



INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of Sunday School Course.)

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 27

JESUS, THE WORLD'S SAVIOR AND KING.

(Review.)

READING LESSON—II Cor. 5:14-21.
GOLDEN TEXT—For he it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Gal. 6:14 E. V.

With the exception of the temperance lesson, all the lessons of the quarter have to do with the death and resurrection of our Lord. In the first quarter we considered Jesus as the great Teacher; in the second, he is presented chiefly as the seeking Savior; in the third, we observed him as he acted in judgment upon Israel and sin; in this last, he is seen in his supreme office as Savior and King. The king of love, he is also the world's Savior. Deny him his kingship, refuse to become a subject of that kingdom of which he is the head and we bring upon ourselves the condemnation of a righteous judgment. This past quarter particularly reveals him in that final ministry which resulted in the initiation of the new enterprise of proclaiming his gospel, to the end that his kingdom shall be established. We shall consider the lessons under four headings:

Story of Love.

I. These of Preparation for His Passion. These embrace the first three lessons. (1) In the first, we have the beautiful story of the love which accompanied him to burial, which he accepted and immortalized. This was not because of the greatness of the act, but because of the appreciation of himself and of his words. (2) Here we observe him presiding over and instituting that lasting memorial, the symbolic feast, wherein the old passes away and the new dispensation is ushered in. (3) In the third lesson we view with awe the agony of the garden wherein he dedicated himself to the coming suffering. "Not as I will, but as thou wilt"—absolute surrender and delight in the Father's will.

II. Those That Preceded His Passion. These next five lessons lead us through those dark shadows, yet, through a darkness which is yet unfathomable and which ended in the total darkness of Calvary. (4) In this lesson Jesus is presented, the incarnation of evil, and the agent of Satan, who betrayed his Lord and "Friend" by a kiss. Here we see the utter ruin of a soul which chose private ambition instead of fellowship with Jesus. (5) This is a presentation of the greatest and most appalling travesty of justice the world has ever seen. Humanity never descended to any lower depths, yet he is serene, calm, dignified and strong. (6) The Temperance Lesson. (7) This lesson considers the heart-breaking rashness of Peter. (8) This is the story of the ignoble failure of a weak, vacillating, time-server. Pilate's conscience was keenly alive, yet at last, that he might save himself and retain his position of power, he gave Jesus over to the hatred and malice of his enemies by ordering him to be crucified.

Story of the Cross.

III. His Passion. (9) This brings us to the story of the cross itself, as considered in this sequence of lessons. Before that awe-inspiring, wonder-creating event we stand with bared head. Here sin was unmasked and did its utmost. Here also we behold grace unveiled and active.

IV. The Post-Passion Lessons. We are now in a new atmosphere and light, a new glory is to be seen. (10) In this lesson we behold the empty tomb, for "He could not be held of death." We share with them the glorious, joyful consciousness that he whom we have just seen die in ignominy and shame and suffering is now alive and "ever liveth" to be our advocate and ever-present friend. This is a glorious fact, that of the literal, bodily resurrection of Christ from among the dead. Hallelujah! (11) In lesson eleven this same thought is again emphasized and with the suggestion of its accompanying obligation, in that "we are witnesses of these things." These first disciples received their great commission and were told how in infinite grace the Savior and King first of all calls his followers into fellowship with himself before they are sent out to carry on those enterprises which are the fruit of his death and resurrection. (12) In this is found the blessed record of those last words of him who "showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom" (Acts 1:3). Here is not alone the unquestioned certainty of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, but the record of his present place "in the heavens," whether he ascended to be with the Father, and also the glorious hope of his coming again "in like manner as ye saw him ascending." Bodily he left this earth, bodily and "in great glory" he is to return. Praise his name!

In "Tarbell's Teachers' Guide" is a good suggestion for review Sunday, viz., that a series of elliptical phrases be written upon a board or chart, that will fix the chief idea or serve to recall the lessons, as follows:

- (1) Let her alone.
- (2) For ye have the poor.
- (3) Where-soever this gospel shall be preached.
- (4) Verily I say unto you, One.
- (5) For the Son of Man goeth.
- (6) This is my blood.
- (7) Take ye.
- (8) My soul is.
- (9) Father, all things.
- (10) Watch and.
- (11) My God, my.
- (12) Why seek ye.
- (13) Ye shall be my.

