Sunday School Lesson

August 4. Lesson V.—Belshazzar's Feast (Temperance Lesson)—Daniel 5: 17-28. Golden Text—Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.—Ephesians 5: 18.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL, vs. 1-16.

II. THE INTERPRETATION, vs. 17-31.

INTRODUCTION—There are two ancient accounts of the fall of Babylon and the end of the Babylonian empire, with which the tory told in this chapter may be compared. The first of these is found in inscriptions of the latter part of the sixth century, B.C., apparently contemporary with the events recorded. According to these inscriptions Cyrus, who in B.C. 549 became king of the little country of Aushan in the southern part of Persia, and who in B.C. 546, or earlier, was called "king of Persia," invaded the Babylonian country in B.C. 538, defeated the army of Nabonidus, last of the kings of Babylon, captured the cities of Sippar and Babylon, and took the king prisoner, and nearly four weeks later the king's son, Belshazzar, was slain in a night attack upon some stronghold in which he must have been making a prolonged resistance. It is possible that Belshazzar was declared king after his father was taken prisoner, but this fact is not recorded.

The second story is drawn from the writings of two famous Greek historians of the fifth century, B.C., Herodotus and Xenophon, both of whom had visited Persia, and tells how Cyrus diverted the waters of the river Euphrates into another channel, and entered the city by the dry bed of the river while the king and the people were holding a festival. There are differences in detail between both of these stories and the account here given in the book of Daniel, but it is quite possible that with fuller knowledge they may be reconciled. Belshazzar, for instance, in the ancient records, appears to be the son of Nabonidus, not of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 5: 2, 23. It is suggested that his mother may have been a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and he, therefore, a grandson.

I. THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL, vs. 1-16.

Belshazzar made a great feast . . . and drank wine. The feasting and wine-drinking are represented as unusual and ostentatious. The Babylonians, however, are said by one ancient writer to have been given to excess in such matters. On this night danger threatened the city, and the king and his lords might have been much better employed in its defence. They seem to have been confident in the city's strength, and in their ability to repel the invaders. It has been suggested that there was treachery within the walls, and that Belshazzar was betrayed into the hands of Cyrus and his generals. In any case feasting and drunkenness do not help men to guard and defend the honor and safety of their homes, whether in times of peace or of war.

To the Jewish writer of this story there was an element of sacrilege in the use of the golden and silver vessels, once consecrated to the service of God in the temple at Jerusalem (see ch. 1: 2 and Jer. 52: 19). These vessels were returned by Cyrus to the company of exiles whom he permitted to go back to Jerusalem, and to rebuild the temple, Ezra 1: 7-11.

The word "father" may quite properly have been used for "grandfather," or "ancestor" (compare Gen. 28: 13 and 1 Kings 15: 11). The presence of women at the feasts, at least among the Persians, is vouched for by Herodotus. The Septuagint, the ancient Greek version, adds to verse 4 the words, "but the eternal God they praised not who hath power over their spirit." How could men whose minds were befuddled by drink, in such a scene of riot, praise the eternal God? Compare v. 23.

In the full light of the candlestick there appeared a mysterious handwriting on the plaster of the wall. The wine which he had drunk had not added to the king's courage. He was seized with panic and superstitious fear. Verses 7 and 8 suggest that the king at first sent a message to the wise men offering a rich reward for the reading and interpretation of the strange writing, and after that they came in to the banqueting-hall.

Now the queen (v. 10) showed more wisdom and courage than the terror-stricken king and his astonished lords. She remembered the great reputation of Daniel, who must, at this time, have been a very old man. He had been carried captive as a boy from Jerusalem to Babylon sixty-seven years before, ch. 1: 1-6. Daniel was sent for and promised an almost royal dignity, high rank, and a place of authority in the kingdom (v. 16), if he could read and interpret the writing.

II. THE INTERPRETATION, vs. 17-31.

Daniel does not, and will not, exercise his great gifts for such rewards as the king can offer. To him the price of wisdom is above purple robes, gold chain, and royal dignity. Out of the past which he remembers so well he recalls to the king the example of his great predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, and the humbling of his pride (see the story told at length in ch. 4). Belshazzar might have taken that lesson to heart. Now his pride, too, will be humbled. His doom is pronounced in the handwriting on the wall.

