

The Happiest People in the Word.

Youth's Bible Study Course

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalms 16:11.

Lesson 11: Joy Cometh in the Morning

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." James 1:2, 3.

"Please, Pastor, won't you come and visit a poor crippled neighbor of mine?" pleaded Sister Beatrice Steevens, a valiant little church worker in Rangoon. "She is so discouraged, and I think a visit would do her so much good."

I was just spending the week end in the city buying supplies for our mission station, and had taken the service that Sabbath day, so I replied, "I'll be glad to go with you."

We stepped into a gharry and in a few minutes arrived at a modest little apartment in the residential section of the city. We knocked at the door, and being bidden to enter, opened the door and went in. I took one look at the poor crippled neighbor, then gasped, went cold, and felt lifeless all over. I had expected to see a crippled little lady, but not this! Here was something indescribable! She might have been an ogre from some dreadful nightmare. Her distorted head was three times its proper size, her back was bent, and her arms and legs were twisted and misshapen. I was utterly speechless at the sight.

When Sister Steevens introduced me as one of the pastors of her church, the poor soul spoke or rather screamed, "A pastor of your church! Ah, then, he can tell me; How can there be a God, a God of love, and let me live on from day to day like this?"

I tried to speak, but I could find no words, and when I remained mute she went on, "A God of love, eh? and I've been praying every day for ten years that I could die, and here I lie helpless and alone."

Again I tried to say something, but I couldn't utter a sound. She continued speaking with great difficulty and unmasked bitterness, "You won't believe it, but when I was twenty I had everything. I had health, a strong body and a lover, as handsome a man as ever a girl could dream of. He begged me to marry him then; but I had a sick mother. So I begged him to wait a year or two till mother passed away. He waited five years. I couldn't ask him to wait any longer. Tearfully I bade

him good-by. I was all my mother had. He married another girl, and six months after, my mother died, and I was left alone. My heart was broken. I began to pine away. In six months my bones began to soften. I became worse and now here I am!"

I tried once more to speak, but while still groping for words, suddenly she lifted her startled eyes and pointed toward the door as well as she could, and screamed, "There! Look! There it goes! Why couldn't it be me! Why couldn't it be me!"

I looked through the open door, and there down the street was going a Hindu funeral procession, led by some noisy drums, a clarinet, a cornet, and a baritone, playing some sort of music. Next came the corpse on a bamboo bier carried on the shoulders of the mourners, its face painted red and open to view, and surrounded with flowers.

"If there's a God," the poor cripple cried, "why doesn't He let me die! Oh, why couldn't that be me!"

The words burned into my soul, and I shall never forget them. I remember little more about that visit. I can just remember trying to tell her of the land where there would be no pain, no sorrow, and no tears. I can remember praying that God would somehow help that poor woman to believe and have hope, and I can remember returning to my room, flinging myself on my knees, and praying, "O God, help me find an answer. Help me to be able to tell that poor woman why God permits suffering."

"Come quickly, Thara!" called one of the little schoolgirls as she came running into the dispensary. "Tharamoo Terah sent me to call you quickly. She wants you to come and pray, the baby is dying."

I left Nurse Yehni to carry on for a while, and calling one or two of the teachers, quickly went over to Terah's house. The baby had been sick for several days. We had done all we could for it. We had prayed, and it seemed to rally, so we gladly went to pray and comfort the sorrowing little mother again. But as we neared the house, we could hear her crying, "It's too late; my baby's dead. My baby's dead. It's no use praying any more."

We saw her hugging the limp form of her dead babe to her breast. We saw her tears falling thick and fast as her bleeding heart cried, "Why? O God, why did my baby have to die?"

I whispered the promise of the resurrection, and told of the day when angels would place the little one in her arms again. But my words seemed so inadequate, and after prayer, as we left the saddened home, we could still hear the words, "Why? O God why?" And again I prayed, "God help me find an answer! Help me find an answer!"

