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JAS. A. THOMAS, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON VIII, FOURTH QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, NOV. 20.

Text of the Lesson, II Chron. xxxiii, 9-16. Memory Verses, 12, 13—Golden Text, I John i, 9—Commentary Prepared by the Rev. D. M. Stearns.

[Copyright, 1898, by D. M. Stearns.]

9. "So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err and to do worse than the heathen whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel." This is a summary of the previous part of this chapter concerning the sins of Manasseh, who began to reign when he was 12 years old and reigned 55 years in Jerusalem. He shed innocent blood very much till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another (II Kings xxi, 16). He wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke Him to anger. Then think of the people of God acting worse than the heathen who knew not God, and even worshiping an idol, a carved image, in the house of God where He had put His name and His glory! What a contrast to the conduct of his father Hezekiah, who for the most part wrought good and right and truth before the Lord his God (chapter xxxi, 20). How could such a good father have such a bad son? But it is not an uncommon story. Consider the sons of Eli and of Samuel and of David. How could sinful King Ahaz, because of whose sins the Lord brought Judah low (chapter xxviii, 19), have such a good son as Hezekiah? His mother's name was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah (II Kings xviii, 2), and to her possibly much is due. But Manasseh's mother was Hephzibah (my delight is in her), and if there is anything in a name he, too, may have had a good mother (II Kings xxi, 1). Our Heavenly Father knows what it is to have rebellious children (Isa. i, 2), and when He permits us to have rebellious children it is a ground of fellowship with Him.

10. "And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people, but they would not hearken." Oh, how often the Lord has to say concerning those whom He would love to bless that they would not let Him, they would not listen to Him, they would not come to Him (Isa. xxx, 15; Math. xxiii, 37; John v, 40). If we only would receive His word with meekness, yield fully to Him and be willing and obedient, how much of heaven we might have upon the earth! How earnestly God cries to His people by His servants the prophets, as, for example, in Jer. iii, 13, 14, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity; turn, O back sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you." See also Ezek. xviii, 30-32; xxxiii, 11, etc.

11. "Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns and bound him with fetters and carried him to Babylon." Thus he found some reaping, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, and they who sow the wind may reap the whirlwind (Gal. vi, 7; Hos. viii, 7). Affliction is often the best thing that can come to one who is wandering from God. God is not willing that any should perish, and if sinners will not listen to gracious words of love He will seek to win them by chastening, as He has said in Job xxxiii, 29, 30.

12. "And when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers." It is often the case that only in affliction will a soul turn to the Lord, even as it is written in Hos. v, 15, "In their affliction they will seek Me early." It will be seen on a larger scale some day, for it is written in Isa. xxvi, 9, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Even the fearful judgments of Rev. ix and xvi are intended, if possible, to bring men to repentance. See Rev. ix, 20, 21; xvi, 9, 11. Pride and self will are born in us as the results of Adam's sin, the work of the devil, and all people are either Cains or Abels, the former proudly resisting God and His salvation, and the latter humbly confessing their sins and accepting His way of redemption. The Pharisees when our Lord was on earth were of the line of Cain, religious, but proud and hating God and His way.

13. "And prayed unto Him, and He was entreated of Him and heard his supplication and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord He was God." Manasseh was evidently a true penitent, and God's car is ever open to such. It is always true for such on God's part, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi, 37). It is written in I Chron. v, 20 concerning some of Israel that they cried to God in the battle and He was entreated of them, because they put their trust in Him. Ezra says in chapter viii, 23, "So we fasted and besought our God for this, and He was entreated of us." As to the mercy which is with God for the greatest sinner who with true penitence turns to Him we need only consider the case of the penitent thief or of Saul of Tarsus. But who could be greater in sin than this son of Hezekiah?

14. "Now after this he built a wall without the city of David." The building of this wall and the placing of captains of war in the fenced cities does not imply any lack of trust in God, but is rather suggestive of keeping the Lord's property for the Lord. In Canticles iv, 12, the bride is compared to a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed; something kept solely for the owner. In Isa. lx, 18, the walls of Zion are called salvation and her gates praise. In Zech. ii, 5, the Lord says He will be unto her a wall of fire round about. Walls and protections of any kind are naught unless they are of God.

