SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

REVIEW: THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

Hebrews 2:1-4; 11:32-12:2.

PRINTED TEXT—Hebrews 2:1-4; 11:32-12:2.

GOLDEN TEXT — The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. —Revelation 11:15.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING

TIME: The Epistle to the Hebrews, as far as we can judge, was written about 66 or 67 A.D., before the destruction of Jerusalem.

PLACE: We do not know from what place the Epistle to the Hebrews was written. Hebrews 13:24 may be interpreted either as indicating the place from which the letter was written, or the place to which it was written, namely, Italy.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard." The "therefore" refers back to all that has been said in the preceding chapter concerning the Lord Jesus Christ Because of all his infinite glories and his marvelous person exalted above all other personalicies of the universe, the very Son of God, whom the angels worshipped, men ought therefore to give to every utterance concerning him their most careful attention. "Lest haply we drift away from them.' The verb here presents a most significant figure. It warns the Hebrews against being carried past the landing-place by the strong current of life. It is a warning suitable for all times, for there are currents of thought, feeling, and action, which, if not resisted, carry down to the sea of spiritual death.

"For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. The Scriptures frequently spoke of the law as being given by God to men through angels (Gal. 3:19; Acts 7:53; Deut. 33:2; Psalm 68:17).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" Our salvation is great because its author is God; it originates in God's love; it is made possible only by the sacrifice of the eternal Lamb of God; it it does what nothing else in the world can do — it absolutely and permanently changes men, it emancipates men from the enslavement of sin; it bestows peace, and joy, and power it is eternal; it perfectly, constantly satisfies: it is unique — it has no true rival in the world. "Which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard." That great preacher Dr T. DeWitt Talmage concludes his sermon on this text with a powerful paragraph, from whic we can give only the following: "Now are you ready for the apostle's question? How shall we escape? No escape at all! Everything will plead against the man who makes it. The tree of Calvary will say — escape, he must not! The throne of judgment will say — escape, he must not! Jesus will say, 'I called to him for many years, but he turned his back on these wounds; and by all those despised tears and by that rejected blood escape, he must not'

"God also bearing witness with them." The pronoun here refers to those who companioned with the Lord Jesus when he was on earth, and who bore witness to his life and death and resurrection to the following generation. "Both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." God bore witness to the truth which they proclaimed by miracles, and by the gifts he bestowed through the Holy Spirit.

"And what shall I more say?" The writer's mind is crowded with other heroes of the faith, of whom he would like to speak, but he has already written more extensively than he had intended, and now he must simply pile up names and incidents without going into details. "For the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon" (Judges 6-8) "Barak" (Judges 4, 5), "Samson" (Judges 13-16), "Jephthah" (Judges 11, 12); "of David and Samuel and the prophets." "Who through faith subdued kingdoms." The allusion is specially to the conquest of Canaan by Joshua and to the victories of David (2 Sam. 5:17-25; 21:15, etc.) "Wrought righteousness." These men served a righteous God, and their lives and their legislation were in righteousness, a glaring contrast with the iniquitous conduct of the Canaanites whom they subdued. "Obtained promises. This refers to all those precious promises God made to the patriarchs, to Moses and Joshua, to the judges, and to the faithful kings of Israel and Judah. "Stopped the mouths of lions." As Samson (Judges 14:6); David (1 Sam. 17:34); and Daniel (Dan. 6:16).

"Quenched the power of fire." As the three Hebrews who were thrown into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3). The fires which we should quench are those which Satan would kindle by his fiery darts (Eph. 6:16). "Escaped the edge of the sword." As David (I Sam. 18:11; 19:12-12); Elijah (I Kings 19); Elisha (2 Kings 6:14), and many others. "From weaknesses were made strong." The reference here may be to Samson (Judges 15:19; 16:28-30), or to David (I Sam. 17:42), or to Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:5). "Waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens." These classes may refer specifically to the Maccabees, though they also suit Joshua, the judges, David, etc.

"Women received their dead by a resurrection." As the widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17:17), and the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:17). "And others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." The word here translated "tortured" means "were broken on the wheel," and the particular events in the mind of the writer may have been the tortures of Eleazar, the scribe, and of the seven brothers, narrated in the Second Book of Maccabees (6 18-30, 7).