In v. 25 the writing contains four words, the first word being repeated. In the interpretation there are only three words, the third from the same root as the corresponding word in v. 25, but in a different form. So also in the Greek and Latin versions. The words seem to have each a double meaning. "Mene" may be identical with the Hebrew "mauch" and Latin "mina," a weigh equal to sixty shekels. Tekel is the Aramaic form of the word "shekel." Peres, of which the form in verse 25 may be plural, is half a mina. At the same time the sound of this word in the plural suggests the word Persians. With some doubt as to the primary meaning of the three words therefore, we may venture to translate, a mina, a shekel, two half-minas. The first word suggests number, the second weight, and the third division. Daniel's inspired interpretation, therefore, can be understood.

To A Greek Statue

What eyes have worshipped thee, O Passionless
Cold stone thou darling beauty of dead men
And buried worlds! What hearts in those days when
Beauty was god have longed for thy caress,
As, 'mid voluptuous feast and wild excess,
They saw the dawn-light of the Eastern skies
Crimson that brow and kindle in those eyes,
And felt their glutted passion's emptiness.
And still thou mockest us, O cruel stone,
And still thine eyes are gazing far away,
Drawing out man's love that loves thee all in vain.
Yea, to all time, thy beauteous white lips say,
"Love's deepest yearnings leave man most alone,
And in man's deepest pleasure there is pain.

—Frederick George Scott.

Canada and Divorce

Manitoba Free Press (Lib). The case for devolving this duty upon a properly-constituted court is overwhelming; but it is by no means certain that this will be done, though Mr. King gave a highly-qualified promise that the question would be dealt with by the Government. The present arrangement is preferred by a majority of the members at least of the present House of Commons; their consciences will not permit them to vote for the establishment of a divorce court, though they make no dimculty about acting themselves as members of a divorce court which grinds out divorces by the hundred under conditions which afford no guarantee that in all cases, or in any case, justice is done.

Tramp: Got 'nother of them good square meals like I got the other day, lady?

Lady of the House. No; I've decided a square meal doesn't fit a man who's 'round all the time like you are.

"Jerry smashed his car yesterday and was taken to court." "Really! What was the charge?" "Driving under the influence of woman!"

Holiday Hints

Some Primary Essentials for Securing the Best Results From a Holiday by the Toronto Department of Health

GOOD ADVICE

First—Make sure of the water supply of the resort or hotel to which you contemplate going. If this is in Ontario, you can secure a report from the Provincial Board of Health as regards the safety of the water. If you are going to a farm house and the water supply is taken from a well, secure from the Department of Public Health a bottle in which you can take a sample of the water which will be tested for you.

Second—Make sure of the milk supply. If the milk supply of the hotel that you are stopping at is not scientifically pasteurized and approved of by the Provincial Board of Health or by our Department of Health, we would strongly advise you to have it scalded, or in other words, brought to the boiling point and then quickly cooled and kept at as low a temperature as possible until consumed. Do not give raw milk to your infant or small children.

Much of the permanent benefit that you will derive from your holiday depends on the safety of your water and milk supply.

Third—Be prepared to protect yourself against mosquitos. Some people are very susceptible to this poison and the bites of a mosquito is to them a great source of discomfort. Do not scratch the little elevation left by the bits of a mosquito, but just firmly press it with a piece of cloth as that will afford quite as much relief as scratching and will not in any way endanger you by infection.

Take a supply of netting with you on your holiday. If there are mosquitos, you can wrap this loosely around your head, in camp or, in your room, and then get to sleep setting these pests at defiance. It is true the hum of the mosquito is not at all musical, and certainly gets on your nerves, but not if you know that the mosquito cannot get near you.

People who are very susceptible to the poison of the mosquito should take with them a small bottle of ammonia. One drop, or even the moistened cork taken from the bottle, if promptly applied over where the mosquito has bitten, will off time neutralize the poison and prevent subsequent itching. Under no consideration scratch to relieve the itching; simply press the affected part with a cloth.

Fourth—Another not infrequent source of annoyance, and one which will materially interfere with the pleasure of the holiday, is poison ivy, and every precaution should be taken to avoid coming in contact with it.

In the event of coming in contact with poison ivy, endeavor to obtain some jewel weed, crush this and apply the juice to the part affected. This is one of the most reliable antidotes you can possibly get and the jewel weed is usually available as it grows in low, wet, marshy places, to a height of from two to four feet. It has a juicy-looking stem that is semi-translucent, and it is usually studded with orange colored hanging flowers, with brown spots on them. These flowers hang gracefully, and if you remember the combination of pale green juicy stem and a yellow or orange flower with brown spots, you can usually locate it without any difficulty.