15. "And he took away the strange gods and the idol out of the house of the Lord." As the children of God we are expected to put away from us all the works of the flesh and to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (Eph. iv, 22, 31; II Cor. vii, 1). Having received the Lord Jesus, we are looked upon as having died with Him and risen from the dead to walk in newness of life; dead unto sin, but alive unto God, yielded unto Him as His property for His use exclusively (Rom. vi, 4, 11, 13).

16. "And he repaired the altar of the Lord * * * and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. Peace and thank-offerings are associated in the law (Lev. vii, 11, 12) and are in connection with the burnt offering, sin offering and other offerings (Lev. vii, 37). All offerings pointed back to Gen. iii, 21, and on to Calvary, for nothing can take away sin or make peace with God but the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, the antitype of all types, the substance of every shadow. He served God as no one else ever did, and we serve truly only as He lives and works in us. In Manasseh's case, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, the grace of God was exceeding abundant (II Tim. i, 14). He is ever the same, full of grace and truth.

It often happens that the doctor is out of town when most needed. The two year old daughter of J. Y. Schenck, of Caddo, Ind. Ter., was threatened with croup. He writes: "My wife insisted that I go for the doctor at once, but as he was out of town, I purchased a bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy, which relieved the child immediately." A bottle of that remedy in the house will often save the expense of a doctor's bill, besides the anxiety always occasioned by serious sickness. When it is given as soon as the croupy cough appears, it will prevent the attack. Thousands of mothers always keep it in their homes. The 25 and 50 cent bottles for sale by W. G. Thomas, druggist.

THE OLD HUNTSMAN.

There's a keen and grim old huntsman
On a horse as white as snow;
Sometimes he is very swift,
And sometimes he is slow,
But he never is at fault,
For he always hunts at view,
And he rides without a halt
After you.

The huntsman's name is Death;
His horse's name is Time;
He is coming, he is coming,
As I sit and write this rhyme;
He is coming, he is coming,
As you read the rhyme I write;
You can hear his hoof's low drumming
Day and night.

You can hear the distant drumming
As the clock goes tick-a-tack,
And the chiming of the hours
Is the music of his pack;
You may hardly note their growling
Underneath the noonday sun,
But at night you hear them howling
As they run.

And they never check or falter,
For they never miss their kill;
Seasons change and systems alter,
But the hunt is running still.
Hark! The evening chime is playing;
O'er the long gray town it peals.
Don't you hear the deathhound baying
At your heels?

Where is there an earth or burrow,
Where a cover left for you?
A year, a week, perhaps tomorrow,
Brings the huntsman's death halloo.
Day by day he gains upon us,
And the most that we can claim
Is that when the hounds are on us
We die game.

And somewhere dwells the Master,
By whom it was decreed;
He sent the savage huntsman;
He bred the snow white steed.
These hounds which run forever,
He set them on your track;
He hears you scream, but never
Calls them back.

He does not heed our suing,
We never see his face;
He hunts to our undoing,
We thank him for the chase;
We thank him, and we flatter,
We hope—because we must—
But have we cause? No matter!
Let us trust!
—A. Conan Doyle in Speaker.

A CLEVER REVENGE.

A celebrated painter of Madrid, whose real name it will be more discreet not to disclose, but whom I shall call Morales, had just completed a superb picture for the convent of the Escurial. He had received a large sum of money for his work, and by way of a little relaxation after the long continued toil bestowed upon it he had assembled around a well spread table a few choice spirits from among his fellow artists. It was a bachelor entertainment. Not a lady was to sit down with them. Even the mistress of the house herself, Dona Casilda, had been excluded. Morales had sent her off with her maid to pass the day with one of her cousins.

But Dona Casilda, having a little curiosity in her composition, was very anxious to know what was to take place in her absence, and had a strong desire to find out what so many men could have to talk about when there were no women present. Instead, therefore, of remaining at the house of her cousin she quickly returned, bringing the latter with her, and the two were presently ensconced in a little closet adjoining the studio, where, with eye and ear closely applied to the keyhole, they remained eagerly listening to all that passed.