"And others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment." See, for examples of imprisonments, the instances of Joseph (Gen. 39:20); of Micaiah (I Kings 22:26, 27), of Jeremiah (Jer. 37:15), of Hanani (2 Chron. 16:10).

"They were stoned." As Zechariah (2 Chron. 24:20-22). (Cf. Matt. 23:35.) For the stoning of the early apostles, see the cases of Stephen (Acts 7:58, 59) and Paul (Acts 14:5, 19; 2 Cor. 11:25). "They were sawn asunder." According to tradition, this was the awful manner of death suffered by Isaiah. (Cf. 2 Sam. 12. 31; I Chron. 20:3). "They were tempted.' 'The character of the temptation is not mentioned. Doubtless some inducement to escape suffering by giving up their faith is referred to. "They were slain with the sword." (See I Kings 19;10; Jer. 26:23.) Thus did James suffer martydom for his faith in the Lord Jesus (Acts 12:2). "They went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated." See the case of Elijah (I Kings 19:13 and 2 Kings 1:8). Hairy garments seemed subsequently to have been a common dress among prophets, and it was sometimes adopted for purposes of deception (Zecn. 13:4.

"Oh whom the world was not worthy." The world drove them out thinking them unworthy to live in it, while in truth it was unworthy to have them living in it."—A. B. Davidson. "Wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth." Of Israelites in general (Judges 6:2); and of the prophets of the Lord (I Kings 18:4, 13) and of Elijah (I Kings 19:9).

"And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith." This entire chapter is but a commentary on the power of faith in God in the lives of men and women. "Received not the promise. God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." These heroes of the faith had been given promises, but the promises had not been completely fulfilled, especially the greatest promise of all concerning that of a Messiah, God's anointed Priest and King. For all the patriarchs, prophets and mighty men of old before the coming of the Lord Jesus, there was only a symbolic sacrifice for sin, an incomplete access to God, a partial infilling, on occasion, of the Holy Spirit, an incomplete revelation of God. For us, we know God through Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

"Therefore let us also." We belong in this company because we are servants of the same God, because our faces are turned toward the same hope, because we are bound together in one great truth, centred in Jesus Christ. "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." We have been led through the corridors of the divine masoleum, and bidden to read the names and epitaphs of those of whom God was not ashamed. We have felt our faith grow stronger as we read and pondered the inspiring record, and, now, by a single touch, these saintly souls are depicted as having passed from the arena into the crowded tiers from which to observe the course which we are treading today. "Lay aside every weight." There are one thousand things that no man dare call wrong, for they show none of the characteristics of sin; on the contrary, they may be precious gifts which, in other circumstances, might be rich in blessing; but if they hinder you when you struggle for the best, and burden you so that you run unworthily, then are they weights and must be laid aside. "And the sin which doth so easily beset us." The six words, "which doth so easily beset us, are, in the Greek one single word, and probably refers to clothing enfolding one as one is about to run, hindering him in the race. "And let us run with patience the race that is set before us." The marginal interpretaiton of the word here translated "patience" is "stedfastness", which probably gives a better idea of what the writer meant.

"Looking unto Jesus". The Greek verb here implies "a looking away from other things," "a concentration of the wandering gaze into a single direction." "The author and perfector of our faith." Christ is the great Exemplar of faith, for, by faith, he lived and suffered, and died.

"Who or the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising shame." What was the joy set before Christ" Many answers can be given. Certainly it would include the joy of being God's anointed one for redeeming men for all the ages to come from sin and death and the wrath of God; of being reunited with the Father in glory after his humiliation; of realizing that, by his death on the cross, Satan's doom was sealed, and a kingdom of absolute and eternal righteousness was made possible. "And hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." His great redemptive work was finished and accepted by the Father. He is now exalted into glory at the Father's right hand (cf. I:3:8:1; 10:12).

Cost of the Coronation

Henry F. Pringle in the Ladies' Home Journal writes:—It is estimated that 2,000,000 vsiitors will go to London for the Coronation and that the procession will be watched by 5,000,000 people.

It is agreed that at least $150,000,000 will flow into the pockets of British hotelkeepers, modistes, jewellers, robe makers, silversmiths, souvenir vendors, florists and restaurateurs. At the outside, as far as I could learn, the Coronation with all its ceremonies will cost the taxpayers a mere $1,000,000 — and the sum will probably be less.

