be present. *None of those men which were bidden.* And refused to accept the invitation. *Shall taste of my supper.* No matter how rich or respectable in other respects.

Application. The Jews as a nation refused to accept the invitation of Jesus to a place in the kingdom of the Messiah. As a consequence their nation was destroyed. They had no part as a nation in the great redemption. The Gentiles were received. The Messianic kingdom is to day the mightiest power on earth. And the Jews, the invitation returns to them, and now they are invited to come.

1 It is our duty to go out and persuade men to come into the kingdom of Christ.

2 The worse men are the fewer their opportunities, and the more they are opposed to good, the more do they need the invitations of the gospel. It will not do to wait for people to come to the churches.

3. Great hope is let down from heaven to the poorest, to those in the hardest circumstances.

4. Every one who would enter the kingdom must accept the invitation to the feast, and the only safe time to do it is when the invitation comes.

How Can the Pastor Get Nearer his Sunday-School?

BY THE REV. A. T. KEMPTON.

Here is a plan which I have tried, and which I would gladly suggest to other pastors. Instead of having one class in the Sunday school, I have them all in turns. Each Sunday I invite into my pastor's room one of the classes of the school. Usually I give them a week in advance to talk and plan about it, and get all of their number out. Then during the time for the lesson study I take them all into my room, the teacher always with them, and talk to them for a few moments about the lesson.

Then I have a direct talk about the need of being a Christian, and ask them personally how many of them have given themselves to Christ. To my joy and surprise, this has seemed to be the part of the talk they appreciate the most. I urge upon them that all openly confess Christ; ask them questions on the Christian life; speak of any special need in the Sunday-school or church, and try and develop a stronger class spirit in the class, speaking words of appreciation of the teachers and scholars.

It is, in fact, a heart-to-heart talk with that class. I get them to ask me questions. All of this has worked very well. Pastor's Sunday has come to be looked forward to by the classes. The last thing before the class goes out, I have a prayer with them, and pray especially for them personally. This brings the pastor in close touch with the class, and if there are any members of it that are strangers, or that need special attention in any way, it give the pastor a chance to know his opportunity and improve it too. This all helps to solve the problem which I was trying to solve, How can the pastor get nearer his Sunday-school? I always have a talk with the teacher, and that brings me in touch with the teachers of the school. After I have gone over the school once, I begin again. This gives me each class about once in four months.

The plan has become so popular with some classes, that, as soon as their regular teacher is absent, they ask that, if possible, they have another pastor's Sunday that day. As a token of the fact that they do appreciate this plan, at Christmas time, when the classes were making presents to their teachers, some of them remembered the pastor in the same way that they did the teacher.

I take especial care in asking the class that, for any special reason, is more approachable on that Sunday. For instance, if one or more are to be baptized from a class, I have that class that day. If two classes are represented in the one thing, I have both classes, either together or separately. If one member has died, that is, of course, the class for that day. I do not hesitate to ask a class to step aside for another when there is any good reason.

The plan is working so well that I commend it to pastors and superintendents, for I believe it will be profitable for either. It takes thought and care and preparation, but the Lord blesses such efforts —S. S. Times.

Not so Fast.

An old gentleman, evidently, a philosopher, had been spending a week in Chicago. He had been jostled on the sidewalks, crowded against walls, prodded in the side, and shoved hither and thither in the midst of a turmoil such as he was quite unused to. His visit was at an end. He was going to a quieter place. He had just bought his ticket when a station official said, briskly, but not unkindly:

"Hurry up, sir, or you'll miss your train.

No doubt the old gentleman seemed a littte slow.

Hustle there; hustle! shouted a gate tender.

I dont have to, do I? said the old man.

You do if you want to catch that train.

But I don't have to catch it unless I want to, do I?

I suppose not; but Chicago's a fast place, sir, and you can't keep up with the procession if you don't hustle.

People don't get honest here any faster than they do elsewhere, do they? asked the old gentleman, seriously.

No, I can't say they do.

Nor they don't become respectable citizens any faster, do they?

I suppose not said the official, whose face was beginning to look puzzled.

Nor develop the Christian graces any faster, do they?

No, I guess not.

Nor reach the highest type of manhood and womanhood any faster, do they?

This was getting almost beyond the official: but he shook his head negatively.

Nor learn any faster their duty to their fellow men?

Again the official shook his head.

Nor go to heaven any faster?

Not much! said the railroad man, with emphasis.

The stranger took out his watch.

Well, I have two minutes in which to walk a hundred feet. I guess I can make it without blowing out a cylinder-head, can't I?

