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## The Sabbath-School

### INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

**First Quarter—Lesson XI—Mar. 13 '98.**

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

Matthew 13: 24-30; 36-43.
Read the Whole Chapter.
Commit Verses 37 39.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.*—MATT. 13: 37.

*Time.*—Autumn, A. D. 28.

*Place.*—On the shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum.

THE GROUP of Eight Parables spoken at this time (seven in Matthew and one other in Mark) were concerning the kingdom of heaven in various aspects, and should be read and studied as a group, in order to obtain a view of the drift and burden of Jesus' teaching at this time.

A PARABLE is a story picture of familiar things, which illustrates, and impresses some great truth.

The truth was presented in this form because the disciples could understand the truth better in this way, and because many of the people were in the state described by Isaiah (6: 9) and quoted by Jesus (Matt. 13: 10-15), and the truth could reach them in no other way. The changed circumstances required a new method of teaching.

The minds of the people, and especially of the Pharisees, were preoccupied with entirely different ideas concerning the kingdom and the Messiah from those presented by Christ. The king and the kingdom were to excel all nations in worldly power and magnificence. There was thus little room in their thoughts forsuch a Messiah as Jesus, or such a kingdom as he was founding.

It was necessary to present the truths by object lessons, and stories which would awake attention, stimulate thought, rebuke without offence, and which would be like living seed planted in their souls.

This was needful even for the disciples. There was much that they could understand. Every parable set some truth in a new light, filled it with new meaning. There was much that they could not comprehend. But in due time the seed would bear a harvest of truth.

PARABLE OF THE TARES.

THE FIELD IS THE WORLD.—Vs. 24, 38. *The kingdom of heaven.* Which Jesus as king had come to establish on earth. *Sowed good seed in his field.* The field is the world. The good seed began to be sown as soon as man was created. We should not leave the smallest portion of the world, without the good seed.

THE SOWER AND THE GOOD SEED.—Vs. 24, 38 A man which sowed good seed. God, the source of all good seed. He began in the garden of Eden, and has been sowing every since.

1. God's children are seed; they are the means of increasing the disciples, through them the whole world is to be filled with the fruits of the Spirit, and the children of the kingdom.

2. There is a great variety of good seed adapted to all seasons and all circumstances.

3. Each produces fruit after its kind. It is necessary to be good if we would increase goodness. Imperfect Christians tend to multiply imperfect Christians.

THE ENEMY SOWING TARES.—Vs. 25-27, 38, 39. *But while men slept,* i. e., at night, in secret. How often, says Trench "the beginnings of evil have been scarcely discernible; how often has that which bore the worst fruit in the end, appeared at first like a higher form of good! *His enemy.* The devil, the opposer of all good. He began to sow his tares in the garden of Eden, and has been sowing ever since. *Sowed tares among the wheat.* The Greek word means that he over-sowed, sowed the tares where the wheat had already been sown.

*Whence then hath it tares?* They come from the enemy, and not from God.

ILLUSTRATIONS. "Two Scotchmen emigrated in the early days to California. Each thought to take with them some memorial of his beloved country. One of them, an enthusiastic lover of Scotland, took with him a thistle, the national emblem. The other took a small swarm of honey bees. Years have passed away. The Pacific coast is, on the one hand, cursed with the Scotch thistle, which the farmers find it impossible to exterminate; on the other hand, the forests and fields are fragrant and laden with the sweetness of honey, which has been and is still one of the blessings of the western slope of the Rocky Mountains.

WHEAT AND TARES GROWING TOGETHER. — Vs. 28-30. *Wilt thou then that we....gather them up?* The tares ought not to be there. They are an evil. Let us root them out. *Nay; lest while we gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat.* Because there was danger of mistaking the wheat for tares. *Let both grow together until the harvest,* when these difficulties will be removed.

We must expect to find some bad men in the church, in every reform, in every good cause.

