



"There is no way of escape for parents; they must needs be as 'inspirers' to their children, because about them hangs, as its atmosphere about a planet the thought-environment of the child, from which he derives those enduring ideas which express themselves as a life-long 'appetency' towards things sordid or things lovely, things earthly or divine."

-Charlotte Mason, Parents and Children, p.37

What is morning time?

Morning Time is simply a focused, daily ritual that brings the entire family together to share in the feast of books, beauty, and Biblical truth. This practice builds a family culture around these shared experiences. In **A Gentle Feast**, morning time consists of two parts: Bible Time and a Beauty Loop. Suggested Bible Readings and memory verses are included. Weekly plans and poetry selections are given in this packet as well.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO PURCHASE?

1. Then Sings My Soul: 150 of the World's Greatest Hymn Stories by Robert Morgan (optional, you can find information on the hymns online)
2. Pick from the following Fables/Tales based on your child's age or just pick one level to read to all your children

FORM I (GRADES 1-3)

Aesop Fables (any version)

Dangerous Journey: The Story of Pilgrim's Progress by Oliver Hunkin

FORM II (GRADES 4-6)

Norse Myths by D'Aulaire

Viking Tales by Hall

FORM III (GRADES 7-9)

Tales from Shakespeare by Charles and Mary Lamb

FORM IV (GRADES 10-12)

Galileo's Daughter by Dava Sobel

The Life of Columbus by Hale

HOW LONG SHOULD MORNING TIME LAST?

This really depends on your family, but here is a general time frame. Bible Time - Readings and narrations (15 minutes), Prayer, Beauty Loop (5-20 minutes depending on the day). So in less than a half hour, your family can enjoy truth, beauty, and goodness together.

Part 1: Bible

Gather the entire family for devotions, prayers, spiritual readings, or whatever else your family uses for religious studies. Four days of Bible readings are given. The other days can be specific to your denomination. You could include saint stories, catechism questions, missionary biographies, or habit-training, character-building lessons.



HOW WAS BIBLE APPROACHED IN MISS MASON'S PROGRAMMES?

1. Bible readings are to come directly from the Bible and not a children's adaptation.

"We are apt to believe that children cannot be interested in the Bible unless its pages be watered down- turned into the slipshod English we prefer to offer them.... It is a mistake to use paraphrases of the text; the fine roll of Bible English appeals to children with a compelling music, and they will probably retain through life their first conception of the Bible scenes, and also, the very words in which these scenes are portrayed,"- Charlotte Mason, Home Education, p. 248-49

2. By age nine, children will have read "the simple (and suitable) narrative portions of the Old Testament, and say, two of the gospels," - Charlotte Mason, Home Education, p. 249

3. Episodes are read and the children narrate these.

"Read aloud to the children a few verses covering, if possible, an episode. Read reverently, carefully, and with just expression. Then require the children to narrate what they have listened to as nearly as possible in the words of the the Bible." - Charlotte Mason, Home Education, p. 251

4. After narrations, the teacher can emphasize points from the lesson.

" Before the close of the lesson, the teacher brings out such new thoughts of God or new points of behavior as the reading has afforded, emphasizing the moral or religious lesson to be learnt rather by a reverent and sympathetic manner than by any attempt at personal application." - Charlotte Mason, A Philosophy of Education, p. 163

5. Older students were to read through the entire Old Testament on their own. They would also read the NT, pairing Miss Mason's Savior of the World poetry

collection with the Bible passages. The Epistles and Revelation were saved until the end of high school.

6. Bible recitations help children memorize larger passages of scripture in a natural manner.

"The learning by heart of Bible passages should begin while the children are quite young, six or seven.....The whole parable should be read to them in a way to bring out its beauty and tenderness; and then, day by day, the teacher should recite a short passage, perhaps two or three verses, saying it over some three or four times until the children think they know it. Then, but not before, let them recite the passage. Next day the children will recite what they have already learned, and so on, until they are able to say the whole parable." - Charlotte Mason, Home Education, p. 253

HOW IS THE BIBLE APPROACHED IN A GENTLE FEAST?

In A Gentle Feast, Bible is done as a family in Morning Time. A four- year rotation is given that covers episodes in the Old and New Testament in chronological order. This is similar to what Miss Mason recommended. In addition, the Psalms and Proverbs are read as it is my belief that the rich language and deep truths contained in these books greatly benefit students. Students do not need to narrate the readings from Psalms and Proverbs. Older students are encouraged to have personal devotions before school reading through the remainder of the Bible. Study Bibles, commentaries, and inductive studies can help older students understand what they are reading. You can access the four- year Bible rotation on the Membership page. Longer portions of scripture are memorized by and by like Miss Mason recommended. The same verse is learned over a twelve week period.