Why does God permit suffering? Where can we find a satisfying answer that will comfort our own poor bleeding hearts, an answer that will help us to "count it all joy" when we fall into divers temptations (James 1:2, 3) and to "glory in tribulation" when it comes to us (Romans 5:3)?

Let us first read the assurance that God knows and understands from men who have suffered greatly. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you," says Peter. 1 Peter 5:7. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," says David. Psalm 103:13. God's promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," sustained Paul. Hebrews 13:5. Job said, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10. Jesus Himself said, "I will not leave you comfortless." John 14:18. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. And Isaiah declares, "As one whom his mother comforteth, . . . ye shall be comforted." Isaiah 66:13.

It is interesting to note that when mothers and fathers comfort their children, they attempt to turn their thoughts from the immediate present to the future: "Never mind, it will soon be better." "Up again, sonny. That's the way we learn to walk. Soon you'll be a big boy and won't fall down any more." "Of course, it will hurt to pull your tooth, but only a little while, and then it won't ache any more." That's the way they talk. And that's just the way God talks to us. Listen: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psalm 30:5.

We are but children in God's sight; children of a day, children of an hour. We are so wrapped up in the immediate present that we are prone to forget there is "a morning," that there is a tomorrow with God, and that He is guiding, fitting, preparing us for tomorrow, not for today. John gives us a picture of those who are prepared to stand on Mount Zion with the Lamb of God tomorrow, and he says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelations 14:12. Notice there are three outstanding characteristics of these redeemed ones. They are patient; they have been humble and meek and long-suffering. They keep the commandments; they have learned obedience and have overcome the flesh. They keep the faith of

Jesus; they have overcome doubt; they have drunk the cup alone; but they know in whom they have believed and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him against that day. (2 Timothy 1:12.)

Sin, suffering, and sorrow came into this world because Satan failed in all these three points. He was proud and aggressive, not humble and patient. "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:" Isaiah 14:13.

He coveted and broke the commandments. "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Verse 14. He disbelieved God and became the father of lies.

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44.

When Adam and Eve were created, Satan assailed them on these same three points. They broke the direct commandment of God: "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Genesis 3:3. He caused them to doubt God, and thus they did not keep the faith: "Ye shall not surely die." Verse 4. Then he appealed to their pride: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Verse 5.

When Jesus came to win back Adam's lost kingdom, God permitted Him to be tempted on the same three points on which Adam fell. And He overcame the temptation on appetite, thus refusing to obey a commandment of Satan. (Matthew 4:4.) He overcame the temptation to be presumptuous and cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, and therein kept the faith. (Verse 6.) And He overcame the temptation to pride and ambition, choosing to win back the kingdom by the way of humiliation, meekness, and patience. (Verse 9.)

In God's tomorrow He must have a people whom He can trust with the glories of eternity. He therefore permits us to be tested and tried. Everyone who stands on Mount Zion with the Lamb of God will have overcome in one way or another the temptation to be proud and ambitious, the temptation to break God's commandments and satisfy the flesh, and the temptation to doubt God's Word and His promises, and thus fail to keep the faith.

To Joseph came the temptation to satisfy the appetite of the flesh, and break the commandments of God, but he overcame, saying, "How then can I do this great

wickedness, and sin against God?" Genesis 39:9. Then came the great temptation of doubt. Though innocent, he was cast into prison. (Verses 20-23.) He was in prison for maybe twelve years. There was plenty of time for him to cry "Why? O God, Why?" But not one word of complaint or doubt is recorded. Joseph kept the faith. Then very subtly came the next temptation. "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, ... I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it." But Joseph was ready for it. "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Genesis 41:15, 16. There was no haughtiness in Joseph; he would not take credit for the work which only God could do, and so Joseph overcame, and God used him to save a nation.

I have enjoyed tracing these same victories in the lives of other great Bible characters. Daniel overcame the temptation of appetite, and would not defile his body with the portion of the king's meat. "And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. . . But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Daniel 1:5, 8.

When his enemies sought to slay him he demonstrated his great faith by saying that if he were given time, God would make known the dream and the interpretation. "Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon." Daniel 2:16-18.

