

ELAM'S NOTES

ON

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1927

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E. A. ELAM, Editor

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In preparing the lessons of this book and his Bible lessons for twenty-six years past, the author has drawn valuable information from all available commentaries, histories, dictionaries, chronological tables, etc., and has endeavored to give due credit in proper form for all direct quotations; but he wishes further to acknowledge his indebtedness to all these for information he has expressed in his own language.

Above all, he is greatly indebted and most grateful to that thoroughly conscientious and most profound teacher of the word of our God, Brother David Lipscomb, now resting from his labors, while his work lives after him.

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1927 LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

Studies in the Christian Life.

I. January	2.—The Christian a Follower of Jesus.....	Mark 1: 16-20; 2: 13-17; 1 John 2: 6
II. "	9.—The Standard of Christian Living.....	Luke 6: 27-38
III. "	16.—The Christian's Use of the Bible.....	Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; 2 Timothy 3: 14-17
IV. "	23.—Prayer in the Christian Life.....	Mark 1: 35; 14: 32-36; Matthew 6: 9-13
V. "	30.—The Christian Overcoming Temptation.....	Luke 4: 1-13; 1 Corinthians 10: 12, 13
VI. February	6.—The Practice of Christian Stewardship.....	Matthew 25: 14-28
VII. "	13.—Making Our Homes Christian.....	Ephesians 5: 25 to 6: 4
VIII. "	20.—Serving In and Through the Church.....	Matthew 5: 13-16; Acts 2: 42-47
IX. "	27.—Making the Community Christian (Temperance Lesson).....	Galatians 5: 13-25
X. March	6.—Sharing the Good News.....	Acts 8: 4, 8; 2 Corinthians 5: 14-20
XI. "	13.—Making the World Christian.....	Matthew 28: 16-20; Acts 16: 6-15
XII. "	20.—The Christian's Hope.....	John 14: 1-3; 2 Corinthians 5: 1-10; 1 John 3: 2, 3
XIII. "	27.—Review: Studies in the Christian Life.....	

SECOND QUARTER.

The Life and Letters of Peter.

I. April	3.—Peter Becomes a Disciple of Jesus.....	Mark 1: 14-18, 29-31
II. "	10.—Peter's Lesson in Trust.....	Matthew 14: 22-33
III. "	17.—Peter's Great Confession.....	Matthew 16: 13-24
IV. "	24.—Peter at the Transfiguration.....	Mark 9: 2-10; 2 Peter 1: 16-18
V. May	1.—Peter's Denial and Repentance.....	Mark 14: 53, 54, 66-71; Luke 22: 61, 62
VI. "	8.—Peter and the Risen Lord.....	John 20: 1-10; 21: 15-17
VII. "	15.—Peter at Pentecost.....	Acts 2: 12-14, 32-41
VIII. "	22.—Peter Heals the Lame Man.....	Acts 3: 1-10; 4: 8-10
IX. "	29.—Peter Undaunted by Persecution.....	Acts 5: 27-35, 38-42
X. June	5.—Peter Preaching to Gentiles.....	Acts 10: 34-48
XI. "	12.—Peter Delivered from Prison.....	Acts 12: 5-17
XII. "	19.—Peter Teaches Good Citizenship (Temperance Lesson).....	1 Peter 2: 11-17; 4: 1-5
XIII. "	26.—Review: Life and Letters of Peter.....	Read 1 Peter 5: 1-11

THIRD QUARTER.

Early Kings and Prophets of Israel: From Samuel to Isaiah.

(First Half of a Six-Months' Course)

I. July	3.—Saul Chosen King.....	1 Samuel 10: 17-27; 11: 12-15
II. "	10.—Samuel's Farewell.....	1 Samuel 12: 1-5, 19-25
III. "	17.—Samuel Anoints David.....	1 Samuel 16: 1-13
IV. "	24.—David and Goliath.....	1 Samuel 17: 31-51
V. "	31.—David and Jonathan.....	1 Samuel 18: 1-4; 19: 1-7
VI. August	7.—David Spares Saul.....	1 Samuel 26: 7-14, 17, 21
VII. "	14.—David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem.....	2 Samuel 2: 3, 4; 5: 1-3; 6: 12-15
VIII. "	21.—God's Promise to David.....	1 Chronicles 17: 1-12
IX. "	28.—Nathan Leads David to Repentance.....	2 Samuel 12: 1-10, 13
X. September	4.—Solomon's Wise Choice.....	1 Kings 3: 4-15
XI. "	11.—Solomon Dedicates the Temple.....	1 Kings 8: 1-11, 62, 63
XII. "	18.—The Kingdom Divided.....	1 Kings 12: 12-20
XIII. "	25.—Review: The Early Kings of Israel.....	

FOURTH QUARTER.

Early Kings and Prophets of Israel: From Samuel to Isaiah.

(Second Half of a Six-Months' Course)

I. October	2.—Elijah on Mount Carmel.....	1 Kings 18: 30-39
II. "	9.—Elijah Hears God's Voice.....	1 Kings 19: 9-18
III. "	16.—Elijah in Naboth's Vineyard.....	1 Kings 21: 5-10, 16-20
IV. "	23.—The Call of the Prophet.....	1 Kings 19: 19, 20; Amos 7: 14, 15; Isaiah 6: 1-8
V. "	30.—Amos Denounces Sin (Temperance Lesson).....	Amos 2: 4-12
VI. November	6.—Amos Pleads for Justice.....	Amos 5: 1-15
VII. "	13.—Hosea Preaches God's Love.....	Hosea 11: 1-11; 14: 4-8
VIII. "	20.—Micah Champions the Oppressed.....	Micah 2: 1-3; 6: 1-13
IX. "	27.—Isaiah Teaches True Worship.....	Isaiah 1: 10-20
X. December	4.—Isaiah Teaches Right Living.....	Isaiah 5: 1-12
XI. "	11.—Isaiah Counsels Rulers.....	Isaiah 37: 5-11, 14-20
XII. "	18.—Review: The Early Prophets of Israel.....	
XIII. "	25.—Christmas Lesson.....	Luke 2: 8-20

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

FROM THE CREATION TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

ACCORDING TO USSHER'S CHRONOLOGY

PERIOD	B. C.	EVENT	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
I From the Cre- ation to the Deluge	4004	The Creation	Gen. 1, 2
	4002	Birth of Cain	Gen. 4: 1
	4001	Birth of Abel	Gen. 4: 2
	3875	Death of Abel	Gen. 4: 8
	3874	Birth of Seth	Gen. 5: 3
	3382	Birth of Enoch	Gen. 5: 18
	3317	Birth of Methuselah	Gen. 5: 21
	3074	Death of Adam	Gen. 5: 5
	3017	Enoch translated	Gen. 5: 24
	2948	Birth of Noah	Gen. 5: 28, 29
	2348	Death of Methuselah	Gen. 5: 27
II From the Deluge to the Call of Abraham	2348	Noah enters the ark	Gen. 7: 6, 7
	2347	Noah goes forth from the ark	Gen. 8: 18
	2234	Building the tower of Babel	Gen. 11: 1-9
	1998	Death of Noah	Gen. 9: 29
	1996	Birth of Abraham	Gen. 11: 26
III From the Call of Abraham to the Exodus	1936	Removal of Abraham from Ur to Haran	Gen. 11: 31
	1921	Abraham called to Canaan	Gen. 12: 1-5
	1913	Abraham's rescue of Lot	Gen. 14: 1-24
	1910	Birth of Ishmael	Gen. 16
	1897	Renewal of God's covenant with Abraham	Gen. 17, 18
	1897	Destruction of Sodom	Gen. 18, 19
	1896	Birth of Isaac	Gen. 21: 1-5
	1871	Abraham's faith tested	Gen. 22: 1-19
	1859	Death of Sarah	Gen. 23: 1, 2
	1856	Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah	Gen. 24
	1836	Birth of Jacob and Esau	Gen. 25: 24-26
	1821	Death of Abraham	Gen. 25: 7, 8
	1760	Jacob's flight to Padan-aram	Gen. 28-30
	1746	Birth of Joseph	Gen. 30: 22-24
	1729	Joseph sold into Egypt	Gen. 37
	1716	Joseph honored in Egypt	Gen. 41
	1706	Jacob's removal to Egypt	Gen. 43-47
	1689	Jacob's death	Gen. 49
	1636	Joseph's death	Gen. 50: 26
IV From the Exodus to the Division of the Kingdom	1574	Birth of Aaron	Ex. 6: 20
	1571	Birth of Moses	Ex. 2: 1-10
	1531	Moses' flight to Midian	Ex. 2: 11-22
	1491	Moses commissioned to deliver Israel	Ex. 3, 4
	1491	Crossing the Red Sea	Ex. 14, 15
	1491	Giving the law at Sinai	Ex. 19-40
	1452	Death of Aaron	Num. 20: 27-29
	1451	Death of Moses	Deut. 34
	1451	Joshua, Moses' successor	Deut. 34: 9
	1451	Crossing the Jordan	Josh. 1-4
	1443	Death of Joshua	Josh. 24
	1155	Birth of Samuel	1 Sam. 1: 20
	1095	Saul anointed king of Israel	1 Sam. 10, 11
	1055	Death of Saul	1 Sam. 31
	1055	David made king of Judah	2 Sam. 2: 4
	1048	David made king of all Israel	2 Sam. 5: 1-5
	1033	Solomon's birth	2 Sam. 12: 24
	1015	Solomon made king	1 Kings 1
	975	Revolt of the ten tribes	1 Kings 12

PERIOD	B. C.	KINGS OF JUDAH	KINGS OF ISRAEL
V From the Division of the Kingdom to the Captivity of Judah	975	Rehoboam.....	Jeroboam
	958	Abijah, or Abijam	
	955	Asa	
	954		Nadab
	953		Baasha
	930		Elah
	929		Zimri
	929		Omri
	918		Ahab
	914	Jehoshaphat	
	897		Ahaziah
	896		Joram, or Jehoram
	892	Joram, or Jehoram	
	885	Ahaziah	
	884	Athaliah	Jehu
	878	Joash, or Jehoash	
	856		Jehoahaz
	839		Jehoash
	839	Amaziah	
	825		Jeroboam II
	810	Uzziah, or Azariah	
	784		(Interregnum)
	773		Zachariah
	772		Shallum
	772		Menahem
	761		Pekahiah
	759		Pekah
	758	Jotham	
	742	Ahaz	
	730		Hoshea
	726	Hezekiah	
	721		(Captivity of Israel)
	697	Manassah	
	642	Amon	
	640	Josiah	
	609	Jehoahaz	
	609	Jehoiakim	
	598	Jehoiachin	
	598	Zedekiah	
	587	Captivity of Judah	
VI From the Captivity of Judah to End of Old Testament History	587	Destruction of Jerusalem.....	2 Kings 25: 8, 9
	538	Capture of Babylon by Cyrus.....	Dan. 5: 31
	536	Cyrus permits Jews to return.....	Ez. 1: 1-4
	536	Return under Zerubbabel.....	Ez. 2: 1, 2
	534	Foundation of second temple laid.....	Ez. 3: 8-13
	521	Building of temple stopped.....	Ez. 4: 24
	520	Building of temple resumed.....	Ez. 6: 14
	520	Appeals of Haggai and Zechariah.....	Ez. 6: 14
	515	Second temple dedicated.....	Ez. 6: 16-22
	478	Esther made queen by Xerxes.....	Es. 2: 17
	473	Haman's plot fails.....	Es. 7: 10
	458	Ezra given a commission.....	Ez. 7: 11-26
	445	Nehemiah governor of Jerusalem.....	Neh. 2
	432	Second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem.....	Neh. 13: 4-7
VII From the Close of Old Testa- ment History to the Birth of Christ	335	Alexander the Great becomes monarch of the East	
	320	Ptolemy Lagus surprises Jerusalem	
	277	Septuagint Version of the Scriptures ordered	
	170	Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian, captures Jerusalem	
	166	Jews revolt and Judas Maccabeus becomes governor of Jerusalem	
	63	Jerusalem becomes a Roman province	
	40	Herod made king	
	28	Augustus Cæsar becomes emperor of Rome	
	18	Herod's temple begun	
	4	Birth of Christ	

NOTE: Old Testament dates cannot be given with exactness. Some of the dates are uncertain.

FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO HIS ASCENSION AND HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

COPIED FROM OXFORD BIBLE

B. C.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST					1:1-5
	<i>Preface</i>				1: 1-4	
5	Annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist	Jerusalem			1: 5-25	
	Espousal of Virgin Mary	Nazareth	1: 18		1: 27	
	Annunciation of the birth of Jesus	Nazareth			1: 26-38	
	The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth	Hebron, or Juttah			1: 39-55	
	Her return to Nazareth				1: 56	
	Joseph's vision	Nazareth	1: 20-25			
	Birth and infancy of John the Baptist	Hebron			1: 57-80	
4	Birth of Jesus	Bethlehem			2: 1-7	
	Adoration by shepherds	Bethlehem			2: 8-16	
	Circumcision	Bethlehem	1: 25		2: 21	
	Presentation and purification	Jerusalem			2: 22-29	
	<i>Genealogies</i>		1: 1-17		3: 23	
3	Adoration by the wise men	Bethlehem	2: 1-12			
A. D.	Flight into Egypt	Egypt	2: 13-15			
	Massacre of the Innocents	Bethlehem	2: 16-18			
1	Return to Nazareth	Nazareth	2: 19-23		2: 39	
	Childhood of Jesus	Nazareth			2: 40	
7	With the doctors in the temple	Jerusalem			2: 46-50	
7-26	Youth of Jesus	Nazareth			2: 51	
	MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST					
26	Ministry of John the Baptist	Bethabara	3: 1-4	1: 1-8	3: 1-6	1: 6-15
	Baptisms by John the Baptist	Bethabara	3: 5	1: 5	3: 7	
	Witness to Christ by John the Baptist	Bethabara	3: 11, 12	1: 7, 8	3: 15-18	
	Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist	Bethabara	3: 13-17	1: 9-11	3: 21, 22	
	Temptation of Jesus	Wilderness of Judea	4: 1-11	1: 12, 13	4: 1-13	
	John the Baptist's second testimony	Bethabara				1: 19-35
	Call of first disciples (five)	Bethabara				1: 37-51
	CHRIST'S FIRST APPEARANCE					
27	First miracle, at Cana	Cana				2: 1-11
	Visit to Capernaum	Capernaum				2: 12
	First Passover; first cleansing of temple	Jerusalem				2: 13-23
	Discourse with Nicodemus	Jerusalem				3: 1-21
	The Baptist's last testimony	Enon				3: 25-36
	Christ's visit to Samaria	Sychar				4: 1-42
	Christ's return to Cana	Cana				4: 43-46
	Christ's healing of nobleman's son	Cana				4: 46-54
	FIRST PUBLIC PREACHING					
	Imprisonment of John the Baptist	Macherus	4: 12	1: 14		
	Christ's preaching in Galilee	Nazareth		6: 1	4: 15-30	
	At Nazareth	Capernaum	4: 13		4: 31	
	Call of Andrew, Peter, James, and John	Capernaum	6: 18-22	6: 16		

A. D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
28	Christ suffers devils to enter the swine.....	Gadara.....	8: 28	5: 1	8: 27	
	Parables—					
	Bridegroom.....	Capernaum.....	9: 15			
	New cloth and new wine.....	Capernaum.....	9: 16, 17			
	Miracles—					
	Issue of blood.....	Capernaum.....	9: 18-26	5: 21-43	8: 41-56	
	Jairus' daughter.....	Capernaum.....				
	Two blind men.....	Capernaum.....	9: 27			
	Dumb spirit.....	Capernaum.....	9: 32			
	THIRD GENERAL CIRCUIT					
	Mission of the twelve apostles.....		10: 1	6: 6-11	9: 1-3	
	Death of John the Baptist.....	Macherus.....	14: 1	6: 14	9: 7	
	Feeding five thousand.....	Bethsaida.....	14: 13	6: 30	9: 12	6: 1
	Walking on the water.....	Lake.....	14: 25	6: 48		6: 19
	Discourse on the plain and in the synagogue.....	Capernaum.....	14: 34			6: 22-70
	THIRD YEAR'S MINISTRY					
	Discourse on pollution.....	Capernaum.....	15: 1-20	7: 1-23		
	Syrophœnician woman.....	Phœnicia.....	15: 21	7: 24		
	Miracles—					
	Healing of the deaf and dumb man.....	Decapolis.....		7: 32		
	Healing of many sick.....	Decapolis.....	15: 29			
	Feeding four thousand.....	Gennesaret.....	15: 32	8: 1		
	Parable of leaven.....	Gennesaret.....	16: 5	8: 14		
	Healing blind man.....	Bethsaida.....		8: 22		
	Peter's confession of Christ's Divinity.....		16: 13	8: 27	9: 18	
	TRANSFIGURATION	Mount Tabor, or Hermon.....				
	Healing demoniac child.....	Mount Tabor, or Hermon.....	17: 1	9: 2	9: 28	
	Predictions of His passion.....	Galilee.....	17: 22	9: 30	9: 43	
	The stater in the fish's mouth.....	Capernaum.....	17: 27			
	Lesson on docility.....		18: 1	9: 33	9: 46	
	Lesson on forgiveness.....		18: 15	9: 43		
	Lesson on self-denial.....		18: 18			
	Parable of the unmerciful servant.....		18: 23			
	THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.....	Jerusalem.....				7: 2, 10
	Discourses.....	Jerusalem.....				7: 10-46
	Officers sent to arrest Him.....	Jerusalem.....				7: 30, 46
	The adulteress.....	Jerusalem.....				8: 3
	Discourses.....	Jerusalem.....				8: 12
	Threatened with stoning.....	Jerusalem.....				8: 59
	Healing of blind man, and discourses.....	Jerusalem.....				9: 1
	Christ the Door.....	Jerusalem.....				10: 1
	Christ the Good Shepherd.....	Jerusalem.....				10: 11
	FEAST OF DEDICATION.....	Jerusalem.....				10: 22
	Christ's oneness with the Father.....	Jerusalem.....				10: 30
	Christ's retreat across the Jordan.....	Perea.....				10: 40
	Christ's raising of Lazarus.....	Bethany.....				11: 1
	Christ's retreat to Ephraim.....	Ephraim.....				11: 54
	*Christ's repulse by the Samaritans.....	Samaria.....			9: 53	
	*Mission of the Seventy.....	Galilee.....			10: 1-17	
	*Parable of the Good Samaritan.....	Jerusalem.....			10: 30	
	*Visit to Martha and Mary.....	Bethany.....			10: 38	
	*The Lord's Prayer.....	Mount of Olives.....	6: 9-13		11: 2-4	
	Parable of the importunity of a friend.....	Mount of Olives.....			11: 5	

A. D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
28	The dumb spirit.....	Jerusalem.....			11: 14	
	The rich fool.....	Jerusalem.....			12: 16	
	God's providence to birds and flowers.....	Jerusalem.....			12: 22-30	
	The barren fig tree.....	Jerusalem.....			13: 6	
	The woman with an infirmity.....	Jerusalem.....			13: 11	
	*The mustard seed.....	Jerusalem.....			13: 18	
	*Healing the man with dropsy.....	Jerusalem.....			14: 1-4	
	*Lesson on humility.....	Jerusalem.....			14: 7	
	Parables—					
	The great supper.....	Jerusalem.....			14: 12	
	The lost sheep and piece of silver.....	Jerusalem.....			15: 1	
	The prodigal son.....	Jerusalem.....			15: 11	
	The unjust steward.....	Jerusalem.....			16: 1	
	Dives and Lazarus.....	Jerusalem.....			16: 19	
	*The ten lepers.....	Samaria.....			17: 11	
	Parables—					
	Importunate widow.....	Jerusalem.....			18: 1	
	Pharisee and publican.....	Jerusalem.....			18: 9	
	Rich young man.....	Jerusalem.....	19: 16	10: 17	18: 18	
	Laborers in the vineyard.....	Jerusalem.....	20: 1			
	Ten pounds.....	Jerusalem.....			19: 12	
	*Healing blind Bartimeus.....	Jericho.....	20: 29	10: 46		
	THE LAST PASSOVER					
29	The supper in Simon's house.....	Bethany.....	26: 6-13	14: 3-9		12: 1
	Mary anoints Jesus.....	Bethany.....	26: 7	14: 3		12: 3
	Triumphant entry into the temple.....	Jerusalem.....	21: 1-17	11: 1-11	19: 29-41	12: 12-20
	Retirement to Bethany.....	Bethany.....	21: 17	11: 11		
	Cursing the fig tree.....	Mount of Olives.....	21: 18	11: 12		
	Cleansing the temple.....	Jerusalem.....	21: 12	11: 15	19: 45	
	Retirement to Bethany.....	Bethany.....		11: 19		
	The withered fig tree and its lesson.....	Mount of Olives.....		11: 20		
	Discourses in the temple—					
	The father and two sons.....	Jerusalem.....	21: 28			
	The wicked husbandmen.....	Jerusalem.....	21: 33	12: 1	20: 9	
	The wedding garment.....	Jerusalem.....	22: 1			
	Tribute money.....	Jerusalem.....	22: 15	12: 13	20: 20	
	The Sadducees and the resurrection.....	Jerusalem.....	22: 23	12: 18	20: 27	
	The great commandment.....	Jerusalem.....	22: 34	12: 28		
	The widow's mite.....	Jerusalem.....		12: 41	21: 1	
	The eight woes.....	Jerusalem.....	23			
	Destruction of Jerusalem and of the world.....	Jerusalem.....	24: 1	13: 1	21: 5	
	Parables—					
	Ten virgins.....	Mount of Olives.....	25: 1			
	Talents.....	Mount of Olives.....	25: 14			
	Sheep and goats.....	Mount of Olives.....	25: 31			
	Warning of the betrayal.....	Bethany.....	26: 1			
	The counsel of the Sanhedrin.....	Jerusalem.....	26: 3	14: 1	22: 1	
	Judas' betrayal.....	Jerusalem.....	26: 14	14: 10	22: 3	
	Preparation of the Passover.....	Jerusalem.....	26: 17	14: 12	22: 7	
	Washing the apostles' feet.....	Jerusalem.....				13: 1-17
	The breaking of bread.....	Jerusalem.....	26: 26	14: 22	22: 19	
	"One of you shall betray me".....	Jerusalem.....			22: 21	13: 18
	"Is it I?".....	Jerusalem.....	26: 22-25	14: 19		
	The giving of the sop. "That thou doest, do quickly".....	Jerusalem.....				13: 26, 27

*As an interval of nearly three months occurred between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, some place the events marked * in that interval, and vary their order, putting the "healing of the ten lepers" immediately after the "repulse by the Samaritans."

A. D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
29	Departure of Judas	Jerusalem				13: 30
	Peter warned	Jerusalem	26: 34	14: 30	22: 34	13: 36
	The blessing the cup	Jerusalem	26: 28	14: 24		
	The discourses after supper	Jerusalem				14-16
	Christ's prayer for his apostles	Jerusalem				17
	The hymn	Jerusalem	26: 30	14: 26		
	The agony	Gethsemane	26: 37	14: 33	22: 39	18: 1
	His prayer (repeated thrice)	Gethsemane	26: 39-44	14: 36-39	22: 42	
	His sweat, and the angel's comfort	Gethsemane			22: 43, 44	
	The sleep of the apostles	Gethsemane	26: 40-45	14: 37-41		
	Betrayal by Judas	Gethsemane	26: 47-50	14: 43, 44	22: 47	18: 2-4
	Peter smites Malchus	Gethsemane	26: 51	14: 47	22: 50	18: 10
	Christ heals the ear of Malchus	Gethsemane			22: 51	
	Christ forsaken by his disciples	Gethsemane	26: 56	14: 50		
	Christ led to Annas	Jerusalem				18: 12
	Christ tried by Caiaphas	Jerusalem	26: 57	14: 53	22: 54	18: 15
	Peter follows Christ	Jerusalem	26: 58	14: 54	22: 55	18: 15
	The high priest's adjuration	Jerusalem	26: 63	14: 61		
	Christ condemned, buffeted, mocked	Jerusalem	26: 66, 67	14: 64, 65	22: 63-65	
	Peter's denial of Christ	Jerusalem	26: 69	14: 66	22: 55-59	18: 17-27
	Christ before Pilate	Jerusalem	27: 1	15: 1	23: 1	18: 28
	Repentance of Judas	Jerusalem	27: 3			
	Pilate comes out to the people	Jerusalem				18: 28
	Pilate speaks to Jesus privately	Jerusalem				18: 33
	Pilate orders Him to be scourged	Jerusalem	27: 26	15: 15		19: 1
	Jesus crowned with thorns	Jerusalem	27: 29	15: 17		19: 2
	Jesus exhibited by Pilate: "Ecce Homo"	Jerusalem				19: 5
	Jesus accused formally	Jerusalem	27: 11	15: 2	23: 2	
	Jesus sent by Pilate to Herod, mocked, arrayed in purple	Jerusalem			23: 6-11	
	"Behold your King"	Jerusalem				19: 14
	Pilate desires to release Him	Jerusalem	27: 15	15: 6	23: 17	
	Pilate receives a message from his wife	Jerusalem	27: 19			
	Pilate washes his hands	Jerusalem	27: 24			
	Pilate releases Barabbas	Jerusalem	27: 26			
	Pilate delivers Jesus to be crucified	Jerusalem		15: 15	23: 25	19: 16
	Simon of Cyrene carries the cross	Jerusalem	27: 32	15: 21	23: 26	
	They give Him vinegar and gall	Golgotha	27: 34	15: 23	23: 36	
	They nail Him to the cross	Golgotha	27: 35		23: 33	19: 18
	The superscription	Golgotha	27: 37	15: 26	23: 38	19: 19
	THE SEVEN WORDS					
	1. <i>Father, forgive them</i>	Golgotha			23: 34	
	His garments parted, and vesture allotted	Golgotha	27: 35	15: 24	23: 23-34	19: 23
	Passers-by rail, the two thieves revile	Golgotha	27: 39-44	15: 29-32	23: 35	
	The penitent thief	Golgotha			23: 40	
	2. <i>To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise</i>	Golgotha			23: 43	
	3. <i>Woman, behold, thy son, etc.</i>	Golgotha				19: 26, 27
	The darkness	Golgotha	27: 45	15: 33	23: 44	
	4. <i>My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?</i>	Golgotha	27: 46	15: 34		
	5. <i>I thirst</i>	Golgotha				19: 28
	The vinegar	Golgotha	27: 48	15: 36		19: 29
	6. <i>It is finished</i>	Golgotha				19: 30
	7. <i>Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit</i>	Golgotha			23: 46	
	Rending of the veil	Jerusalem	27: 51	15: 38	23: 45	

A. D.	EVENTS	LOCAL	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
29	Opening of graves, and resurrection of saints.....	Jerusalem.....	27: 52			
	Testimony of centurion.....	Golgotha.....	27: 54	15: 39	23: 47	
	Watching of the women.....	Golgotha.....	27: 55	15: 40	23: 49	
	Piercing His side.....	Golgotha.....				19: 31
	Taking down from the cross, and burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.....	Golgotha.....	27: 57-60	15: 46	23: 53	19: 38
	A guard placed at the door, which was sealed.....	The Garden.....	27: 65,66			19: 39-42
	THE GREAT FORTY DAYS					
	Women carry spices to the tomb.....	The Garden.....	28: 1	16: 2		
	An angel had rolled away the stone.....	The Garden.....	28: 2			
	Women announce the resurrection.....	Jerusalem.....	28: 8			20: 1, 2
	Peter and John run to the tomb.....	The Garden.....			24: 12	20: 3
	The women return to the tomb.....	The Garden.....			24: 1	
	The guards report it to the chief priests.....	Jerusalem.....	28: 11-15			
	APPEARANCES OF CHRIST AFTER HIS RESURRECTION					
	1. To Mary Magdalene.....	The Garden.....		16: 9,10		20: 14
	"All hail! Fear not. Touch me not".....	The Garden.....	28: 9			20: 17
	2. To the women returning home.....	The Garden.....	28: 9			
	"Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee; there shall they see me.".....					
	3. To two disciples going to Emmaus.....	Emmaus.....		16: 12	24: 13	
	(Exposition of prophecies on the Passion). 4. To Peter (1 Cor. 15: 5).....	Jerusalem.....			24: 34	
	5. To ten apostles in the upper room.....	Jerusalem.....			24: 36	20: 19
	"Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit," etc. 6. To the eleven apostles in the upper room.....	Jerusalem.....		16: 14		20: 26
	"Peace be unto you." To Thomas. "Reach hither thy finger," etc. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." 7. To seven apostles at the Sea of Tiberias.....	Tiberias.....				21: 1-24
	To Peter. "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs." 8. To eleven apostles on a mountain in Galilee (1 Cor. 15: 5).....	Galilee.....	28: 16			
	"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."					