If you are unable to get the jewel weed, you will very often find satisfactory results from using freely strong laundry soap. We emphasize "laundry" soap, because it is necessary to have a soap containing an excess of alkali. In fact, fresh lime water, as you get it from your druggist, answers this purpose very well in many cases.

Be sure you take an emergency case with you when leaving for your holiday. This case should contain:

3 or 4 bandages, 2 or 3 inches wide,
¼ pound of sterilized gauze,
1 ounce of absorbent cotton,
1 or 2 ounces of tincture of iodine,
1 small roll of adhesive plaster,
about 1 inch wide,
1 ounce of boracic acid,
1 or 2 ounces of bicarbonate of soda,
A hot water bottle,
2 ounces of aromatic spirits of ammonia.

The last item is important in the event of a collapse. From one-half to a teaspoonful of aromatic spirits of ammonia in a wine glass of water acts more promptly than either whiskey or brandy. It is one of the best stimulants we have.

In the event of one of your children having an abrasion of the skin, either a cut or a severe bruise, in which the skin has been broken, or even a splinter in the finger or the foot, cleanse the part with soap and water and then paint it over carefully with tincture of iodine.

Avoid being overly zealous in your efforts to get sunburned—take it gradually. Half an hour at a time is quite as long as any part of the body, not accustomed to exposure, should be subjected to the strong rays of the sun, for the first few days; then it will be quite safe to increase the time to an hour, and after a fairly good coat of tan has been developed you are well protected against the dangers of sunburn. If you do not take these precautions you may be caused a great deal of annoyance and have the plesure of your holiday materially marred.

Furthermore, recent revelations as regards the therapeutic value of the chemical rays of the sun have been such as to make one feel that it would be difficult to over-estimate their importance. Therefore, we recommend for small children the sun suits which can be obtained in any of our stores. These suits only protect the hips and upper parts of the thighs, and leave the balance of the body exposed to the sun's rays.

Of course in the case of an infant or small child one requires to be particularly cautious about the length of time of exposure until a satisfactory coat of tan has been established.

In this connection we wish to emphasize the fact that it is much easier for brunettes to get a coat of tan than for blondes, their blood being supplied with a larger percentage of pigment. In the case of blondes who came originally from northern stock where they were not accustomed to powerful sun's rays), many are incapable of developing a tan and, therefore, have to be more or less cautious constantly as regards the time of exposure.

It is well to bear in mind that in order to get the therapeutic benefits it is not absolutely necessary that you be exposed to the direct rays of the sun—there is the sky shine, or reflected rays from the sky and clouds. On a clear day you may lie or sit on the shady side of the house, with the blue dome above you, and get from one third to one-half of the benefits of the rays of the sun that you would get by exposing yourself directly to them.

Do not be on the go all the time during your holiday. Take some reading matter with you and spend part of the day, particularly in the middle of the day, in the shade of the trees, in your hammock, or in an easy chair, or lying on a rug on the ground. Do not dance every night during your holiday, and expect to come home rested and refreshed for the balance of the year.

"You know a woman who has been at every night of her life for years without ill effects? Tell it to the marines!"

"Lots of marines know it's true."

"Who is she then?"

"The Goddess of Liberty in New York harbor."

Perfection

Nothing makes the soul so pure, so religious, as the endeavor to create something perfect, for God is perfection, and whoever strives for it strives for something that is Godlike.—Michel Angelo.

FLUTTERING PLAITS.

The smart woman appreciates the charm of the fluttering plaited skirt, stitched to fitted hip yoke, to attain greater length to silhouette. The jabot frill at centre-front of bodice, that shows plain contrasting lining cuts all in one with the right front section. A new idea also appears in box-plait at centre-back of skirt. It's so attractive and so wearable in navy blue silk crepe printed in novelty dot motif in grasshopper green with plain green silk crepe contrast. The pattern for Style No. 486 can be had in sizes 16, 18, 20 years, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust. Much copy making it, because of its simplicity. Plain silk crepe in garden green, printed rajah silk, printed pique in red and white tones, a checked silk gingham in red and white, lipstick red georgette crepe, and black silk crepe with jabot frill lined with eggshell shade are fashionable combinations. Pattern price 20c in stamps or coin (coin is preferred) ran coin carefully.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size, of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number, and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto. Patterns sent by an early mail.