"But tell us, my friend," said one of the guests, "why are we deprived of the pleasure of Senora Morales' company. Surely her beauty and wit would not have diminished the charm of the delightful meeting."

"There!" whispered the lady to her cousin. "That is the first sensible speech I have heard."

"Bosh!" replied the husband, pouring out a glass of golden sherry. "Women know nothing of the poetry of life."

"That is true," added another. "Women are mere matter of fact beings—commonplace, essentially prosaic. What do they know about the arts or the enjoyments of artists?"

"Fools!" exclaimed Casilda.

"Yes," continued Morales. "Take from women love, intrigues and household affairs and they absolutely have nothing that they can think or talk about."

"Impertinent fellow!" was the comment of the listeners.

"Why," added the painter, "they cannot comprehend a rich joke or one of those capital pieces of humor which the air of the studio inspires. They cannot appreciate them. When a woman plays us a trick, it is always at the expense of our honor."

"Wretch!" This word escaped the two cousins at the same instant and was uttered in a loud tone, but the noise of the guests and the rattling of glasses prevented its being heard. "Ah, Master Simple, and so you defy us to play you a trick without touching your honor, do you? By our Lady of Atocha, I vow that before Lent is over I will have my revenge!"

Casilda set her wits to work, and you shall hear what came of it. On the following Thursday she engaged her brother to procure from the Place Cabeda, where they are accustomed to sell fragments of old buildings, a door of the same dimensions as their own which fronted on the street. She charged him to get one of an antique pattern, covered with ironwork and heavy moldings. This she had conveyed to her house with all secrecy and kept closely concealed until the favorable moment. She had communicated her design to her brother and a few friends in the neighborhood, on whose aid she relied in carrying out her plot. On a certain evening, when Morales had returned home at a late hour from a convent where he had just completed the painting of a chapel, which the monks were to have opened at Easter, Casilda received him with much warmth and a greater profusion of caresses than usual. It was very late when they retired to rest, for Morales must first have his supper.

The night was cold and stormy. Toward midnight Morales' wife began to utter deep groans, intermingled with piercing cries, as if suffering intense pain.

"Holy Mother!" exclaimed she. "I am dying! My dear husband, my last hour is come!"

Her husband, in consoling tones, tried to quiet her.

"I can bear it no longer!" she cried. "Get me a confessor—the sacraments! It is almost over with me!"

At these cries the domestic hastened to her assistance, but nothing relieved the sufferer. Poor Morales, though sore against his will, was forced to leave his bed.

"I know what it is that ails you, mistress," said the girl. "It is that bad vinegar you mixed with the salad. You know, it served you the same way last time. Mother Castinoja cured you then."

The painter at this began to scold his wife because experience had not made her more careful, but she only sobbed out in half suffocated words:

"'Al hecho no ay remedio' (What is done cannot be undone). For mercy's sake, go for Mother Castinoja. She is the only one who can give me relief. Bring her quickly, or there will be nothing left for you but to open my grave."

"My little wife," replied her husband, in a dismal tone, "my dearest wife, Mother Castinoja has moved to the other end of the city. The night is very cold, and the rain is pouring in torrents. Even if I could find Mother Castinoja, do you think she would come to see you through this terrible storm? Compose yourself, my dear, and do not force me to take such a long walk, which I am sure will be of no use."

At this Casilda began to sob anew.

"See what a husband God has given me! I only ask him to go for a nurse at the risk of wetting his shoes, and he refuses. But I know what it is you want—you wish to be a widower and live over again your bachelor life. Ah, I am dying! A priest! I'm poisoned!"

Morales, really believing that his wife was at the last extremity, and fearing if she died that the accusation she had thrown out against him might have serious consequences, endeavored to soothe her by caresses and prepared to light a lantern. He then drew on a pair of stout boots, threw a cloak over his shoulders and manfully set forth on his nocturnal expedition in search of Mother Castinoja.

The painter knew that she lived somewhere in the Rue Funcarral, but of the precise location he was totally ignorant. The rain fell in torrents. The night was as dark as Egypt, and Morales cursed the day on which he was married. It may readily be imagined that in such a mood he was not likely to find the object of his search.