A. D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
29	9. To five hundred brethren at once (1 Cor. 15: 6) -----	Galilee, or				
	10. To James (1 Cor. 15: 7) -----	Bethany -----				
	11. Ascension (1 Cor. 15: 7) -----	Bethany -----		16: 19	24: 50, 51	
	12. To Paul (1 Cor. 15: 8) -----	Damascus (?) -----				

SUPPOSED CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS AND EPISTLES

A. D.	
30	Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles (1: 1-14).
30-35	Events till the appointment of deacons (1: 15 to 6: 6).
35-40	Events till the conversion of Cornelius (6: 7 to 10: 48).
40-43	Events till the establishment of the church at Antioch (11: 1-26).
43-46	Events till the end of Paul's first missionary journey (11: 27 to 14: 28).
46-54	Events till the end of Paul's second missionary journey (15: 1 to 18: 22). Epistles—1 Thess. (52); 2 Thess. (53).
55-60	Events till the end of Paul's third missionary journey (18: 23 to 26: 32). Epistles—1 Cor. (57); 2 Cor., Gal. (57); Rom. (58).
60-63	Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea and voyage to Rome (27, 28).
61	James' General Epistle to Jewish Christians.
62	Paul writes his Epistle to Ephesians.
	Timothy and Epaphroditus arrive at Rome, bringing tidings from Colosse (Col. 1: 1-7).
	Paul's Epistle to the Colossians.
	Paul's Epistle to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus, his runaway slave.
63	Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.
	Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, explaining how the old dispensation is developed into the new.
	Timothy liberated (Heb. 13).
	Paul visits Crete; leaves Titus in charge of church there.
	Peter writes his first Epistle to Jews and Gentiles scattered abroad and persecuted.
64	Paul goes to Macedonia.
	Paul writes first Epistle to Timothy, at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1: 6).
	Paul writes Epistle to Titus.
	Paul winters at Nicopolis, Dalmatia, Troas.
65(?)	Jude writes his Epistle.
65	Peter writes his second Epistle to Jewish and Gentile Christians scattered through Pontus.
	Paul's second imprisonment in Rome; tried before Nero.
66	Paul's second Epistle to Timothy, summoning him to Rome.
	Paul's martyrdom. Peter's martyrdom at Rome.
71	Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.
	John writes his three Epistles.
75(?)	Jude writes his Epistle.
96	John writes the Book of Revelation.
97	John writes his Gospel.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

LESSON I.—JANUARY 2.

THE CHRISTIAN A FOLLOWER OF JESUS.

Mark 1: 16-20; 2: 13-17; 1 John 2: 6.

16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they left the nets, and followed him.

19 And going on a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending the nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him.

13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphæus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

15 And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“He saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.”* (Mark 2: 14.)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

For the benefit of all who are not acquainted with the reason for giving the time of these lessons as it has been done, let it be said that reckoning time from the birth of Jesus did not begin until several hundred years after his birth.

It has been agreed by those who have studied the question that a mistake of four years was made, which places the birth of Jesus in the year B.C. 4. “According to the received chronology, Jesus was born in the last year of Herod; and he was, therefore, less than a year old when Herod died. His birth occurred four years previous to our common era, the era having been erroneously fixed by Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century.” (McGarvey.) This monk fixed the date of Jesus’ birth 753 after the building of Rome; but this cannot be the right date, because Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, and Herod the Great died in the spring of 750 after the building of Rome. Jesus, then, was born as early as 749 after the building

of Rome, or B.C. 4. The date fixed by this learned monk has been so long in general use that it is hardly possible to change it, and it is not necessary for practical purposes to try to do so.

PLACES.—The Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Matthew's place of business and home in this city.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the four disciples, other disciples, Matthew, his friends, the scribes and Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 2: 5-11.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Luke 6: 46-49; John 1: 35-51.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|--------------|----|----------------------------|--------------------|
| December 27. | M. | Followers of Jesus. | (Mark 1: 16-20.) |
| December 28. | T. | Discipleship Accepted. | (Acts 9: 1-9.) |
| December 29. | W. | Discipleship Refused. | (Matt. 19: 16-26.) |
| December 30. | T. | The Vine and the Branches. | (John 15: 1-10.) |
| December 31. | F. | Supreme Love for Christ. | (Matt. 10: 34-42.) |
| January 1. | S. | Disciples Rewarded. | (Matt. 19: 23-30.) |
| January 2. | S. | Christ Becoming a Servant. | (Phil. 2: 5-11.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

THE SEA OF GALILEE.—This sea was formed by a depression in the ground where the river Jordan simply spreads out, for it runs into the northern end of this sea and runs out at the southern end. It is called "the Sea of Galilee" from the province in which it lies. It is thirteen miles long and about six miles wide at the widest place. It is also called "the Sea of Tiberias" (John 6: 1) from the city of that name on its western border; "Gennesaret," from the beautiful plain on its north-western border (Luke 5: 1; Matt. 14: 34); and "Chinnereth," or "Chinneroth," from a town of that name (Num. 34: 11; Deut. 3: 17; Josh. 11: 2; 12: 3; 13: 27).

The region around it was the most densely settled of all Palestine, there being no less than nine cities on its very shores.

Around this lake Jesus did most of his marvelous works and spent most of his public life.

CAPERNAUM.—"Capernaum" means "village of comfort." This was one of the chief cities of Galilee. It was situated on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, on the border between the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (Matt. 4: 13), about three miles west of where the Jordan flows into the Sea of Galilee, and on the road from Damascus to the Mediterranean.

It had a custom station, where Matthew collected the taxes (Matt. 9: 9), a Roman garrison, and a synagogue, built by the Roman centurion. The ruins of the synagogue at Tell Hum, said by McGarvey and some other scholars and travelers to be the site of Capernaum, show it to have been a finer one than any in all Galilee.

In Jesus' day Capernaum is said to have had thirty thousand inhabitants. Jesus made his home there for at least two years, and it is called "his own city" (Matt. 4: 13; 9: 1); and in Mark 2: 1 (margin) it is said he was "at home."

No city on earth could have enjoyed more exalted privileges. There Jesus not only resided, but taught in the synagogue, in homes, and

on the seashore; did many miracles; and there five of his apostles lived. To it, in its wasted opportunities and despised privileges, Jesus said: "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Matt. 11: 23, 24.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

After all our study of the Bible, all we have learned and yet may learn of it, and after all our efforts to teach it to others, our own salvation depends altogether upon our *practicing* it. "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

The ones who arranged these lessons place before us one grand "aim"—namely: "To discover, through a study of the teaching of Jesus and his apostles, the Christian way of living in our day." This is the great purpose in studying the teaching of Him who spake as "never man spake." But it must be remembered that "the Christian way of living in our day" is the same "Christian way of living" as it was in the days of the apostles. There has been no change. Christianity is the teaching of Christ, and Christian living is hearing and doing his "sayings." Apart from his teaching there can be no Christian living. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 20.)

No one, then, has ever really taught the Bible who has not fully impressed the absolute necessity of implicit obedience to it.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus Calls Four Disciples.

16. Matt. 4: 18-22; Luke 5: 1-10, together with these verses of Mark 1: 16-20, record the calling of these four disciples, and comment is made as follows on all that these three say:

Luke goes more into detail than Matthew and Mark, although Luke does not mention Andrew by name in this connection. Matthew says Jesus was "walking by the Sea of Galilee" and saw Peter and Andrew "casting a net into the sea;" and, going on further, he saw James and John; and Mark says the same. Matthew and Mark omit the fact that Jesus taught the multitudes by the sea at this time; also the great draught of fishes, etc. Luke mentions these. While he taught the multitudes "standing by the lake of Gennesaret," he called Peter and Andrew, James and John. While he taught by the sea, "the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God."

"By the seaside" was a convenient place to teach, and a favorite one with Jesus. He "sat" in a boat and taught on different occasions (Matt. 13: 1, 2; Mark 3: 9; Luke 5: 1-11); he "sat" in the boat and taught, while "the multitude stood on the beach;" he "sat down" when he delivered the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 1). There were "two boats" which belonged to these four disciples. The fishermen had "toiled all night" in vain, and were now out of their boats "washing

their nets." After washing the nets, they went back into the boats, and James and John were "mending" their nets. Jesus "entered into" Simon's boat "and asked him to put out a little from the land" and to "let down" the "nets for a draught." Peter replied that they had "toiled all night" and had taken nothing, yet at Jesus' "word" they would try again. "And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking." They found it necessary to call to their assistance their partners, James and John. This was done by beckoning to James and John. "And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink." Jesus must have kept the boats from sinking. When Peter saw this, he "fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

In contrast with the purity and power of Jesus, Peter felt his own sinfulness and weakness; but his humility and confession show Peter's fitness to enter upon his future work. All, as well as Peter, were "amazed" at this, although Jesus had worked miracles before. "When they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed" Jesus.

17, 18. First, Jesus said to Peter and Andrew: "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." At once "they left the nets, and followed him."

19, 20. "Going on a little further," Jesus called James and John, "and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him."

Not for the sake of the fishes, referred to above, did Jesus cause them to catch so many. In this he taught them a great and needed lesson—namely, transcendently greater it is to "catch men" than to catch fishes; and if they would follow him, they should "catch men."

To follow him was not only to go about with him during his personal ministry, but to obey him ever and to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."

Andrew and Peter, James and John, were partners. They owned their own boats and had hired servants. Their business was an honest one, and they were successful. This shows that they were energetic, practical, reliable business men, of general observation and good common sense. The study of the characteristics and work of all the apostles is both interesting and helpful. From John 1: 29-42 we learn that Andrew, Peter, John, and perhaps James, were already disciples of Jesus at the time of this lesson. John the Baptist pointed out Jesus to his own disciples as "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." All the apostles were present when Jesus was baptized. This was necessary in order to become an apostle. (Acts 1: 22.)

Andrew, Peter, John, and others, and perhaps James, went with Jesus from his temptation to Cana of Galilee, to Capernaum, back to Jerusalem, through Judea (where they baptized under his direction), and back into Galilee. For a short while they seemed to have returned to their own homes and private affairs; now they leave all to follow him permanently—and, indeed, to "catch men." "And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him."

We can never fully realize the vast importance and superlative glory of winning souls to Christ until we stand complete in him and experience the light, life, and salvation of the "new heavens and a new

earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (See Dan. 12: 3; Phil. 4: 1; 1 Thess. 2: 19; James 5: 19, 20.)

After this, when the rich young ruler went away "exceeding sorrowful," Peter said to Jesus: "Lo, we have left our own, and followed thee." Jesus "said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the world to come eternal life." (Luke 18: 27-30.)

II. Matthew Becomes a Disciple.

13. Matthew (9: 9) says: "And Jesus passed by from thence"—from the house of Capernaum where he had healed the paralytic in the previous verses (1-9).

Luke (5: 27) says: "After these things he went forth." This verse says: "He went forth again by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them." Mark relates a fact omitted by Matthew and Luke—namely, that Jesus went forth from this house and taught the multitude by the seaside. That he "went forth again by the seaside" implies that he had taught there before. So he had done, and so he did afterwards, as we have learned.

14. "And as he passed by [on his way to the "seaside"], he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the place of toll."

In the book of which he is the author Levi calls himself "Matthew." "Matthew" means "a gift of God." Of him very little is said in the Bible. He was a Jew, the son of Alphaeus, and a publican. He speaks of himself as "Matthew the publican," unwilling to conceal his despised calling before he left all to follow Jesus. He was probably a disciple of John the Baptist (Acts 1: 21, 22); he became a disciple of Jesus, and, later, an apostle (Matt. 10: 2-4). He made Christ a great feast, which he modestly declines to relate. He is mentioned by name the last time in Acts 1: 13.

It is universally accepted that he is the author of the book which bears his name, and it is understood that he wrote it for the benefit especially of his fellow countrymen.

"The place of toll" was the custom station. Customs were the taxes imposed by the government on both imported and exported goods. On taxes and the publicans, see the article following this lesson.

III. Matthew Left All for Jesus.

Luke says when Jesus called Matthew, "he forsook all, rose up, and followed him." He promptly obeyed. He was called to a higher life, a nobler work—to gather no longer perishable money for the Roman treasury, but to gather souls for heaven. It cost him something—his business, his hope of earthly gain, and a comfortable, luxurious life—to follow Him who had not where to lay his head.

There are not many Matthews now. Note here that one must forsake all for Jesus; must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus. (Matt. 10: 38; 16: 24; Luke 14: 27-33.)

Like Andrew, Peter, James, and John, Matthew evidently had

heard Jesus before, was already his disciple, but now was called to become a constant attendant and to that preparation which was necessary to fit him for the apostleship.

IV. Facts Not Always in Chronological Order.

15. The call of Matthew and the feast which he gave to Jesus did not occur at the same time. None of the writers give what Christ did and said in their chronological order always. They gathered up incidents sometimes from several parts of Christ's ministry and grouped them together to explain some action of Jesus and to show his authority and power. For example, Matt. 8 and 9 are filled with the wonderful works of Jesus, and it was not intended by the writer to give these in the order in which they occurred, but to group them together so as to produce a clear, strong, and deep conviction that Jesus is the Son of God and has authority to teach. God bore testimony to him by miracles. The miracles themselves were manifestations of mercy to suffering humanity, but their chief purpose was to convince people of the truth of the claims of Jesus. (John 3: 2; 5: 36; 14: 11; 20: 30, 31; Heb. 2: 1-5.)

V. Matthew's Feast.

So in this verse the call of Matthew was at one time and the feast some time later. It was "a great feast" prepared by Matthew "in his own house" for Jesus and his disciples, to which many publicans and others were invited. (Luke 5: 29.) He wanted his fellow publicans and other friends who were sinners to meet Jesus, that they might come under his influence and be saved.

Jesus and his disciples attended the feast, and they attended the marriage feast in Cana. It is not wrong for Christians to attend feasts prepared by unbelievers, if, as did Jesus, they seek the good of all and the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10: 27.)

"Sat at meat," or "was sitting at meat," as Mark puts it, means they reclined after the usual custom at the table.

VI. The Criticism of the Scribes and Pharisees.

16. We have learned who the scribes and Pharisees were. They were not guests at this feast, but saw Jesus and his disciples there or knew they were there. They were on the watch. In their sight it was wrong for religious teachers to mix with publicans and sinners; and, hence, it was a great shock to their sense of propriety for Jesus to eat with such. By them these publicans and sinners were classed with heathens, and even the other apostles thought Peter did wrong to eat with a Gentile. (Acts 11: 3.) They criticized Jesus to his disciples because he ate with publicans and sinners, putting himself on social equality with them.

This was a taunt thrown into the face of the disciples. Scribes and Pharisees were just as great sinners, if not greater, but in another way. They rejected the commandments of God that they might keep their traditions (Mark 7: 7-9), and rejected Christ, while publicans and harlots went into the kingdom before them (Matt. 21: 31, 32). No greater sins can be committed than Jesus charges them with. (Matt. 23.)

VII. Jesus' Reply.

17. Jesus heard this either through the disciples, who went to him with it, not able perhaps to reply to it themselves, or he overheard the scribes and Pharisees when they asked the question.

"He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (See Luke 5: 31.) The physically well man does not need the physician; the spiritually whole, the righteous, do not need to repent. Granting that these scribes and Pharisees were all they claimed for themselves—spiritually whole, strong, and healthy morally—then they needed not the physician; but, from their own standpoint, these poor publicans and sinners were in great need of relief and of repentance.

Jesus is the great Physician of the soul. He went to the sin-sick, to those who felt their need of healing. These self-righteous Pharisees did not realize their own sinful condition, and, hence, felt no need of Christ.

There is much more hope for sinners, however deep in sin they may be, who realize their unworthiness of Jesus and their lost condition without him, than for the self-righteous. One must be humble, meek, and of a broken heart and contrite spirit to be saved. (Ps. 34: 18.)

Matthew gives another reply still to this taunt: "But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice." (See Hos. 6: 6; Mic. 6: 6-8.) The sacrifices which God required, when offered in submission to him, were always pleasing to him; but even these sacrifices without mercy to men were not enough and were not acceptable. Any sacrifice which God did not require was not acceptable. (1 Sam. 15: 22.) This was a direct condemnation of these self-righteous, unmerciful Pharisees.

We need to study this lesson more ourselves. There is much need of mercy yet. Are you merciful? The more we see of human weakness, frailty, and imperfection, the more we realize the great need of mercy. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

VIII. To Walk Even as Jesus Walked.

6. Our salvation depends upon our walking even as Jesus walked. Jesus says: "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." (John 17: 3.) Beginning with verse 3 of 1 John 2, we are told how we may know that we know Christ. "Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." On the other hand, whoever claims to know Christ, "and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Nothing can be plainer and more pointed than this. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected." "This is the love of God"—our love for him—"that we keep his commandments." (1 John 5: 3.) "Hereby we know that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)

"Even as he walked." How did Christ walk? He walked in the light. (See 1 John 1: 5-10.) He did always the things which were pleasing to the Father. (John 8: 29.) He pleased not himself. (Rom. 15: 3; see also verses 1, 2.) It would prove a valuable lesson, indeed, to note and to practice the many passages of Scripture which teach Christians how to walk. There is no becoming a Christian or living the Christian life without denying oneself, enduring persecution, or bearing the cross, and following Christ.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Give the reasons for saying Jesus was born B.C. 4.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Locate and describe the Sea of Galilee.
Give its different names and the reason for them.
Locate and give the size and importance of Capernaum.
Why was its condemnation so severe?
So far as our own lives are concerned, upon what does our salvation depend?
What one lesson should teachers, first, be impressed with, and, second, should impress upon all pupils?
- 16 Who were these four disciples?
When did Jesus call them?
Why did he get into the boat?
Whose boat was it?
When Jesus had finished teaching, what did he tell Peter to do?
How long had they toiled without success?
Why did Peter try again?
What was the result?
Why did the boats not sink?
What did Peter do and say?
What effect did this have upon all?
- 17, 18 What did Jesus say he would make of these disciples?
- 19, 20 What did James and John leave in order to follow Jesus?
What shows the energy and success of these men?
Whose disciples were they before they followed Jesus?
What was necessary in order to become an apostle?
From what place did these disciples first follow Jesus?
What shows the importance and glory of winning souls?
- 13 From what place and to what place did Jesus go at this time?
- What "things" had he done in this house?
Why was he going to the seaside?
What shows he was accustomed to teaching there?
- 14 Whom did he see on the way?
By what other name was Levi called?
What is the meaning of "Matthew?"
What was his business?
State all the Bible says about him.
What was "the place of toll?"
What was "the toll?"
Why suppose that Matthew was a disciple of John?
To what work was he now called?
- 15 What is said about recording everything in chronological order?
Why did Matthew make this feast?
Under what circumstances is it right now for Christians to attend feasts?
- 16 What were the scribes and Pharisees doing there or near there?
What taunt did they throw at the disciples of Jesus?
How did they treat publicans and sinners?
How were they as great, if not greater, sinners?
- 17 What reply did Jesus make to this criticism?
What does that mean?
What condition of heart is necessary to salvation?
What does Matthew give here which Mark omits?
Where is this quotation found?
What does it mean?
Should we cultivate and manifest mercy?
How should we approach sinners?
- 6 What does Jesus say in John 17: 3 is life eternal?
How do we know that we know God? On what does our salvation depend?
What is he who says he knows God when he does not keep God's commandments?
How alone can one abide in Christ?
What is it to walk even as Christ walked?

TAXES.

The Romans taxed almost everything—fish, trees, houses, doors, columns, and all property, real and personal—and the publicans, for the convenience of collection, had erected customhouses at the approach of bridges, the termination of roads, and in harbors. All human governments take this course, and the burden of taxation grows heavier and heavier.

Public roads to Jerusalem, Tyre, Sidon, and the east centered at Capernaum. On the merchandise passing along these roads and on the fish and trade of the lake certain customs were due and must be collected. Levi was in Capernaum.

The Publicans.

Originally and properly, publicans were usually rich Roman knights, who contracted for the taxes (both the direct taxes and the customs) of provinces for the payment of a certain sum into the Roman treasury. When these taxes surpassed the financial ability of one man, a joint stock company was formed with one man as the general manager, who looked after the business and paid over the profits to the stockholders.

"The system was, however, a vicious one. The publicani [publicans] were banded together to support each other's interests, and at once resented and defied all interference. They demanded severe laws, and put every such law into execution." (Consult Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

These Roman knights, or the managing director of the stock company, did not gather the taxes themselves; but the provinces were divided up into districts, and these districts were sublet to some inhabitant, usually of the country, who was acquainted with its resources and the temper of the people.

These subagents, or underlings, are the publicans of the New Testament. Matthew and Zaccheus were of this class. Zaccheus was "a chief publican," and "was rich." (Luke 19: 2.) These subagents, or publicans, had every opportunity to extort from the people more than was due. They were encouraged in extortion and fraud by those who had them engaged. An exorbitant sum, fixed by law, was required of them by their superiors, and they depended largely on extortion and fraud for their profits. They were allowed to fix more or less arbitrarily the value of all exports and imports and demand payment. If there should be any property in dispute, they seized it and held it until the taxes were paid. They would forbid a farmer to gather his standing crop until they had extorted from him all that was possible; they would sometimes make false accusations of smuggling goods, and require the accused to pay them so much "hush money." Therefore, John the Baptist exhorted them, saying, "Extort no more than that which is appointed you" (Luke 3: 13); and Zaccheus said: "If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19: 8).

We can see now why the publicans were despised in every province throughout the Roman Empire. For a native to be an agent or a tool in the hand of some foreign capitalist or rich stock company to extort

unwilling taxes, and frequently by fraud and false accusations more than the already burdensome laws required, from his fellow countrymen, was quite enough to incur the hatred and contempt of patriotic citizens.

This was especially so among the Jews. They regarded their subjugation by the Romans and the payment of tribute to them as a national degradation, and the payment of such tribute dishonoring to God. Hence the question: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" (Matt. 22: 17.)

For this reason the publicans among the Jews were not only odious as taxgatherers, but were considered also traitors to their nation and apostates from the religion of their God. They were classed with sinners, harlots, and heathens in public estimation. (Matt. 9: 11; 11: 19; 18: 17; 21: 31, 32.) They were not all necessarily dishonest and corrupt. John and Jesus found many ready to obey the truth and to do right. (Luke 3: 12; 7: 29, 30; Matt. 21: 31, 32.)

These Scriptures, the preceding lesson, and the following Scriptures (Luke 7: 34; 15: 1-10; 19: 1-10) show John's and Christ's attitude toward them. From this class, finding one worthy, Jesus chose an apostle, thereby encouraging publicans as well as other sinners to come to him, through whom he doubtless hoped to reach other publicans, and showing, too, by this choice, that there is no caste in his kingdom.

From out the tangled threads of love and hate,
The gold of laughter and the gray of tears,
Fate weaves the cloth from which we all must cut
The coat of life to wear in later years.

Ours not to choose the color of the woof;
Ours not to grumble or to lightly praise;
Ours but to sew the cloth in proper shape,
To use time's needle and the thread of days.

We may embroider it with wondrous dreams,
Or stitch it with ambition's silvery skein,
Or we may dye it with our bitter tears,
Or make it loose to cover faults or pain.

But every day we must put in a stitch,
A goodly action or, perchance, a sin;
And neither tears nor prayers nor any shears can rip
Those daily stitches that we have put in.

And we must wear through all the years to come
The cloak we fashion from this cloth of fate;
So let us stitch it strong with faith and love
And goodly deeds before it is too late.

(Betsy Trotwood.)

LESSON II.—JANUARY 9.

THE STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN LIVING.

Luke 6: 27-38.

- 27 But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you,
 28 Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.
 29 To him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also.
 30 Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.
 31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
 32 And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even sinners love those that love them.
 33 And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same.
 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much.
 35 But love your enemies, and do *them* good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.
 36 Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful.
 37 And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released:
 38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matt. 5: 48.)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—A level place in Galilee, where Jesus taught the people.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitudes.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 5: 1-10.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Matt. 5: 13 to 7: 5.

HOME READING.—

- January 3. M. Love and Forgiveness for Enemies. (Luke 6: 27-38.)
 January 4. T. Love and the Christian Brotherhood. (1 John 3: 13-24.)
 January 5. W. Unselfishness in Service. (1 Cor. 9: 19-23.)
 January 6. T. Love and Self-Denial. (Rom. 14: 16 to 15: 3.)
 January 7. F. The Pre-eminence of Love. (1 Cor. 13.)
 January 8. S. Christ Practicing His Teaching. (Luke 23: 32-43.)
 January 9. S. Conditions of Blessing. (Matt. 5: 1-10.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Matt. 5-7 contains what is called “the Sermon on the Mount.”