Warships to Visit Popular Resorts

Vessels Will "Show Flag" to Britons on Holiday at Seashore

London.—Various vessels of the royal navy will in the next few weeks be "showing the flag" not in odd corners of the world but off the seafronts of some of the most popular resorts of these seagirt islands. The Briton of the middle-lass therefore during his annual fortnight by the briny voices with his amiable spouse, will be able to combine an inflation of his normal patriotic feelings with the satisfaction of beholding something substantial in return for his income tax.

The outstanding success which has attended the annual military tatoo at Aldershot has led to the suggestion that a similar exhibition by the navy would be equally popular. The practicability of such enterprises is rather doubtful and it is possible the senior service is not entirely enthusastic over the idea. It is said men high in military matters incline to the opinion that military training nowadays is not carried on so much in preparation for possible warlike operations as for the next (that) war.

Farm Notes

FEEDING OF DAIRY CATTLE

Experiments would indicate that there is little to choose between mangels and sugar beets for the feeding of dairy cattle. A test made at the Agassiz, British Columbia, Experimental Farm last year indicates that slightly better yields of milk were obtained from the use of sugar beets, which, however, were offset by the greater difficulty of growing the beets. The experiment was conducted during February and March. Each cow under test was fed, in addition to a ration of mixed grains, alfalfa hay and ensilage, thirty pounds of roots. The experiment procedure was on the three periods plan. During the first and third periods one of the two roots was used in the ration during the second or intermediate period the other root was fed. The results of the test are given in the report of the Superintendent of the Station for last year, published by the Dept. of Agriculture at Ottawa. Ten cows were used in the trial. In the table of results it is shown that to produce 100 pounds of milk there was required in addition to the other feeds, 115.03 pounds of mangels as compared with 111.6 pounds of sugar beets. The cost of the entire ration to produce 100 pounds of milk was 1.97 when the mangels were fed, and $1.91 from the sugar beets. In the production of a pound of butter fat there was almost a cent difference in favor of the sugar beet ration. During the week the ten cows were getting mangels, according to this report they gave 55.9 pounds of milk less than the week they were fed on the sugar beets. Since sugar beets yield slightly less crops and are more difficult to harvest, Mr. Hicks the Superintendent of the Station regards it as wise practice to adhere to the beets for the feeding of milking cows, growing mangels rather than sugar beets for the feeding of milking cows.

EGG LAYING CONTESTS.

The Egg Laying Contests conducted by the Experimental Farms of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa have been operating for nine seasons. Tests have been conducted year by year for all Canada and for the Province of Ontario at Ottawa and at one or two points in each of the other provinces. In the report of the work for the sixth, seventh and eighth annual contests published in Bulletin No. 108 of the Dept. of Agriculture, it is shown that up to the end of 1927, 25,820 hens had been tested in trap nests. The testing began in 1919-20 with 1,610 birds, which gradually increased to the point of 4,220 in 1925-26, which was ten birds higher than the year following. During these years there was a steady increase in the average egg production up to 1925-26 when it reached 179.5. This was an improvement of 57 eggs over the average of the first year of the contest. In these contests, which have the twofold purpose of stimulating interest in the breeding of birds for egg production and the providing of a medium for qualification for registration, the birds are kept constantly housed in flocks of ten and include the following breeds: Barred, White and Partridge Plymouth Rocks; White and Silver Laced Wyandottes; Single Comb and Rose Comb Rhode Island Reds; White, Brown and Buff Leghorns; Single and Rose Comb Anconas; Buff Orpingtons; Chanticleer; and Jersey Black Giants. The report, which is available at the Publications Branch of the Department, is a most interesting document on the work of poultry improvement.

A Purpose

One of the rarest arts of life is to be serious of purpose without losing that lightness of touch which differentiates the interesting personality from the bore. The man who is profound and pretentious about everything and who looks upon the whimsical and humorous side of existence as something to be shunned is one of the curses of a civilization which demands that everyone shall be at least partially educated. Only their wives know the full tragedy of living with them.

Making a Living

Merely to make a living is a very low ambition. We are here for something much higher than that. We are here to make a life that is immortal, to gain treasures to carry with us into the world eternal.

