

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By E. O. SELLEERS, Acting Director of Sunday School Courses. LESSON FOR DECEMBER 20.

THE ASCENSION.

LESSON TEXT—Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11. GOLDEN TEXT—He was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight—Acts 1:9.

We have now reached the final lesson of the present course in the life of Christ, next Sunday being devoted to the review. The lesson committee have selected the continuous account of this final earthly act of our Lord as given us by St. Luke, for the Book of Acts is a continuous account of the Gospel of Luke (Acts 1:1). Inasmuch as this is really but one account we will consider only that found in the Acts.

I. The Proof of the Resurrection. vv. 1-3. This book of "The Acts" is a continuation of what Jesus "began to do" and gives us the record of how he continued this work by means of those "whom he had chosen" (v. 2). Following his resurrection he gave them commandments "through the Holy Spirit," viz. in the power of the Holy Spirit. A like honor rests upon every believer to hear and to obey the commands of Jesus given in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. The all-sufficient proof (see also I Cor. 15:4-8) was that Jesus had been seen for a period of 40 days. This is the "many infallible proofs." During that time they not only saw the risen Lord, but conversed with him, ate with him, and had communion with him. During these days of communion he gave them his commands as to the "things concerning the kingdom of God." This entailed a burden that these commands be proclaimed in ever widening circles to the utmost bounds of the earth.

Additional Experiences.

II. The Promise of the Father. vv. 4-8. The disciples were not to begin the proclamation of their message until they were fully equipped with what they had received that all essential preparation, the endowment of the Holy Spirit. Here, again, the Scriptures are to be fulfilled (Isa. 44:3; Joel 2:8; also Luke 24:49). That ten days' delay was not time lost, for time spent in preparation is never time lost. We must not suppose these men as not regenerate (John 13:10; 15:3), but as lacking an equipment necessary for the successful execution of their important task. We as believers cannot call him Lord except by the power of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:3), but we do not all have that infilling of the Spirit which alone will enable us to render effective service. This is an additional experience, but one open to all who will honestly and intelligently seek it (see Acts 8:12, and other references). This experience is (a) commanded, "charged not to depart till, etc." (b) to be preceded by "repentance," and (c) to carry with it authority, v. 7 R. V. It does not mean, either, temporal power nor is it the prerogative of a visible church and confined to an elect few. This kingdom is a spiritual one. The program of Jesus is Spirit-filled men to be his witnesses, and to begin "at Jerusalem." A true reception of the Holy Spirit means world-wide missionary endeavor.

Presumptive Ignorance.

III. The Present Place of Jesus. vv. 9-11. Even yet the disciples failed to grasp the idea of a spiritual kingdom as evidenced by verse six. In a most emphatic way he tells them that it is not for them to know the "times and seasons which the Father hath set within his own power" (authority, v. 7, R. V.). Their power is not to be earthly, but spiritual (v. 8). It is the height of presumptive ignorance for any one to set the date of our Lord's return (Deut. 29:29). Jesus has given us explicit information on this question (Matt. 24:36), and his parables all warn us to "watch." While Jesus talked with his disciples concerning the reception of this new power and the place where they were to begin to exercise it, his feet were parted from the earth and a cloud received him from their sight as he ascended "into heaven" (Luke 24:51; I Pet. 3:22; see also Gen. 5:24 and Heb. 3:23 R. V.). His parting benediction was an adjuration to a life of service not in their weakness, but in the blessed endowment of power. Yonder into heaven he had gone to prepare a place for us (John 14:2, Heb. 9:24). There he ever liveth to intercede for us (Heb. 7:25). His presence there makes us eternally secure (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). His presence in the heavens is the guarantee that we, too, shall one day be "with him" (John 12:26; Rev. 2:21).

This hope inspires the church to evangelism, to holy living and to faithful service. It was necessary that our Lord's work be transferred from his invisible person. Lifted up he was on Calvary, lifted up he was into glory, that "If I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Mysterious birth, wondrous life, glorious, marvelous ascension!

As this is written Europe is bathed in blood, and America is engaged in a set season of prayer for peace. The only abiding peace we can hope for will be when the Prince of Peace shall return to rule and to reign.

CURIOUS WAYS OF THE JAPS

American Traveler Disconcerted by Customs in the Land of the Cherry Blossom.

I knew before I got here that Japan was queer, but I had no idea that everything was backward. Homer Crox writes in Leslie's. I can't get used to sitting on the floor and sleeping with a tomato can with a napkin around it for a pillow. The easiest way to figure out how the Japanese would do a thing, is to think what would be exactly backward in Missouri. When two Japanese meet they bow and bow, giving their heads short jerks as if trying to get salt water out of their eyes. When they separate they tip their hats. When they buy a ticket they tip their hats. Their elbows are always bent towards their hats.