These phrases may be written upon cards or slips of paper and distributed to classes or individuals, the entire sentence to be recited when called for.

If Grandpa Were Santa Claus!



If Grandpa were Santa Claus, how happy we would be! When toyshop toil was finished he would take us on each knee. He'd tell us all his secrets and he'd name the pretty toys He'd made and kept in hiding for the other girls and boys.

We have a real, live Grandpa! He visits us each year, And he is quite a bosom friend of Santa Claus, I hear. Although he owns no reindeer, and of playthings no great store— If Grandpa were Santa Claus, we could not love him more!

GENE MORGAN.

EMOTIONAL VALUE OF DAY

Christmas Spirit Almost Universally Felt, But What It Is Remains a Mystery to Many.

The emotional value of Christmas may be said to be universally felt. Something happens at Christmas that, if only for a day or two, does the whole world good. What that something is remains for many a mystery. A number of persons who feel the renewing impulse are like Faust when the notes of the Easter song arrest his suicidal intent; they take and enjoy the moment's deliverance and continue to regard the source of the boon as nothing more than mythology made potent through human associations. Others are moved through superstitious fears; they approach the great season with consciences crowded with uncomfortable memories; Marley's

ghost is after them, but, unlike Scrooge, their new heart is only for Christmas week. Another group simply fall in with an ancient custom and are surprised, and indeed pleased, when the dry bones of their unbelieving minds come together, take on flesh, and begin to live. A vast multitude meet the great day with buoyant expectation, take with thanks its new happiness, return to their work in this exalted mood, and ask no questions about cause and effect. A few philosophize on the phenomenon, and they are willing to stake their lives on the substantial truth of their insight.—George A. Gordon, in Atlantic Monthly.



FRIENDLY ADVICE.



"Can you suggest something for me to get for my wife for Christmas?" he asked of the shopkeeper. "You'd better get her a box of cigars, I expect," said the shopkeeper. "She was in here this morning and bought a lace parasol for you."

MISTLETOE HISTORY

Gathering of Plant Sacred Rite in Druidical Religious Festivals.

Also Considered a Potent Remedy for Ills, a Belief Which Still Exists in Some of the Remote Places of Europe.

When we decorate our homes with sprays of mistletoe at Christmas time, but few of us know the history of it as a Yuletide symbol. Pretty girls are kissed under it and a great deal of fun and nonsense is carried on apropos of it, but no one stops to think of how ancient a decoration it is or how sacred it was once thought to be.

Almost everybody has a vague knowledge that the Druids of old had something to do with the gathering of mistletoe, but just what that something was is not clear to the average mind.

The fact is that the ancient Celts in their druidical religion had two great festivals, one in June and the other in December, the latter being equivalent to our Christmas. In both of these great festivals the gathering of the mistletoe was a sacred rite.

Pliny in his "Natural History" describes the ceremony. Speaking of the Druids' worship of the oak, he says: "They believe that whatever grows on these trees is sent from heaven and is a sign that the tree has been chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe is very rarely to be met with, but when it is found they gather it with solemn ceremony. This they do especially on the sixth day of the moon, because by the sixth day the moon has plenty of vigor and has not run half its course."

"After the preparations have been made for a sacrifice and a feast under the tree they hail it as the universal healer and bring to the spot two white bulls whose horns have never been bound before. A priest clad in a white robe climbs the tree and with a golden sickle cuts the mistletoe, which is caught in a white cloth. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God may make his own gift to prosper with those upon whom he has bestowed it."

"They believe that a potion prepared from mistletoe will increase their flocks and that the plant is a remedy against all poison."

It was believed to be a remedy for many ills, and this belief is still to be found in many remote places in Europe. In Holstein, for example, the mistletoe is regarded as a healing remedy for wounds, and in Lacauze, France, it is always administered by the native people as an antidote for poison. They apply the plant to the stomach of the patient and give him a solution of it to drink as well. The Gaelic word for mistletoe is "an t'ail, loc," which means all healer.