Luke 6 gives many of the same principles, and has been identified by some with the Sermon on the Mount; but Jesus “went up into the mountain” and delivered the sermon recorded by Matthew, and “he came down with them, and stood on a level place” (Luke 6: 17), and delivered the one recorded by Luke.

Luke (5: 17-39) records the healing of a leper, healing the paralytic,

the call of Matthew and the feast at his house, and also the choosing of the twelve apostles before the sermon "on the level place;" while Matthew gives the healing, seemingly of the same leper, after the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 8: 1-4), and healing the paralytic, the call of Matthew and his feast, and choosing the twelve apostles, seemingly later on (Matt. 9 and 10). Matt. 4: 23 to 8: 4 seems to come in regular order, and corresponds to Mark 1: 38-45 and Luke 5: 12-17.

The Sermon on the Mount is fuller than the one in Luke 6, and not in the same order. Luke gives other portions of his sermon in 11: 9-13; 13: 22-31.

No doubt Jesus preached these same principles everywhere and to all people, not always in the same order or in exactly the same words; and it is more than probable that Matthew records the sermon delivered at one time and Luke at another.

This is a much-needed lesson, because it teaches us to love our enemies as well as our neighbors, and also what love is.

Since this sermon in all its parts is the standard of Christian living, then all should see that they live up to it and preach and teach it fully and faithfully to all others.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Law of Love.

27. In Luke the contrast between the teaching which was formerly delivered to the Jews and the teaching of Jesus is not pointed out as it is in Matthew. Luke says: "Love your enemies." Matthew (5: 43, 44) says: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies." Lev. 19: 18 teaches love for neighbors as for oneself. The parable of the good Samaritan shows who one's neighbor is and what it is to love him. (Luke 10: 25-37.) This is also shown in Rom. 13: 8-10.

"And hate thine enemy." This is nowhere found a precept of the law, but that which God had said to the children of Israel led them to consider it so taught. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," implies this. The Jews were forbidden to make any covenant with the Canaanites (Ex. 34: 11-16; Deut. 23: 6), their enemies. Jesus advanced upon the teaching of the law when he commanded love for enemies. It is not impossible to love enemies, because God never requires impossibilities. Love as a command is not a passion, but a principle of service. To love enemies is to treat them as God directs: "But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink. . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12: 20, 21.) Jesus, Stephen, and Paul prayed for their enemies.

28. To bless instead of to curse is to love enemies; to pray for those who despitefully use one is to love them. This forbids retaliation and vengeance.

29. Instead of taking vengeance, Jesus says when one cheek is smitten, "offer also the other." Christians are forbidden to take vengeance in any way. "Render to no man evil for evil. . . . Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense,

saith the Lord. (Rom. 12: 17-19.) The "cloak" was the outer garment and the "coat" the inner garment. Instead of taking vengeance even when oppressed and the cloak is unjustly taken by law, let the coat go also. Christians must suffer wrong rather than do wrong. (1 Cor. 6: 7.)

II. Give to Every One.

30. Instead of taking vengeance, Jesus' disciples must "give to every one" who asks of them, and of him who takes away their goods they must not ask them again. This does not forbid such self-protection as Paul sought when he claimed the rights of a Roman citizen (Acts 16: 37; 22: 25-29) and appealed to Cæsar (Acts 25: 11), but it does forbid vengeance and teaches that Christians should endure wrong rather than to do wrong.

III. The Golden Rule.

31. This has been called the "Golden Rule," not because it brings one under the rule of gold, but, like "the golden age" of a kingdom, this rule is so excellent that it is compared to the most precious metal. There is a very great difference between the Golden Rule and the rule of gold. The Golden Rule lifts men high above selfishness and leads them from the worship of gold to loving service of men and the worship of God.

According to this, no man can cheat, defraud, wrong, oppress, or rob others. It is loving one's neighbor as oneself; it is rendering to all their dues, and owing "no man anything, save to love one another." (Rom. 13: 7, 8.)

It is the "royal law." (James 2: 8.)

Jesus sums up in this one rule all duties man owes to his fellow men. He adds in Matt. 7: 12: "For this is the law and the prophets." All that is required in "the law and the prophets" as regards man's duties to others is embraced in this command. This is the way to love men; it is love itself. "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law." (Rom. 13: 9, 10.)

In all conditions, circumstances, trades, transactions, and associations with others, Jesus means for us to live daily by this rule. He does not mean that we are to do for people what, in their selfishness, greediness, sensuality, and foolish wishes, they may ask of us, but that which, in justice, righteousness, mercy, and love, we would have them do to us were we in their place and they in ours. This rule works two ways: We are not only not to injure others in any way, but really to do something for them—to do unto them as we would have them do unto us. It also requires of us not to demand more of others than we are willing to give under similar circumstances. Some people are exacting, but are quite unwilling to do the same themselves. This rule is active; it is something to be and do. Many do not kill, do

not steal, do not commit adultery, do not bear false witness; and, on the other hand, they do not do what the Lord says they must do. On the positive, active, aggressive side of Christianity many fail.

IV. Christians Must Do More Than Sinners.

32-34. "And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye?" To love those who love you is human and easily done. Aside from the Bible, the highest conception people have of right is to love those who love them and hate those who hate them. Many who profess to be Christians do but little, if any, better than that now. "For even sinners love those who love them." The force of Jesus' statement is that those considered the worst and most depraved loved their friends and hated their enemies, and his disciples must do better than these. Doing good to those who do good to them and lending to those who lend in turn to them are practiced by sinners or by any of the people of the world, but Christ's disciples must do more than that.

35. In contrast with the practices of sinners, Jesus adds: "But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing." His disciples must not grow weary in well-doing; and if they do not, their reward will "be great" and they will be "sons of the Most High." Loving enemies is essential to being children of God, for he loves his enemies, and those who do not love their enemies are unlike him. God shows his love for his enemies by sending sunshine and rain upon the evil and unjust. All who live in sin are God's enemies. "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5: 8.)

36. Since God is merciful, his children must be merciful. To be merciful is to treat an offender better than he deserves, to forgive when punishment or penalty could be exacted; also to carry relief, to show kindness, and to extend pity to the needy and suffering. Those who are full of mercy will obtain mercy from men and God.

V. Judge Not.

37-38. "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged." Judging is the opposite of showing mercy. To know men by their fruits is not forbidden. (See Matt. 7: 15-20; 2 Thess. 3: 6-15; Rom. 16: 17, 18; 1 Cor. 5: 2, 12.) This is not judging men. Unjust, unfair judgment and harsh criticism, in which many indulge, is here forbidden. It is wrong to form opinions, to draw conclusions, and to pass sentence upon any one before knowing the facts. It is quite sinful to impugn motives or to condemn without giving all the charges an impartial and careful examination. Partiality is prohibited. (James 2: 1-13.) Such judges have "evil thoughts." Faultfinding, ill will, and rash judgment are condemned.

Judging others according to one's own impure motives and wrong intentions is very unchristian. "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7: 24.) "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man." (John 8: 15.) True, God "will render to every man according to his own works;" but one's deeds are good or bad as they are in obedience or disobedience to the will of God. (Rom. 2: 6-11; John 12: 47-50.) It is wrong to condemn others for what one

practices oneself. "Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that practice such things. And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest them that practice such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" (Rom. 2: 1-3.) "Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. One only is the lawgiver and judge, even he who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor?" (James 4: 11, 12.) "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling." (Rom. 14: 13.)

We should all be glad that God, and not man, is our judge. Such are man's preferences, prejudices, partiality, and blindness that he would consign to perdition many whom God will save, and permit others to enter heaven who in character and life are fitted only for perdition.

"That ye be not judged" is the promise based upon obedience to the command, "Judge not." Gentleness, kindness, mercy, forbearance, forgiveness, patience with others, and love bring one into favor with God and men. It is stated as a fact that men will receive the judgment they pass upon others, for God "will render to every man according to his works." "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." "For judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy: mercy glorieth against judgment." (James 2: 13.) "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6: 14, 15; see especially Matt. 18: 23-25.)

As a rule, too, according to their judgment of others, people will be judged by their fellow men, and justly so. The man who thinks everybody is a thief will bear watching himself. The Pharisees were of the devil (John 8: 44), and accused Jesus, therefore, of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and in reply to his accusation Jesus said: "Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (Matt. 12: 34.) Faultfinding, censuring, harshly criticizing, and picking flaws in everybody and everything will soon react upon those who do such things. "So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai." (Esth. 7: 10.) "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it." (Eccles. 10: 8; see Luke 6: 36-38.) It is a law running through all the government of God, spiritual as well as natural, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6: 7.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Did you read all the references?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Give the reasons for thinking the Sermon on the Mount and the one

- in Luke 6 were not delivered at the same time.
- Why is this called "the law of love?"
- 27 What contrast does Jesus in Luke not point out which he does in Matthew? To what teachings of the law does Jesus refer in Matt. 5: 43, 44?
- Who is one's neighbor?
- Why did the Jews infer that the law taught them to hate their enemies?
- Whom does Jesus teach his disciples to love?
- Why is it possible to do this?
- 28 What is it to love enemies?
- What does this verse forbid?
- 29 When smitten on one cheek, what should be done?
- To whom does vengeance belong?
- What lesson is taught by the cloak and the coat?
- 30 To whom must we give?
- What does this not forbid?
- 31 Why has this been called the "Golden Rule?"
- From what and to what does it lead men?
- What does it embrace?
- What does Rom. 13: 8-10 say about our duties to others and love?
- In what ways does this rule work actively?
- 32-34 When do we deserve thanks for loving?
- What classes love friends and hate enemies?
- 35 Why should Christians not despair in loving enemies?
- What is essential to being sons of God?
- How does God and Christ commend his love to us?
- 36 Why are children of God merciful?
- 37, 38 How are we to know false prophets and other bad men?
- How can the church know from whom to withdraw?
- What is condemned, then, by "judge not?" (Let the teacher see that all these references are discussed.)
- What blessings have those who judge not?
- What will befall those who judge?

In speaking of another's fault,
Pray don't forget your own;
Remember, those with homes of glass
Should never throw a stone.
If we have nothing else to do
But talk of those who sin,
'Tis better to commence at home,
And from that point begin.

.

I'll tell you of a better plan,
And find it works full well—
To try your own defects to cure
Before of others tell.
And though sometimes I hope to be
No worse than some I know,
My own shortcomings bid me let
The faults of others go.

Then let us all, when we commence
To slander friend or foe,
Think of the harm one word may do
To those who little know.
Remember, curses sometimes, like
Our chickens, "roost at home."
Don't speak of others' faults until
We have none of our own.

(Selected.)

LESSON III.—JANUARY 16.

THE CHRISTIAN'S USE OF THE BIBLE.

Deut. 6: 4-9; 2 Tim. 3: 14-17.

4 Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah:

5 And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them:

15 And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path."* (Ps. 119: 105.)

TIME.—Of the book of Deuteronomy, B.C. 1451; when Paul wrote Second Timothy, A.D. 66.

PLACES.—Plain of Moab, east of the Jordan, where Moses spoke Deuteronomy (Deut. 1: 5); Rome, where Paul wrote Second Timothy.

PERSONS.—Moses and the children of Israel, Paul and Timothy.

DEVOTIONAL READING—Ps. 119: 9-16.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Ps. 19: 7-14; Luke 24: 44-47; John 5: 39, 40.

HOME READING.—

- January 10. M. Teaching the Bible to Children. (2 Tim. 3: 14-17.)
- January 11. T. The Bible in Personal Work. (Acts 8: 29-39.)
- January 12. W. Bible Reading in Public. (Neh. 8: 1-8.)
- January 13. T. The Bible and Conviction. (2 Kings 22: 10-20.)
- January 14. F. The Bible and Temptation. (Luke 4: 1-15.)
- January 15. S. The Bible and Character Building. (Matt. 7: 24-29.)
- January 16. S. The Cleansing Power of the Word. (Ps. 119: 9-16.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The plain of Moab was east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho, and, it is said, was nine miles long and six miles wide.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

It is the teacher's duty and responsibility both to practice and to impress this lesson.

This lesson should cause us to see the folly and sin of placing inex-

perienced, thoughtless, and even flippant ones, young or old, over others as teachers of the Bible. Such persons are not competent to teach the Bible. God's rule is for the experienced in both the knowledge and practice of the truth—the older ones in the church, the older women in their sphere and the older men in their sphere—to teach others. (See, for instance, Tit. 2: 1-8.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Warnings, Exhortations, Blessings.

4. With many exhortations God warned the Israelites against forgetting him, worshiping idols, and going into other sins. In verse 1 it is stated: "This is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah your God commanded to teach you." "The statutes" and "the ordinances" embraced the worship and service of God and all duties to man. Moses had just repeated the "Ten Commandments" in the preceding chapter. In the land which they were about to possess the Israelites were to observe the statutes and commandments of God. "That thou mightest fear Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments." (Verse 2.) The only way to fear and honor God is to obey him. Frequent repetitions were made of these blessings to encourage the Israelites. (See Deut. 28: 1-14.) Pestilence, famine, and sword, with numerous other temporal afflictions, were held up as some of the fearful consequences of disobedience. (Deut. 28: 15-68.)

II. Jehovah Is One.

"Hear, O Israel." This is an exhortation to heed what Moses was teaching. Jesus frequently exhorted his audiences to hear him—not the sound of his voice, but to heed his words. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Luke 8: 8; see also Matt. 11: 15.) These exhortations are repeated frequently throughout the New Testament. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. 13: 16.) The fearful consequences of not hearing are also given. (See Matt. 13: 15.)

"Jehovah our God is one Jehovah" means Jehovah is one and the only true God. Israel did not, as the heathens, have gods many and lords many. A firm belief in the one true and living God, the perfect self-existent and self-sufficient one, would arm the Israelites against idolatry. The first commandments of the ten were directed against idolatry. The fact that "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah" was emphasized in the Old Testament that the Israelites might not divide their affection between Jehovah and any idol or god. There is no other. This is repeated in the New Testament. (See Matt. 4: 10; Eph. 4: 6.) The New Testament declares that covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) Some professed Christians are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3: 4.) All are forbidden to love the world. (1 John 2: 15, 16.)

III. How God Must Be Loved.

5. Jesus repeated the commandment of this verse as the first and great commandment. (Matt. 22: 37-40.) All the heart, all the soul, and all the might embrace all the inner powers, or spiritual nature, and mental and physical strength. All these must be enlisted in the service of God. To love God is to obey him. (John 14: 15, 23; 1 John 5: 3; 2: 5, 6.)

6. "Shall be upon thy heart." To keep God's "statutes and commandments" upon the heart is to remember them, to be conversant with them, and to have the whole life brought under their influence and guidance. "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. 119: 11; see verses 105, 130.) The parable of the sower illustrates now the power of the word of God and the importance of receiving it into the heart to the exclusion of other things. "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1: 21.)

IV. Teaching the Word of God Diligently to Children.

7. "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." "Teach" and "diligently" are words full of meaning. We know what is meant by doing anything "diligently." With diligence parents are to teach the word of God to their children.

"To teach" really means to cause to know; hence, parents must give all diligence to cause their children to know the word of God. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and this is the most effectual way to cause children to appreciate and to learn the Bible. When parents are so saturated, as it were, with the word of God, so overflowing with it, that they talk of it when they sit together with the children in the home, when they walk together, and remember it as the last thing upon retiring to bed and the first thing upon arising in the morning, then their children and neighbors likewise will be impressed with it and realize that to obey God is, indeed, the foremost thing—the one purpose of life. Parents cannot teach that which they do not know and do not desire to teach. Parents now are commanded to "nurture" their children—cause them to grow and develop—"in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6: 4.)

This is a sadly neglected duty, which neglect brings irreparable and immeasurable injury to children. The matters of which parents talk most to one another and to their children, the children are led to consider of greatest importance; and when the word of God is not spoken of at all, it is natural for children to consider it of no importance. Parents can commit no greater sin against their children than to fail to lead them to love and obey the word of God. This command to teach the word of God to their children was frequently repeated to the Israelites. (Ex. 13: 8; Deut. 11: 19.)

God pronounces a great blessing upon all who fear him, think upon his name, and speak often to one another in regard to him. Such he calls his "jewels"—his own possession—whom he will spare as a father spares his own son that serves him, and whose names are written in his book of remembrance. (See Mal. 3: 16-18.)

V. True Education.

One's education is not complete without a knowledge of the Bible—its literature, the history it teaches, its characters, the principles upon which God deals with individuals and nations, its revelation of both God's will and attributes to men, its morality, and, above all, Christianity. With all knowledge of the world—science, human philosophy, the fine arts, mathematics, history, and literature—man, without self-control and submission to God, is only a refined, cultured, and educated animal. Education is without true foundation unless based upon a knowledge of God and the principles of the Bible. Hence, to leave the Bible out of the education of the young is to leave out the true foundation of their education. Many schools, colleges, and universities pay far more attention to the development of the animal than the spiritual. Thousands of pupils are trained in athletics, but not in real love for mankind and worship of God in spirit and truth.

VI. The Word of God Must Be Ever Before the Eyes and Upon the Heart.

8, 9. We would suppose that Moses spoke figuratively in order to impress the Israelites with the fact that the commandments of God should be ever upon their hearts and before their eyes in exhorting them to bind them as signs upon the hand and as frontlets between the eyes and to write them upon the gates and doorposts. These expressions were frequently used. (Ex. 13: 9, 16; Deut. 11: 18-20.) But the Israelites took these things literally; "for they have always considered the wearing of the 'tephillin,' or frontlets, a permanent obligation. The form was as follows: Four pieces of parchment, inscribed—the first, with Ex. 13: 2-10; the second, with Ex. 13: 11-16; the third, with Deut. 6: 1-8; and the fourth, with Deut. 11: 18-21—were inclosed in a square case or box of tough skin, on the side of which was placed the Hebrew letter 'shin,' and bound round the forehead with a thong or ribbon. When designed for the arms, those four texts were written on one slip of parchment, which, as well as the ink, was carefully prepared for the purpose. With regard to the other usage supposed to be alluded to, the ancient Egyptians had the lintels and imposts of their doors and gates inscribed with sentences indicative of a favorable omen. [Wilkinson.] And this is still the case, for in Egypt and other Mohammedan countries the front doors of the houses—in Cairo, for instance—are painted red, white, and green, bearing conspicuously inscribed upon them such sentences from the Koran as: 'God is the Creator,' 'God is one, and Mahomet is his prophet.' Moses designed to turn this ancient and favorite custom to a better account, and ordered that, instead of the former superstitious inscriptions, should be written the words of God, persuading and enjoining the people to hold the law in perpetual remembrance." (Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown.) From this sprang the custom of making "broad their phylacteries" and enlarging "the borders of their garments," condemned by Jesus. (Matt. 23: 5.)

VII. Timothy's Early Training.

Timothy's father was a Greek (Acts 16: 1-3), but his mother was a Jewess, whose name was "Eunice;" his grandmother's name was "Lois" (2 Tim. 1: 5). Timothy became a Christian on Paul's first missionary journey through Asia Minor, and on Paul's second journey through that region he was circumcised and became Paul's companion in travel and work. He had a good report from his home church. He was circumcised only as a family mark, and not as service or worship to God. Paul calls him his "true child in faith." (1 Tim. 1: 2.) He was with Paul during Paul's first imprisonment (Phil. 1: 1; 2: 19; Col. 1: 1; Phile. 1), and, as is inferred from Heb. 13: 23, at some time was set at liberty. Paul wrote both letters to Timothy while Timothy was at Ephesus.

14. "But" places Timothy in contrast with others mentioned in the previous part of this chapter. Timothy followed Paul's teaching, example, and even suffered persecution with him. (Verses 10, 11.) In contrast with "evil men and impostors," who "wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," Timothy is exhorted to abide in the things he had learned and had been assured of, knowing of whom he had learned them. (Verse 13.) Timothy had learned these things from the inspired apostle. This exhortation applies to all Christians to-day. All should continue to practice in the worship of God and work of the church only the principles and commandments received from the word of God. All must be as careful as to the origin of the teaching they practice as Timothy was exhorted to be.

15. Of "the things" which Timothy had learned from Paul, he had been "assured" from "the sacred writings" (the Authorized Version says "holy scriptures"), which he had known from a child. Jesus, while on earth, established his claims to be the Son of God and the Christ by the "holy scriptures," or Old Testament (John 5: 30-47; Luke 24: 25-27, 44-48); Paul proved that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ and the Son of God by the same Scriptures (Acts 17: 2, 3; 26: 22, 23); so did Peter (Acts 2: 14-36; 3: 18) and Apollos (Acts 18: 28).

The Scriptures were able to make Timothy "wise unto salvation," because they establish the claims of Jesus, proving that he is the Christ and Savior, and, therefore, lead to "faith which is in Christ Jesus." They now make "wise unto salvation through faith" in Christ. Here we are impressed with the truth that faith comes through hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Timothy had learned the Scriptures from Eunice, his mother, and Lois, his grandmother (2 Tim. 1: 5), because they were women of "unfeigned faith." This faith was first in the grandmother, then planted and cultivated in the mother, and then in the son. This is encouraging to parents to teach the word of God diligently to their children.

16. "Every scripture inspired of God" does not imply that anything written in the Bible is not "inspired;" not at all. It means just the reverse. Since the word of God, which is the Bible, is inspired, it means that no other writing "is profitable for teaching," or is of binding authority in matters of religion, or as man's "rule of faith and practice" in the service of God. According to Webster's New International Dictionary, "scripture" means: "Anything written; a writ-

ing or passage from a writing; a document; a manuscript; an inscription." Therefore, if any writing, from an almanac to the profoundest philosophy on earth, is not "inspired of God," it has no binding authority in faith and practice upon men. The only thing, *but the all-important thing*, to determine is, whether or not any writing, document, or book is from God; if it is not, then it can be of no binding authority upon the faith and practice of people. It can be fearfully in the way of such faith and practice, because it may keep people from accepting the Bible.

The writings of the Bible are from God and are inspired. (See Acts 1: 16; Heb. 2: 1-4; 3: 7; 1 Pet. 1: 19-21.) The writings, or Scriptures, of all the books of both the Old and the New Testament are inspired, because prophets spoke "from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1: 21); the apostles spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2: 4); and the gospel was preached "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven" (1 Pet. 1: 12). David in the Holy Spirit called Christ "Lord" (Matt. 22: 43), but this was done when David wrote Ps. 110: 1; hence, he wrote by inspiration. 2 Sam. 23: 1, 2; Heb. 1: 1, 2; and other passages teach the same.

Preëminently the books of both the Old and the New Testament are called "the Scriptures" in contradistinction to all other writings, and are referred to as "the Scriptures" in the Bible. (See John 5: 39; 10: 35; Rom. 4: 3.) Hence, "the Scriptures" in ordinary use and in the Bible mean the books of the Bible.

"Every scripture inspired of God," every writing in both the Old and the New Testament, is not only able to make people "wise unto salvation through faith" in Christ, but is profitable for four other things:

(1) "For teaching." For teaching what? The fundamental principles of the church of Christ, or kingdom of God, which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14: 17)—the gospel of Christ; "Christ, and him crucified;" "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints;" "all things that pertain unto life and godliness;" "all things whatsoever" Christ commanded the apostles to observe and to teach.

Every school of philosophy, every system of religion, every benevolent organization, every political party, and every government on earth holds to and is held together by certain tenets and dogmas, called "principles of doctrine," or "teaching." These principles, precepts, or dogmas are designated in the New Testament by the word "doctrine" or "teaching." In most places it is spoken of as "doctrine" or "doctrines." Using this word, the New Testament speaks of "the doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4: 1); "the doctrines of men" (Matt. 15: 9; Mark 7: 7; Col. 2: 22); "a different doctrine" from that which is according "to sound words" and "to godliness" (1 Tim. 6: 3); "every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4: 14); "sound doctrine" (1 Tim. 1: 10; 2 Tim. 6: 6); "the doctrine," which must not be "blasphemed" (1 Tim. 6: 1); "the doctrine of God our Savior" (Tit. 2: 10); the "doctrine" in which a teacher must show "uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned" (Tit. 2: 7, 8). It occurs as "teaching" in the following passages: Rom. 7: 7; 1 Tim. 4: 13; 1 Tim. 5: 17. In one passage it occurs as "learning"—"for our learning." (Rom. 15: 4.)

From these passages we obtain a very clear and full meaning of the word "teaching," or "doctrine," as used in this and in other verses. The "doctrine of God," this "good doctrine," "sound doctrine," "which is according to godliness," is the "doctrine," or "teaching," upon which the church of God stands, which holds it together and completely furnishes it unto every good work. This "teaching," or "doctrine," is unchangeable. On the "teaching," or "doctrine," that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," Christ built his church. (Matt. 16: 18; Eph. 2: 19-22.) "Other foundation can no man lay." (1 Cor. 3: 11.) No other gospel can be preached by man or angel. (Gal. 1: 8, 9.) Nothing can be added to or taken from this "teaching." (Rev. 22: 18, 19.) This "teaching" is called "the faith," which Paul preached, having first made "havoc" of it (Gal. 1: 23), and which "was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Paul sums up this "teaching" as follows: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." (Eph. 4: 4-6.)

This is the "teaching," or "doctrine," for which "every scripture inspired of God" is profitable and all-sufficient. Less than this is not enough; more than this is too much.

(2) "For reproof." Some need reproof. (1 Tim. 5: 20; 2 Tim. 4: 2; Tit. 2: 15.) Because the Cretans were "liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons," they were to be reproofed "sharply." (Tit. 1: 12, 13.) To reprove is to convict one of sinfulness—to bring one to see one's faults and to feel one's sins. The Scriptures are all-sufficient for this. But this can be done only according to the Scriptures. Paul says: "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove [bring to the proof]—margin, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." (2 Tim. 4: 2.) If one cannot be reached and reproofed by the word of God, then one is beyond the reach of reproof. The Bible is clear enough and strong enough, mild enough and severe enough, gentle enough and sharp enough, to fit every one's case who needs reproof.

(3) "For correction." Thayer says the word means "restoration to an upright or right state; correction, improvement." The word of God is all that is necessary to correct one's mistaken views, errors, sins, and to restore one to an upright state of heart and Christian character. "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul." (Ps. 19: 7.) "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. 119: 11.) For this purpose we should use the Scriptures daily.

(4) "For instruction which is in righteousness." Nothing else can instruct in righteousness, and such instruction all need. This word means not only information, but "(1) the whole training and education of children; (2) whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing the passions; hence, instruction which aims at the increase of virtue." (Thayer.) It embraces discipline, training, and development in the service of God. All who "hunger and thirst after righteousness"—who will receive the instruction which comes alone from the word of God—have the promise of being filled.