He spoke in a gentle tone, almost as if he were speaking to himself, and the railway official picked up his satchel and carried it for him out through the gate and across the platform.

Thoughts on Tobacco.

In a physician's letter on Tobacco, given in the Anti-Tobacco Journal, we find the following remarks:

Alcohol and tobacco march on, conquering and to conquer—emptying purses, ruining estates, killing and slaying their thousands, wounding and paining their millions. Mightier than the mightiest plagues are these agencies; but so insidiously do they work that they are loved and welcomed even by those they have ruined. The votaries kiss the hand that deals them destruction, love the agency that is their evil genius—yea, the very victim's die embracing their murderers.

Tobacco is accounted a mild evil; but from experiment I think I represent matters very mildly when I calculate every pennyworth of tobacco causes the heart to give five hundred beats more than the normal amount, which beats are to be accounted as lost energy on the part of the heart. On this assumption the £16,000,000 worth of tobacco should cause as many extra pulsations as would have equaled those of nearly a thousand individuals living seventy years. As each throb represents a labor of so many ounces, we can see the thousands of tons of unnecessary energy which are cruelly thrown upon the overburdened heart.

Millions smoke; but smoke in ignorance. No wonder this is an age of heart disease. Little they think that their health is burning away with their tobacco, and that they are puffing away their nervous energies with the smoke. Of these millions not one receives an iota of benefit from the pipe, and all, though inappreciably, must be suffering. None in this enlightened age need smoke in ignorance, and those who smoke on in the face of the testimony of physiology, and in face of their own admonishing conscience, are either hardened beyond cure or heartless beyond conviction.

Why Don't You Hurry?

A missionary was asked why he labored so unweariedly, and replied:

One night I was going home across a field and saw my little boy coming to meet me.

Suddenly he disappeared.

Then the thought flashed across my mind: There's an old well there, and he has fallen in. I hurried up to him, and reached down into the well, and lifted him out; and as he looked up into my face, what do you think he said: Oh, papa, why didn't you hurry?

These words never left me. They kept ringing in my ears until God put a new and deep meaning into them and bade me think of others who are lost, without God and without hope in this world; and a message came to me as a message from the heavenly Father, Go and work in My name; and then from that vast throng a pitiful pleading cry rolled into my soul as I accepted God's call, O, why didn't you hurry? —Lookout.

Only he who lives a life of his own can help the lives of other men.

PAIN-KILLER is the best, safest and surest remedy for cramps, colic and diarrhœa. As a liniment for wounds and sprains it is unequalled. Avoid substitutes, there's but one Pain-Killer, Perry Davis'. 25c. and 50c.

THE BEST PILLS.—Mr. Wm. Vandervoort, Sydney Crossing, Ont., writes: "We have been using Parmelee's Pills, and find them by far the best pills we ever used. For Delicate and Debilitated Constitutions these pills act like a charm. Taken in small doses, the effect is both a tonic and a stimulant, mildly exciting the secretions of the body, giving tone and vigor.

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Dear Sirs,—Please pardon my delay in answering yours of weeks ago. Yes I have no hesitation in recommending your

Invigorating Syrup

During the fall and winter of '96 and '97 I was greatly distressed with indigestion. I tried several remedies each of which gave me no relief. I was advised to try your Invigorating Syrup, which I readily did, and have felt grateful ever since to the one who gave such good advice. The very first dose helped me, and before half of the first bottle was used I was completely cured. Have not been troubled with the disease since. I have taken occasion to recommend your medicine publicly upon several occasions, and heartily do so now. You are at liberty to use this in any way you please.

Yours truly,
(REV.) F. M. YOUNG
Pastor Baptist Church, Bridgetown, N. S.

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I BEG to inform my numerous patrons that I have just opened out a very large and well-selected stock of NEW SPRING CLOTHS, consisting of English Scotch and Canadian Tweed Suitings, Fine Corkscrew and Diagonal Suitings, Light and Dark Spring Overcoatings, and all the latest designs and patterns in Trouserings from which I am prepared to make up in FIRST CLASS STYLE, according to the latest New York Spring and mer Fashions, and guarantee to give satisfaction.

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My stock of Men's Furnishing Goods cannot be excelled. It consists of Hats and Soft Hats of English and American make, in all the novelties and Staple Styles for Spring Wear. White and Regatta shirts, Linen Collars, Silk Handkerchiefs, Braces, Merino Underwear, Hosiery well selected assortment of Fancy Ties and Scarfs, in all the latest patterns of English and American designs.

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