Then came the time when Belshazzar said to him, "I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee.... Now if thou canst read the writing, . . . thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom." Daniel 5:14-16. Try to sense the subtlety of this temptation. There is nothing wrong with being honored and promoted. The sin is in being proud and taking the glory to oneself. But Daniel was ready for it. "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another" (verse 17), he said. How humble he was!

And as he began the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall, he gave God the glory, "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom." Verse 18.

It is interesting also to notice how when one fails, God does not forsake him, but patiently brings him over the road again and again in an attempt to let him become victorious. For an example let us take Abraham. God called him, blessed him, and said, "I will make of thee a great nation." Genesis 12:2. Yet shortly after this his faith failed, and he told Pharaoh that Sarah was his sister. (Verses 10, 11.) God renewed His promise with Abraham, saying his seed would be as the dust of the earth. (Genesis 13:14-18.)

But Abraham's faith was still weak, and he took Hagar to wife, and she bore him Ishmael. (Genesis 16:15.) Again God renewed His covenant, and declared that he should be the father of many nations (Genesis 17:1-4), and that Sarah herself should bear a son (verses 15, 16). But Abraham laughed. (Verse 17.) Then God actually named the son that was to be born (verse 19), and his name means 'laughter'! And still Abraham's faith was so weak that he could not see how God could save Sarah from the hands of Abimelech; so once more he said, "She is my sister" (Genesis 20:2). However, the time came when Isaac was born (Genesis 21:3), and then Abraham's faith began to grow. It grew and grew till he chose to sacrifice his son in obedience to God's command. (Genesis 22:1, 2.) "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." Hebrews 11:19.

Now let us read a paragraph from Messages to Young People, page 117:

"The trials of life are God's workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our characters. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process, it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel. But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple. Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace."

Then, if we are suffering from trials, it is proof that God sees in us precious material that can be polished. If you recall the experience of Job, you will remember that God does not send the trial; He permits the trial to come. Satan is the author of suffering; he sends it to destroy us and our faith. God permits it to come upon us to polish our characters for eternity. Isaiah declares that God will be very gracious unto us and will hear our cry, and we shall weep no more, and then he adds, "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the

water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." Isaiah 30:20.

Young people, that's what we need. We need our eyes to be opened, so that we can see in the trials and sufferings that come to us, teachers that will teach us to be patient, teachers that will convince us that we ought to obey the commandments of God, teachers that will persuade us to believe in God though the heavens fall.

That is how James found his "joy" when he fell into divers temptations. "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." James 1:3. That is the reason Paul gloried in tribulations, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." Romans 5:3.

But here is definite encouragement: "When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire is presumption. God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you.'" Steps to Christ, p. 96.

Let us fasten our faith to this truth: "God is too wise to err." He permits only those trials and temptations to come to us that He can "work together" for our good. (Romans 8:28.) I like the way Paul expresses it in Ephesians 3:20. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory world without end. Amen."

Paul is the man who was healed of blindness in answer to prayer. Paul is the man who prayed, and the earthquake came and delivered him from prison. Paul is the man who prayed three times that the thorn in his flesh should be removed, and God answered that prayer by saying 'no' three times. (2 Corinthians 12:8.)

But Paul found that his infirmity kept him humble, and kept him dependent on God; therefore he gloried in infirmities. (Verse 9.) "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." Verse 10. Paul recognized that by saying no to his request and thereby keeping him weak and dependent on Him, God was actually doing exceeding abundantly above all that Paul could ask or think.

Let us take another illustration from the experience of Moses. "O Lord God," he prayed, "let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan." Deuteronomy 3:24, 25. And the Lord said, "Speak no more unto me of this matter ...: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan." Verses 26, 27. But God had an exceeding abundantly better answer for Moses after saying no to his prayer. He sent Michael the archangel to awaken him from the grave. (Jude 9.) He was taken to heaven, and sent as a special comforter with Elijah to Christ on the mount of transfiguration. (Matthew 17:3.)