17. It is a very great honor to be indeed a "man of God;" but to

refuse the teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness which can come alone from the word of God is not to be a "man of God." To contend for the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures to completely furnish one "unto every good work," and yet to make no effort to receive the reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness which they furnish, is a shame and smacks of hypocrisy.

"The man of God"—the preacher (since Paul was writing to Timothy) or any other "man of God"—has in the Scriptures (which lead to faith in Christ, and, therefore, embrace the New Testament) not only all that is necessary to build him up in integrity, virtue, and Christian character, but also all that is necessary to teach others. The word of God, then, will make any man "complete" as to his own spiritual nature or Christian character and furnish him "completely unto every good work." There is nothing, then, in the way of religious knowledge, faith in Jesus, love of God, worship of God, work of the church, and "every good work" that one can possess or perform that is not contained in the word of God. To want more than this or to require less is to turn from the will of God, and, therefore, to reject God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Places, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was the plain of Moab?
What should this lesson cause us to realize?
What are the qualifications of teachers of the Bible?
Who, then, should be put forward in congregations as teachers?
- 4 Against what did God warn the Israelites?
In the land which they were about to enter, what were they to observe?
What do the statutes and ordinances of God embrace?
What is it to fear and honor Jehovah?
What would overtake the Israelites if they did not do this?
What does "hear" mean?
What blessings did Jesus pronounce upon the eyes and ears of his disciples?
What is meant by "Jehovah our God" being one Jehovah?
Against what were the first of the Ten Commandments directed?
Where is this repeated in the New Testament?
 - How is idolatry manifested in Christian lands?
 - 5 How should God be loved?
What is it to love God?
 - 6 What is it to have the statutes and commandments of God upon the heart?
 - 7 To whom are parents to diligently teach the word of God?
In what way can parents do this?
Why cannot some parents teach the word of God to their children?
What blessings does God pronounce upon those who do this?
What is necessary to true education?
 - 8, 9 What were the children of Israel to do in order to remember the word of God?
Describe the "frontlets" and "phylacteries."
 - What custom sprang from this?
 - 14 Who were Timothy's parents?
By whom was he taught the Scriptures?
What faith characterized his grandmother, his mother, and himself?
By whom was he taught the gospel?
Where was he with Paul?
In what was he exhorted to abide?
 - 15 Where had he learned these things?
How could the Old Testament Scriptures make him "wise unto salvation?"

16 What does "scripture" mean?

What is meant by "every scripture inspired of God?"

What writings, or Scriptures, are "inspired of God?"

How prove that the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament are inspired?

For what different things is every Scripture inspired of God profitable?

What is meant by "teaching," or "doctrine?"

Can this teaching ever be changed, added to, or taken from?

What is meant by "reproof?"

What is meant by "correction?"

What is meant by "instruction in righteousness?"

What will completely furnish the man of God unto every good work?

What is meant by "the man of God?"

I saw one man, armed simply with God's word,
Enter the souls of many fellow men,
And pierce them sharply as a two-edged sword,
While conscience echoed back his words again,
Till, even as the showers of fertilizing rain
Sink through the bosom of the valley clod,
So their hearts opened to the wholesome pain,
And hundreds knelt upon the flowery sod.
One good man's earnest prayer, the link 'twixt them and God.
(Selected.)

He leads us on
Through all the unquiet years.
Past all our dreamland hopes and doubts and fears,
He guides our steps. Through all the tangled maze
Of sin, of sorrow, and o'erclouded days,
We know his will is done;
And still he leads us on.

And he at last—
After the weary strife,
After the restless fever we call life,
After the dreariness, the aching pain,
The wayward struggles, which have proved in vain—
After toils are past,
Will give us rest at last. (Selected.)

three-quarters of a mile, east from Jerusalem (Acts 1: 12), from which it was separated by the Kidron Valley.

"Kidron" means "black torrent," and flowed only during rainy seasons.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The privilege of prayer cannot be too highly appreciated; the need of prayer cannot be too deeply felt; the duty of prayer cannot be too strongly impressed.

The elements of acceptable prayer or the conditions upon which God promises to answer prayer should be well understood and faithfully complied with. All prayer embracing these elements or offered upon these conditions will surely be answered; but not everything prayed for will be given.

"And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him." (1 John 5: 14, 15.)

"Pray without ceasing."

"Continuing steadfastly in prayer."

"And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus Prayed in Solitude.

(Mark 1: 35.)

After the events mentioned in the previous part of this chapter, the work and fatigue of a busy Sabbath, Jesus rose early the next morning—"a great while before day"—and went "into a desert place" to pray. He sought the solitude of this place and the quietude of this early hour, while all the city was wrapped in slumber, to commune with his Father.

Jesus was a prayerful Savior.

He frequently withdrew from even his disciples to pray. Sometimes he spent a whole night in prayer. (Luke 6: 12; 11: 1; Heb. 5: 7.)

It was necessary for him to pray in order to gain wisdom for his work, strength to resist temptation and accomplish all that he did.

Many to-day yield readily to temptation and accomplish so little because they pray but little or not at all, and it is hard to show such people the necessity and blessings of prayer. They are too blind and too weak to realize their need and to appreciate the privilege of praying to God.

II. Jesus in Gethsemane.

(Mark 14: 32-36.)

(a) ALONE WITH GOD.

32. "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples" (John 18: 2), "as his custom was" (Luke 22: 39).

The owner of the garden was doubtless a friend to Jesus.

Having reached the garden, Jesus said to his disciples: "Sit ye here."

LESSON IV.—JANUARY 23.

PRAYER IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Mark 1: 35; 14: 32-36; Matt. 6: 9-13.

35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed.

32 And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled.

34 And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: abide ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” (Matt. 7: 7.)

TIME.—Of Mark 1: 35; Matt. 6: 9-13, A.D. 28; of Mark 14: 32-36, A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Capernaum, place of the Sermon on the Mount, Gethsemane.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the apostles, especially Peter, James, and John.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 63: 1-8.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Matt. 7: 7-11; 18: 19, 20; Luke 18: 1-14; 1 John 5: 14, 15.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| January 17. | M. | The Example of Jesus. (Mark 14: 32-36.) |
| January 18. | T. | Encouragement to Prayer. (Luke 11: 5-13.) |
| January 19. | W. | Secret Prayer. (Matt. 6: 5-15.) |
| January 20. | T. | Prayer of Penitence. (Ps. 51: 1-12.) |
| January 21. | F. | Importunity in Prayer. (Luke 18: 1-8.) |
| January 22. | S. | The Holy Spirit and Prayer. (Rom. 8: 26-30.) |
| January 23. | S. | David's Earnest Prayer. (Ps. 63: 1-8.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Gethsemane” means “oil press,” and was doubtless an olive orchard, probably inclosed, where oil was pressed out of its fruit. It was on the western slope of the mount of Olives, just across the brook Kidron from Jerusalem, and close to the city.

The mount of Olives was only a Sabbath day's journey, or about

while I go yonder and pray.” (Matt. 26: 36.) Eight of them remained there. Again we see that Jesus desired to be alone with God in prayer.

His deep and abiding interest in his disciples is seen from the fact that in the severest trials of his life and deepest troubles of his soul he had their future peace and welfare at heart. He was a tearful, suppliant Savior—“a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53: 3); “by whose stripes ye were [we are] healed” (1 Pet. 2: 24).

In deep earnestness and faith in God one now desires at times to be alone with God in prayer. In the closet, in the still hours of the night, in solitude—somewhere—the heart yearns to draw near to God in prayer. One is nearer to God in prayer when there is not a sight or sound or person to interfere with this blessed communion.

33. Leaving the eight, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and went further into the garden.

These three, we remember, were with Jesus in the chamber when he raised Jairus' daughter and on the mount of transfiguration. This was not partiality or favoritism. These three were prepared and fitted for this.

“And began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled.” His natural vigor was overcome by sorrow, and he was oppressed and even overwhelmed by anguish of spirit. This began to be apparent to his disciples.

(b) HIS SOUL SORROWFUL EVEN UNTO DEATH.

34. He said to the three: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.” This explains the sorrow and agony of the preceding verse, and means that, unless he found relief, death would ensue. His betrayal was at hand, the mock trial was just before him, and the shadow of the horrible death on the cross was upon him. As he was more than human, he felt all this with more than human sensibility, while the temptation came upon him in all the weakness of humanity.

Into this one hour were crowded all the horrors, cruelty, shame, and death of the cross. The wickedness and treachery of Judas, the desertion of the eleven, the hypocrisy and crime of the Jewish leaders, the rejection by the race of their only Savior, together with the sins of the whole world, were all upon him and overwhelmed him with sorrow. “Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree.” (1 Pet. 2: 24.) He was tried, and he died as a criminal between thieves. He suffered, “the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. 3: 18.)

Not simply from the physical suffering of death did he shrink, but his divine nature felt more keenly than mortals can know the horror and awfulness of sin and the calumny of his trial and crucifixion. He was despised and rejected by men, was bruised and put to grief for the sins of others.

(c) HE DESIRED HUMAN SYMPATHY.

“Abide ye here, and watch with me.” (Matt. 26: 38.) In this hour of agony Jesus desired human sympathy. He had encouraged

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(c) HE DESIRED HUMAN SYMPATHY.

"Abide ye here, and watch with me." (Matt. 26: 38.) In this hour of agony Jesus desired human sympathy. He had encouraged

and comforted his disciples in every hour of trouble and weakness, but now he desired them to watch with him that he might not be disturbed by the traitor and the mob in his hour of communion with God.

(d) JESUS' ATTITUDE IN PRAYER.

35. "And he went forward a little." "About a stone's cast." (Luke 22: 41.) He would be entirely alone. First, as Luke (22: 41) says, "he kneeled down and prayed;" then, as Matthew states, he "fell on his face," or prostrated himself. This is the lowliest attitude of prayer, and expresses a feeling of helplessness, humility, and entire dependence upon God. In prayer one goes to God in reverence, awe, and humility; and the attitude naturally expresses the feelings and condition of the heart.

Prayer must be in faith and from the heart. Jesus did not go through the form of prayer, but unburdened his soul to God.

(e) "NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE."

36. "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me." Matthew (26: 39) says: "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me."

"Abba," as we know, means "Father."

The "cup" is the suffering of all that was rapidly coming upon him—his betrayal and trial, the cross and its shame, the horrors of dying as a sinner and of being executed as a criminal.

Then before him arose the salvation and destiny of the world, and in triumphant faith and submission he added: "Howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt." (See Luke 22: 42, 43.) If God could not save the race unless Jesus should drink this cup, then he was willing to die.

While he must drink the bitter cup, God answered his prayer. "And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him." (Luke 22: 43.) He was heard "for his godly fear." (See Heb. 5: 7-9.) He "humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 8.)

Every prayer should be offered (1) to God and (2) in the faith and resignation of Jesus.

God may answer prayer now without granting the specific thing desired.

III. The Spirit and Purpose of Prayer.

(Matt. 6: 9-13.)

9. In contrast with the prayers of hypocrites and heathen, Jesus says to his disciples, "After this manner therefore pray ye"—not always in this form or these exact words, but in this spirit and with this purpose. Jesus in his prayers did not use this exact form of words. As the occasion and his condition required; according to the will of God; and with all the elements, therefore, of acceptable prayer, he poured out his soul to his Father.

Jesus teaches his disciples not only to pray "after this manner," but in praying to "say"—to speak to God. We may breathe a prayer to God or pray in silence, as did Hannah, who "spoke in her heart," while

- Why cannot many see the need of prayer?
- 32 To what place did Jesus often go?
Why?
Where were the eight apostles left?
How did Jesus manifest his deep solicitude for his disciples?
Why was he grieved?
- 33 Whom did he carry with him into the garden?
Where had these been with him before?
Why these?
What was apparent to his disciples?
- 34 What did he say to Peter, James, and John?
What does this mean?
Why was he so grieved?
Why did he feel this so keenly?
What did he then say to the three?
From whom would he receive sympathy?
Why did he exhort them to watch?
- 35 How far did he go from them?
Why would he be alone?
What was his first position in prayer?
How did he show his feeling of utter helplessness and entire dependence upon God?
What does the attitude of prayer show?
- 36 For what did Jesus pray?
How did God answer Jesus' prayer?
Repeat Heb. 5: 7-9.
How does God answer prayer?
- 9 After what manner does Jesus teach his disciples to pray?
- What is meant by "this manner?"
What is said of speaking to God in prayer?
In what is this prayer a model?
How should we address God?
What is expressed by this?
Under what obligation do we place ourselves by calling God "our Father?"
- What is meant by "hallowed?"
- 10 What is the next petition?
Has the kingdom come?
For what should we still pray?
What is the next petition?
How is God's will done in heaven?
What became of the angels who disobeyed God?
What does this petition embrace?
What will bring heaven to earth?
- 11 For what, then, may we ask for ourselves?
What means must we use while we pray?
- 12 For what may we next pray?
What must we do for those who sin against us before we can expect to be forgiven?
- 13 What is the next petition?
Does God tempt us to sin?
What, then, is meant by this petition?
For what next may we pray?
How does God deliver us from the evil one?
What different things should we learn here concerning prayer?

A READER'S GUIDE.

- When you worry, read Matt. 6: 19-34.
When you grow bitter or critical, read 1 Cor. 13.
When you leave home for labor or travel, read Ps. 121.
When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, read Ps. 67.
For Jesus' idea of prayer, read Luke 11: 13 and Matt. 6: 5-15.
For Paul's rules on how to get along with men, read Rom. 12.
When you think of investments and returns, read Mark 10: 17-31.
For a prophet's picture of worship that counts, read Isa. 58: 1-12.
For the prophet's idea of religion, read Isa. 1: 10-18; Micah 6: 6-8.
(The Religious Telescope.)

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For the prophet's idea of religion, read Isa. 1: 10-18; Micah 6: 6-8.
(The Religious Telescope.)

11. (e) Praying for oneself. When we have thus prayed for the glory of God and the good of all men, we are permitted to pray for ourselves. Even then we must pray as directed. We are to ask, not for food for the entire future or to be consumed upon our pleasures (James 4: 1-3), but for "our daily bread," "day by day." In praying for bread "day by day," we can no more ignore the means which produce bread and still be fed than we can ignore the means of salvation and still be saved. (See Eph. 4: 28; 2 Thess. 3: 10-14; Tit. 1: 12; 3: 14.)

12. (f) Praying for forgiveness. This verse teaches the absolute necessity of forgiving others if we would be forgiven. "As we have forgiven our debtors." This subject should be well studied. We are allowed here to ask God to do for us in the way of forgiveness only that which we have done for others.

13. (g) "And bring us not into temptation." God does not tempt his children to do wrong. (James 1: 12-15.) This is a petition to God to save us from temptation by which we may be led into sin—the temptations which Satan presents to all. "But deliver us from the evil one." God delivers his children from "the evil one" by teaching how to resist various temptations, how to grow in grace and strength, and by not allowing Satan to tempt them beyond their ability to resist him. (1 Cor. 10: 13.)

V. What May Be Learned from This Prayer.

Jesus adds (verses 14, 15): "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." He who refuses to forgive others has no promise of forgiveness while in that condition. Full instruction as to how the wrongdoer may be brought to repentance and to the point of asking forgiveness is given in Matt. 18: 15-20, and the importance of extending forgiveness from the heart is further emphasized in Matt. 18: 21-35.

With this comprehensive, but brief, prayer before us, we should learn several important lessons on the subject of prayer: (1) We cannot be selfish in prayer, but must first seek the glory of God, the extension of his kingdom, the conversion and salvation of the world, and then pray for our own needed temporal and spiritual blessings; (2) our desire must be for God's will to be done, not ours; (3) we are not heard for our "much speaking." Prayers are not heard according to their perfection of rhetoric and beauty of diction or the pleasant voice of the petitioner.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Places, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What does "Gethsemane" mean?

Where was it?

What and where is Mount Olivet?

Where and what is the brook Kidron?

Why should the privilege of prayer be appreciated?

Why should its need be felt?

When does God answer prayer?

Repeat some exhortations to pray.

35 Where did Jesus go one morning "a great while before day?"

Why did he do this?

Where, when, and how much did Jesus pray?

Why did he pray?

LESSON V.—JANUARY 30.

THE CHRISTIAN OVERCOMING TEMPTATION.

Luke 4: 1-13; 1 Cor. 10: 12, 13.

1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness

2 During forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days: and when they were completed, he hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread.

4 And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone.

5 And he led him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:

11 And,

On their hands they shall bear thee up,

Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."* (Heb. 2: 18.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 27.

PLACE.—The place of temptation was probably in the northern part of the wilderness of Judea.

PERSONS.—God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the angels, and Satan.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 8: 31-39.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—2 Cor. 10: 3-5; Phil. 4: 11-13; Heb. 2: 14-18; 4: 14-16.

HOME READING.—

January 24. M. The Temptation of Jesus. (Luke 4: 1-13.)

January 25. T. Escaping Temptation. (1 Cor. 10: 1-13.)

January 26. W. Withstanding Temptation. (Prov. 1: 10-19.)

January 27. T. Prayer and Temptation. (Mark 14: 32-42.)

January 28. F. Fortifying Against Temptation. (Eph. 6: 10-20.)

January 29. S. Daniel's Victory. (Dan. 1: 8-16.)

January 30. S. Christ Our Intercessor. (Rom. 8: 31-39.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

It is impossible to learn all that God teaches on any given subject without studying all that the writers of the Bible say on that subject.

Studying all that Matthew, Mark, and Luke say on the temptation of Jesus, we have the following lesson.

Look out the quotations as they are made from any of these writers.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Forty-Days' Fast.

1, 2. After the baptism of Jesus, he "returned from the Jordan," and was driven immediately by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and "was with the wild beasts." (Mark 1: 13.)

In the beginning of the race Adam was tempted, and fell; in the beginning of his great work of reclaiming the earth and redeeming the race, Christ was tempted, and gained a triumphant victory.

Christ was doubtless tempted before. During the thirty years he spent at Nazareth he must have suffered different temptations; but now that he enters upon his public work, Satan renews these attacks with increased energy and force. He does all he can to thwart the purposes of God and to defeat Jesus in his mission of salvation. Besides, this temptation was a preparation for Jesus in the flesh for his great work as the Messiah. He must grapple with every difficulty and conquer every foe. He is not the Savior of men and cannot establish his spiritual kingdom if he yields in a single point or does not really overcome Satan in his subtlest and mightiest attacks; but, having overcome, he is ready to succor all who are tempted.

The loyalty of every soul must be tried; and as one proves faithful, God commits to him greater trusts.

Luke says: "During forty days, being tempted of the devil." During all this time Jesus endured temptation. The temptations are not specified, as below; but being in the flesh, with all the lusts and appetites of the flesh, he was tempted in all points as we are.

He "fasted forty days and forty nights." "He did eat nothing." Moses fasted the same number of days twice (Ex. 24: 18; 34: 28); Elijah, once (1 Kings 19: 8). If Jesus had been miraculously sustained during this time, the effects of the fast would have been destroyed; but "he afterwards hungered." Any great grief, imminent danger, deep anxiety, mental excitement, or intense interest destroys for the time being the natural desire for food. (See Acts 27: 20-44.) Fasting and prayer lift one above animal appetites into closer union and communion with God, and are means of gaining spiritual strength and power. (See Mark 9: 29; 2 Cor. 6: 3-19; 11: 16-33, especially verse 27.) Intensely interested in the greatest work the earth has ever witnessed; overwhelmed with its vast importance, in deep anxiety and constant prayer for strength and power to accomplish it; and undergoing the severe test, the fiery trials, and the great mental and spiritual strains to which the shrewd and mighty temptations of Satan subjected him, Christ's natural desire for food was suspended.

In this mighty, unrelenting conflict he is most successful at absolutely every point. He resists triumphantly every attack of the subtle deceiver. The danger seemingly is past; the victory is his; and nature reacts and asserts its claims with powerful force, and he is hungry in the extreme of a gnawing, imperious appetite.

II. The First Temptation.

3. "If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread." The tempter watched his time. He withdrew only for a moment to change his tactics, to renew his energy, to increase his force, and to return to make his subtlest, most cruel, most severe, and most powerful assault in the time of Christ's greatest weakness. So he attacks us in our weakest places and moments—when we are weary, weak, nervous, sick, depressed in spirit, or disheartened.

There are two points in this temptation: (1) to display his power in turning stones into bread, and (2) to satisfy his hunger—an appeal to his fleshly appetite. Christ's temptations were real and powerful.

"If thou art the Son of God" suggests a doubt and a taunt. Why should the Son of God hunger? "You are not he; if so, you could make bread of these stones." "Let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen." (Luke 23: 35.) "Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us." (Verse 39.) Jesus fed the multitudes and raised the dead, but he did not use his miraculous power to feed himself or to save himself from the cross. He and the apostles did not use their miraculous power for self-benefit or self-glorification. To have done this would have thwarted his earthly mission. He came in the flesh to live as a human being among men, to suffer, to be tempted, to weep, to die. Satan appealed to a most imperious appetite (hunger), and did it in the subtlest way. What wrong is there in eating bread when one is hungry, and when, too, one's power is displayed in making it? To eat wholesome food is not wrong within itself; it is necessary, and clothing and shelter are necessary; but "the life is more than the food, and the body than the raiment." Jesus is here voluntarily as a man, and to have used miraculous power to sustain life would have made his humanity a mere appearance. God led the children of Israel into the wilderness to humble them, to prove them, whether they would trust and obey him or not; and while they knew not what they would eat, he fed them on manna. So the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted and approved.

4. Jesus was under God's protection, and God would feed him when he saw fit; hence, he said to the devil: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4: 4; see Deut. 8: 3.) God could be trusted to sustain him.

"Every word" of God means that all of God's will must be done, if it leads through hunger and poverty to the cross and death, and God will sustain him who does it. The sword of the Spirit, the word of God—"the written word," as people sometimes say—is the only weapon Jesus used with which to defend himself. He at once quoted the Scripture, saying: "It is written."

III. The Second Temptation.

The second temptation given by Matthew is the one of tempting or making trial of God. This is recorded as third by Luke, but is really the second. Hence, verses 9-11 of this lesson will be studied next and before verses 5-8.

9-11. The devil then took Jesus into Jerusalem. "The holy city"

was Jerusalem, and "the pinnacle of the temple" was some very high point of the building, overlooking, perhaps, a deep valley below. Again the doubt and taunt are repeated. To cast himself down without injury would show his power and gain the applause of the wondering multitudes. Love of applause and love of distinction are human passions. Thus he would open up a short way into the confidence of the Jewish nation and easily establish himself at once as their King. This would be a quicker and more desirable way than the patient, suffering, tearful, prayerful, self-denying way of the cross. This was a temptation. Jesus, in human tears, sweat, and blood, shrank from the cross and prayed God that the cup might pass; but in its dark shadow, as in the wilderness of temptation, his only desire was that God's will should be done.

Since Jesus relied so implicitly upon the word of God, the devil quoted Scripture to induce him to do wrong. He quoted Ps. 91: 11, 12, but left out an important line: "To keep thee in all thy ways." God will protect and keep those who walk in the way which he has appointed for them. Going where God says go is trusting him. Satan first tempted Jesus to distrust God, but now he tempts him to go to the extreme of rashly tempting him.

12. Jesus at once replied: "It is said"—or, "Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God." God's statements do not conflict; his word is always harmonious. He does not tell men what to do or what not to do, and then send the devil, or even angels, to them to countermand his directions. Jesus still relies implicitly upon the word of God as "it is written." So may we. It is always right.

IV. The Third Temptation.

5. This is the last temptation at this time, and it is the mightiest. It has been called "Satan's masterpiece." In this he throws off the mask and acknowledges that he is "the prince of the world." From a lofty eminence—"an exceeding high mountain"—he spreads out before Jesus, "in a moment of time," "the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." Jesus sees all—the luxury and ease, the pomp and splendor, the bright crowns and dazzling glories; the wealth of the East, the culture and refinement of Greece, and the power and triumphant armies of Rome. Satan offers all this to Jesus, saying: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." "For it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it."

6, 7. "All this authority, and the glory of them: . . . it shall all be thine." This was a great temptation. The love of worldly power and glory is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, human passions. Satan told no lie; all this has been delivered to him, and he is "the prince of the world." (John 14: 30.) It would have been no temptation to offer to Jesus that which Satan did not possess. Christ's "kingdom is not of this world." (John 18: 36.) "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Rev. 11: 15.) Christ must rescue all from Satan. He did not dispute Satan's claims to these things. To reclaim them and to reign with God, Jesus must tread the thorny way alone; he must endure the cross and its shame; he must go through blood and the grave. If Jesus

would give up this purpose and worship Satan (make him head and leader), then Satan would place Jesus on the throne without this self-denial and suffering.

8. Jesus feels the force of the temptation, but abhors the thought and repels the adversary with indignation, exclaiming: "Get thee hence, Satan ["Leave me, thou archenemy of God and men"]: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (See Deut. 6: 13.) Again Christ's defense is the word of God: "It is written." This is sufficient. God is Creator and Ruler of the universe, and to worship and serve him is man's only and greatest good; to turn from him is ruin forever.

Satan has done his best. He has presented all his temptations—"the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life" (1 John 2: 16)—and he has presented them in his subtlest and most artful manner, and Jesus has resisted all. Satan recognized his defeat and "departed from him for a season."

13. When Jesus had fought off the devil, "angels came and ministered unto him." They came after the victory, not to fight his battles. In all probability, they brought him food and sympathy. Angels, indeed, have charge of him now.

1 Cor. 10: 12, 13. All must be tempted. (Matt. 18: 7.) All are tempted through their own lusts. (James 1: 13-15.) None are tempted above their ability to resist. God will not allow Satan to tempt us beyond our ability to resist him. Satan could do this if God would allow him. So when we yield, it is our own fault. Temptations prove all and strengthen all who resist. (James 1: 2-4.) "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

QUESTIONS.

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| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?</p> <p>1, 2 How alone can we learn all that God teaches on any subject?
What led Jesus into the wilderness?
Was he ever tempted before?
Why was he so tempted at this time?
Was he tempted through the forty days?
Was he miraculously sustained during this fast?
What will cause one to fast?
What benefit may be derived from fasting and prayer?
When did Jesus become hungry?
Why?</p> <p>3 Why did Satan come to him just then?
When does Satan try us most sorely?
What is the first temptation?
How many points are there in it?
Why does Jesus not thus feed himself?
How does he defend himself?</p> | <p>Where is this Scripture?</p> <p>4 What does "every word" of God mean?
How do we live by it?
What was "the holy city?"</p> <p>9-11 What was "the pinnacle of the temple?"
What is the second temptation?
How does Satan try to persuade Jesus to yield?
What Scripture did Satan quote?
What part did he omit?</p> <p>12 How did Jesus meet it?
Does God contradict himself?</p> <p>5 What is the last temptation?
What did Jesus see?</p> <p>6, 7 Does Satan lie in this?
Why is this a great temptation?</p> <p>8 How does Jesus meet this one?
What is it to worship Satan?
What is it to worship God?</p> <p>13 Why did Satan leave Jesus?
Who "ministered unto him?"
How?</p> <p>1 Cor. 10: 12, 13: How can we resist temptation?
What will God not allow Satan to do in tempting us?</p> |
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LESSON VI.—FEBRUARY 6.