THE TWO HARVESTS.—Vs. 30, 39-43. *Until the harvest....the end of the world,* the day of judgment and the coming of the Son of man. *Say to the reapers. The reapers are the angels. Gather ye together first the tares.* All the baskets of wheat are carried from the threshing floor to the flat roofs of their houses, where they are emptied out on mats, and the tedious separation of grain from grain is carried on, sometimes for days, until the wheat is finally rid of this unhappy admixture. *All things that offend.* That cause others to sin, and *them which do iniquity,* themselves, *shall* (be) *cast ....into a furnace of fire.* It is the end and punishment of the wicked. Punishment is intended to keep wickedness from spreading, and destroying all the good, just as weeds are burned to keep them from multiplying, and destroying good grain. *Wailing and gnashing of teeth* expresses the terribleness of their end. The knowledge of that danger should have shown them the awful evil of sin, and kept them from it. *Gather the wheat into my barn,* where it will be preserved,—accomplish the end for which it was made. *Then,* when the evil, hindering element is removed, *shall the righteous shine forth as the sun,* the symbol of gladness, of truth, of life. *Who hath ears to hear.* All of you, whose mind is open to the truth.

We are all sowing seed of some kind, shall it be wheat or tares?

Which shall we be in the world, wheat or tares?

The harvest, the fruit of different courses of life, should teach us which kind of life to choose.

### Enriched by Teaching.

BY MARY D. SHAEFFER.

While I was a scholar in the Sunday school, I never questioned but that it was an institution maintained solely for the benefit of the young people. Considering all that is done to secure, hold, and instruct the young, this view was hardly surprising.

But, since I have been teaching, I have often wondered whether, after all, we teachers are not the ones most benefited. Many of us could testify that we have given our best thought, best work, best selves, to a Sunday school class, only to find that in all these things we have been enriched,—by teaching.

Perhaps even the tact necessary to secure scholars may not be ours by nature; but, when it is cultivated and developed for such a cause as this, we acquire power which may be of service in a larger sphere than the average Sunday school.

To hold these scholars from Sunday to Sunday, to make Bible study attractive, to make them Bible students, to bring them to Christ, necessitates our putting into exercise many graces of mind and heart. Patience, love, knowledge, have here abundant opportunity for exercise, and one cannot exercise them without gaining thereby.

If we are wise teachers, we shall not slight the power of attractiveness, whether it be of person or dress; because of this, one's general appearance will improve,—a thing not to be despised by those of us who are past the days of youthful grace and vigor.

A Sunday school teacher's privileges are not confined to one day in seven. There should be a profitable weekday companionship between teacher and scholars. It is to this weekday relation that the teacher is indebted for many brightening, quickening influences resulting from contact with the optimism of youth. Our sympathies are also broadened and deepened by these everyday glimpses into the helps and hinrances that surround our scholars in their home, social, and business circles.

But even better than all this is the result of the faithful teacher's purpose to become just what her scholars think she is; not that there is any effort on her part to deceive them as to her true worth, but they have a way of placing her on heights in mental and spiritual spheres,—heights on which we ought to be, but perhaps have not yet scaled. The restraining influence of the class is upon us in matters of opinion and decision, and we are thus spared some faltering and stumbling. Their faith in us, their expectancy of the best in us and by us, leads us on "from character to character," the possession of which gives satisfaction of the highest and purest.

The study of the Word for the purpose of presenting its truths to a class is another, doubtless the greatest, source of benefit to a teacher. We cannot spend several hours weekly in prayful research of the Bible without coming into closer fellowship with the Great Teacher, without whose leadings we are failures, indeed, in this great work of teaching in the Sunday school. I doubt if many of us would be like the Bereans of old, were it not that the responsibility of teaching others were laid upon us; then our loss would be as great as is our present gain.

Not to be overlooked is the goodly company into which this Bible study for the work in the Sunday school brings us,—a company whose knowledge and experience in ways mental and spiritual makes clear to us many things we might not otherwise comprehend or enjoy. We may never see McLaren, Miller, Hurlbut, Schauffler, and a host of other lesson-writers, but they are not strangers to us; they are giving us much valuable help in character building.

These are only some of the benefits resulting from teaching a Sunday school class, but perhaps enough have been advanced in support of the statement that we are enriched by teaching.—S. S. Times.

### A Little Lesson for a Stormy Day.

Have you ever made a special effort for your Sunday school class, studying and praying over the lesson all the week, trying to make its teachings fit the needs of each individual scholar under your care, and looking forward to the lesson hour with high hope and eager expectancy, only to wake up on Sunday morning to find it raining? If so, you know just how great is the temptation to fret and worry and scold about the bad weather interfering with all your plans.