In the northeast of Scotland people used to cut twigs of mistletoe at the March full moon; these they bent in circles and kept for a year to cure hiccups and other troubles. In some parts of Germany the mistletoe is especially esteemed as a remedy for the ailments of children; who sometimes wear it hung around the neck as an amulet.

In Sweden on Midsummer eve mistletoe is diligently sought after, the people believing it to be possessed of many mystic qualities, and that if a sprig of it is attached to the ceiling of the dwelling house, the horse's stall or the cow's crib, the troll will then be powerless to injure either man or beast. Branches of the plant are commonly seen in farm houses hanging from the ceiling to protect the dwellings from all harm, but especially from fire, and persons afflicted with the falling sickness think they can ward off all attacks of the malady by carrying about with them a knife which has a handle of mistletoe.

A Swedish remedy for other complaints is to hang a sprig of mistletoe round the sufferer's neck or to make him wear on his finger a ring made from the plant. Moreover they fashion divining rods of mistletoe or of four different kinds of wood, one of which must be mistletoe. The treasure seeker places the rod on the ground after sundown, and when it rests directly over the treasure the rod begins to move as if it were alive. Like their Swedish neighbors, many German peasants consider the mistletoe a powerful charm against evil spirits. A similar belief seems to have lingered among the Romans; whose religion at a very early date was somewhat similar to that of the Druids. When Aeneas descended into Hades, he gathered to protect himself from the infernal powers a branch of mistletoe, which Vergil calls the golden bough.

"IS 'E COMIN' TERNIGHT?"

WILBUR D. NESBIT

"Is 'e comin' ternaht, mammy? Comin' ternaht?"
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WHAT YOU CAN GIVE

Helpful Christmas Present Suggestions for Those Who Are Puzzled.

Unabridged Dictionary Will Be Appreciated by Children of Kindergarten Age—Other Suitable Gifts for Young and Old.

NUMBER of correspondents who have requested suggestions of books suitable for Christmas gifts will find answers to their queries in the following:

Among the many attractive gift books for very little boys might be mentioned Professor Rasmussen's "Analogy Between the Monogamous Protoplasm and the Silurian Molecule." We can think of no book that would be a greater source of delight to the child that is not yet out of short dresses. It tells in easy words of eight and ten syllables of the sports and pastimes of the protoplasmic family and draws beautiful moral lessons from the corpuses of the carboniferous era. It is handsomely illustrated with representations of the agile animalcule and will be sure to delight the heart of the little boy or girl who finds it in his or her stocking, as the case may be.

Another dainty idea for a child of three or four years is the Unabridged Dictionary. The simplicity of style observed in this interesting narrative recommends it at once for children who have reached the kindergarten age. The plot is not so complex and the characters are sufficiently varied to hold the unfading interest of the little ones. We have in mind a gentleman who gave his little son a dictionary last Christmas, and he assures us that the lad simply devoured the book.

A pretty present for a child is the clinical report of the county hospital. This comes nicely printed on clean white paper, with bizarre illustrations showing the rise and fall of the temperature, amount of proctoids eaten, official count of the germs, statistics as to microbes and many other amusing and entertaining ideas. A rare source of pleasure with this book is to have the little fellows pronounce the long words first the way they are spelled and then read them backward and see what difference, if any, there is in the sound. Some boys would rather do this than go skating.

In the line of pure romance there is nothing more entertaining from Prof. T. L. Escopier's "How the Spectrum Taught On in Saturn." This highly original historical tale tells how the spectrum revealed the secret of Saturn's rings, showing that the planet was warm and dry and that the two rings were for ice water. It comes in four large volumes, with 22 pages of logarithmic calculations that are sure to delight young and old.

As a gift book for a member of a temperance family there is nothing pleasanter than "The Complete Barker-Karpis." This tells exactly what goes into the stuff that men put in their mouths to steal away their brains, and will be of valuable assistance to any person who wishes to apply satisfactory tests and determine whether or not he has been equipped with brains and would inspire larceny.