THE PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP.

Matt. 25: 14-28.

14 For it is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey.

16 Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents.

17 In like manner he also that received the two gained other two.

18 But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 Now after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them.

20 And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliverest unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter;

25 And I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own.

26 But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter;

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest.

28 Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."* (Matt. 25: 21.)

TIME.—Tuesday, probably April 4, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Mount of Olives.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Cor. 9: 6-11.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Luke 16: 10-13; 1 Cor. 4: 1, 2; 1 Pet. 4: 7-11.

HOME READING.—

- January 31. M. Parable of the Talents. (Matt. 25: 14-30.)
- February 1. T. God the Owner of All. (Ps. 50: 1-12.)
- February 2. W. Recognizing God's Claims. (Mal. 3: 7-12.)
- February 3. T. Stewardship Rewarded. (Prov. 3: 1-10.)
- February 4. F. Ideal Stewards of Money. (2 Cor. 8: 1-9.)
- February 5. S. Stewardship of Grace. (1 Pet. 4: 7-11.)
- February 6. S. Giving Cheerfully. (2 Cor. 9: 6-15.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In the last part of Matt. 24 Jesus not only exhorts his disciples, saying, "Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh;" but he also tells who "the faithful and wise servant" is.

In Matt. 25 he teaches his disciples how to watch and to be ready, which is by improving their opportunities and meeting faithfully their responsibilities. He illustrates this by the parable of the ten virgins and the talents.

Before his coming and the end of the world he must go, as the man of this parable, "into another country"—to heaven—and return, as indicated in verse 19. He is the Master; his disciples are the servants.

The foolish virgins failed because they thought getting into heaven too easy; the wicked servant failed because he thought getting into heaven too hard—his lot was too hard and too much was required of him.

To stand and gaze up into heaven is not the way to watch and be ready. The way is to be constantly and aggressively engaged in the work of the Master.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Meaning of the Parable.

14. The man "going into another country" represents Jesus about to go into heaven. "His own servants" are his disciples. Christ commanded the apostles to preach the gospel "to the whole creation," bestowed upon them the greatest miraculous gifts, and set them "first" in the church (1 Cor. 12: 28; Eph. 4: 8-16)—"delivered unto them his goods;" yet he has blessed all, not with miraculous gifts, but with ability, means, and opportunities to serve him. This parable applied not only to Christ's apostles when spoken, but it applies to all his disciples or servants for all time. The "goods" are the entire interests of the church—all means of usefulness. God has made the church "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15), and has committed to his servants the affairs of his church and the extension of his kingdom among men.

15. A "talent" was a weight, not a coin. A talent of silver is estimated to be from \$1,639 to \$1,920. The master gave to every servant "according to his several ability." Five talents was too much for some, and one not enough for others. Every one received just what he was capable of managing. He who received much improved it accordingly, and he who received little was not excused for not improving it proportionately. He who improves the little he has will be rewarded as surely as he who with much gains much. The talents, representing the entire interests of the church, embrace all ability for doing good—wealth, influence, and mental powers. Every servant of God is talented; all have opportunities for doing good. He who can make money has as much talent as he who can preach; and if he does not use his talents to God's glory, he will be lost. God gives power to get wealth. (Deut. 8: 17, 18.) He gives to all men all they have and enjoy. All opportunity for doing good must be cultivated and used. None can be idle; all are called to zealous service.

After committing to his servants his goods and making arrangements for their useful employment in his absence, the master "went on his journey."

Thus Jesus has left plenty of useful employment for all his disciples for all time.

II. The Profitable Servants.

16, 17. The two servants of these verses made proper use of their talents. All who make the proper use of the means, abilities, and opportunities the Lord has placed in their hands are such servants. Two talents properly used are as good with the Lord as five. Gain and happiness to the servants are the objects to be reached.

18. Where there are no banks of deposit it is the custom to hide money in the earth for safe-keeping. There were no such banks in Palestine. This servant made no effort to improve, and there is no standing still. Hence, this servant not only gained nothing, but lost what he once had.

19. "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh." As in verse 5 of the previous part of the chapter, this is an intimation that it would be a long time before the Lord would return.

"Maketh a reckoning with them." The "reckoning" is the judgment, when Jesus will return and all will be judged, and the faithful will be rewarded and the slothful cast out forever. (See 2 Cor. 5: 10.) "Each one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14: 12.) There is no escape from the judgment. Death is the same as the coming of the Lord to all who die, because "it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." (Heb. 9: 27.)

20. By industry, diligence, and good judgment, he who had received the five talents gained five more. He acknowledged his obligations to his lord for all, since the lord had given him the money. So to-day God gives life, breath, and all things to all men. (Acts 17: 25-28.) Joyfully this servant came forward to give his account. "Hope putteth not to shame." (Rom. 5: 1-5.) Paul joyfully looked forward to the coming of Christ. He says of the Thessalonians: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming?" (1 Thess. 2: 19.) So he says of the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1: 14) and of the Philippians (Phil. 4: 1). So it will be with every one who properly improves his talents. (See Dan. 12: 2, 3; Matt. 25: 34; James 5: 19, 20.)

21. "Well done, good and faithful servant." His lord commended him for his diligence in business and rewarded him for his faithfulness and goodness. "I will set thee over many things." Greater trusts were committed to him because he was prepared to manage them. Faithfulness in little is the only road to the successful management in much.

"Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." When the master returned from a long journey, it was customary to celebrate his return with a festival, in the joys of which all faithful servants were invited to share. (Matt. 24: 45-47; Luke 12: 35-40.) There will be a spiritual and eternal feast in heaven, in which all faithful servants of Jesus will participate.

22, 23. Likewise he who had received two talents had gained two more, and likewise the lord blessed him in exactly the same language

which he used in rewarding the first. In God's service, promotion depends upon faithfulness and not upon abundance. All cannot do abundantly great things, but all can do faithfully little things. Not the number of talents, but the proper use and improvement of those possessed bring the reward and blessing. The faithful discharge of duties now prepares one for greater usefulness in the future. This is true in every station in life. The boy to-day who is faithful in little will become ruler over much. The duties and opportunities of to-day are tests by which God proves one's worthiness of greater trusts for the future. All these duties and obligations in which one proves himself faithful are "a few things" compared to the heavenly trusts and rewards. According to this, the faithful will not be unemployed in heaven, but will be set "over many things."

III. The Unprofitable Servant.

24, 25. This servant was the last to report. We can understand why he should linger behind. He was not, as Peter says, "looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God." (2 Pet. 3: 12.) Sin makes ashamed and fills one with misgivings and fears. "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4: 18.) This servant accused his master of being harsh and unfeeling, dishonest and unscrupulous. So now many think Jesus is exacting; that he makes unreasonable demands of self-sacrifice, self-denial, and self-control. They think it is too much to ask of them to meet on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper in memory of Jesus (Acts 2: 42; 20: 7) and to otherwise worship God as he requires. Some, like this servant, seem determined not to improve their opportunities and to blame the Lord for their failures. They have simply buried their talent.

The wicked seek comfort in finding fault with and in accusing others of wrongdoing.

26, 27. "Thou wicked and slothful servant." He was wicked because he had wrongfully accused his master. He tried to justify himself by accusing his master of dishonesty. He was slothful in that he had not improved his talent. Granting that his lord was exacting and unscrupulous, he at least ought to have put the money out at interest. As it was, the lord did not receive his own. One cannot suffer the gifts God has bestowed upon him to lie idle and his opportunities to pass unimproved, and yet give back to God his own.

It is well to note this servant's sins. He was not a thief. He did not steal this talent or rob widows and orphans. He came by it honestly. His lord gave it to him. Neither was he accused, as the prodigal son, of wasting his substance in riotous living, or, as the unjust steward, of squandering his lord's money; he was not dissipated and immoral. He was slothful—inactive and lacking in energy and zeal in God's service. He suffered for what he did not do, and lost his soul through unfaithfulness.

It is worthy of note, too, that the servant with the one talent failed. One is prone to think that because he can accomplish so little for Jesus it is unnecessary to try to do anything. It is duty, service, love, faithfulness, character that God wants; and all this can be developed

and manifested in little as well as in much. Then it is not for the Lord's profit, but for one's own benefit and salvation, that he should improve his talent or his talents.

28. This servant had proved himself unworthy of his trust and had neglected his opportunity; therefore, his talent was taken from him. This was the natural consequence of his sloth. This principle is demonstrated in a dozen ways around us every day. In various ways people sin away their opportunities.

"And give it unto him that hath the ten talents," because he is worthy and will improve it. As stated in verse 29, every opportunity improved fits one for greater opportunities and greater usefulness. (See Matt. 13: 12.) This is the ruling principle of all successful lives. Without it, no life is successful. Activity and aggressive goodness are essential to salvation.

As stated in verse 30, this servant was unprofitable because he had done nothing. He had not even returned to the lord his own. The Lord has given you, reader, a body, a mind, and a soul. Will you give them back weakened by idleness and impaired by sin?

Jesus turns in verse 30 from the parable to that which it illustrates, and declares that the wicked, slothful, and unprofitable servant will be lost forever. "The outer darkness" and "the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" show the terrible punishment which awaits the indolent and unfaithful.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What is the difference between the foolish virgins and the unprofitable servant?
What is it to "watch" for the coming of Christ?
- 14 Whom does the man going into "another country" represent?
Who are the "servants"?
What are the "goods"?
- 15 What is a talent?
How much was it worth?
How many talents did the master give every one of his servants?
Why did he not give the same amount to all?
Why is one who is faithful in little equally blessed with one who is faithful in much?
What do the talents represent?
What must be done with money-making talents?
- 16, 17 What use did the two servants of these verses make of their talents?
Whom do they represent?
What is the gain to the servants?
- 18 Why was money hidden in the ground?
19 What does this verse indicate?
What is the "reckoning"?
How will Jesus judge every one?
- 20 What did the first servant gain?
How did he do this?
What report did he make?
In what spirit did he make his report?
What does God give to all?
How will all profitable servants meet Jesus?
What will be Paul's joy and crown of glorying?
What will be ours?
- 21 What was done for this servant?
Why was he set over "many things"?
What prepares for the successful management of much?
What was "the joy of thy lord"?
Into what joy will Jesus' faithful servants enter?
What will all such servants say?
- 22, 23 What report did the second servant make?
How was he rewarded?
What are tests now?
What shows there will be employment in heaven?
- 24, 25 Why did this servant linger behind?

What renders people ashamed?
 What casts out fear?
 How did this servant seek to excuse himself?
 Of what do idle church members accuse Jesus?
 26, 27 What did his lord say to this servant?
 In what was he wicked?
 In what was he slothful?
 In what was he unprofitable?
 What should he have done with the money?

How do people now bury their talents?
 What marks the difference between servants?
 What is it that God requires?
 Are you an unprofitable servant?
 28 What was done with this servant's talent?
 Why?
 What is the principle of success?
 What became of this servant?
 What do "the outer darkness" and "the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" represent?

"MAKING GOOD."

This is "making good" in life:
 Being patient through the strife,
 Being glad that you can bear
 Now and then the touch of care,
 Being cheerful day by day,
 Being careful not to say
 Bitter things which leave a sting—
 This, for laborer or king,
 When the record's understood,
 Is the depth of "making good."

This is "making good" on earth:
 Being glad to prove your worth,
 Being kindly, being true;
 Doing what you find to do,
 Even though your strength is faint,
 Without whimpering or complaint;
 Doing little, doing much,
 With a brave and manly touch;
 Drawing water, hewing wood—
 Cheerfully—is "making good."

This is "making good" with men:
 Standing up to service when
 It were easier to stop
 And to let the burden drop;
 Doing more than is your share,
 More than you were asked to bear,
 So, when finished is the test,
 You may say you've done your best—
 This, in every neighborhood,
 Is the depth of "making good."

(Edgar A. Guest.)

LESSON VII.—FEBRUARY 13.

MAKING OUR HOMES CHRISTIAN.

Eph. 5: 25 to 6: 4.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it;

26 That he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,

27 That he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself:

29 For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church;

30 Because we are members of his body.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

32 This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.

33 Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise),

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God."* (1 John 4: 7.)

TIME.—About A.D. 63.

PLACE.—Paul when in prison at Rome wrote the Ephesian letter.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church at Ephesus.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Ex. 2: 1-10; Luke 10: 38-42; John 12: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

February 7. M. Making Our Homes Christian. (Eph. 5: 25 to 6: 4.)

February 8. T. Teaching Children the Bible. (Deut. 6: 4-12.)

February 9. W. Promises to Godly Children. (Prov. 3: 1-10.)

February 10. T. Timothy's Training. (2 Tim. 3: 14-17.)

February 11. F. The Home of Lazarus. (John 11: 1-6.)

February 12. S. Abraham's Household. (Gen. 18: 16-21.)

February 13. S. Love Supreme. (1 Cor. 13.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia and the greatest city of Asia Minor. Here was erected the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, and here magical arts prevailed. (Acts 19: 18-20.) "The inhabitants were noted for their licentious and luxurious life, for the cultivation of magical arts, and for the fanatical worship of the Asiatic Artemis, the personification of exuberant natural production."

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The Scriptures of this lesson have reference to teaching the Bible in the home and show how to make the home Christian, or how to build Christian homes.

One of the crying needs of the present is Christian homes. Nothing can take the place of home training and home influences. But with the tendency of the age not to build homes, and even to break up existing ones, this great and godly influence is gradually being lost. Living in boarding houses and flats and the disposition of some married people not to rear families make against Christian homes. God's rule is that the younger women "marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling: for already some are turned aside after Satan." (1 Tim. 5: 14, 15.) But how few are following God's rule in this respect, and how many have turned aside after Satan!

Paul says of old women "that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Tit. 2: 4, 5.) To pervert this order is to blaspheme the word of God.

God created man, and for man he created woman as a help suited to him; God ordained the family, and to destroy the family and its influence is to destroy God's order and man's happiness. As this lesson shows, the obligations of man, the husband and the father, are just as great as those of wife and mother. These obligations cannot be broken without sin and its consequences.

Home building is one of the greatest works people can engage in, and Christian homes are the next places to heaven.

The influences of schools and business are not conducive to home building—that is, during this present age.

God, in his great wisdom and goodness, knows what is best for men and women, parents and children; and the Bible is our only guide.

Following the Bible will keep sin out of homes and make them prosperous, Christian, and happy.

Beginning with verse 22 of chapter 5 of Ephesians and continuing through verse 9 of chapter 6, Paul teaches and exhorts concerning family relationships and duties.

Wives are taught to "be in subjection to their own husbands, as unto the Lord." The reason for this command is: "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is also the head of the church, being himself the Savior of the body."

But very few in the church even treat this relationship to-day with proper seriousness; on the contrary, most people make a joke of it, not realizing its great significance, reaching from the formation of Eve from Adam's open side to the church, the Lamb's bride, for whose cleansing and salvation Christ gave himself up. It is a fearful thing to trifle with the work and will of God!

God's order is: "The head of Christ is God," "the head of every man is Christ," and "the head of the woman is the man." (1 Cor. 11: 3.)

The reason for not allowing woman to have dominion over man, but for placing her in subjection to him and for requiring her to live in

quietness, is that "Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." (1 Tim. 2: 13-15.)

Bearing and rearing children, ruling the household, and home keeping are embraced in woman's mission and sphere; yet by the expression, "she shall be saved through her childbearing," is meant, it appears to me, that "she" ("the woman" and all her daughters, as well as men) can be saved through the child she bore—"the seed of woman" who bruised the serpent's head, or destroyed Satan. "God sent forth his Son, born of woman," in order to redeem mankind. (Gal. 4: 4.)

The expression, "If they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety," shows that women cannot be saved through what "woman" has done in becoming the mother of the Savior without faith in Christ and obedience to God. "Faith" in the full meaning of faith, "love" in the true meaning of love, "sanctification" in the Scriptural meaning of sanctification, and "sobriety" in its true meaning are strong expressions and embrace much. All should be impressed with the truth that salvation depends upon these. Then how can frivolous, foolish, worldly women, fond of finery and admiration, even if they do claim "membership" in the church and engage in some of its public activities, expect to be saved? The life which God directs women to live—adorned in modest apparel and modesty in general, with sobriety, with a meek and quiet spirit, with good works, and not with costly or extravagant, immodest, and even indecent dress, receives but little attention and less study and practice at present.

Either teachers and preachers, as a rule, have not studied this subject and are incompetent to teach it, or, knowing the teaching of the Bible in regard to it, they are chary of it and hesitate to teach and preach the clear will of God concerning it.

These hints and helps on the duties of wives and mothers have been given as briefly as possible, and the lesson should embrace them.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Duties of Husbands.

25. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." The duties of husbands to their wives is none the less binding and beautiful and happy than those of wives to their husbands. As Christ is the head of the church, or ruler over it, so the husband is the head of the wife and ruler over his family. Paul says a bishop must be one "that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." (1 Tim. 3: 4.) But the rule of husbands over their wives must spring from love for them, and they must seek the protection, comfort, and greatest good of their wives, both temporally and spiritually, even as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it. Husbands cannot be tyrannical in any way or cruel or harsh. They must manifest the tenderest regard and most unselfish love for their wives. They must be as true and faithful to their wives as Christ as a husband is to the church, or as true and devoted to their wives as they expect their wives to be to them. Peter (1 Pet. 3: 7) states this as follows: "Ye husbands, in like manner,

dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered." Husbands are to dwell with their wives according to the teaching and purity of Christianity; they are to furnish their wives with the necessities, comforts, and maintenance of life so far as in their power, thus "giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel." This is the way men honor their wives. For women to have to make the living for husbands is a reversal of God's order of things and a dishonor to woman. The home, with its blessed ministries, is woman's sphere and work. She is physically the weaker vessel, and should be protected as much as possible from the hardships and heavier burdens of life. But she is not inferior to man; she and her husband are "joint heirs of the grace of life." Husbands hinder their prayers when they do not dwell thus in purity and helpfulness and love with their wives.

II. How Christ Cleansed the Church.

26, 27. Christ gave himself up for the church—died for it and "purchased it with his own blood." (Acts 20: 28.) He shed his blood "for many unto the remission of sins." (Matt. 26: 28.) His blood "cleanseth from all sin." (1 John 1: 7.) Without this blood there is no remission. (Heb. 9: 22.) The blood of Christ is reached through faith in him as the Son of God and Savior of the world, repentance of all sin, and baptism into his name. (See Mark 16: 15, 16; Matt. 28: 19, 20; Acts 2: 36-38; Acts 16: 30-34; 22: 16.) Hence, it is said Christ cleansed the church "by the washing of water with the word." Jesus says to his disciples, "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15: 3); and Peter (1 Pet. 1: 22) says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently." The truth which they obeyed in purifying their souls, the word by which they were cleansed, is that which they did unto the remission of sins, which has been quoted or cited above. By faith in Christ and through repentance Paul was baptized and washed away his sins, "calling on his name;" hence, he speaks of "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," which washing must refer to baptism. (Tit. 3: 5.) Referring to the flood, Peter (1 Pet. 3: 20, 21) says "eight souls" "were saved through water [the flood]: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Baptism is the true likeness, or the antitype, of the flood. As eight souls were saved through the water of the flood by faith in God, so through faith in Christ in their penitence by obedience to God in baptism people are now saved, or cleansed from sin. By a continued obedience to God they are sanctified by his word, or the truth. (John 17: 17.)

Adam Clarke says: "*By the word—the doctrine of Christ crucified, through which baptism is administered, sin canceled, and the soul purified from all unrighteousness; the death of Christ giving efficacy to all.*"

The church is represented as a pure or chaste virgin espoused to one husband—to Christ. (2 Cor. 11: 2.) The washing and cleansing and sanctifying of the church no doubt refers to the purification of the women who were to be married to kings. This preparation is mentioned in Esth. 2: 12; Ps. 45: 13, 14; Ezek. 16: 7-14. So the church must be cleansed and purified and sanctified that it may be presented to Christ "a glorious church." Brides are spoken of as making themselves beautiful with rich and splendid garments and brilliant jewels, but the Lamb's bride must make herself ready by properly cleansing and purifying herself and arraying herself "in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." (Rev. 19: 8.) These "righteous acts" must be performed in the service of God in this life. Now is the time to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7: 1.) "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God" is the same as being sanctified. Keeping "unspotted from the world," coming out from among "unbelievers," from "iniquity," "darkness," "Belial," "temples of idols," being "separate" from and touching "no unclean thing," is being sanctified. Then, how can professed church members, with the spots and wrinkles and blemishes of worldliness and unrighteousness and sin upon their souls, claim to be ready to be presented to the Lord as "a pure virgin," or members of his body?

III. The Husband and Wife Are One Flesh.

28-31. No stronger reason and higher motive than the love of Christ for the church can be placed before men for loving their wives—"each one his own wife." As the church, "we are members of" Christ's body. On this fact, see Rom. 12: 5; 1 Cor. 6: 15-18; 1 Cor. 12: 27. As Christ nourishes and cherishes the church, so husbands must love, nourish, and cherish their wives. Woman was made of man, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2: 24.) This is the strongest bond and the closest union which can exist between human beings. In loving his wife, a man loves himself, loves his own body; and as a man never hates his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it, so he must love, care for, protect, and cherish his wife. As a man and his wife are one flesh, so he "that is joined to a harlot is one flesh." In thus being joined to a harlot he sins against his own flesh. In this sin a man not only weakens his body, wastes its strength, plants in it the seeds of deadly disease, but he sins against his wife, against his own flesh in that way, because he is one flesh with his wife. Joined to a harlot, a man has the same spirit, passions, and wicked inclinations with her. A part of—a member—of the body of Christ, "joined unto the Lord," a man "is one spirit" with the Lord. He has the same desires, inclinations, purpose, and life of the Lord. (1 Cor. 6: 16-18.)

IV. A Mystery.

32, 33. Mystery in the Bible signifies something not known by human wisdom, something that is beyond human understanding, such as the purposes of God. Adam Clarke says: "A *mystery* signifies some-

thing *hidden*, but it ceases to be a *mystery* as soon as it is *revealed*." By revelation God made known to Paul and other apostles and through them to others that which in other ages was not made known—namely, that the Gentiles should become fellow heirs with the Jews in the church and partakers of the promises of the gospel. Through revelation all men can understand this "mystery." So with all other things in the purposes of God which were hidden from the beginning, but which have now been revealed. This revelation of these things God has made; hence, they are no longer mysteries. (See Eph. 1: 9; 3: 3-12.) Of the mystery in these verses Paul speaks "in regard of Christ and the church." "By the mystery here we may understand a natural thing by which some *spiritual* matter is signified, which signification the Spirit of God alone can give. So here the creation and union of Adam and Eve were intended, in the design of God, to point out the union of Christ and the church." (Adam Clarke.) As close as is the union between husband and wife, that close is the union between Christ and the church.

"Nevertheless," or while the union of Adam and Eve prefigures the union of Christ and the church, men must see that "severally" or that each one loves "his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear [reverence] her husband."

V. The Duty of Children to Parents.

1. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord." Obedience to parents is a part of the Christian life. In order to become Christians and to live the Christian life, children must learn obedience to parents. Col. 3: 20 says: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord." "In the Lord" means according to the will of God. Should parents require children to disobey God, they must still obey the Lord at all hazards. Disobedience to parents is a sign of "grievous times." This is "grievous" to both parents and children. (See 2 Tim. 3: 1-7.) Few children claiming to be in the church have learned and are practicing this beautiful and happy lesson.

2, 3. To honor father and mother means not only to respect them, but to regard their comfort and welfare, to support and care for them in their old age and decrepitude. This lesson is strongly impressed by the Savior in Matt. 15: 3-6; Mark 7: 8-13, which should be studied. On the meaning of "honor," see also 1 Tim. 5: 3, 4, 17. For children to show piety toward their own family and to requite their parents is to honor them. Not to do this is to dishonor them. This, too, was one of the Ten Commandments. (Ex. 20: 12.) This is "the first commandment with promise"—the first of the ten to which the promise is attached, and the first to children. What should children learn before learning obedience to parents? The promise is: "That it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth." Then it will be well with children, whether young or full grown, who obey and honor their parents.

4. Fathers are forbidden to provoke their children to wrath. They should correct their children, but should not use harsh and cruel means. Such means injure rather than bless children. They are to

use such chastening and admonition as come from the word of God—that is, such as the word of God directs parents to give. In this chastening and admonition parents are commanded to nurture their children—that is, to train and develop them—in the service of the Lord, to feed their minds and souls on nourishing mental and spiritual food, and to exercise them in godliness, as the body is nourished by wholesome physical food and developed by proper physical exercise.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Ephesus?
What wonderful building was there?
For what were its inhabitants noted?
What duties do the Scriptures of this lesson embrace?
What is one of the crying needs of the present time?
What is displacing real homes?
What is God's rule concerning young women and home life?
What are the duties of older women?
How does this lesson say the word of God is blasphemed?
What is said of the duty of husband and father?
What is one of the greatest works in which people can engage?
Why do not many schools and much business have a good influence over homes?
What is our only guide in these matters?
What will make a home prosperous, Christian, and happy?
What is the duty of wives to their husbands?
What do many wives not realize?
Give God's order as to the head of Christ, man, and woman?
Why was woman not allowed dominion over man, but was put in subjection to him?
What is meant by woman's being saved through her childbearing?
But in what must she continue in order to be saved?
Why do some teachers and preachers fail to impress these lessons?
25 To what degree must husbands love their wives?
In what manner and spirit must a man rule his own house?
How can husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church?
- Should wives or husbands make the living for the family?
How is woman the weaker vessel?
What is woman's sphere and work?
26, 27 How does Christ cleanse the church?
What does the "washing of water with the word" mean?
What is meant by not having "spot or wrinkle or any such thing?"
To what custom is reference made in the expression of Christ presenting the church to himself a "glorious church?"
28-31 What conclusion is drawn in this verse?
Why does a man love his own body in loving his wife?
How does he hate his body in hating his wife?
What does nourishing and cherishing one's wife mean?
What reason is given for a man's leaving his father and mother and cleaving unto his wife?
32 Explain the great mystery of this verse.
33 Whom must each man see that he loves?
As what must he love her?
What must the wife see that she does?
1 What are children commanded to do in regard to their parents?
If parents require children to disobey God, what must the children do?
2, 3 What is it to honor father and mother?
What is it to dishonor them?
How is this the first commandment with promise?
What is the promise?
4 To what must fathers not provoke their children?
How is this done?
In what should they nurture their children?
What does "nurture" mean?
What is meant by the chastening and admonition of the Lord?