But while he is groping along the streets let us return to the sick lady. No sooner did she see her husband fairly off on his expedition than she summoned her brother and a few chosen friends who were lying hid in the cellar. In a twinkling they had the old street door off its hinges and its place supplied by the one bought for the occasion. Above it they placed a huge white sign, on which was displayed in large letters the following inscription:

"The Hotel of the Cid. Good Entertainment For Man and Beast."

This done, a large party of friends from the neighborhood who had been let into the secret were speedily assembled. Castanets and guitars were put in requisition. A repast was prepared, and the merry guests began to eat, drink and dance by way of celebrating the dismal expedition of the poor husband who had gone in search of Mother Castinoja.

Meanwhile, having proceeded from street to street, knocked at more than 50 doors and roused and angered the whole neighborhood, our good painter was at length obliged to return without the nurse. He was drenched to the skin, and his patience was completely exhausted. On approaching his house the sound of musical instruments, singing and peals of laughter burst upon his astonished ears. Thinking he had made a mistake, he raised the lantern, and discovering a different door from his own, with the sign of a hotel over it, he became completely bewildered and began to traverse the pavement anew.

"It is indeed the Rue de Lapaire," said he. "Here is the bookstore of Pedro Trappal, and this is the house of Diego le Boiteux, and then surely comes mine." He recognized the doors of all his neighbors—his alone was changed.

"God help me!" said he, making 50 signs of the cross, "this indeed must be my house. It is but an hour and a half since I left it. My wife was then weeping and groaning with pain, and now they are singing and dancing. I have never noticed a tavern in this street, and surely it is not in my house they would establish one."

He began to make a closer examination, passing his hand over the door, but could not find the knocker.

At last, determining to make himself heard in hopes that as soon as he effected an entrance he would learn the cause of this mysterious transformation, he began to thump on the door with blows loud enough to rouse the whole neighborhood.

The merrymakers within pretended not to hear him.

He knocked still more loudly.

At length, after he had stood a long time under the drippings of the roof, a man, with head covered by an old handkerchief, opened the window above.

"Hello, my good man, what in the devil do you want at this time of night? There is no room for you here. Go elsewhere for your lodging."

"But I wish to enter my own house."

"My friend, it is not our custom to open our doors at this unusual hour."

"Morbleu! but I tell you this is my house, and my father, Diego Morales, paid a round sum for it with his own deniers."

"Hark ye, my fine fellow, I know not if the wine which disturbs your noddle was Val de Pequas or Lagroquo, but I'll be sworn it was capital, and the water from the gutters will not hurt you. So go on, or I'll let loose a mastiff. Good night."

Thus saying, he closed the window.

The singing, and laughter were renewed within. Morales commenced knocking again, when presently he heard some one call out

"Antonio, unloose the dogs."

At this the door was thrown open and forth came a man with two huge dogs, which might have made the joke a rather serious one had they not been held back by their keeper.

"You cursed fellow," he said, "what do you mean by making this land? Were you not told there was no room for you here?"

"But, my good friend, this is my house, and I cannot comprehend what piece of sorcery has converted it into a tavern."

"My good man, you are certainly under a strange delusion. I know neither Morales nor mulberries in this neighborhood."

"I am a painter, well known in this city, and of some celebrity in this quarter. Call my wife, Casilda. If she is not transformed into a landlady she will doubtless extricate me from this labyrinth."

"The landlady is Maria Perez. For more than six years this has been one of the most frequented hotels in Madrid. Its master is Pedro Carasco, and I am his valet. And now take yourself off."

The poor painter made the best of his way by groping along through the darkness to the house of a friend. From the lamentable voice in which Morales asked admittance the friend thought some serious calamity had befallen him, and hastened to let him in. Morales related his adventure, but his friend listened with incredulity. However, he prepared him a bed and advised him to go to sleep, for he had evidently that Morales had been making a little too free with the pound grape.

In the morning the painter still persisted in maintaining the truth of his story, and his friend could not solve the enchanted mansion accompanied him home.