Part 2: Beauty Subjects

If options are provided, do the first option during your first time through the cycle, and the second option during your second time through.

1. PICTURE STUDY OR COMPOSER STUDY

Steps to a Picture Study

In Home Education (pages 310-311), Miss Mason gives these steps for a "Picture-Talk"

Objects:

1. To continue the series of Landseer's pictures the children are taking in school.
2. To increase their interest in Landseer's works.
3. To show the importance of his acquaintance with animals.
4. To help them to read a picture truly.
5. To increase their powers of attention and observation.

She goes on to explain in detail:

Step I.--Ask the children if they remember what their last picture-talk was about, and what artist was famous for animal-painting. Tell them Landseer was acquainted with animals when he was quite young: he had dogs for pets, and because he loved them he studied them and their habits--so was able to paint them.

Step II.--Give them the picture 'Alexander and Diogenes' to look at, and ask them to find out all they can about it themselves, and to think what

idea the artist had in his mind, and what idea or ideas he meant his picture to convey to us.

Step III.--After three or four minutes, take the picture away and see what the children have noticed. Then ask them what the different dogs suggest to them; the strength of the mastiff representing Alexander; the dignity and stateliness of the bloodhounds in his rear; the look of the wise counselor on the face of the setter; the rather contemptuous look of the rough-haired terrier in the tub. Ask the children if they have noticed anything in the picture which shows the time of day: for example, the tools thrown down by the side of the workman's basket suggesting the mid-day meal; and the bright sunshine on the dogs who cast a shadow on the tub shows it must be somewhere about noon.

Step IV.--Let them read the title, and tell any facts they know about Alexander and Diogenes; then tell them Alexander was a great conqueror who lived B.C. 356-323, famous for the battles he won against Persia, India, and along the coast of the Mediterranean. He was very proud, strong, and boastful. Diogenes was a cynic philosopher. Explain cynic, illustrating by the legend of Alexander and Diogenes; and from it find out which dog represents Alexander and which Diogenes.

Step V.--Let the children draw the chief lines of the picture, in five minutes, with a pencil and paper.

Composer Study

On the first day of the term, read the composer biography ahead of time and paraphrase it for your children. You can also read the optional composer biography book a little bit each time or listen to the podcast from **Classics for Kids** (linked in the Resources if available). Links to the musical selections are provided in the Resources. Each week, you will simply listen to and enjoy the piece.

DAY 2: POETRY RECITATION

Students will recite the poems included in their student packet. Form IV students have speeches/Shakespeare. Each poem is listed for 4-6 weeks, but work at your child's pace. Have your child focus on speaking eloquently. They may memorize the poem by and by, but the focus of recitation is on speaking clearly and with emotion. Poetry selections are given in the student packet for each level.

"She told me that her niece could repeat to me any of those poems that I liked to ask for, and that she had never learnt a single verse by heart in her life. The girl did repeat several of the poems on the list, quite beautifully and without hesitation; and then the lady unfolded her secret. She thought she had made a discovery, and I thought so too. She read a poem through to E.; then the next day, while the little girl was making a doll's frock, perhaps, she read it again; once again the next day, while E.'s hair was being brushed. She got in about six or more readings, according to the length of the poem, at odd and unexpected times, and in the end E. could say the poem which she had not learned. "I have tried the plan often since, and found it effectual. The child must not try to recollect or to say the verse over to himself, but, as far as may be, present an open mind to receive an impression of interest. Half a dozen repetitions should give children possession of such poems as—"Dolly and Dick," "Do you ask what the birds say?" "Little lamb, who made thee?" and the like" (Vol. 1, pp. 224, 225)

DAY 3: POET STUDY

During this time, you will read a selection from the term's poet. Poems are included in the Morning Time Packet. In the Green Year, the poems are from Elizabethan era. If you only have a Form I child, they may be too intense. You can substitute selections from the book, Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems, edited by Jan Carr, or A Child's Garden of Verses by Robert Louis Stevenson. Each year's poets correspond to the time period studied each year.

"Poetry reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feelings, reviews the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the springtime of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature, by vivid delineations of its tenderest and softest feelings, and through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life." - William E. Channing

DAY 4: FABLES AND HERO TALES/ BIOGRAPHIES

Read these to your Form I children during this time. Older students can read independently. Forms III and IV will probably need to find additional time to finish their weekly readings other than Morning Time. If you prefer, you can choose just one fables book to read to the entire family.

DAY 5: HYMN

Read the background information in Then Sings My Soul. You can use the lyrics from the book or find them in the morning packet. I recommend making a copy of the lyrics for each child. Sing through this hymn for six weeks during this loop time. Hymns are chosen to correspond with the time period being studied. Hymns links are provided on the website.