LESSON VIII.—FEBRUARY 20.

SERVING IN AND THROUGH THE CHURCH.

Matt. 5: 13-16; Acts 2: 42-47.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house.

16 Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.

46 And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"We are God's fellow workers."* (1 Cor. 3: 9.)

TIME.—A.D. 28, when the Sermon on the Mount was delivered; A.D. 30, when the facts of Acts 2 transpired.

Note what is said in Lesson I of the First Quarter in regard to time.

PLACES.—Where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered and Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Christ and his disciples and the church at Jerusalem.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 3: 14-21.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—1 Cor. 12: 1-31; 1 Thess. 4: 9-12; 5: 12-15.

HOME READING.—

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|--------------|----|---|
| February 14. | M. | Serving In and Through the Church. (Acts 2: 42-47.) |
| February 15. | T. | Spirit-Prompted Service. (Acts 13: 1-12.) |
| February 16. | W. | Exalted Work of the Church. (Isa. 52: 1-12.) |
| February 17. | T. | The Holy Spirit and Witnessing. (Acts 1: 1-11.) |
| February 18. | F. | Promoting Harmony in the Church. (Matt. 13: 15-20.) |
| February 19. | S. | Christ the Head of the Church. (Col. 1: 9-23.) |
| February 20. | S. | Paul's Prayer for the Church. (Eph. 3: 14-21.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The place where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered is supposed to be Mount Hattin, seven miles southwest from Capernaum and about three miles west of the Sea of Galilee. Of this place McGarvey says: "But the sides of the hill are too steep for the assembling of such a multitude as heard the Sermon on the Mount, and its summits are not sufficiently capacious. There is no reason at all for giving credence

to the tradition." ("Lands of the Bible," page 318.) Again: "It was selected without reason in the period of the Crusaders." (Page 520.)

The Sermon on the Mount, it seems, was delivered during Christ's first general tour through Galilee. It contains the basic principles of his kingdom. In obedience to these, one must enter into and live in his kingdom.

The church of Christ is the training school on earth in which his disciples are developed into the practice of these principles.

Christ came to the earth, suffered, died, and rose again from the dead in order to restore God's rule on earth. When all men live according to these principles, God's will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Sermon on the Mount teaches implicit obedience to and perfect reliance upon God. See its conclusions in Matt. 7: 21-29.

These principles are quite the opposite of what the world admires and calls great.

It must not be understood that he who cultivates any one or a few of these alone to the exclusion of the rest will be blessed, but he who cultivates and practices all together.

This lesson embraces only two of these principles, but it is necessary to understand what the Sermon on the Mount is.

Since the subject of this lesson is "Serving In and Through the Church," it is very necessary to know that God cannot be served out of the church.

Serving God puts one in the church. To say that one can serve God out of the church is equal to saying one can serve God while in sin, because the moment one reaches the forgiveness of sins one becomes a part of the church. See the comment on verse 47.

It is necessary to know what the church is. The word "church" is a translation of the word which means "called out." God's called-out ones are his church. They have been "called out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Pet. 2: 9.) They have been called out of darkness into light to remain out and to "walk in the light, as he is in the light." (1 John 1: 7.) In Acts 8: 1-4 it is stated that the church was persecuted; that "Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison;" "and they [the church] were all scattered abroad, . . . except the apostles." This shows that Christians, children of God, constitute the church. Whatever is done to them is done to the church. People cannot be saved from their sins, become children of God, or Christians, without being parts of the church, or that much of the church, or parts of God's family, or citizens of his kingdom. In Acts 9: 31 it is stated that "the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied." This shows again what the church is—the people of God, who have peace, receive edification, walk in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and are multiplied.

The church exists all the time—every day in the week and all the year round. The church comes together at the times God specifies for work and worship. (1 Cor. 14: 23-26; 1 Cor. 11: 17; Acts 7: 20; Heb. 10: 25.)

Whatever Christians, or children of God, do in obedience to him at all times—in shops, stores, factories, offices, etc.; on farms; in homes as housewives or mothers, rearing children in the fear of God; or following any honest occupation or doing any other good in the name of Christ—is church work; hence, is serving God in the church.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "The Salt of the Earth," "The Light of the World."

(Matt. 5: 13-16.)

13. "Ye are the salt of the earth." With all the conditions of heart and qualifications of character given in the previous part of Matt. 5, cultivated and manifested by Christ's disciples, they are, indeed, "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world."

We are familiar with the properties of salt. Christ's disciples are "the salt of the earth" in that they influence others to be saved and in that, like the number of righteous persons not found in Sodom who would have saved the city, they save the earth and its inhabitants from immediate destruction. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one." (Col. 4: 6.) Those who have lost their influence for good are like salt which has lost its savor—fit for nothing.

14-16. "Ye are the light of the world." Whatever makes manifest is light, and "the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." (Eph. 5: 7-13.) The disciples of Christ show what Christianity is and what it has done for them. Their light shines through their good works. They are like a city on a hill which cannot be hid. Like the salt which has lost its savor, if the light which is in Christ's disciples be darkness, "how great is the darkness!" (Matt. 6: 23.) The Philippians shone as "lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." (Phil. 2: 15.)

II. The Church at Work.

(Acts 2: 42-47.)

42. "And they." "They" who? They who, having heard the sermon preached "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven" (1 Pet. 1: 12; Acts 2: 4) through Peter on the day of Pentecost, believed in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, exalted to the right hand of God, and made both Lord and Christ; who had repented of their sins; and who had been baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission" of sins, with the promise of receiving the "Holy Spirit"—they who had gladly received this word (which included faith in Christ as the Savior, Priest, and King, and repentance of sins, and baptism in the name of Christ) continued "steadfastly" in the things named in this verse. They continued to learn from the apostles the will of God, and continued likewise to practice it.

The "fellowship" was mutual joy, sympathy, and helpfulness in one another's successes and triumphs, sufferings and wants, afflictions and sorrows. (Rom. 12: 15; 1 Cor. 12: 26.) This embraces the contri-

bution of money and means to relieve the distressed and to help the needy.

The "breaking of bread" refers to the Lord's Supper. (Matt. 26: 26-30; Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 10: 16.) These disciples were taught to meet on the first day of the week "to break bread" and to otherwise worship God as he directs (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2), and were exhorted not to forsake their own assembling together (Heb. 10: 25).

Christians are to be "instant in prayer" and to "pray without ceasing."

"And the prayers" refers to prayers in their meetings.

This verse does not state the regular day or time of meeting for this purpose, but other passages do. (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; Heb. 10: 25.)

Thus all Christians must continue in the worship of God.

From this chapter we learn how the Spirit influenced sinners and guided them into the remission of sins and into the church of Christ. So through the inspired apostles in the same way the Spirit guides sinners to-day. And we learn, too, how the Spirit guides all Christians in the worship of God and the work of the church.

43. All these wonderful things, with the additional miracles wrought by the apostles, filled the people with awe and the fear of God.

44, 45. There were three thousand believers added on the one day mentioned above, and this number was increased daily. These many thousands of believers, or Christians, were together. The most of them were from distant countries and had no means of subsistence. Those who had goods and possessions sold them, and distribution of the proceeds was made among others "according as any man had need." Only the needy received anything. This was a common fund out of which to supply the needy. This was not a communistic leveling-up and leveling-down affair, or joint stock company, with the apostles as general managers.

This was a manifestation of great liberality. Liberality to-day in the church should be equal to the necessity, even if that requires the sale of property.

46. This is "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4: 3.) These thousands of believers, with "singleness of heart" and "with one accord," continued "steadfastly" in the service of God, worshipping and teaching daily in the temple and eating their meals at home with gladness. Christ's prayer that his disciples may all be one was answered here. All churches to-day should be of "one accord," of "one mind and soul," and act with "singleness of heart." Not to do so is disobedience to God—is sin.

47. From such hearts and lives continual praises to God ascend. Such unity and peace and liberality will always gain "favor with all the people." It is a great pity, and even shame, that congregations in numerous places do not have this favor to-day, but are rather in disfavor because of strife, contention, a bad spirit, and division.

"And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved," and the margin says, "or were being saved." This shows that the Lord adds people to his church; that only the pardoned, or saved, are added; and that he adds them as fast as he saves them. That which saves people adds them to the church. They were not "converted,"

or saved, and then "added" at some indefinite future time; neither did they "join the church of their choice" when the meeting was over, because they were already in it by virtue of their obedience.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What is said about the place where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered?
What principles does the Sermon on the Mount contain?
What school is the church of Christ?
What did Christ come to this earth to restore?
Exactly opposite to what are the principles of the Sermon on the Mount?
One is blessed by observing how many of these principles?
What is it necessary to understand in order to comprehend the subject of this lesson?
Into what does serving God put one?
Who constitute the church?
Of what have they been called out?
For how long must they remain out?
Give the passages which show that Christians, or children of God, make the church.
Does the church exist every day in the week?
When does it come together, and for what purpose?
What is church work?
What part of the Sermon on the Mount does this lesson embrace?
13 How are Christ's disciples "the salt of the earth?"
For what are those who have lost their influence not fit?
14-16 How are Christ's disciples "the light of the world?"
- In what respect are they like a city on a hill?
How did the Philippians shine as lights?
42 To whom does the "they" in this verse refer?
State what they had heard and done to become Christians.
What did they continue to do?
What is the "fellowship?"
What is the "breaking of bread?"
What "prayers" are meant?
What should all Christians continue to do?
On what day did they meet to break bread, etc.?
How did the Spirit of God teach and guide the people into remission of sins and into the church and the Christian life?
43 What filled the people with wonder and awe?
44, 45 How did this church show its liberality?
Who received help, and who did not?
What liberality should the church manifest now?
46 What here shows "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"
Show the difference between this church in Jerusalem and some which call themselves "churches of Christ" now.
47 Why did this church have favor with all people?
Who adds people to the church?
When and how does he do this?
Why not wait until some future time after becoming a Christian before "joining the church" and then "join the church of one's choice?"

His work is never hard to do
Who works all day for some one;
He labors well whose heart is true,
And fondly true, to some one.
Men toil for gold and bravely go
Where danger lurks for fame; but—O!—
The sweetest joy a man may know
Is just to work for some one. (Selected.)

LESSON IX.—FEBRUARY 27.

MAKING THE COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN.

(TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

Gal. 5: 13-25.

13 For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only *use* not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another.

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties,

21 Envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 Meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.

24 And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

25 If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them."* (Eph. 5: 11.)

TIME.—Self-control should be exercised at all times.

PLACES.—Self-control should be exercised at all places.

PERSONS.—Self-control should be exercised by all persons.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 6: 10-20.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Eph. 5: 1-21.

HOME READING.—

February 21. M. Making the Community Christian. (Gal. 5: 13-25.)

February 22. T. Responsibility for Others. (Gal. 6: 1-10.)

February 23. W. Law-Abiding Citizens. (Rom. 13: 1-10.)

February 24. T. The Highest Good. (Rom. 14: 13-23.)

February 25. F. Giving Up Sin. (Acts 19: 18-22.)

February 26. S. The Heavenly Ideal. (Rev. 21: 1-8.)

February 27. S. Protection Against Enemies. (Eph. 6: 10-20.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Galatia was a province of Asia Minor. It was inhabited by Gauls, Greeks, and Jews. Some think that in Paul's time Galatia embraced the district in which Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were situated.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

This is another "temperance lesson." "Temperance" is "self-control," and too much correct teaching in regard to it cannot be done.

Before the corrupt Felix and profligate Drusilla, Paul "reasoned of

righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come." (See Acts 24: 24-26.)

Self-control is one of the essential elements to success in this life and one of the duties and virtues essential to entrance into heaven. (See 2 Pet. 1: 1-11.)

The greatest lesson of life and the most difficult to practice is the one of self-control. To conquer one's own passions and lusts is the greatest victory of life. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16: 32.)

This is the one great fight all have to make, and where so many fail.

The "lesson text" for the present lesson is in the book of Galatians. This book was written by Paul and addressed to "the churches of Galatia." (Gal. 1: 1, 2.)

Paul, with Timothy, preached the gospel in Galatia about A.D. 52. (Acts 16: 6.)

About three years after that Paul "went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples." (Acts 18: 23.)

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul states that he "gave order to the churches of Galatia" "concerning the collection for the saints." (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2.)

His letter to these churches was written about A.D. 58, probably from Corinth or Ephesus.

The object of this letter to the Galatians was: "(1) To defend his own apostolic authority; (2) to oppose the Judaistic errors by which they were being deceived. Accordingly, it contains two parts—the apologetic (chapters 1, 2) and the polemic (chapters 3 to 5: 12). These are naturally followed by a hortatory conclusion." (Alford.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself."

13. This verse states the fact that Christians are "called for freedom" from the law of Moses, as stated in verse 1: "For freedom did Christ set us free." Hence, Christians should not be persuaded by Judaizing teachers to go back to the law—to be "entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

All the moral code of the Mosaic law has been incorporated in the gospel—"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8: 2)—and is binding on Christians; but they are free from the rites, ceremonies, and positive requirements. This freedom, therefore, must not be used as an occasion for gratifying the appetites and passions of the flesh. Instead, Christians should "through love be servants one of another."

14. "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This one commandment embraces all duties to one's fellow men. All who would "make a fair show in the flesh" and "glory" in the flesh compelled circumcision (Gal. 6: 12, 13), but all who really loved their neighbors served them and sought their peace and salvation.

15. "But" introduces a contrast between loving one another and bit-

ing and devouring one another. Evil teachers had created strife and contention in the churches of Galatia, as such teachers do now. Paul speaks of them to the Philippians as follows: "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision: for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. 3: 2, 3.) This strife led them not only to "bite," but to "devour one another." "Bite" represents sudden anger, but "devour" shows action of vengeance and malice. If this biting and devouring were allowed to continue, those indulging in them would consume one another.

Much strife and contention, biting and devouring, have resulted from evil teachers in the present generation, and congregations have been rent asunder.

II. Walking By the Spirit.

16. To "walk by the Spirit" is to take every step in life according to the direction of the Holy Spirit, to live continually as the Holy Spirit directs. The Holy Spirit directs and guides all in becoming Christians and throughout the Christian life by speaking to all the word of God through the inspired apostles. The word of God has been revealed by the Holy Spirit. Peter (1 Pet. 1: 12) says the gospel was preached "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven." The Holy Spirit says deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" (Tit. 2: 11); "put to death your members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3: 5); "put to death the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8: 13); put away "anger, wrath, malice, railing, and shameful speaking out of your mouth," and "lie not one to another" (Col. 3: 8, 9); to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world"—"the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life" (1 John 2: 15, 16); and to set the heart "on the things that are above," etc. (Col. 3: 2). All who do these things "walk by the Spirit," and do not "fulfill the lust of the flesh." "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Rom. 13: 14.)

17. "The flesh [its appetites, desires, passions] lusteth [longs and strives] against the Spirit [the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit], and the Spirit against the flesh." The appetites, desires, passions, and vain ambitions of the flesh lead in one direction and the Spirit of God in an opposite direction. This is a continual warfare. "That ye may not do the things that ye would."

No one can live the life of a Christian, or even become a Christian, who does not desire and purpose to turn away from all sin, to obey God in all things, and to become a partaker "of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Pet. 1: 4); yet, with all holy aspirations, earnest prayers, and zealous efforts, the weakness, passions, and lusts of the flesh present such obstacles and difficulties that one is unable to accomplish what one would and what one could without such hindrances. This is no justification for yielding to temptation and giving away to the flesh—not at all.

18. "But if ye are led by the Spirit [guided by the teachings of the Holy Spirit], ye are not under the law." Why does Paul say in this connection, "Ye are not under the law?" For the encouragement of the churches of Galatia—and all Christians. He has just stated in

the previous verse that because of the weaknesses, appetites, passions, and lusts of the flesh, "ye may not do the things that ye would," and under the law of Moses all such were condemned; "for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them." (Gal. 3: 10.) Under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" and walking after the Spirit, they were not condemned by the Mosaic law.

III. The Works of the Flesh.

19-21. "The works of the flesh are manifest"—are plainly seen and may be easily recognized. Walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit are being contrasted by the apostle, and he clearly shows how all may know which they are following. All who do the works of the flesh are not "walking by the Spirit."

"Fornication," strictly speaking, is sexual intercourse on the part of an unmarried person with one of the opposite sex, whether married or unmarried. Adultery is a violation of the marriage bed, or unlawful sexual intercourse of a married person with another, whether married or unmarried. If both the guilty parties are married, the act is called "double adultery." Fornication often signifies adultery.

"Uncleanness" is unnatural practice—self-abuse, bestiality, sodomy, etc. This sin was common among heathens. (See Rom. 1: 24; 2 Cor. 12: 21.)

"Lasciviousness" is any kind of unchastity. There may be lascivious eyes and lascivious desires. "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which defile the man." (Matt. 15: 19, 20.) Then how important to heed the command: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4: 23.) He who thinks no evil and indulges no impure and unholy feelings can keep his life clean and pure, righteous and holy.

"Idolatry" is the worship of idols, embracing the idolatrous feast and rites of the worship of different gods and goddesses—such as Venus, Bacchus, etc. Paul says covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) Jesus says: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6: 24.)

"Sorcery" is the use of magic, enchantment, divination by the supposed assistance of evil spirits, witchcraft. The practice of sorcery was extensive and its power great in many places, especially in Asia Minor. (See Acts 19: 19.)

"Enmities" are the qualities which make enemies—hatred, ill will, etc.—and are opposed to kindness and brotherly love.

"Strife" represents the acts of contention to which "enmities" lead.

"Jealousies" are the painful feelings, anxious fear, and unfounded suspicions aroused in the heart over the excellencies of others; unholy desires and strife to excel one another, rivalries. Jealousy never allows one to "rejoice with them that rejoice" (Rom. 12: 15), but, on the other hand, makes one most miserable. Zeal and jealousy come from the same word, and may be used in a good sense. "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy." (2 Cor. 11: 2.) God is a jealous God.

"Wraths" are broils and acts of vengeance.

"Factions, divisions, parties" come in natural order. James (3:14) condemns "bitter jealousy and faction" in the heart and lying "against the truth." "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse." (Tit. 3:10.) Teaching a "different doctrine" from that of the New Testament, consenting "not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" (which leads to godliness), and "doting about questionings and disputes of words," are factious and produce envy, strife, "divisions," and "parties." (See 1 Tim. 6:3-5.)

Christ's body—his church—is one, and it is a great sin against him and men to divide that body into factions and contending parties over the opinions and ways, wisdom and institutions, of men. First come the factions, then the divisions, then the separate parties.

"Envyings" are harmful and murderous feelings aroused in the heart over the excellencies and successes of others. No feeling can be baser and more like Satan.

"Drunkenness" is not simply reeling and staggering on the street, but indulgence in the use of intoxicating liquors. In many ways and in many places in the Bible drunkenness is condemned.

"Revelings" are carousals, or riotous and lascivious feasts, with dissolute songs and music.

"And such like"—all other works of the flesh not specified in the above list.

"Of which I forewarn you ["tell you plainly"—margin], even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." As Paul had warned the Galatians before when with them, he now repeats the warnings in his letter; and as he warned the Galatians, he now solemnly warns all against such practices. All teachers and preachers should teach and warn against such now.

22, 23. "But" introduces the contrast between "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit." The "works of the flesh" are so variant that they are spoken of in the plural number, while "the fruit of the Spirit" is in the singular number. "The fruit of the Spirit" is the result of "walking by the Spirit." (See comment on verse 16.) A tree is known by its fruit. We know and the world knows that we are "led by the Spirit" (verse 18) when "the fruit of the Spirit" is manifest in our lives.

As he enumerates above "the works of the flesh," Paul describes here "the fruit of the Spirit." Commit to memory all that it embraces.

"Love" is not a passion, a mere sentiment; it is obedience to God and service to men. (See John 14:15, 23; 1 John 5:3; 3:16-18.) "Joy"—joy that arises over the pardon of sin and the hope of heaven. (See Rom. 5:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:8.) "Peace"—peace toward men. Christians are commanded to be at peace among themselves, to keep the peace, and to pursue peace with all men. "Long-suffering" is bearing with the faults and frailties of others and enduring trials for Christ's sake. "Kindness" not to some only, but toward all. "Goodness" is the noble quality of heart that in pure and holy desires is free from envy, scorn, and pride; thinks no evil, and seeks the good of all. "Faithfulness" is prompt and punctual, continued and reliable

obedience to God and service to men—discharging all duties, at all times, at all hazards. "Meekness" is steadfastness in the service of God; patient endurance under difficulties and provocation as obedience to God. "Self-control" is to govern the temper and tongue, appetites and passions, and to bring the body into subjection to the will of God.

"Against such there is no law." None who bear "the fruit of the Spirit" will be condemned by the law. "Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for menstealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine," etc. (1 Tim. 1: 9-11.)

24. "They that are of Christ Jesus" are Christians, followers of Christ, governed by him. Such "have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." "Crucified" is a strong term, and means that those under the control of Christ have put to death the passions and lusts of the flesh. Paul says by the cross of Christ the world was crucified to him and he to the world. (Gal. 6: 14.)

IV. By the Spirit Let Us Walk.

25. "If we live by the Spirit" means inasmuch as, or since, we live in a spiritual kingdom (the church), or under a spiritual dispensation, and under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8: 2), "by the Spirit let us also walk"—that is, live as the Spirit through the word of God directs. (See comment on verse 16.)

"Vainglorious" is self-opinionated, elated over one's own achievements, covetous of empty glory and vain honors. (Verse 26.) Christians should not be puffed up one against another; but, "having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind," should do "nothing through faction or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind" each should "count other better than himself." (Phil. 2: 2-4.) Striving for vainglory provokes, or challenges, one another to rivalry, and leads to envy and other bad feelings.

QUESTIONS.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Give the subject. | For what should this freedom not be used? |
| Repeat the Golden Text. | 14 In what is the whole law fulfilled? |
| Give the Time, Place, and Persons. | Why? |
| Did you read the Devotional Reading? | 15 What contrast is made in this verse? |
| Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers? | Who had created strife and contention in the churches of Galatia? |
| Did you read the Home Reading? | To what did these lead? |
| What and where was Galatia? | What is the difference between "bite," "devour," and "consume"? |
| What is "temperance?" | From what do strife, contention, and division now result? |
| What is the greatest victory one can gain? | 16 What is it to "walk by the Spirit?" |
| Who wrote the book of Galatians? | What does the Holy Spirit teach in regard to the flesh? |
| To whom was it addressed? | What is it to fulfill "the lusts of the flesh?" |
| About when was it written? | 17 In what way do the flesh and Spirit strive against each other? |
| For what purpose was it written? | |
| What visits did Paul make to Galatia? | |
| 13 What does this verse state? | |
| What of the law of Moses is embraced in the gospel of Christ? | |

- Why cannot one do the things one would?
- 18 What is one's condition when led by the Spirit?
- Why is such a one not under the law?
- 19-21 What is meant by the works of the flesh being "manifest?"
- Name and define them.
- What is the only way of controlling speech and conduct?
- What form of idolatry have we in this country?
- Who is a factious man?
- What should be done with him?
- Against what does Paul warn the Galatians?
- How does he warn them?
- 22, 23 What is the "fruit of the Spirit?"
- How is this fruit produced in one's life?
- What is "love," "joy," "peace," "long-suffering," "kindness," "goodness," "faithfulness," "meekness," "self-control?"
- Why is there no law against such?
- 24 Who are "of Christ Jesus?"
- What have they done?
- What is it to "crucify the flesh," etc.?
- 25 What is meant by living "by the Spirit?"
- What should all such do?
- What is it to be "vainglorious?"
- To what does this lead?

MY RESOLVE.

To live as gentle as I can;
 To be, no matter where, a man;
 To take what comes of good or ill,
 And cling to faith and honor still;
 To do my best and let that stand,
 The record of my brain and hand,
 And then, should failure come to me,
 Still work and hope for victory;
 To have no secret place wherein
 I stoop unseen to shame and sin;
 To be the same when I'm alone
 As when my every deed is known;
 To live undaunted, unafraid
 Of any step that I have made;
 To be, without pretense or sham,
 Exactly what men think I am. (Edgar A. Guest.)

It is not the thing that you meant to do,
 But the thing you did, my son,
 That counts in keeping the record true
 Till the long day's work is done.

It is not the castles you build in Spain,
 Nor the mighty deeds you planned;
 It is not the dream of the dreaming brain,
 But the deed of the toiling hand.

For the airy castle dissolves in air,
 And the vision fadeth fast;
 But the thing that is done—it standeth there
 Till the earth and heavens are past.
 (Bryan W. Collier.)

LESSON X.—MARCH 6.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS.

Acts 8: 4-8; 2 Cor. 5: 14-20.

4 They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ.

6 And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did.

7 For from many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was much joy in that city.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died;

15 And he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.

16 Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more.

17 Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.

18 But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Ye shall be my witnesses.” (Acts 1: 8.) Jesus said this to the apostles.

TIME.—Of Acts 8: 4-8, between A.D. 30 and A.D. 37; of writing Second Corinthians, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Samaria and Corinth.

PERSONS.—Philip, the Samaritans and Corinthians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 1-7.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Acts 1: 6-11; 16: 13-15; 2 Cor. 5: 20 to 6: 10.

HOME READING.—

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|--------------|----|---|
| February 28. | M. | Sharing the Good News. (2 Cor. 5: 14-20.) |
| March 1. | T. | The Great Commission. (Matt. 28: 16-20.) |
| March 2. | W. | The Purpose of Preaching. (1 Cor. 1: 18-25.) |
| March 3. | T. | Paul's Example. (1 Cor. 2: 1-10.) |
| March 4. | F. | The True Preacher's Spirit. (1 Thess. 2: 1-12.) |
| March 5. | S. | The Sower's Reward. (Ps. 126.) |
| March 6. | S. | The Gracious Invitation. (Isa. 55: 1-7.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The city of Samaria was the capital of the province of Samaria, which lay between Judea and Galilee. It was between forty and forty-five miles from Jerusalem.