Now, let us take an illustration or two from everyday life. Several years ago my family and I spent a month in the hill station of Maymyo. We shared a house with Brother and Sister Wyman, dear fellow missionaries, and our children enjoyed one another's company very much.

One day as I sat at my desk doing some translating, I heard my five-year-old daughter, Verna May, playing on the back veranda with little Carol, who was just a little older. They were making mud cookies, rolling and patting them with their hands, and sprinkling them with sand for sugar. Each had a board on which she was putting her mud cookies in the sun to dry. To them it was the most important task in their little lives, and they thrilled through and through with each success.

Suddenly I heard a yell of rage. It was my Verna May. I could tell that cry among a thousand. It was followed by a wail of pain from Carol. I knew there was trouble, and they both needed help. I dropped my pen and ran to the scene, and understood it immediately. Carol had accidentally knocked Verna May's board over, and had broken three of her cookies. And Verna May had seized little Carol by her golden curls and was administering revenge. Again came the yell of rage and again the wail of pain. I could understand those cries as clearly as if they had been spoken in the most perfect language. Verna May was pleading for me to annihilate her enemy for destroying her beautiful work, and little Carol was pleading for mercy, for she didn't mean to knock the board over.

Verna May was just a little girl, and she could only comprehend the very present. But I was her father. I could see into the future and knew what kind of character I wanted my little girl to have, and I answered her cry.

Do you know what I did? I had a ruler in my hand, and I applied it smartly to the right place two or three times, and while she wept as though she were terribly treated and terribly misunderstood, I straightened up the board, and molded the mud cookies again. The tears dried so quickly they left mud rings on her little face. Then I gathered her into my arms and told her how a good girl would act. Though

it was beyond her understanding, I added, "Someday you'll thank your daddy for trying to teach you self-control." I think I answered her cry exceeding abundantly above that she was able to ask or think. Don't you? Indeed, how often since she has grown to womanhood has she thrown her arms around my neck and thanked me for teaching her to obey and to be patient.

Again I remember a Christmas season many years ago, when Eileen was eleven and Lenny was just seven years old. We lived on our mission station away up in the jungle, and I only went to the city three or four times a year for supplies. This year I planned a trip to Rangoon the first week in December.

"It will be the last opportunity to get the children something for Christmas," said Mrs. Hare. So after they had gone to bed we counted our savings, thought hard, and wrote down on the list a doll for Eileen and a steam engine for Lenny.

As the motorboat honked its arrival on my return, the children came excitedly down to meet me. The schoolboys unloaded the boxes and bundles, and carried them as marked to the dispensary, the school store, or our home.

"I know it's still three weeks to Christmas," said Mrs. Hare, "but what does it matter? There's no one to have Christmas with, so why not let the children have their things now."

"All right," I agreed, and gave Eileen the box with her doll in it, and Lenny the box with his engine in it. What happy children they were! In just a few moments Eileen was singing to her new dolly, and Lenny was erupting with squeals of joy as he filled his engine with water and lighted the methylated spirits fire. Soon the wheel was turning around with a busy hum, "Tr-rr-r-r-r-r-r-r," and the whistle was "Too-too-tooting!"

That afternoon the village postman brought a letter from Auntie Jessie! "She's coming in February to stay two or three months!" announced Mrs. Hare as she hastily read the letter. "And she is bringing Edwin, Wilfred, and Buddy! And the boys are getting a Meccano set for Christmas!"

"Oh, goody, goody!" we all chorused with glee.

And then I got to thinking. Being a father, I could see further ahead than the children could. I could see the steam engine turning the wheels and the merry-go-rounds we could make with the Meccano set. But this was only December, and there were two months till the three little cousins and their Meccano set would arrive! In two months the little engine might be all broken and useless. I thought

it through for a long time, asked Mrs. Hare what she thought of my plan, then in the evening called Lenny, and said, "Son, I've been thinking."

"Yes, Daddy?"

"About the engine and the Meccano set! Wouldn't it be fun to have the engine turn a merry-go-round that we could make with the Meccano set!"

"Oh, yes, daddy!"