But the utter astonishment of the mystified artist and his friend when he saw over the spirit of mendacity. The marvel is soon told. He stood at the house was secured by its accustomed portal and everything had resumed its former quiet and peaceful appearance.

"Come, Morales," said his friend, slapping him on the shoulder, "I know that you had taken a drop too much last night and were afraid to return home."

"On my honor as a man and as an artist," replied Morales, "I have told you nothing but the truth."

Morales rapped sharply at the door. Bridget, the maid-servant, hastened to open it.

"Oh, senor Morales!" cried she in tones of well feigned astonishment. "How could you have the heart to stay out all night carousing with your friends and your poor wife lying here at death's door? And to go off under pretense of finding Mother Castinoja! Shame on you!"

"Shame on you!" cried an shrill voices from the little ring within. "You have an angel for a wife and you leave her in this cruel way to die without assistance."

"Ah, indeed! And where have you been all night? In some filthy tavern, I guess, drinking with your worthless companions. What an ass you have! A thing a man is who plays the tavern!"

"But it is with me he has the worst to settle," cried Casilda, who now came up, looking wan and pale as was natural, after a night of disquiet. "And so you believed I was dead and yet thought to come back and squander my dower on your bachelor parties. But you did not reckon on the kind services of the neighbors."

"My dear little wife," said Morales soothingly, "if you will only listen to me, you will find that I am much more to be pitied than blamed."

And here the poor artist began to relate what had happened to him.

But his story was received with shouts of laughter.

"Tell that to others! Do you take us for idiots, Morales, to whom you are telling some of your hunting stories? The studio! Confess the truth, man. You have fallen in with some of your scapegrace companions, with whom you have passed the night drinking and carousing. Tell the truth and be pardoned for your fault, instead of standing there telling these sick and ludicrous that no one will believe."

And, in truth, Morales had to come to this at last. Crestfallen, overwhelmed by ridicule, he was forced to sue humbly for pardon, which was only granted him on the condition that he would give no more bachelor parties.—From the Spanish Fortune at St. Louis.

Breezy Lady Holland.

A writer in The Pall Mall Magazine says that in the midst of some of Macaulay's interesting anecdotes Lady Holland would tap on the table with her fan and say, "Now, Macaulay, we have had enough of this—give us something else. Go to Sydney Smith." On ringing the bell, "He answered, 'Yes, ma'am, and shall I sweep the room?'"

To Lord Portchester her frankness went even further. "I am sorry to hear you are going to publish a poem. Don't you suppose it?" If her dinner table was too crowded, she instantly gave her imperious order, "Boutrelli, make room!"

"It must certainly be made," he answered, "for it does not exist."

Scrapbook Paste.

A fine paste for scrapbooks can be made from alum water and flour. Put two teaspoonfuls of powdered alum into a pint in enough cold water to make a pint of paste. Pour the water when the alum is dissolved on enough flour to thicken it as stiff as common paste. Bring it to a boil, stir all the time, and when done add a few drops of oil of cloves. The alum prevents fermentation and the oil of cloves prevents mouldy paste and kills the table mold.

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Will R. Speck, editor of the Warren County Gazette, Richardsville, Ky., writes The Dr. J. H. McLean Medicine Co. as follows: "Gentlemen—My wife's praises of Dr. J. H. McLean's Strengthening Cordial and Blood Purifier have overcome my antipathy to writing a testimonial for it, and I therefore add my recommendation to the hundreds you are doubtless receiving daily for your valuable remedies. Your Strengthing Cordial is truly a wonderful strength giving medicine, and did my wife more good in relieving weakness and nervous prostration than one hundred dollars spent with our best physician. I give one physician credit, however, for recommending your Cordial." For sale by W. G. Thomas Druggist.

From the Lone Star State comes the following letter written by W. F. Drake, editor of the Mt. Vernon (Tex.) Herald: "I have used Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhœa Remedy in my family for the past year, and find it the best remedy for colic and diarrhœa that I have ever tried. Its effects are instantaneous and satisfactory, and I cheerfully recommend it, especially for cramp colic and diarrhœa. Indeed, we shall try and keep a bottle of it on our medicine shelf as long as we keep house." For sale by W. G. Thomas, druggist.

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