

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Adapted from Hurlbut's Notes.

Third Quarter.

Lesson IV.—July 25. Acts 17, 22-34.
PAUL PREACHING IN ATHENS.

[Read verses 13-21.]

GOLDEN TEXT.

God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. John 4, 24.

I. THE THEME. VERSES 22, 23.

22. IN THE MIST OF MARS' HILL—Better, in the midst of the Areopagus, the meeting place of the Athenian council, which took its name from the place where it met. He was not there as a criminal, but because its size and quiet were better fitted for his grave theme than the noise and jostling of the market. The Acropolis, covered with the noblest monuments of Grecian art, lay on the east of where he stood. On the other side rose the Pnyx, the place of assemblies of the people, from which Demosthenes had often rolled his thunder, while before him was the sublime Parthenon, the masterpiece of ancient architecture. But the humble tent-maker was ready to speak their classic language and present the Gospel to the loftiest intellects. MEN OF ATHENS—The customary address of Demosthenes. TWO SUPERSTITIOUS—This is not a happy translation; God-fearing would be better. He gives them credit for great religiousness. Their buildings and sculpture appear to him the expression of religious sentiment. He had seen no such expression in the other cities of Greece. It was a delicate compliment to their city.

23. AS I PASSED BY—Better, along. The word refers to the whole of the apostle's walk about the city. YOUR DEVOTIONS—The objects of your worship—temples, statues and altars. He had paced their streets like any stranger. What mental notes had he taken? One object attracted his attention, and now leaped to his lips. To an unknown God—There were several such altars in the city. It was a confession that with their thirty thousand deities and city full of temples there remained something which they could not reach and without which they could not be happy. YE IGNORANTLY—Or, unknowingly; echoing the word "unknown." You confess that you do not know. I am come to tell you.

II. THE SERMON. VERSES 24-31.

24. GOD THAT MADE THE WORLD—Not only did he build the world as an architect builds a house, but he made the material likewise. This would strike at once at their belief that it was a work of chance or existed from eternity. HE IS LORD—Over all matter and mind; all worlds and systems. The universe is not built, like a great machine, to manage itself. It cannot last one moment without him. TEMPLES MADE WITH HANDS—His eye may have turned and his hand pointed away to the city at their feet, and up to the Acropolis, crowned and crowded with the choicest of them.

25. AS THOUGH HE NEEDED ANYTHING—Part of the Greek idea of offerings was that the gods were pleased with the smell of smoke. The offerings were gifts of which they stood in need. Some still regard money devoted to the support of religion as a gift unto God, as though he lived upon the charity of the world. Churches are maintained, not because they are profitable to God, but because they are advantageous to man. HE GIVETH TO ALL LIFE—More than the root is to the branch or the blood to the body God is to the universe.

26. OF ONE BLOOD ALL NATIONS—"The unity of God and the unity of the race go together. DETERMINED THE TIMES—Better, as in Revised Version, their appointed seasons; those ordained by God for seedtime and harvest, which make the earth a fitting abode for men. BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION—How far the Greek nation should extend, what should be the limits of Greek culture, and what the duration of the national life, were all dependent upon God. The history of the race, the movements of nations, both in place and time, are the carrying out of God's plan, who, as Father, stands in as close relation to every people as to any one.

The race question is prominent whenever different races meet. It is not only white man and Negro in Georgia and the Carolinas, but white man and Indian in Colorado, Caucasian and Chinaman on the Pacific coast, French and English in Montreal, Slave and Hebrew in Russia. Within two centuries the inhabitants of France and England were won't to speak of each other as "our natural enemies." "The Irish Question" is still a burning problem

in the United Kingdom. We are to preach and teach, not by ignoring or carefully avoiding these facts, but by meeting race hostility with the doctrine of our unity by creation and in redemption.

27. THAT THEY SHOULD SEEK THE LORD—In the government of the world all events were so disposed as to be helpful to mankind in their search after God. This time God did not seek after the Gentiles as he did after the Jews; nevertheless, he lent them every natural aid to seek after himself. NOT FAR FROM EVERY ONE OF US—He is in constant and vital contact with all existence. We may enjoy, be insensible of, dread, seek after, or deny God's presence. We are nearer to the heart of God than the babe to the heart of its mother.

28. IN HIM WE LIVE—The dissipation of energy in all living things involves the necessity of continuous resupply. Every movement that we make is a proof that God is near, sustaining the being that we derive from him. YOUR OWN PORTS—He quotes from well-known heathen poets of more than three hundred years before, Aratus of Cilicia, and Cleanthes, the Stoic of Troas. WE ARE ALSO HIS OFFSPRING—"Weak, wayward, infirm. This relationship explains why God sent his Son to die for us. With earthly parents the weaker the child the stronger the parent's love. It also shows the enormity of sin. The greatest ingratitude is that which overlooks a father's kindness, the greatest criminality that which violates a father's laws, the greatest rebellion that which contemns a father's authority."