But there is a better way to meet a stormy day, taught us by a company of little children who were perfectly unconscious of the impressions they were stamping indelibly on human hearts. Saturday afternoon of Christian Endeavor Convention week at Boston in 1895 was set apart for children, and a rally was held in the immense hall of Mechanics' Building. The various Junior Christian Endeavor societies, under the care of their superintendents, came, not only from all parts of Boston proper, but from every town within a radius of many miles. The children had been planning eagerly for it many months.

The long-looked for Saturday afternoon came at last, and with it rain,—not an ordinary rain, by any means, but a heavy, steady downpour, that showed no signs of abating. Disappointment reigned supreme. Early that afternoon, Old Colony Depot presented an unusually busy scene. In addition to the regular passenger traffic, which is always heavy, trains were arriving every few minutes bringing great numbers of children.

The building could not accommodate them all, and groups of children were obliged to stand outside in the rain, waiting for street cars to carry them to their destination. It was a pitiful sight. All signs of starch had disappeared from the smart holiday frocks, and eager enthusiasm had died out in disappointed hearts. The Sunday hats, with their gay ribbons and bright flowers, were in a sorry plight, and the sweet young faces under them had lost their sunny smiles.

Just then one of the superintendents noticed two of her little girls holding a whispered conference. "All right," she heard one say; "I'll start it, if you'll follow." What were they going to do? She soon discovered, for, without delay, they began to sing "There shall be showers of blessings." One after another joined the little leaders, until the whole crowd, both inside and outside, were singing the wonderfully beautiful and appropriate hymn. Scarcely had the last notes died away, when the sweet voice of a sunny-faced lad began, "There is sunshine in my soul to day." Once more the old depot rang with the music of a hymn, and echoed and re ech ed with the glad, sweet words.

The effect produced upon the crowd was indescribable. Men passing on the street reverently raised their hats, and some stopped and listened with uncovered heads until the hymns were ended. A great wave -like an electric shock—passed over the whole company. Faces brightened, hearts grew light and buoyant with hope, and enthusiasm reigned once more Conditions had not changed, the rain still kept its steady downpour, but the clouds of discouragement had lifted, showers of blessing were descending, and God's own sunshine was flooding every soul and filling it with gladness.

The next time we wake up to find it raining on Sunday morning, instead of fretting about it, let us go to the throne of grace, and plead that showers of spiritual blessing may be poured out upon us and our dear scholars. And then let us leave it all with God, knowing that he rules the weather, as he does all else, and go to our duties as officers and teachers with bright faces hearts full of faith, and souls full of sunshine. Perhaps the blessing on the rainy day will be "exceeding abundantly above" all that we should have thought of asking had it been a sunshiny day. God is able to make it so.—S. S. Time.

They Never Fail.—Mr. S. M. Boughner, Langton, writes: "For about two years I was troubled with Inward Piles, but by using Parmelee's Pills, I was completely cured, and although four years have elapsed since then they have not returned." Parmelee's Pills are anti-bilious and a specific for the cure of Liver and Kidney Complaints, Dyspepsia, Costiveness, Headache, Piles, etc., and will regulate the secretions and remove all bilious matter.

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### What to Teach Boys.

A philosopher has said that true education of boys is to "teach them what they ought to know when they become men."

1. To be true and to be genuine. No education is worth anything that does not include this. A man had better not know how to read—he had better never learn a letter in the alphabet, and be true, genuine in intention and in action—rather than be learned in all sciences and all languages, to be at the same time false in heart and counterfeit in life. Above all things, teach boys that truth is more than riches, more than earthly power or possessions.

2 To be pure in thought, language, and life—pure in mind and in body.

3. To be unselfish. To care for the feelings and comforts of others. To be generous, noble, and manly. This will include a genuine reverence for the aged and for things sacred.

4. To be self-reliant and self-helpful, even from childhood. To be industrious always, and self-supporting at the earliest proper age. Teach them that all honest work is honorable, that an idle life of dependence on others is disgraceful.

When a boy has learned these four things, when he has made these ideas a part of his being—however poor or however rich—he has learned the most important things he ought to know when he becomes a man.—Parish Visitor.

God calls upon church officials to be faithful. The promise is to the faithful. A Premier of England was presented with a list of incompetent generals from whom he had to appoint one to take command of an important expedient. He said: "I know not what effect their names will have on the enemy, but I know that they make me tremble."

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