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## The Sabbath-School.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

[FROM PELOUET'S NOTES.]

Fourth Quarter.—Lesson 11.—Dec. 12.  
THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.—REV. 7: 9-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.*—REV. 7: 15.

After the scene in heaven which we studied in our last lesson, six of the seven seals were opened, showing the tribulations and conflicts of out of which the Church was to be developed, as Venus, the goddess of beauty, was fabled to have sprung from the foam of the sea. And now the end is approaching. In chap. 8 begins another series of visions, the seven trumpets, which are parallel to the seven seals, showing the conflict from another point of view.

THE INNUMERABLE COMPANY OF THE REDEEMED.—VER. 9. In the previous verses we are told that 144,000 persons were sealed to God, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The sealing signifies that they were specially chosen. The 144,000 is doubtless a symbolical number, and not to be taken as if these were all, but to signify that some would be saved from every tribe; that the Church of God did not perish with the outward form of the kingdom of Israel. And lest any should imagine that this definite number was all that would be saved, immediately there is shown to John a great multitude which no man could number. This representation is in strong contrast with a very common opinion that only a few will be saved. For the true religion is yet to spread all over the world, and perhaps for many, many thousands of years piety is to be as prevalent as sin has been.

Of all nations. This implies two things: (1) that the Gospel would be preached among all nations; and (2) that even when it was thus preached to them, they would keep up their national characteristics. *Kindreds, and people, and tongues.* (4) God has already redeemed some of every race, to a high degree of Christian living and character, to show the Church what God would do with all. *Stood before the throne.* As worshippers and servants.

*Clothed with white robes.* Emblems of purity through the atonement. *And palms in their hands.* Marks of joy; also emblems of victory.

THE CHORUS OF SAINTS AND ANGELS.—VER. 10-12. *And they cry.* (the present tense expresses their unceasing occupation) *with a loud voice, saying, Salvation, the praise of our salvation.* To our God... and unto the Lamb. Both are joined in the salvation; to both the praise is given.

*And all the angels.* Angels and saints together take up the song of praise. *The elders and the four beasts.* Living creatures (see last lesson). Representatives of the redeemed Church. *Fell before the throne on their faces.* In token of reverence and humility.

*Saying, Amen.* So be it. In truth. *Blessing and glory, etc.* The great concourse of angels now add their "Amen" to the cry of the redeemed.

HOW THE SAINTS CAME TO HEAVEN.—VER. 13, 14. *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me.* The seer had asked no question, but the elder answers the wondering thoughts and questionings which fill his mind.

*What are these which are arrayed in white robes.* Who are these countless throngs of holy ones?

*And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.* Thou art the one to answer this hard question. *These are they which came (come) out of great tribulation.* The trials experienced by the saints of God throughout the whole period of their pilgrimage. *And have washed their robes, etc., in the blood of the Lamb, and thus made them clean and pure.* What is here signified, therefore, is that these believers are made new creatures in Christ Jesus; they are alike justified and sanctified, when they are "washed" in the blood of Christ.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE SAINTS.—VER. 15-17. *Therefore are they before the throne of God.* Nearest his glory and goodness and love, becoming like him because they see him as he is.

*And they serve him night and day in his temple.* Their whole life is worship.

*And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.* In the term "shall tabernacle" (so literally) are contained a multitude of recollections,—of the pillar in the wilderness, of the Shekinah in the holy place, of the tabernacle of witness with all its symbolism. These will all now be realized and superseded by the overshadowing presence of God himself.

*They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.* None of the privations which they have endured for Christ's sake shall trouble them;

none of the dissatisfactions and weariness of life shall afflict them; for hunger, thirst, and fatigue will be no more.

*Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.* The eastern sun, in its fierce and overpowering intensity, was a fit emblem of those trials which dry up the springs of strength. No sun, and no heat, no burning hot wind like the sirocco, will spread withering influence there.

*For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne.* The same Jesus who, in his human body, loved and taught and gave his life for his people, now on the throne of power. *Shall feed them.* Do all for them that a shepherd does for his sheep. *And lead them unto living fountains of waters.* The water of eternal life, refreshing, joyous, free, enduring. The word *living* here must refer to the fact that that happiness will be perennial.

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* No tears shall gather in any eye, for the sources of sorrow will be cut off. Who would not shed life's tears to have God's hand to wipe them away?

The vision of heaven is revealed to us on earth that we may know the qualities and characters we should cultivate in order to enter heaven. So far as our faith in Jesus has made heaven within us, and our lives are lived according to heavenly principles, we may have the assurance of heaven.

### THOSE THREE CENTS.

We want to tell you a story we heard the other day. It is a true story from beginning to end. A clergyman told it and told it about himself.

He said that when he was a little fellow he was playing one winter day with some of his boy friends, when three cents, belonging to one of them suddenly disappeared in the snow. Try as they would they could not find them, and the boys finally gave up the search, much to the disappointment of the one who owned them. "The next day," said the clergyman who was telling the story, "I chanced to be going by the spot, when suddenly I spied the three coins we had been looking for. The snow which had covered them the day before had melted, and there they lay in full view. I seized them and put them in my pocket. I thought of the candy I could buy with them, and how fortunate I was to have found them; and when conscience would not keep still, but insisted on telling me what it thought of me, and above all, what God thought of me, I just told it to be quiet, and tried to satisfy it by saying that Charlie B— had given up thinking about his three cents by this time, and that the one who found them had the right to them.