Tangier Donkeys

In Tangier, and indeed everywhere in the East, the donkeys speak for themselves, no testimonials are necessary. They do their duty in spite of many difficulties and hardships, with an individuality and peaceful charm which, as one watches them day by day, grows ever more impressive. Coming down the hill into the Grand Socco any morning, you may see numbers of them standing in a row inside the railing, waiting for their masters. First a tiny gray thing, almost like a mouse, were it not for those long feathery ears. The little legs are so slender, such wee hoofs, he seems only fit for a plaything; and yet he will carry his load with courage; you can see it in the soft yet bright eye, and the toss of his woolly head. Next him are two little dark fellows, their coats almost the same warm brown hue as the faces of their owners. These have pert tawny noses; the long ears come forward, they are taking notice, perhaps discussing some knotty problem of weight or distance. Donkeys always have so wise a look. Near by stands a tall, light gray, Algerian beast; beside his small brothers he is like a coach horse, beside a Shetland pony. Patience is written all over him; even resignation. He does not show so much interest in his surroundings as do his little neighbors. And there are others, a long line; all colors, all sizes, grave and gay. Everywhere you look they are around you; coming, going, waiting in the Socco, climbing the narrow street, loading up with charcoal in the market. Here is a big one with boxes pannierwise on either side full of syphons, there a string of little ones carrying bricks or sand. Then a tall, bearded Moor bestrides a small dark beast, long brown legs dangling on either side for a fawn-colored one bearing vegetables, crowned with a great cluster of gourds, which look like a gigantic clutch of eggs in a nest of lettuces. Upon some, veiled women ride slowly, on others, small bare-legged boys; Negroes negligently balancing in side-long attitude, donkeys with loads, donkeys with riders, with none, with both; donkeys gay and lively, or grave and serious—but mostly serious.

They creep into one's affections; it is easy to see each one as an integral feature of the household, in which he is indeed a most important possession. Such toil as he undertakes should meet with a greater appreciation. But appreciated or not, the donkey shows no resentment, meets it with patience, and sets forth daily on his round of duty. Whatever the burden, however long the journey, you cannot fail to be impressed by the courage, the resolution and endurance shown by these sturdy little animals. They push along with bent heads through the beating rain and wind, moisture streaming from their shaggy coats, but still plucky and willing, though maybe their ears may droop a trifle sadly. Bright eyes, ears pricked, gay, in the hot sunshine, little pattering hoofs hurrying toward their goal. In rain or shine, in heat or cold, willing, faithful, enduring.

And here in the East, pictures come to thought, of Mary the gentle mother riding down to Bethlehem; and of Jesus as he entered into Jerusalem,—"Lowly and riding upon an ass"—as the prophet foretold. Here in Tangier today, as through all the intervening centuries, patient and gentle, the donkeys carry their burdens in honorable service.

Canada and Australia

Sydney Bulletin: Canada doesn't go in for compulsory trade-unionism, or basic-wage commissions, or arbitration courts, or anything like that. It believes that the less Government meddles in industry the better for both employers and employees; and as warrant for its belief it can point to prosperous industries, recent wage increases in many trades, low unemployment returns and comparative freedom from strikes. In 1917 the number of disputes was 79, the number of workmen involved 22,683, the number of working days lost 165,288. Australia, with its expensive apparatus of industrial tribunals, had 441 strikes, 200,757 involved employees and 1,731,581 lost working days in that same year. In short, Canada is beating us badly, and we ought to be too proud to let Canada beat us badly, though not too proud to learn from its example.

Little Johnny had a great liking for visiting the docks, but his father objected strongly. On one occasion the father warned the boy that if he went to the docks again he would get a sound thrashing, and added: "I shall know by your boots if you go." A day or two afterwards, Johnny rushed into the house. "Mother," he said, "father won't be able to tell by my boots if I've gone to the docks, because I've cut the tongues out!"

She was giving an order to the grocer. "And I require some cheese" she said. "Yes, miss," replied the grocer, smiling amiably; "I have some lovely cheese." "You should not say 'lovely cheese!" said the customer severely. "But why not, miss? It is lovely cheese." "Because,"—she tried to combine maidenly modesty with an air of learning — "because 'lovely' should only be used to qualify something that is alive." The grocer's smile broadened as he glanced at the gorgonzola. "Well, miss," he said, "I'll stick to 'lovely'!"

MUTT AND JEFF—

Interesting News About Mr. Szi, The Chinese Minister to Washington.

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