"One Thousand Ways to Cure a Cold," by Burton Bales, is a beautifully written book, giving all the remedies for cold that were suggested to its author in one day. There are 89 variations of the quinine and whisky treatment, and the other 911 remedies consist of the same prescription without the bitter quinine. This is a good book to have in any house.

"The Servant Question and Its Answer" will deceive many people, but it might do for a gift to a young married couple. The answer is quaintly given: "Board."

WILBUR D. NESBIT.

When and Why.
"Do you go to Sunday school now, Georgie?" inquired Georgie's uncle.
"Yes; Christmas is comin'!"
"Don't you go except just before Christmas?"
"Yes; I go just before the summer picnic, too."

The Christmas Robin.
In many parts of England the robin is associated with Christmas-tide. There is a belief that on Christmas eve these birds will sing near a house where a person is dying, to cheer him.

VALUE OF A CHILD'S GIFTS

Those Made With Their Own Hands Teach Good Lessons and Give Inspiration.

If we stop to think about our Christmas giving we realize that a gift means more to the giver than it does to him who receives. If it is given in the proper spirit the donor finds out to the full that it is really "more blessed to give than to receive," a fact that is lost sight of in an age of the commercial spirit.

With children there is a great educative value in their present giving if it is encouraged to be really their own giving. If the mother, however, simply prepares some little remembrance, and says "Mary, this is your Christmas present to Aunt Ellen," the gift has no meaning in the thoughts of the young giver. And not only has it no meaning, but it becomes actually harmful for the reason it presents the idea to the child that the gift without the giver is really a gift. And the child has put no thought or self sacrifice into the giving of that present.

On the other hand, if the child be given pocket money which it may consider its very own, or better still, if it is enabled to earn pocket money and is then encouraged to set aside a portion of its very own money for present making the idea of true giving is acquired. The sacrifice, the forethought, the love necessary to make a gift a real gift are there.

The home-made gifts of children have many valuable lessons to teach the young givers. Many lessons in sewing, raffia, bead-work or painting may be given under the guise of making a gift. In one family, where the elder sister had never made gifts, and really never learned to sew well until she was eighteen years of age, the younger sister, a girl of ten, inspired by the example of a small friend, wished to make birthday gifts for her family. Once she asked her mother to teach her how to crochet; another time to scallop, and before she was twelve years old she had become as proficient a little seamstress as one would want to see.

Thus practical lessons are learned, while the child is inspired with the idea that "Not what we give, but what we share; the gift without the giver is bare."

A FEEL IN THE CHRISTMAS AIR.

By JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

They're a feel in the air,
They're a feel in the air,
When the Christ-
mas time sets in,
That's about as much
of a mystery
As ever I've run
across.

For instance, now,
While I gain in
weight,
And general health,
I swear
There's a goodness
somewhere
I can't quite state—
A kind o' feel in the air.

They're a feel in the air,
They're a feel in the air,
To the spot where
a man lives at
it gives a teller a
appetite—
They ain't no doubt
about that!
And yet they're some-
pin—I don't know
what—
That follows me
here and there
And haunts and worries and spares me
not—
A kind o' feel in the air.

Is it the racket the
children raise?
Why, no!—God
bless 'em, no!
Is it the eyes and
the cheeks ablaze,
Like my own wux
long ago?
Is it the bleat o' the
whistle a n d
beat?
O' the little toy
drum and blare
O' the horn? No, no! It is just the
sweet—
The sad-sweet feel in the air.

One Might.
"They are to be married on Christ-
mas day."
"Would you call that Yuletide?"

Don't and Do in Holiday Fire Caution

- Do not decorate your Christmas tree with paper, cotton or flimsy materials.
- Do not use cotton to represent snow.
- Do not permit children to light candles.
- Do not leave matches within reach of the children.
- Do not place Christmas tree near window curtains or gas fixtures.
- Use metallic tinsel and non-inflammable decorations only.
- Use asbestos fiber to represent snow.
- Set the tree upon a substantial stand.
- A house of incense is better than a house of mourning.
- Have an extinguisher or a few buckets full of water near the tree, ready for use in an emergency.