"Well, to make a long story short, I spent the money, ate the candy, and thought that was the end of the whole matter. But I was never more mistaken. Years passed on. I grew from a boy into a man, but every now and then 'those three cents' would come into my mind. I couldn't get rid of them. They would come. However, in spite of them, I had all along a strong desire to be a good boy, and to grow up to be a good man—a Christian man. This desire grew stronger and stronger, for God never left me, and so I gave myself to him, and finally, when I grew up became a clergyman. Now perhaps you may think my trouble was over. But no; every now and then 'those three cents' would come into my mind as before. Especially when I would try to get nearer to God, there were 'those three cents' right in the way.

"At last I saw what God had all along been trying to make me see, that I must tell Charlie B—that I had taken them! To be sure he was a man by this time, and so was I, but no matter. God told me as plainly as I am telling you now, that till I had done this he could not bless me. So then and there I sat down and wrote to Charlie, inclosing in my note twenty-five cents—the three cents with interest. Since then I have had peace, and God has blessed me."

Boys and girls, a very little thing may come between you and God. What are your "three cents"? God will show you if he has not already. Don't ever let any sin, however small, come between you and him. Confess it right away, and he will make you clean. You should try so to live that you may be always sure of the smile of Jesus. Then you will be happy, and then you can be blessed.—*Parish Visitor.*

### SWEET WORDS.

"My dearest of mothers." I heard the words repeated in soft tones by my next-door neighbor at an island farmhouse where we were sojourning. "My dearest of mothers." My friend was a widow, and her son, an affectionate, talented fellow, was engineering in Idaho. In one of his late letters he had said at the close: "And now, my dearest of mothers, good-by." Did he guess, I

wonder, how the little petting phrase would please the heart that loved him so? Did he think that she would say it over softly to herself as she sat alone in her room?

The home days were over. The babies, with their sweet ways, their joy-giving and their trouble-making, had grown to noisy boys, then to self-asserting men; they were out in the world making their way; brains busy, thoughts absorbed, hearts full; yet there was one who remembered the mother, still in middle life, loving, and needing love the same as when her boys were her very own in the dear child's home. He wrote her long letters, describing his adventurous, changeable life; the strange companions by whom he is surrounded, the wonderful scenery of the wild western world. It was all intensely enjoyed; but better than all were the love-phrases that showed the son's affectionate heart. I wonder if the "boys" know how dear they are to their mothers, and how little attentions, little gifts, tender words, flying visits, cheer and warm the hearts that have borne the test of years and sorrows.

Life is a little chilly to the mothers whose homes are the things of the past. Even if they remain in the old home, the rooms seem very bare and silent after the children are gone. It is as if summer had flown, with its nests and bird songs, and autumn winds were blowing. Then the love of the sons and daughters is like sunshine, of warm fires, to the hearts that sadly miss them. Let us hope there are many sons who write, "My dearest of mothers."—*Congregationalist.*

### HAD AN EYE ON HIM.

"That young Brown has become a Christian, has he?" So said one business man to another.

"Yes, I heard so." "Well, I'll have my eye on him to see if he holds out. I want a trusty young man in my store. They are hard to find. If this is the real thing with him, he will be just the man I want. I've kept my eye on him ever since I heard of it. I'm watching him closely."

So young Brown went in and out of the store, and up and down the street. He mixed with his old associates, and all the time Mr. Todd had an eye on him. He watched how the young man bore the sneer of being "one of the saints," if he stood up manfully for his new Master, and was not afraid to show his colors. Although Mr. Todd took rides, went to church, or did what he pleased on Sunday, he was very glad to see that Brown rested on the Sunday and hallowed it. Though the Wednesday evening bell never drew the merchant to prayer meeting, he watched to see if Brown passed by. Sometimes he said: "Where are you going, Brown?" and always received the prompt answer: "To prayer meeting." Brown's father and his teacher were both questioned as to how the lad was getting on.

For a year or more Todd's eyes were on Brown. Then he said to himself: "He'll do. He is a real Christian. I can trust him. I can afford to pay him. He shall have a good place in my store."

Thus, young Christians, others watch to see if you are true; if you'll do for places of trust. The world has its cold, calculating eye on you, to see if your religion is real, or if you are just ready to turn back. The work is pleasant and the pay good. These places may be for you when, through His strength, you have proved yourself true.

Fix an eye on Him, and he will keep you in the way.—*Congregationalist.*

### INDIVIDUAL EFFORT.

The conversion of the world is the aim of the Church of Christ. It is not, however, the work of a day or a century. It is the greatest possible task, but it is a possible task, and, therefore, it is a duty. If we stop to inquire what difficulties lie in the way, and to estimate the number of years necessary to make the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of Christ, we shall simply discourage ourselves and gain no compensating advantage. If the world is to be converted, as the Scriptures intimate, it is plain to the most ordinary understanding that it is to be converted by individual effort and individual faithfulness. The humblest person in the church has his part in the great work, and all that is needed to hasten the grand consummation of the world's history is that each believer do his work hour by hour, day by day, as it comes to him. It is because there are so many lazy and indifferent Christians—men and women who do not abide in the faith, who turn away from their duty like cowards—that the church advances so slowly. Let each determine to do his duty as God gives him to see his duty, and the church will receive a mighty impulse in its career of conquest.—*The Independent.*

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