"But if you play with the engine now, maybe it will be broken by the time your cousins come. Wouldn't it be better to put the engine away now, so it will still be brand new when Edwin and Wilfred and Buddy come?"

"Oh, but, Daddy, I want to play with it now."

"But it's not so much fun without a Meccano-set merry go-round."

"But, Daddy, I want to play with it now. It's the only engine I've ever had in all my life."

I hesitated. I knew it would break his heart. I thought it all carefully through again, and more sure than ever that my way was best, I said, "We'll play with it once more, son, then we'll put it away so it will be brand new when the Meccano set comes."

He played with it till the fire burned out, and the steam died down. Then I emptied it, wiped it over, and put it away.

"You don't love me any more!" wailed little Lenny as if his heart was broken. "I want to play with my little engine; it's the only engine I've ever had in all my life."

I took him for a swim in the river. Mother had his favorite pumpkin pie for supper that night. There were stories and games to follow, and off he went to bed. In two or three days he had almost forgotten his engine, and hardly mentioned it again. The days and the weeks went swiftly by. February came. Then one day the motorboat honked the arrival of Aunt Jessie and the little cousins.

"Hi, Lenny," shouted Edwin. "Guess what! We've got a Meccano set, and we can make a Ferris wheel!"

"And a merry-go-round," added Wilfred.

There was great excitement as everybody hugged and kissed everybody else. Then the luggage was brought to the house. The first thing to be unpacked was the Meccano set, and in a moment four little boys were working feverishly on a

bamboo mat constructing a Ferris wheel. And while they put the parts together, I went in, got out the brand new engine, and put it right in the middle of them.

"Oh-h-h, my engine!" squealed Lenny, and he busied himself putting in the water and lighting up. By the time he had steam up, the Ferris wheel was complete. Edwin got a long string belt, and in just a moment round and round it was going, driven by the little engine! Four little boys danced up and down and clapped their hands with delight. Four little boys ohed and ahed and laughed and shouted in glee. This was ecstasy undreamed of, joy unthought of, and I looked on for a long, long time in thoughtful satisfaction. Then I said, "Son, aren't you glad now that daddy put the little engine away?"

He came bounding over to where I sat, climbed upon my knee, put his arms around my neck, and said, "How did you know it would be better like this, Daddy? How did you know?"

And it gives me faith to believe that when God puts away our toys, the ones we love best of everything in all the world, He does it only that we can have them brand new in the morning. And when He seemingly passes us by, and keeps something back that we would rather have than anything else in all the world, He is only doing it that it may be ours, unmarred, unscratched, unbroken, in the morning. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psalm 30:5.

I told this story to the little crippled woman in Rangoon during a subsequent visit. She listened quietly, and eagerly drank in every word. "Thank you," she said, as her eyes filled with tears. "Please come again." And I knew she understood. I went to see her once more just before coming back to the homeland in 1934. "Tell me the story about your little boy's engine. Tell me again," she said. I told her again, and that was the last time I saw her. When I went back to Rangoon in 1941 Miss Steevens told me she fell asleep about a year after we left, a sweet, patient Christian woman. In these simple illustrations and in these simple thoughts she had found an answer to her question. "Why? O God, why?"

There is another thought on this matter of the reason for suffering. Paul said, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Romans 14:7. If we are strong in faith, somebody else will be encouraged to be strong in faith also. If we are patient under trial, somebody else will be inspired to be patient also. Sometimes God permits one to bear a cross, or to drink a cup, so that He can comfort and strengthen others who may be called upon to bear the same cross or pass through the same experience.

Many, many years ago a young man and his wife were appointed to a certain mission field. It was not the field of their own choice, but they gladly accepted the call, left father and mother and brothers and sisters for Christ's sake, and went across the seas to the distant land. For a year and a half all went well. They were busy with language study and preparation for greater responsibilities. Then suddenly their first baby died, and they followed its little coffin to its resting place in the cemetery on their second wedding anniversary.