Japanese never kiss. This pleasant pastime has not yet been imported into cherry blossom land. It is only recently that a few of the Japanese have learned to shake hands. We travelers are hoping that they will take up other great American institutions. Japanese look upon kissing as being low and vulgar, believing that a few moments spent in bowing is much better. The girls feel that way about it, too—they say. As I have been in Japan only a few days I cannot write with that tone of authority on the subject which I may be able to use later. However, in order to make my articles as replete with information as possible I shall go to no end of trouble to get accurate data on this subject for the benefit of the readers of Leslie's. When an ardent young Japanese suitor slips his arm around the girl's waist and whispers into her shell-like ear that she is the only woman who has ever understood him, and when she looks up confidingly into his eyes and breathes, "You are so strong!" he does not clasp her to his bosom in an ecstasy of joy and plant a delirious kiss on her trembling lips—no, instead of that he gets up and bows and thanks her in a few courteous phrases.

One cannot help feeling sorry for them when thinking how many pleasant evenings they miss. From my limited experience I wouldn't give a good old fashioned Missouri kiss for ten minutes of bows.

JOHN BULL BECOMING VAIN?

Really It Would Seem So, If Advertisements in Magazines Are Admitted as Evidence.

The vanity of the Frenchman and his inclination toward corsets and other feminine aids to beauty have long been the object of ridicule by newspapers, but who would have thought that our staid British cousins, who have always pointed the finger of scorn at such methods of attaining the grace of an Adonis, would have fallen under the spell.

That the Johnnies of the tight little lele are not above "painting the lily," however, is evidenced by a number of bona fide advertisements recently clipped from a popular London magazine. They relate to creams and cosmetics, the particular form of vanity which the Britisher derides in his women folk. One of them reads:

"Mustaches forced quickly, cheaply, secretly. Trial box, 7d."

Can we not picture the fair youth—with nine on a side—standing before a mirror and patiently rubbing in the cream or salve, or whatever it is, hope springing eternal in his breast that on the morrow he will be twirling a long, silky mustache which will transform him into a perfect lady killer?

Card Wasn't Necessary.

Senator William A. Smith of Michigan smiled the other evening when the conversation turned to the bad breaks occasionally made by servants. He said he was reminded of a maid named Norah.

One afternoon two women stopped at the home of a distant relative. Norah answered the ring at the door and requested the callers to take seats until she ascertained whether her mistress was in.

"I am very sorry," announced Norah, coming down stairs a minute later, "but Mrs. Jones has gone out and is not expected back until after dinner."

"What a pity I have forgotten my cards," remarked one of the callers fumbling in her satchel, "I will have to write my name on one of yours, Jenny."

"It won't be necessary, ma'am," thoughtlessly broke in Norah. "I told my mistress who you are."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

America's Mineral Resources.

Mineral production in the United States now reaches a grand total of \$2,500,000,000 a year, according to statistics gathered by Wall Street Journal. No other country of the world makes anything like so large a contribution to its mineral wealth. The director of the geological survey reminds us that this country mines 40 per cent of the world's output of coal and 65 per cent of the petroleum. Of the more essential metals 40 per cent of the world's production of iron ore comes from American mines. Our smelters furnish 55 per cent of the copper and at least 55 per cent of its lead and zinc. In no respect will the European war probably bring more advantage to the United States than by forcing home to us the possibilities of providing for our own needs instead of depending on foreign sources for much of our mineral elements essential to industry.

ENGINE NOT YET PERFECTED

Great Things Looked For of the Diesel Motor, But They Seem of the Future.

Although the sanguine popular writers who have to find unexpected wonders in every new thing to make a place for their articles predict an immediate revolution in marine propulsion following the perfection of the Diesel engine, the revolution itself has been rather slow in materializing. The Diesel-engined battleship is apparently still an achievement of the distant future. And as for the Diesel-engined afloat, which the Germans are reported to have invented (this engine is necessarily much heavier than the gasoline engine), it may safely be put on the shelf with that other pseudo-German wonder, a gas with three times the lifting power of hydrogen, and "absolutely non-inflammable," which is now used for floating the Kaiser's Zeppelin warships.

The Diesel engine is, however, coming to be used more and more in smaller naval vessels, particularly submarines. Most of the latest and largest of these are propelled by Diesel engines. Some of them develop as much as 2,000 horsepower. Larger craft of this type are said now to be under construction in which Diesel engines of 5,000 horsepower will be installed. A number of destroyers and coast-defense gunboats have also been equipped with Diesel motors. The engine is in use to some extent in motor-tank vessels acting as tenders to warships. How far it will eventually go in displacing the steam engine for marine propulsion is still a very uncertain question.—New York Saturday Evening Post.

CARING FOR SOLDIERS' FEET

Military Surgeons Have Given Considerable Thought to This Most Important Subject.