Corinth was a literary, commercial, and heathen city about forty-

five miles south of Athens. It "was situated on the western coast of the isthmus which connects the Peloponnesus with Attica. It was only nine miles distant across the isthmus to Cenchrea, at the head of the Saronic Gulf, and in this direction it had easy communication with all the great cities of Asia; and being at the head of the Gulf of Corinth, on the west, it enjoyed through it and the Adriatic Sea close communication with Italy and the west. It was, therefore, a city of great commercial advantages, and these had drawn into it a large Jewish population." (McGarvey.) It was the seat of the Roman government of Achaia and the political and commercial capital of Greece. Its inhabitants were given to fleshly enjoyment and licentiousness.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

An account of the establishment of the church in Jerusalem is given in Acts 2.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 give further accounts of its growth and development.

Chapter 7 gives the account of Stephen's speech and martyrdom.

Acts 8: 1-3 introduces us to Saul of Tarsus, and gives the part he played in the death of Stephen and the persecution of the church.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Philip Preaching in Samaria.

4. On account of persecution the church in Jerusalem were "all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." They who "were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." As they met people in the roads and where they lodged at night, they told of the cause of Christ. They made it their business to preach Christ—some publicly, some privately.

God overruled this persecution to the advancement of his kingdom. What was done by its enemies to destroy the church scattered the seed of the church—the word of God—over all the country. God made the wrath of man to praise him.

5. Philip—not the apostle, but the evangelist (Acts 21: 8) and one of the seven—"went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." As did Stephen, Philip, appointed to serve tables, soon developed into a preacher of the gospel.

The Samaritans were a mixed race, springing up after the captivity of the ten tribes from the colonists of different nations the king of Assyria sent to inhabit the land and the remaining Jews. (2 Kings 17: 24-41.) They were neither Jew nor Gentile.

Philip "proclaimed unto them the Christ." He told them about Jesus—his birth, his life, his suffering, his crucifixion, his resurrection, his ascension, his promise to come again, who he was, what he was, what he had done, what he was doing in heaven, and what he would have all to believe and do in order to be saved.

When Paul became a preacher, he determined to know nothing, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2: 1-5.)

Philip was a preacher because he preached, an evangelist because he evangelized.

Christ's order in preaching the gospel was first in Jerusalem, next in Judea, next in Samaria, and next unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1: 8.) In the providence of God this order was observed.

6-8. The people heard Philip, and "gave heed with one accord" to what he said, seeing the miracles he wrought. These miracles confirmed the truth preached by Philip and convinced the people that it was from God. Two reasons are given for the people's acceptance of the gospel with one accord—(1) hearing Philip and (2) seeing "the signs which he did." Healing the afflicted and the assurance of salvation produced great joy in Samaria.

II. The Result of Philip's Preaching.

Verses 12 and 13 state the result of Philip's preaching. "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." They turned away from their former leader to Jesus. Their faith came by hearing the word of God. (See Rom. 10: 17.) This was the order on Pentecost: (1) Peter preached, (2) the people heard, (3) they believed, (4) they repented, and (5) they were baptized. (Acts 2: 36-42.)

In various cases of conversion recorded in Acts it is stated, as in this case, the people heard, believed, and were baptized. This means, of course, they also repented. (See Acts 9: 5, 17, 18; 10: 38-43, 48; 16: 13-15, 31-33; 18: 8; 19: 4, 5.) This shows that in preaching Jesus (verse 5), Philip taught the people to believe in Jesus, to repent, of course, and to be baptized. No one can preach Jesus to-day without preaching all Philip and the apostles preached. The people were not baptized before they believed, but because they believed. Had they not believed in Jesus, they would not have been baptized. Both men and women—not infants—were baptized. They believed and acted upon their own faith and responsibility.

III. Paul and the Corinthians.

As we know, Paul planted the church in Corinth, A.D. 52, 53 (1 Cor. 3: 6; 4: 14), during his second missionary journey. He was at Corinth eighteen months. (Acts 18: 1-10.) He wrote the first letter to the Corinthians, in the spring of A.D. 57, from Ephesus, at the close of his three-years' stay there. (Acts 20: 31; 19: 1, 8, 9, 10, 21; 1 Cor. 16: 8.) He wrote the second letter from Macedonia (2 Cor. 7: 5; 9: 3, 4) upon Titus' return from Corinth with encouraging news from the church there. From these letters we learn not only of the growth of this church, but of the many wrong things which sprang up, threatening to destroy its unity, peace, and purity.

Verses 11-21 of 2 Cor. 5, in which this lesson is found, contain very comprehensive declarations, which, it seems, have not been properly studied or understood by some.

IV. "For the Love of Christ Constraineth Us."

14, 15. "For" connects that which precedes with the declaration, "the love of Christ constraineth us." Paul persuaded men to believe

in and obey Christ. He was willing to be contrasted with those who "gloried in appearance and not in heart," to be accused by false teachers of being beside himself, because he was constrained by the love of Christ to do so. He states why the love of Christ constrains us—"because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died." Through the transgression of "one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." (Rom. 5: 12, 18.) All were doomed to death, so Christ died for all. By the grace of God he tasted of death for every man. (Heb. 2: 9.) We should be familiar with the passages declaring God's love for men, such as John 3: 16; 15: 13; and 1 John 4: 9-11. But not only the fact that Christ died for all, making it possible for God to "be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3: 26), must be considered, but also the effect this love should have upon men. It is this which Paul presents here—"that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." All owe their redemption from death to Christ; and whether they love and obey him or not, they should do so, and should live no longer unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again; for none are their own, but have been bought with a price—the blood of Jesus. (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.) "We love, because he first loved us." (1 John 4: 19.) The goodness of God leads men to repentance, and every one who does not repent despises "the richness of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering." (Rom. 2: 4.)

V. A New Creature in Christ.

16. "Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh." These verses teach the same lesson which John the Baptist taught the Pharisees and Sadducees and that Jesus taught Nicodemus, which is that no one enters the kingdom of God, or is a child of God, because he is a fleshly descendant of Abraham, or because he belongs to any fleshly family on earth or fills any station among men. (See Matt. 3: 7-10; John 1: 12, 13.) To become a child of God, one must be born of God, must obey God. So Jew or Gentile can become a child of God, regardless of fleshly birth or family connection. Jesus sent out the apostles to preach repentance and remission of sins unto all nations. So the conditions of pardon and peace are preached alike to all. (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 46, 47.) For this reason we know no man after the flesh in the church of God. "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more." No man in Paul's time was a Christian, or a child of God, because he belonged to the fleshly family among the Jews even of which Christ was born. Christ's own half brothers at first did not believe on him and were no better because of kinship to him. So with every other Jew. Some were acquainted with Christ while he was here in the flesh, but they were no better for that. But this may mean that the Word "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1: 14); hence, Christ was manifested in the flesh and was thus known in the flesh; but after he ascended to heaven and is still in heaven with his glorified body, he is not known in the flesh, but is the Savior, Prophet, Priest, and King.

17. Whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, rich or poor, high or low,

the only way to be saved is to become "a new creature" in Christ Jesus. If any man, whoever he may be, is in Christ, he is a "new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." This is the same as being "born anew," or "born again"—"born of water and the Spirit." (John 3: 3-8.) But very many are far more concerned about the theory of the "new birth," or the theory of getting into Christ, than they are about the reality of being "born anew" or of being indeed new creatures in Christ. When one is a new creature in Christ, the old life has been left behind; the old man, with his deeds, has been put off; the love of the world has been given up, and one has come out of darkness into light; one has a new heart, a new hope, new associates, a new life to live, the affections have been set upon things above—all things have become new. If this is not the case, how can one claim to be in Christ?

How, then, does one enter into, live in, and die in Christ? One comes to Christ through faith in him, repentance of all sins, owning and confessing him as Prophet, Priest, and King, and then enters him by being baptized into him. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27; see also 1 Cor. 12: 13; Rom. 6: 3.) But this is not all. One must abide in Christ, grow in the Christian graces in him. Hence, Paul says: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Rom. 13: 14.) In Christ one finds redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1: 14), and all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1: 3).

18, 19. "But all things"—the new life and all these good things in Christ—are from God. They have come through the love and grace of God. God has reconciled us to himself through Christ. God is not man's enemy. He has no feeling of enmity against man. He has never wronged or harmed man in any way. "God is love," and seeks man's greatest good both here and hereafter. He is the same yesterday and to-day and forever. The supreme good of the human race was his consideration in the creation of all things. When sin and death entered the world through man's transgression, God in grace and love provided through Christ the way of salvation. Hence, God is not the one to become reconciled. He is willing and ready and able to save to the uttermost all who come unto him through Christ. (Heb. 7: 25.) It is unnecessary and wrong, therefore, to pray God to become reconciled to save sinners; on the contrary, sinners are prayed to be reconciled to God. Sinners are at enmity with God. The friendship of the world is enmity with God. "Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God." (James 4: 4.) The world hates God and Christ and the church. (John 15: 18, 19.) To become reconciled to God is to put away this enmity, to love God, to become obedient to him, to imbibe his spirit, and to live in harmony and unity with him. To influence and induce man to do this, God in his love sent Christ to be the propitiation "for our sins." God manifested his great love for man in that he "sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." (1 John 4: 9.)

"Gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation." This "ministry"

means the service, or the work, of bringing man into reconciliation with God—namely, as Paul says: “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses.” This is done through the grace of God and the love of Christ and faith on man’s part, as stated in Rom. 3: 21-26. The wisdom, goodness, grace, love, power, and salvation of God are manifested through Christ. “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power.” (Col. 2: 9, 10; read also verses 11-15 of the same chapter.) “Christ,” as we know, means “Anointed.” He is called “the Lord’s Anointed.” Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. Christ is all three. He is the Teacher promised and sent from God—the Teacher of the whole world. He is the Priest to offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world—the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world; the Priest that ever lives to make intercession for us; the Mediator between God and men. And he is the King to rule over us, “and his commandments are not grievous.” (1 John 5: 3.) By studying the passages already quoted, and also Heb. 1: 4, with other similar passages, we see how God was in Christ.

God does not reckon unto men their trespasses, or hold their sins against them, in that he forgives their sins upon their obedience to Christ. (Heb. 5: 7-9.)

“Having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” By the pronoun “us” Paul means himself, as may be seen from verses 12 and 13, as Adam Clarke says. But as other apostles were inspired and sent out by Christ, they have a part in this ministry of reconciliation. To them in the great commission (Matt. 28: 19-20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 46, 47; John 20: 21-23) Christ committed this ministry of reconciliation. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles “into all the truth” (John 16: 13) and to bring to their remembrance all that he had said unto them (John 14: 26). They were not to begin this great work until they were endued with this power from on high. When this power came, what the apostles preached, telling sinners what to believe and to do unto the remission of sins, and all Christians to continue steadfastly to practice, is stated in Acts 2. This can never be changed; nothing can be added to or taken from it. This is “the word of reconciliation”—the conditions of pardon and salvation—committed to the apostles.

All that is necessary for all the rest of mankind—educated, learned, or otherwise—to do, and all that they can do, is to believe and obey this, and to teach and to persuade others to do the same.

VI. Ambassadors of Christ.

20. Let us consider well what this verse states—“ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ;” God “entreating by us,” we beseech on behalf of Christ. An ambassador is “an official representative” sent by a sovereign power to attend to the business of that power—kingdom or government—that is, to represent that government or power. Christ is God’s ambassador to men. He represents God to the human race. God speaks through him. (Heb. 1: 2.) God gave to him all authority in heaven and on earth. (Matt. 28: 19.) No human being or angel in heaven can have this power.

Christ sent out the apostles to speak for him. He speaks through them. Those who hear and receive them hear and receive Jesus. (Matt. 10: 40; Luke 10: 16; John 13: 20.) Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to speak through the apostles. Hence, the apostles are ambassadors on behalf of Christ; and in Christ's stead, or on his behalf, they present to the whole world and for all time the conditions of pardon and salvation, and thus through the love and grace of God beseech all in behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God. No man not endued with this power from on high and not thus sent out by Christ can act in his stead or speak on his behalf. How, then, can any man since the days of the apostles claim to speak for Christ, therefore to speak for God, and therefore to be an ambassador on behalf of Christ? Yet some young preachers are beginning to speak of themselves as ambassadors of Christ. This comes from both ignorance and presumption. What can they do or say that the rest of us cannot do and say? What rights and authority in the church have they that the poorest, weakest, and humblest member of the church has not?

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Places, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Tell what and where Samaria was.
Give the situation first, then the political, educational, religious, and moral or immoral condition of Corinth.
When and by whom was the church in Jerusalem established?
Of what do chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 of Acts give an account?
What does chapter 7 relate?
Where do we first meet with Saul of Tarsus?
What evil work did he do?
4 How was the gospel preached in Judea?
How did it reach Samaria?
To what good did God overrule the persecution at Jerusalem?
5 What Philip was this?
Where and what was the city of Samaria?
How far was it from Jerusalem?
Who were the Samaritans?
What did Philip preach to them?
What is it to preach Christ?
What was Christ's order in preaching the gospel?
6-8 What effect did the preaching of Philip have upon the Samaritans?
What two reasons are given for their ready acceptance of the gospel?
What were the classes of miracles performed?
For what purpose were these miracles performed?
- When Philip preached, what did the people believe?
What did they do?
State the steps taken in the case of those who were converted in Acts 2.
Relate the account of cases of other conversions in Acts.
What does this show must be preached when one preaches Christ?
Who were baptized?
Who are proper subjects of baptism?
Who planted the church at Corinth?
How long was he there at first?
From what place and when did he write First Corinthians?
When and from what place did he write Second Corinthians?
14, 15 What did the love of Christ constrain Paul to do?
What should it constrain us to do?
What did Christ's dying for all show?
What effect should this love have upon all?
16 What is meant by knowing no man "after the flesh?"
How alone can one become a child of God?
What is meant by knowing and not knowing Christ "after the flesh?"
17 When is one a new creature in Christ?
Who can become new creatures in Christ?
Is becoming "a new creature" in Christ a matter of theory only or a reality?
Explain how one reaches and enters into Christ.
What things are new when one enters Christ?
What things become old?
18, 19 What things are from God?
Who are enemies of God?

Is God man's enemy?
 Who is to be reconciled—God or man?
 What is it to become reconciled to God?
 What did God do in order to influence man to become reconciled to him?
 What is the ministry of reconciliation?
 How was God in Christ?
 What office does Christ fill to men?
 How does God not reckon sin unto men?
 To whom did God commit the word of reconciliation?

What is the word of reconciliation?
 How and when did God commit this word unto the apostles?
 When and where were they to begin to preach it?
 20 What does "ambassador" mean?
 Who was God's Ambassador to men?
 Who serves as ambassadors of Christ or in behalf of Christ?
 Could Christ have ambassadors since the apostles?
 Why not?
 What about preachers now who say they are his ambassadors?

TRIUMPHANT TRUTH

Truth never dies, though ages come and go;
 The mountains wear away; the seas retire;
 Destruction lays earth's mighty cities low;
 And empires, states, and dynasties expire;
 But, caught and handed onward by the wise,
 Truth never dies.

Though unreceived and scoffed at through the year;
 Though made the butt of ridicule and jest;
 Though held aloft for mockery and jeers,
 Denied by those of transient power possessed,
 Insulted by the insolence of lies,
 Truth never dies.

It answers not; it does not take offense,
 But with mighty silence bides its time,
 As some great cliff that braves the elements
 And lifts through all the storms its head sublime,
 And never dies.

As rests the Sphinx amid Egyptian sands;
 As loom on high the snowy peak and crest;
 As firm and patient as Gibraltar stands,
 So truth, unwearied, waits the era blest,
 When men shall turn to it with great surprise—
 Truth never dies. (Author Unknown.)

LESSON XI.—MARCH 13.

MAKING THE WORLD CHRISTIAN.

Matt. 28: 16-20; Acts 16: 6-15.

16 But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

7 And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not;

8 And passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

13 And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.” (Matt. 28: 19.)

TIME.—April or May, A.D. 30, when the commission was given; A.D. 51, when Paul preached to Lydia and her household.

PLACES.—Mountain in Galilee, Jerusalem, Philippi.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the apostles, Lydia and her household, and all nations.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 60: 1-5.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—2 Cor. 11: 23-29.

HOME READING.—

March 7. M. Making the World Christian. (Acts 16: 6-15.)

March 8. T. Power for Evangelizing. (Acts 1: 1-11.)

March 9. W. World Conquest Prophesied. (Ps. 72: 8-19.)

March 10. T. Prayer for Workers. (Luke 10: 1-9.)

March 11. F. Paul's Appeal to the Heathen. (Acts 17: 22-31.)

March 12. S. The Success of Missions. (Acts 9: 32-35.)

March 13. S. The Enlargement of the Church. (Isa. 60: 1-5.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Phrygia, Galatia, Asia, Mysia, and Bithynia were provinces of Asia Minor. Locate them on the map.

There was a Roman province in Asia Minor called "Asia." Ephesus was its chief city.

Troas was a seaport on the *Ægean* Sea, and was near the site of ancient Troy. Counting this visit, Paul visited Troas at least three times, if not four times—the second time, 2 Cor. 2: 12; the third time, Acts 20: 6; the fourth time, perhaps, when he left his cloak and books with Carpus (2 Tim. 4: 13). There was a church at Troas.

Macedonia was a Roman province northwest from Asia Minor, across the *Ægean* Sea. Thessalonica was its capital.

Philippi was the first city of a small district of Macedonia, but was not the chief city of all Macedonia.

Philippi was built by Philip, king of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great, and named for himself. It was made famous by the battle fought there between Brutus and Cassius on one side and Augustus Cæsar and Mark Antony on the other side, in honor of which Augustus made it a Roman colony. He settled it with freedmen and soldiers, and the colony had its own senate and magistrates and was a miniature Rome.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Apostles Met Jesus on a Mountain in Galilee.

(Matt. 28: 16-20.)

16, 17. Just before Jesus' death he designated Galilee as a meeting place, and on the morning of his resurrection the angel sent word to the apostles that Jesus would meet them there. "The eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them." We have no way of ascertaining what mountain this was. We should learn the lesson of meeting Jesus where and when he appoints.

II. "All Authority."

18. What else Jesus may have said on this important occasion has not been recorded, but, for the salvation of all men, this much—and, therefore, all that is necessary—has been recorded.

"All authority" means that Jesus has the ability to teach, the power to save, and the right to rule. After Jesus had willingly suffered death, God "raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1: 20-23.) This passage and others show what is meant by "all authority."

"Hath been given" shows that Jesus derived this "authority" from God. Phil. 2: 6-11 shows *when* and *why* God so highly exalted Jesus. 1 Cor. 15: 20-28 shows that this "authority" is held under God, and that finally Jesus will deliver up the kingdom to God, the Father.

III. "Go Ye Therefore."

19. Because of this "authority" and in virtue of it, Jesus issued this command to go. He is the only one who could issue it, the only one who could tell what sinners must do in order to be saved and how the citizens of his kingdom must live.

"Go" means an aggressive work. The apostles and early disciples under this commission preached the gospel throughout the world in twenty-five or thirty years after it was issued because they obeyed the first word in it, "Go."

If all disciples in the world to-day would thus obey the command to go, the question of how to do missionary work would soon be settled and the work would soon be done.

"Go," not send, is the command; "go" to the people, and not simply invite "the masses" to come at stated times and to certain places to hear the gospel. "Go" everywhere, preaching the word, is the divine order; "go," not simply pay some one to go in your stead. You cannot serve God by proxy or save men by machinery. Personal work is the great need of the hour. The church is the pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3: 15), and God's people are the church, and they must go.

IV. "Make Disciples."

"Make disciples of all the nations"—that is, by teaching them of Jesus and persuading them to become his followers.

"Baptizing them"—the taught, those willing to follow Jesus, as is seen in Acts 2: 41: "They then that received his word were baptized." None could be baptized who would not receive the teaching.

The commission recorded by Mark and Luke was not spoken at the same time as when recorded by Matthew, but it means exactly the same thing. In Mark 16: 16 Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." In Luke 24: 47 he says: "Repentance and remission of sins." This shows that becoming disciples of Christ is a voluntary act on the part of "all the nations." They can receive the gospel or reject it. It also shows that in becoming Christians they must believe the gospel, repent of their sins, and be baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The way to be saved rests upon the same authority as the command to "go, . . . and make disciples of all nations." Neither men nor angels can alter this. God even has committed this way into the hands of Him who says: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.)

"Baptizing them into the name [not names] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" means into all the blessings in them; into association, fellowship, and communion with them; out of self into Christ, out of darkness into light, out of the world into the body and kingdom of God's Son.

This baptism is water baptism, because the apostles could not baptize people with the Holy Spirit; Christ alone could do that; because also no one was ever commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 10: 47, 48.)

Baptism is a burial in water of one who believes in Jesus as the Christ, trusts God, and has repented of all sins.

Baptism is a solemn act of obedience to God, declaring one's faith in Jesus Christ. "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead." (Col. 2: 12.) It puts one into Christ, as this verse states—into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.)

V. Teaching the Disciples.

20. "Teaching them"—those who have become disciples. Then people are not required to know everything about Christianity before they become Christians; neither can they. They must first become babes in Christ and learners in Christ's school.

"To observe all things whatsoever I commanded you"—not something commanded by any earthly religious authority. It is just as important to observe all these things as it is to first become Christians, or disciples of Christ. This expression embraces every precept and principle taught by Jesus. The apostles preached and practiced this part of the commission as diligently as the first part. So must all to-day.

"And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This means Jesus was not only with the disciples then, but will be ever with his church and will ever uphold this commission until the end of the world. The way of salvation will never change "unto the end of the world." Many are the promises of Jesus to be with his disciples and to bless them.

VI. The Conversion of Lydia and Her Household.

(Acts 16: 6-15.)

The above lesson gives Christ's commission to the apostles to preach the gospel to the "whole creation"—to "all the nations."

The Acts of Apostles shows how this commission was carried out. The following lesson gives one case of conversion under the teaching of this commission.

VII. Why Pass Asia, Mysia, and Bithynia?

6. It required some time to go "through the region of Phrygia and Galatia," although Luke speaks briefly of this work. Paul speaks of the churches of Galatia, and addressed an epistle to them. (Gal. 1: 2.)

Because of some sickness or infirmity of the flesh, Paul preached in Galatia. (Gal. 4: 13-15.) While because of this infirmity Paul preached in Galatia, the Holy Spirit forbade his preaching the word in Asia, which his judgment suggested was a ripe field. Later on he did spend three years in Ephesus, its capital. (Acts 20: 31.)

7, 8. As they traveled from east to west, Asia was on their left and Bithynia was on their right, extending to the Black Sea. Mysia was before them, being the extreme western district of Asia Minor. When

they were also forbidden to preach in Bithynia, they could do nothing else but to go forward. It was their judgment to preach in these countries at this time, but it was not God's will. They did not stop in Mysia, but, "passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas."

VIII. "The Macedonian Call."

9. While at Troas, probably the night after he reached there, a vision appeared to Paul. "There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." This was like Peter's vision at Joppa, like that of Cornelius (Acts 10: 3, 9-16), and like others which Paul had (Acts 18: 9; 22: 17; 2 Cor. 12: 1-10.) It was a revelation of God's will as to what he desired Paul to do.

IX. Luke's Appearance.

10. Here Luke first speaks of himself as being in Paul's company. Before this he says "they;" now he says "we." It is supposed Luke joined them here. Luke accompanied Paul to Philippi. In verse 40 of this chapter Luke says "they" departed, leaving himself at Philippi until several years afterwards, when he joined Paul and others on Paul's visit to Jerusalem. (Acts 20: 5, 7.)

They rightly concluded that God had called them to preach the gospel in Macedonia. Now they begin to see why they were forbidden at this time to preach in these other places.

X. The Voyage.

11. They found a ship in readiness and a propitious wind at sea, so that they made a straight course to Samothracia, and the day following to Neapolis (new town).

Samothracia was an island in the sea and Neapolis was a seaport of Philippi, which was about ten miles inland.

In two days they were across the sea, but at another time they were five days in making this voyage in the opposite direction. (Acts 20: 6.)

XI. When the Gospel Was First Preached in Europe.

12. From the place of landing, Neapolis, Paul and his company went directly to Philippi.

They were now in Europe. "And we were in this city tarrying certain days," not yet seeing just where and how to begin work.

13. There was no synagogue of the Jews there. The few pious Jews had "a place of prayer" "without the gate by a riverside"—by the river probably because of the Jewish washings. This was an inclosed place or temporary structure. To this place on the Sabbath Paul and his company went and "sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together."

The church at Philippi, like many now, began among the women. The first persons to hear and obey the gospel in Europe were women. These were either Jewish women or proselytes; more likely they were Jewesses. This was on Saturday; the first day of the week is never called the "Sabbath."

XII. The Facts in the Case.

14. Lydia was from Thyatira, a town in the province of Lydia and on the border between Lydia and Mysia. This woman may have received her name from this province. Paul and his company had just passed through Mysia. Lydia was about three hundred miles from home. Purple was highly prized by the Romans, and was worn by the rich and great. The rich man "was clothed in purple and fine linen." (Luke 16: 19.) In mocking Jesus, they put on him a crown of thorns and a purple robe. (John 19: 1-3.) Emperors and kings wore purple. It was a costly dye, and was of different hues. It was an important industry of Thyatira. Lydia must have had some means in order to deal in this dye or purple goods, yet she had to depend upon her own exertions.

She was devout and worshiped God. She worshiped according to the law of Moses. While she was in Philippi on business, and while her rivals in business were at work on the Sabbath, she found time to quit business and go to the place of prayer in order to worship God. She did better then, though not a Christian, than many professed Christians do now.

"Whose heart the Lord opened." The Lord opened her heart through the teaching of Paul. He instructed her and removed former errors from her heart. There is nothing mysterious about this. Her heart was not opened before Paul taught her. Paul was sent to instruct her, just as Ananias had been sent to him; Peter, to Cornelius; and Philip, to the eunuch.

"To give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul" means to obey these things. She was enlightened as to Jesus and the gospel and rendered that obedience which all did under the preaching of the apostles. She believed in Christ, repented, and was baptized in his name. When the hearts of people to-day are opened as the Lord opened Lydia's heart, then they will do as she did.

15. "And when she was baptized" shows that this was one of the "things" spoken by Paul. There was the river in which she could easily be baptized. When Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans and to the eunuch, they were at once baptized; when Paul preached the word of God to the jailer, he and his house were baptized the same hour of the night (verses 31-34); and so in this case, which shows that this obedience always followed preaching Jesus when people obeyed at all.

"Her household" were doubtless women employed by her in her business. A woman with infants would likely not have been three hundred miles from home in such business. It is not even stated that she was ever married.

"And she constrained us" shows that Paul and his company did not accept of her hospitality until they knew it would be no imposition upon her. This, then, was their home while in Philippi.