It all seemed too cruel. The darkness of despair fell upon them. In discouragement they cried, "O God, why? Why did this happen to us?" In the bitterness of their souls they could not pray. There seemed no comfort from any source. Their fellow missionaries could only say they were sorry, for they had not known the sorrow of the death of a child. And this young couple needed no pity; they needed sympathy. Three weeks went by. Their hearts were cold, bitter, and dark, and then one Sabbath afternoon there came a knock on the door.

The young man opened the door and said, "Come in." A humble little sister from the church entered and sat down. Within his heart the young man said, "All right, say it. Preach at us, and get it over with as soon as you can. Then go and leave us alone."

But the humble little sister didn't begin to preach. She didn't begin to read the Testimonies to them. She sat quietly for a moment, then overcome with emotion, she cried, "I can't say it. I don't know what to say. But my heart has been bleeding for you for three weeks. I want you to know that I know how you feel, for I lost my first baby."

Oh, what wonderful words! The poor heartbroken young mother who for three weeks had been too bitter for tears threw her arms around the humble little sister and sobbed her heart out. Here was someone who knew how it felt. In just a minute the cold, hardhearted young husband was kneeling at her knee, and that little woman prayed them back to faith and trust in, and love for God again. The preacher couldn't do it. The fellow missionaries couldn't do it, but that little sister who had gone victoriously through the valley herself brought them comfort and assurance.

Ever afterward that young missionary couple spoke the name of that dear sister with a blessing upon their lips. In many ways and frequently they were able to tell her how much her loving ministry meant to them, and on one occasion they heard her actually say, "I'm glad now I lost my first baby, for I was able to comfort you." Just fancy her being able to say that! That's the kind of gladness we will

have "in the morning." May God open our eyes that we may see the teachers and the workmen He permits to come in order to teach us patience, obedience, and faith. May God open our lips to speak a word of comfort to those who are traveling the same way that we have gone. And remember, it was Jesus who said; "And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." John 16:22.

BROKEN TOYS

'Twas eventide. The westering sun
Had almost run its race;
And the long line of darkening hills
Reached up to kiss its face.
Close by the shade a cottage stood;
Within it all was calm.
Only faint echoes bore the strain
Of childhood's evening psalm.
Two little hands were clasped in prayer—
The prayer divinely given,
And childish lips breathed out once more
"Father which art in heaven."
"Give us our bread for every day,"
The echoes told again;
"Our sins forgive, the glory Thine,
Forevermore, Amen."

"But say, Mamma, does Jesus know"
The clasped hands loosen now,
And the wide, wondering eyes look out
Beneath a shaded brow
"Does Jesus know of all we feel,
Our sorrow and our joy?
I know He cares for you, Mamma,
But there's my broken toy
That lovely one I broke last night!
It made me cry so long.
Oh, would He mend it if I pray
And tell Him what is wrong?"

"Yes! Jesus knows your grief, my child,
He was a child below!"
The little head sinks thoughtfully
Upon its rest of snow,
And closing eyes with slumber strive
As twilight strives with even;
The red lips part once more, "I know, Mamma,
He'll mend it up in heaven."

Ah me! sad heart, thy lesson learn:
Each gift of heavenly love
Shattered by earth's misfortune now,
Will be restored above.
There severed friendships join again,
No more by tempests riven;
And shattered hopes, like broken toys,
Are perfected in heaven.
Robert Hare.

Lesson 11 Quiz:

Write True or False [T or F]:

1. _____ Sometimes it is hard to understand why sorrows hit us.
2. _____ If our prayers are not answered right away, God is angry with us.
3. _____ People who have experienced loss and pain can comfort others better.
4. _____ Pain and suffering are God punishing us.
5. _____ There is a difference between results of sin and punishment for sin.
6. _____ Patiently waiting for the answers to our prayers brings greater blessings!
7. _____ We can never be happy unless everything is going good for us.
8. _____ Trials and suffering often are the only way we learn certain lessons.
9. _____ Jesus can empower us to be cheerful even in loss and suffering.
10. _____ Even great Bible heroes had times when they showed lack of faith.