29. WE OUGHT NOT—He adopts as little as possible a tone of superiority, but identifies himself with them. He wisely sought to avoid giving offense while striving to destroy a powerful falsehood which was injuring the individual and national life. A man is of more honor than material things. How far above these must the Godhead be? LIKE UNTO GOLD—He condemned all efforts visibly to represent the invisible God. "How inexcusable are the Greek and Roman churches in paganizing the worship of the Christian church by encouraging pictures and images in religious services." ART—This is the only direct mention made in the Bible of art. When it degrades man and dishonors God it must be ruthlessly condemned. Christianity cannot countenance immoral art or godless science.

30. GOD WINKED AT—Literally, overlooked. God had not imputed to men the errors they committed in ignorance. Now the case is changed. Men who have heard of Christ cannot plead ignorance. See Luke 12, 48. Knowledge creates new obligations. ALL MEN—Every man, everywhere. None are too high to need repentance, none too low to have it. TO REPENT—This is the first step to salvation.

31. BECAUSE HE HATH APPOINTED—Long ago in God's foreknowledge. WILL JUDGE THE WORLD—Such language intimates that the judgment will be a solemn judicial assize, held upon all mankind at once. IN RIGHTEOUSNESS—There will be no trace of partiality; none will fare better, none the worse, for class or sex or parentage or nationality. HATH GIVEN ASSURANCE—By the resurrection of Jesus God has given to man assurance that what Jesus taught was true.

III. THE HEARERS. VERSES 32-34.

32. HEARD OF THE RESURRECTION—"The Greek religion was but the glorification of the present life. The resurrection, presupposing the vanity of the present life, gave the deathblow to their most cherished ideal." The Epicureans regarded death as an eternal sleep. HEAR THEM AGAIN—Athenian levity of purpose deferred to another day the decisive step of accepting the salvation of the risen Saviour, just as it had deferred resistance to Philip of Macedonia till their liberties were gone and their country enslaved. There is no reason to believe that these men ever heard Paul again.

33. PAUL DEPARTED—The meaning is that he left the assembly in the Areopagus, leaving them still sitting on their benches while he walked down the steps to the city. He had cleared his own conscience and thrown on them an increased responsibility.

34. CLAVE UNTO HIM—Joined themselves to him for further instruction, and believed. DIONYSIUS THE AKROFAGITE—One of the members of the council. He must have been a man of position and influence, for no one could be a member of this council unless he had held some high office of state, and was above sixty years of age. Tradition says he was the first Bishop of Athens, and that he was martyred. WOMAN NAMED DAMARIS—Not, certainly, one of the apostle's audience in the Areopagus, but new to the faith either before or after. Nothing else is known of her.

Repeat only the good thing you hear; that will be doing a little toward making the world happier.

Kind words will live after you. Kind deeds in due season will bring forth a harvest of good in unexpected ways. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

Housekeepers, by the food they provide, by the couches they spread, by the books they introduce, by the influences they bring around their homes, are deciding the physical, intellect, moral and eternal destiny of the race.—T. DeWitt Talmage.

Secure a good name to thyself by living virtuously and humbly; but let this good name be nursed abroad and never be brought home to look upon it. Let others use it for their own advantage—let them speak of it if they please; but do not thou use it at all but as an instrument to do God glory and thy neighbor more advantage. Let thy face, like Moses, shine to others, but make no looking-glass for thyself.—Jeremy Taylor.

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RECORD OF CURES UNEQUALLED IN THE
HISTORY OF ANY
REMEDY.

There is no escaping the fact that Eczema is one of the most intractable of diseases. Its symptoms are so severe and the irritation it causes so great that a sufferer would gladly give anything, do anything, to get relief.

Physicians are often at their wit's end to know what to do with cases of this nature, and in all kindness we would advise them to prescribe for their patients Ryckman's Kootenay Cure. So far we know of ten medical men who have either used it or recommended it.

In the city of London, Ont., at 440 Park Ave., there lives Mrs. Burdick, who is today a grateful woman for having been cured by Kootenay of an Eczema of five years' standing. The disease had spread all over her body and was a constant source of irritation, so much so that she was unable to obtain more than one hour's sleep at a time. She had three physicians in attendance and took many patent medicines, but none of them cured her.

After taking eight bottles of Ryckman's Kootenay Cure her blood became pure and she has not the slightest sign of Eczema or any other eruption on her body.

Another lady, Mrs. Richards, living at 28 Aikman Ave., Hamilton, had a somewhat similar experience. For two months she was unable to rest night or day with the awful itching and pain. Medical men failed to cure her, but four bottles of Kootenay did, and she now says the Eczema has entirely disappeared and she feels like another person.

We could multiply instances like the above, and if you are desirous of further indisputable proof of Kootenay's Kingship over disease, send your name to the Ryckman Medicine Co., Hamilton, Ont. Phenological chart book sent free to any address.

One bottle lasts over a month.



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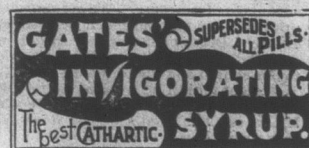
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