Every year at the French military maneuvers, in spite of the fact that the military boot is chosen a trifle large to avoid injuring the feet, in the first few days' marching a large number of soldiers suffer from blisters and chafing, which compel them to go on the sick list, and the same would doubtless be the case in warfare. Doctor Arnould, a military medical officer, having noted the coincidence of these injuries with too great mobility of the foot in the regulation boot, suggested, according to the Paris correspondent of the Lancet, the use of a leather thong 75 centimeters long by five in width, which is bound round the boot outside, being placed in the hollow of the foot, brought over the instep and crossed in a figure eight backward round the tendon of Achilles, thus immobilizing the foot in the boot and obviating the chafing.

In all the regiments in which this method has been adopted the number of footsore soldiers after the early marches has been reduced to an insignificant proportion. The analogous German "Fusschoner" contain steel bands, which render the apparatus both more complicated and more costly.

Another Guess.

"One good, I hope, will come from this terrible European cataclysm," said F. E. Spaulding, treasurer of the American School Peace league. "War will be taken out of the hands of the autocrats and put into the hands of the people—the people, who, anyway, are the ones who really have to do the fighting."

"These heaven-born autocrats may really desire peace, but they go about maintaining it in such a warlike way. Take, for example, the Kaiser's peace telegrams to the czar. Why, they remind me of Shrook."

"Shrook stopped his motor car at a desolate cross-roads and yelled to a farmer who lay on a cart of fertilizer: 'Hey, Cornsilk, is this the way to Croymond?'"

"The farmer raised himself from the fertilizer in astonishment.

"By heck, stranger, how did you know my name was Cornsilk?" he asked.

"I guessed it," said the motorist.

"Then, by heck," said the farmer, as he drove off, 'guess your way to Croymond.'"—Minneapolis Journal.

Not a Scarecrow.

A certain Chicago business man has had a great deal of trouble with his workmen, a number of whom have from time to time evinced a disposition "to soldier."

On one occasion when this gentleman, in company with his brother, was visiting the farm of a friend in southern Illinois, the two observed an uncouth figure standing in a distant field.

"Since it isn't moving," observed the brother, "it must be a scarecrow."

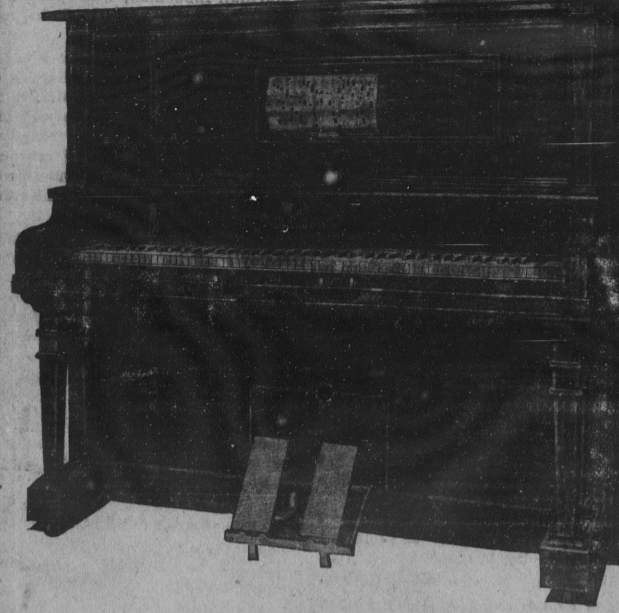
"That isn't a scarecrow," said the other, after a long gaze at the figure. "That's a man working by the day."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Mineral May Be of Much Value.

Virginia produced all the American output of rutile produced in 1913. A large part of the rutile produced in 1913 was used in the manufacture of titanium carbide electrodes for arc lamps. A part of the ilmenite found in the deposits and separated by means of a magnetic separator has been sold for use in making electrodes for electric lights, and the experiments with the electric furnace point to the possible use of ilmenite in the direct production of tool steel.

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ENROLL NOW.

To the next few persons who enroll as contestants will be given a souvenir, and 5,000 votes. Come in at once and let us explain how you can win.

This is the Last Week for Recording Blue Votes. No Blue Votes Will be Accepted After Wednesday, December 16th.

RULES OF CONTEST

- 1. No name of contestant will be known.
- 2. No name of contestant will be published.
- 3. Every contestant is credited with 2,000 votes when placed in nomination.
- 4. Every contestant gets a number.
- 5. Standing of contestants number published weekly.
- 6. Contestants having the largest number of votes on May 29, 1915, win the piano and other premiums.
- 7. All votes must be in Wednesday for Recording.
- 8. Votes cannot be solicited in or about the store.
- 9. Tie votes in packages, with your number and amount on top slip only.
- 10. Color of votes will be changed monthly and must be recorded weekly by count.
- 11. Votes not transferable only before recording.
- 12. All parties to a tie will participate equally.
- 13. No church, school, lodge, society or public institution can become a contestant directly or indirectly.

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