Among others, I called on Edward H. Symonds, a leading London fashion authority who had just returned from a presentation of British fashions in New York and other American cities. Mr. Symonds is chairman and managing director of Reville, Ltd., dressmakers by Royal warrant of appointment since 1911 to Queen Mary. For the Coronation season, Mr. Symonds said, over $5,000,000 worth of orders for London created clothes, fabrics, and fashion accessories would be received from America alone.

He estimated that not less than $60,000,000 might well be spent for robes and gowns, cloaks, dresses,

FARM NOTES

Conducted by PROFESSOR HENRY G. BELL

With the Co-Operation of the Various Departments of the Ontario Agricultural College.

tions favourable for the growth of clover, and the addition of Phosphoric acid and nitrogen greatly invigorates the growth of grass .

2. QUESTION—(a) "The milk yield of my herd seems to have fallen off quite considerably during the past two years and some of the cattle have lost their healthy appearance and seem quite gaunt and weak. Is there any possibility that the soil is becoming run down and producing low grade feed? I have never used commercial fertilizer but always have quite a bit of manure each year to put back in the land."

(b) I have a clay loam field which has been in pasture for 25 years and is now very thin. I do not wish to plow it up and am wondering if reseeding will be satisfactory along with some commercial fertilizer. If so, what procedure should I follow?"

S.A.W., Kent County.

ANSWER — (a) Undoubtedly the soil of your pasture is becoming deficient in Phosphoric acid and possibly Potash. It may be also lacking in lime. The lack of Phosphoric acid and lime is becoming apparent in not a few pastures in certain parts of the province with the result that pasture animals are more and more given to chewing bones, stones and wood in an effort to obtain these elements which constitute a considerable part of their bone. Craving is bound to increase until attention is paid to putting back the minerals that are lacking in the pasture. You say that you apply considerable manure each year which is an excellent practice, but one must keep in mind that manure even if well-kept carries only 8-9 lbs. of Phosphoric acid (P205) and possibly 10 lbs. Potash (K20) per ton. It does carry 10 to 15 lbs. nitrogen. You will see from this that returning manure does not effectively correct the soil condition, especially where milk is being sold from the land and the breeding cattle are raising their young which means that still greater quantities of Phosphoric acid and lime are being removed in the skeletons of beef and other meat animals that are raised and sold off the farm. The observations you mention are being made in several sections. There are two ways of attacking the problem, one, by top dressing with fertilizer of analysis which will help the crop conditions and another, by feeding approved mineral feed mixtures which carry lime and Phosphoric acid in forms suitable for feeding. Probably a combination of these methods will give speediest and most effective help.

ANSWER — (b) Pastures such as you describe have been greatly improved by top dressing with such fertilizer as 4-12-6 or 2-12-10 in early spring as soon as the sod will carry the team. Fertilizer is best applied broadcast either with the drill, with the hose or discs suspended, or with a lime spreader.

In a pasture test conducted by the Ontario Agricultural College in Middlesex County, great improvement of herbage of the pasture and good improvement of carrying capacity has been obtained by top dressing as described. The Potash makes condi-

Phone Girls Ready Dolls For Christmas

Employees of New York Telephone Company have volunteered as Santa's aides in putting finishing touches to more than 3,000 dolls which will be distributed to needy children. Here's three workers.

Motor Magnates Meet At A.A.A. Convention

Henry Ford (left) makes one of his rare banquet appearances at the 34th annual convention of the A.A.A. in Detroit. With him is Mr. Thomas P. Henry, president of American Automobile Association.

Going "Over the Top" . .

At a recent test of men and equipment by German High Command, trucks, motorcycles and autos were put through grueling paces at Wunsdorff near Berlin. Above a cyclist goes over embankment.

Amateur Fair Champions

Dr. J. C. McClelland (left), Akron, O., and E. Neiman, Los Angeles, Cal., who won national amateur pair championship of American Bridge League at national tourney in Chicago.

Figure Skater Shows What She'll Do

Giving the ship news photographers an idea of what she'll be doing at New York ice carnival, Janine Garanger, French figure skating champion, glides above deck of S. S Champlain.