Paul and his company were independent, gallant, true men, and could support themselves and preach, too, when necessary, which they did at times. They were not men to impose upon a woman, and one, too, dependent upon her own exertions for her living, working away from home at that. They were not tramps seeking a lodging place

in the name of religion, or religious "dead beats." Neither were they sensationalists, seeking notoriety, or to attract attention by any peculiarities in regard to where they should stop. Neither were they squeamish, fastidious, exacting, and hard to entertain. They were not seeking entertainment, but the good of all. So when it was made clear to them that it was no imposition and in every way proper for them to do so, they gratefully accepted Lydia's hospitality.

Some modern preachers could study the behavior of these men, rather could *imitate* them, with much profit to themselves and relief to those whose lot it is to entertain them.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
- 16, 17 Where did Jesus appoint for his apostles to meet him after his resurrection?
- 18 What is meant by "all authority?"
From whom did Jesus receive this authority?
To whom will Jesus deliver the kingdom, and when?
What rests upon the man or angel who would preach any other gospel than the one Jesus sent his apostles to preach?
- 19 Upon whose and what authority were the apostles sent out?
Who alone can tell the world what to do to be saved?
What was the first thing the apostles were to do?
What must all the church do now?
What is the church as regards the truth?
What is meant by making disciples of all nations?
Whom were the apostles to baptize?
What must people do to be saved?
What does baptism "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" mean?
Upon what authority does the way of salvation rest?
What is baptism?
What does it declare?
How is it known that this is water baptism?
- 20 What else must be taught and done?
What does this embrace?
How may we learn the apostles' understanding of this commission?
What does Jesus promise as regards this commission?
What does Acts of the Apostles show?
What and where were Phrygia? Galatia? Asia? Mysia? Bithynia? (Let each question be answered separately.)
- Locate and tell what was Troas.
Where and what was Macedonia?
Where and what was Philippi?
By whom founded?
- 6 How do we know it required some time to go through Phrygia and Galatia?
- Why did Paul preach in Galatia at first?
- In what countries were Paul and his company forbidden to preach the word?
- Did Paul afterwards preach in Asia?
- 7, 8 When forbidden to preach in these countries, what did they do?
State the number of times Paul visited Troas.
- 9 What appeared to Paul here?
What did this vision reveal to Paul?
- 10 Who is first mentioned here as being in Paul's company?
- 11 How did they reach Philippi?
- 12 At what place did Paul and his company land?
Where did they then go?
- 13 What did Paul and his company discover was without the gate of the city?
To whom did they speak the word there?
Who were these women?
- 14 From what place was Lydia?
What was her business?
What is said of this dye and cloth?
How did she show her piety and devotion to God?
How did the Lord open her heart?
What did she do?
- 15 How did she learn that she should be baptized?
What did all these New Testament preachers preach when they preached Christ?
What did all those who believed in Jesus do at once?
Why did Lydia have to constrain Paul and his company to stop with her?
What kind of men were Paul and his company, and what kind were they not?
What could some preachers learn from Paul's example?

LESSON XII.—MARCH 20.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

John 14: 1-3; 2 Cor. 5: 1-10; 1 John 3: 2, 3.

1 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

1 For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

2 For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight);

8 We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.

9 Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him.

10 For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is.

3 And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."* (John 14: 2.)

TIME.—A.D. 30, when Jesus spoke John 14: 1-3; A.D. 57, when Paul wrote Second Corinthians; uncertain when John wrote First John. Some think he wrote this book about A.D. 69; others think he wrote it later.

PLACES.—The upper room in Jerusalem, Corinth, probably Ephesus.

PERSONS.—Jesus and the apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 21: 1-7.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Matt. 25: 34-40, 46; 1 Thess. 4: 13-18.

HOME READING.—

March 14. M. The Christian's Hope. (John 14: 1-10.)

March 15. T. Our Heavenly Home. (2 Cor. 5: 1-10.)

March 16. W. Heaven a Reward. (Matt. 25: 31-40.)

March 17. T. The Way to Heaven. (John 10: 1-9.)

March 18. F. A Preview of Heaven. (Rev. 22: 1-7.)

March 19. S. The Universal Invitation. (Rev. 22: 10-17.)

March 20. S. The New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21: 1-7.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

See the Geographical Notes of Lesson X.

After instituting the Lord's Supper and before his prayer in John 17, Jesus had with the apostles the most profoundly interesting and important conversation. It is contained in the last part of John 13 and chapters 14, 15, 16.

Bright, beautiful, and glorious is the Christian's hope. Learn what hope is and what it does for us. (See Rom. 8: 24, 25; Heb. 6: 18-29.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled."

1. The announcement made by Jesus that one would betray him, all would forsake him, Peter would deny him, and he would depart from them, caused great sorrow to the apostles. With the betrayal, the arrest, the mock trial, the cruel scourging, and the cross before him, Jesus here speaks not of his own sorrow, but seeks to console his apostles. Frequently in this conversation Jesus spoke of the trouble and sorrow of the apostles. He said to them that while they were then sorrowful, would weep and lament, and those who killed them would think such persecution was God's service, yet their sorrow should be turned into joy which none could take away. (John 16: 2, 6, 20-22.)

"Believe in God, believe also in me." Jesus knew on account of his death the apostles would lose hope. The following expression shows they did: "But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel." (Luke 24: 21.) This hope began to fail on the night of this lesson in John 14; hence the encouragement given here.

Since the apostles would still believe in God when Jesus had been taken from them and killed, they should still believe also in him; they should walk by faith. This was from God and for their good and the salvation of the race. He was in the Father and the Father in him; and, believing in God, they should believe in him. Leaving them, he would go to the Father.

Jesus foretold these things that when they should come to pass the faith of the apostles might not be shaken. (Verse 29.)

II. The "Many Mansions."

2. "In my Father's house are many mansions." God's house is heaven. There is "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11: 10.) This is "the new Jerusalem." John saw this city coming down out of heaven, "made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." When this takes place, the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will be their God, and they will be his people.

This city needs no sun or moon or stars to give it light. The sun, moon, and stars will all pass away with the present heaven and earth. The light of this city is the glory of God and the Lamb. There is no night there, because God and the Lamb are always there, and they are its light.

The gates stand always open to receive the redeemed, but nothing unclean or abominable or that loves and makes a lie can enter. (Rev. 21: 9-27.) The redeemed of all nations will inhabit it.

"Mansions" means "dwelling places." (See margin.)

"If it were not so, I would have told you." Jesus had told the apostles the truth—that he must suffer, die, and rise from the dead; that he must go away. Had it been otherwise, he would have told them. But his going away was for their good.

"For I go to prepare a place for you." The sacrifice of Jesus provided the way of salvation; he is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (verse 6); but he also prepares the place. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. There will be "new heavens and a new earth," wherein the righteous will dwell. (2 Pet. 3: 13.)

III. Christ Will Come Again.

3. "I come again." The separation was not forever. "That where I am, there ye may be also."

This return was not the resurrection of Jesus, but his second coming.

Christians joyfully expect Christ to come from heaven. (Phil. 3: 20, 21; 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.)

To this end Jesus prayed for his disciples: "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." (John 17: 24.) "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will the Father honor." (John 12: 26.)

All preachers of the gospel whom I have heard and all who have taught the word of God by pen have preached and taught the second coming of Christ. All who have preached and taught the gospel since Christ ascended from the earth have preached and taught the same. If preachers do not preach and teach that, they do not preach and teach the gospel.

But preachers who preach and teach the particular time when Christ is coming, preach and teach more than the gospel and more than that which Jesus says he and the angels know. (Matt. 24: 26; Mark 13: 32; Acts 1: 7; 1 Thess. 5: 2; 1 Pet. 3: 10.)

Not only does no one know the day or the hour when Christ will come, but his coming will be sudden. (Mark 13: 33; Luke 12: 37-40; and many other passages.)

IV. "Earthly House," "Building from God."

1. "For" of this verse connects the hope of eternal glory which Paul had and which all Christians now have, expressed in verses 16-18 of chapter 4, with the same hope and blessed assurance of obtaining its full fruition, described in the verses of this lesson—"more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." This glory is superlatively great—great beyond comparison and beyond human comprehension.

What is "the earthly house of our tabernacle?" "Tabernacle" means "tent," and the margin says "bodily frame." In Job (4: 19) mention is made of those who "dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust;" and (10: 9) it is said: "Thou hast fashioned me as clay;

and wilt thou bring me into dust again?" "The first man is of the earth, earthy." (1 Cor. 15: 47.) Peter (2 Pet. 1: 13-15) speaks of being "in this tabernacle," but that "the putting off of" his tabernacle "cometh swiftly," and calls that his "decease," or "departure" (margin and Luke 9: 31). The body is the house of the soul, is the "outward man;" the soul is the "inward man." The "outward man is decaying" and will "be dissolved;" the "inward man is renewed day by day." (See Col. 3: 10; Rom. 12: 2.)

But while we are studying the meaning of "earthly house" and the "building from God," the very practical and most important lesson of being prepared in heart and character for this "building from God" must not be overlooked, because God in his mercy and wisdom, justice and grace, will have "the house not made with hands" ready for all who are prepared for it. We must not work for "the things which are seen," which "are temporal;" but, with the heart placed upon "the things that are above," we must work for that which is spiritual.

"A building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens," is in contrast with the "earthly house of our tabernacle." Then, what is that which has been made with hands and that which has been made without hands? While the body is the "tabernacle" meant, all that which pertains to its existence and which has been built by hands in its vanity and glory must be included, just as the house "not made with hands" includes the eternal dwelling place of the "inward man" when "renewed day by day" and made ready for it. Peter (2 Pet. 3: 8-13) declares that a thousand years with God is as one day; that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise;" that "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up;" and that "these things are thus all to be dissolved."

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself—
Yea, all that it inherit—shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

The eternal dwelling place is called, as above in verse 2, "my Father's house," in which "are many mansions;" "the city of the living God;" "the holy city;" "the new Jerusalem;" "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" a heavenly country.

"We know" by faith that when the dissolution just mentioned takes place we have this "building from God."

2. In this earthly tabernacle, or body, "we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven"—that is, our groans express our longing to enter into this eternal habitation. (See 2 Pet. 3: 11, 12.)

3. "Clothed" in this verse must mean the same as in the previous one. Then "clothed upon with a habitation" is the idea in this verse. "Being clothed" means entering into this "house not made with hands," but which is "from heaven." "Not found naked" must mean, then, the opposite of being "clothed upon with" this "habitation which is from heaven," hence having no such habitation. The righteous will not only put off the earthly, mortal, decaying, and dying body and put on an

immortal, incorruptible, "spiritual" one (see 1 Cor. 15: 42-55), but will dwell in their "Father's house" forever.

4. "For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." All faithful servants of God, with Paul, feel the burden of the mortal body, with its frailty, weakness, trials, decay, and death. "The whole creation," having been "subjected unto vanity," "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;" and "even we ourselves," "who have the first fruits of the Spirit," "groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Suffering such persecution as Paul and the early Christians did, Paul declares with great joy: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward." (Rom. 8: 18-25.)

"Not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." This is the meaning and conclusion of all that is said above—that all that is embraced in mortality and things pertaining to it may be so overcome as to "be swallowed up of life"—eternal life, with all that it means, as it is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15: 54.) Paul does not mean that he was unwilling, or that any Christian should be unwilling, to bear any burden and endure any persecution incident to this life, or that he wanted then to die, or that any one should long to die before accomplishing all the work the Lord has for him to do, but to be ready and to enter finally this eternal habitation. He was willing to work and pray on, to endure, and to make the good fight to the glorious end. So must we be willing and courageous to do.

5. "He that wrought us from this very thing is God."

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." (Ps. 103: 14.)

God placed in us this longing after immortality. God has made all preparation for the future happiness of his faithful servants.

"Earnest" is an assurance or pledge that a promise will be kept. God has confirmed what he teaches by "signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." (Heb. 2: 3, 4.) Thus God has attested all his promises and all his teaching concerning all things through the apostles. This assurance or pledge we now have, filling us with joyous anticipation and glorious hope of the resurrection and eternal life herein set forth. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord. . . . Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4: 13-18.)

6, 8. These two verses are taken together, because "the good courage," which characterized Paul in all his labors, trials, persecutions of various kinds and of the severest nature, is emphasized. This same courage should be manifested by all. In the face of all these, Paul was "of good courage," because he knew that should he be put to death, and thus "be absent from the body," he would "be at home with the Lord." To be absent from the body means to be present with the Lord. The condition of the body does not affect the condition of the soul. The body becomes sick, grows tired, and sleeps, or dies. Not so with the soul. The soul puts off the mortal body and puts on a spiritual, or immortal, one.

7. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." We do not know these

things as they appear to the natural eye; it is by faith that we know them. "Faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11: 1.) "That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." (Gal. 2: 20.) By faith Abraham "looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11: 10); and by faith Moses "looked unto the recompense of reward" (verse 26). "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11: 13.) Faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Faith is believing fully and appropriating by obedience whatever God promises or says in regard to anything. Walking by faith is taking every step we make according to his directions. We cannot hope for anything which God has not promised, or hope for that which he has promised without complying with the conditions upon which his promises are based. We cannot do by faith anything which God has not commanded.

9. Whether at home in the body or absent from it and with the Lord—dead or alive—Paul made it his aim to be well pleasing to the Lord. This is a grand and glorious aim. To be well pleasing to the Lord both here and hereafter must be our only aim if we hope to be with the Lord. We can be well pleasing to the Lord by obeying him.

V. The Judgment.

10. Appearing "before the judgment seat of Christ" is one of the strongest incentives to be always well pleasing unto him and one of the most solemn warnings against displeasing him. No one can escape the judgment. (See Matt. 12: 36, 41; Luke 10: 12-15.)

In the judgment one will "receive the things done in the body." One will be judged according to this life—what one does here, not after death. "According to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." God, not oneself, determines what is "good or bad." Unto those who through faith in Christ obey him and continue steadfastly in well doing, seeking for glory and honor and incorruption, God will give eternal life; but unto those who "are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. 2: 1-11.)

VI. One Must Be Pure to Enter Heaven.

(1 John 3: 2, 3.)

2. Great is the love of God to accept us as his children. (See verse 1; Rom. 8: 17; 2 Cor. 6: 17, 18.)

"It is not yet made manifest what we shall be." This must be left with God. Jesus will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Phil. 3: 21.) We shall see him, and "we shall see him even as he is."

3. These verses again place before us the Christian's glorious hope. The appearance of Christ, "the body of his glory," "what we shall be," and being "like him," are all matters of God's will and wisdom and goodness, and will be taken care of for our greatest happiness. Our one practical and daily concern is to purify ourselves, "even as he is pure," and to "be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What do this lesson and chapters 15 and 16 contain?
- What had caused the apostles trouble?
What shows Jesus' unselfishness and consideration for the apostles?
What further would they suffer?
Into what would their sorrow be turned?
What did Jesus exhort them to do?
Can one believe in God and not believe in Christ?
Why did Jesus give the exhortation?
Why should they still believe in him?
Why did Jesus foretell these things?
 - What is his Father's house?
Who will enter this city?
Who will be shut out?
Who will give it light?
What does Paul say Christians have?
What does "mansions" mean?
Why did Jesus go away?
 - What did Jesus say he would do after preparing the place?
When?
Where will all his faithful followers be?
 - What thoughts do the "for" of this verse connect?
How great is this glory?
What is the "earthly house of our tabernacle?"
What does Peter say about this tabernacle?
What are the "outward man" and "inward man?"
What changes take place in each?
What is the most important lesson in this connection?
What is embraced in the expression, "a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens?"
What will be dissolved?
Give different expressions describing the eternal dwelling place of the righteous.
- By what do we know these things?
2 Why do we groan in this tabernacle?
3 What does being clothed and being naked mean?
4 With what are we burdened?
With what are the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared?
What is the meaning and conclusion of all that is said above?
Does Paul mean that he or any Christian should be unwilling to bear any burden or to suffer any persecution for Christ's sake?
Does he mean he wanted at that time to die?
What, then, did he desire to do?
- For what has God wrought us, and how?
What is an "earnest?"
How has God given us the "earnest of the Spirit?"
 - 8 What in these verses is emphasized?
What should all Christians manifest?
Why was Paul of such good courage?
What is meant by being absent from the body and present with the Lord?
Does any condition of the body affect the soul?
 - 7 What is meant by walking by faith, not by sight?
What different things are stated in the Bible that we know by faith?
What is faith?
For what alone can we hope by faith?
How alone can we walk by faith?
 - 9 What is meant by "at home" or "absent?"
What was Paul's one aim, and what is the aim of all Christians?
How alone can we be well pleasing to the Lord?
 - 10 What is stated in this verse to encourage obedience and to warn against disobedience to Christ?
According to what will one be judged?
When will this judgment take place?
How alone can one be judged according to the deeds done in the body?

LESSON XIII.—MARCH 27.

REVIEW—STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments."*
(John 14: 15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 7: 9-17.

HOME READING.—

- March 21. M. The Greatest Grace. (1 Cor. 13.)
 March 22. T. The Excellency of the Bible. (Ps. 19.)
 March 23. W. Effective Praying. (Matt. 6: 5-15.)
 March 24. T. Forgetting God. (Deut. 8: 11-20.)
 March 25. F. Obedience and Prosperity. (Lev. 26: 3-13.)
 March 26. S. A Devout Household. (Acts 10: 1-8.)
 March 27. S. Heaven a Place of Service. (Rev. 7: 9-17.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

What does it take to constitute a Christian?

Who were the first disciples of Jesus?

What was their business?

What did Jesus say he would make of them?

Who was Levi?

What did he become?

LESSON II.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

State, according to this lesson, the standard of Christian living.

What is it to love one's enemies?

How can we be "sons of the Most High?"

What is it to be merciful?

LESSON III.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

What is said against idolatry?

What is it to love God with all the heart and soul and strength?

What uses, as stated in the Bible, should people make of the word of God?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

When, where, and how often did Jesus pray?

Repeat the prayer after the manner of which Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

Give the analysis of this prayer.

LESSON V.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Name, in order, the temptations of Jesus at this time.

How did Jesus meet and overcome the tempter?

What promise does God make to us concerning temptation?

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

State the facts of the parable of this lesson.

Give its application.

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

How can the home be made Christian?

State the duties of husband, wife, parents, and children.

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

What is it to be "the salt of the earth?"

What to be "the light of the world?"

In what did the church at Jerusalem continue steadfastly?

What shows the unity of this church?

What did the church do daily?

How often and how were people added to the church?

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What one sentence embraces our treatment of men?
Why?
Name the works of the flesh.
Give the fruit of the Spirit.
How keep from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh?

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What occasioned the dispersion of the church at Jerusalem?
What did the church do in the way of sharing the good news?
What should constrain us?
When is one a new creature?
How does one enter into Christ?

To whom was committed the ministry and word of reconciliation?
Who are, and who are not, ambassadors for Christ?

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Repeat the great commission as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
Give the facts of the conversion of Lydia and her household. (Let the teacher see that this is accurately done.)

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What is the Christian's hope?
On what alone is it based?
How alone can this hope be enjoyed?
What is it to walk by sight?

Let me go; my soul is weary of the chain that binds it here;
Let my spirit bend its pinion to a brighter, holier sphere.
Earth, 'tis true, hath friends who bless me with their fond and faithful love,
But the hands of angels beckon onward to the climes above.

Let me go; for earth hath sorrow, sin and pain, and bitter tears;
All its paths are dark and dreary, all its hopes are fraught with fears.
Short-lived are its brightest flowers; soon its cherished joys decay.
Let me go; I fain would leave it for the realms of Cloudless Day.

Let me go; my heart hath tasted of my Savior's wondrous grace;
Let me go where I shall ever see and know him face to face;
Let me go; the trees of heaven rise before me, waving bright,
And the distant crystal waters flash upon my failing sight.

Let me go; for songs seraphic now seem calling from the sky.
'Tis the welcome of the angels which e'en now are hov'ring nigh.
Let me go; they wait to bear me to the mansions of the blest,
Where the spirit, worn and weary, finds at last its long-sought rest.
(Selected.)

SECOND QUARTER.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF PETER.

LESSON I.—APRIL 3.

PETER BECOMES A DISCIPLE OF JESUS.

Mark 1: 14-18, 29-31.

14 Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.

16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they left the nets, and followed him.

29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her:

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."* (Mark 1: 17.)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Peter, and others.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 1-5.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—John 1: 40-42.

HOME READING.—

March 28. M. Peter Becomes a Disciple of Jesus. (Mark 1: 14-20.)

March 29. T. Andrew Finds Peter. (John 1: 35-42.)

March 30. W. A Fisher of Men. (Luke 5: 1-11.)

March 31. T. The Cost of Discipleship. (Luke 14: 25-35.)

April 1. F. The Work of the Disciple. (Matt. 10: 5-15.)

April 2. S. Making the Great Decision. (Josh. 24: 14-25.)

April 3. S. The Gracious Invitation. (Isa. 55: 1-5.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

See Geographical Notes on Galilee and Capernaum, Lesson I of First Quarter.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The aim of the lessons of this quarter is to learn, through a study of the life and letters of Peter, what the Holy Spirit led him to do and to speak and to write in order that through him people "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe" in Christ (Acts 15: 7), and that

all who believe in him may be "guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1: 5).

We first meet with Peter in John 1: 40-42. He was brother to Andrew, who led him to Christ.

His name was "Simon" until Jesus changed it to "Cephas," "which is by interpretation, Peter." "Cephas," or "Peter," means "a stone." "Peter" is the Greek form; "Cephas" "is Aramaic, the modified form of Hebrew spoken in Palestine in our Lord's day." This seems a prophecy as to what Simon would become in strength of character. He was impulsive and wavering at times in the beginning, but he grew to be a stone.

Peter's father's name was "John" ("Joanes," called in Matt. 16: 17 "Jonah"—margin).

His home was at Bethsaida ("house of fishing"), and he was a fisherman by trade, which was an honorable occupation. His partners in business were Andrew, James, and John.

While Andrew led Peter to Christ, Peter soon became more prominent and accomplished more than his brother, because he was bolder and more aggressive. We may possess but "one talent" ourselves; yet we may lead to Jesus those who, by God's grace, may accomplish much.

To bring our friends and dear ones to Jesus is the greatest possible service that we can render them. If every Christian would bring one soul to Christ, how soon would the world be turned to God!

This work cannot be done by proxy; we cannot send some one else, but must ourselves do our own work.

We shall learn more of Peter and his work as we proceed with these lessons.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Preaching of Jesus.

14, 15. About one year elapsed between the temptation of Jesus and the further facts of this lesson. About this time John the Baptist was cast into prison. The preaching and works of Jesus produced a wonderful effect in Galilee, and he was "glorified of all." (Luke 4: 15.) His theme was "the gospel of God"—namely: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel."

This "kingdom of God" is the one which God promised to "set up" "in the days of those kings," "which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2: 44), over which Christ is King, and to which Paul and others refer (Acts 13: 34; 15: 16-18). To this kingdom Jesus and his apostles referred in their preaching during his personal ministry. He preached, as did John: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4: 17.) So did the apostles (Matt. 10: 7), and so did the seventy (Luke 10: 9, 11).

"At hand" means that it approaches, draws nigh. Matthew says "at hand," and Luke says "is come nigh." (Luke 10: 9, 11.) These expressions are equivalent in meaning.

After Jesus had died, had arisen from the dead, had been crowned King in heaven, and had sent down the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the apostles no longer said that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" or that it "is come nigh;" they preached it as having been fully "set up,"

and that all Christians were in it. (Col. 1: 13; Rev. 1: 6, 9.) Philip preached the "good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 8: 12.) People were "born of water and the Spirit" into it. (John 3: 5.) Then it is not yet to come and be set up; it was set up and put in working order to make the conquest of the world on the first Pentecost after Christ's ascension.

II. Four Disciples Called.

Because the lessons of this quarter give the call of Peter to be both a disciple and an apostle and much of his work, it is necessary to repeat a few verses, with comments, which appear in the First Quarter on the beginning of his life as a follower of Christ.

16-18. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the calling of these four disciples, and comment is made as follows on all that these three say: Luke goes more into detail than Matthew and Mark, although Luke does not mention Andrew by name in this connection. Matthew says Jesus was "walking by the Sea of Galilee" and saw Peter and Andrew "casting a net into the sea;" and, going on further, he saw James and John; and Mark says the same. Matthew and Mark omit the fact that Jesus taught the multitudes by the sea at this time; also the great draught of fishes, etc. Luke mentions these. While he taught the multitudes "standing by the lake of Gennesaret," he called Peter and Andrew, James and John. While he taught by the sea, "the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God."

"By the seaside" was a convenient place to teach, and a favorite one with Jesus. He "sat" in a boat and taught on different occasions (Matt. 13: 1, 2; Mark 3: 9; Luke 5: 1-11); he "sat" in the boat and taught, while "the multitude stood on the beach;" he "sat down" when he delivered the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 1). There were "two boats" which belonged to these four disciples. The fishermen had "toiled all night" in vain, and were now out of their boats "washing their nets." (Luke 5: 2-7.) After washing the nets, they went back into the boats, and James and John were "mending" their nets. Jesus "entered into" Simon's boat, "and asked him to put out a little from the land" and to "let down" the "nets for a draught." Peter replied that they had "toiled all night" and had taken nothing, yet at Jesus' "word" they would try again. "And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking." They found it necessary to call to their assistance their partners, James and John. This was done by beckoning to James and John. "And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink." Jesus must have kept the boats from sinking.

When Peter saw this, he "fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

In contrast with the purity and power of Jesus, Peter felt his own sinfulness and weakness; but his humility and confession show Peter's fitness to enter upon his future work. All, as well as Peter, were "amazed" at this, although Jesus had worked miracles before. (Luke 5: 1-10.) "When they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed" Jesus. (Luke 5: 11.)

Our lesson states that Peter and Andrew first started with Jesus, and, "going on a little further," Jesus called James and John.

III. With Peter, James and John Follow Christ.

Mark (1: 20) says James and John "left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him."

Not for the sake of the fishes did Jesus cause them to catch so many. In this he taught them a great and needed lesson—namely, transcendently greater it is to "catch men" than to catch fishes; and if they would follow him, they should "catch men."

To follow Jesus was not only to go about with him during his personal ministry, but to obey him ever and to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."

Andrew and Peter, James and John, were partners. They owned their own boats and had hired servants. Their business was an honest one, and they were successful. This shows that they were energetic, practical, reliable business men, of general observation and good common sense. The study of the characteristics and work of all the apostles is both interesting and helpful.

From John 1: 29-42 we learn that Andrew, Peter, John, and perhaps James, were already disciples of Jesus at the time of this lesson, and, therefore, had been with him before. John the Baptist pointed out Jesus to his own disciples as "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." All the apostles were present when Jesus was baptized. This was necessary in order to become an apostle. (Acts 1: 22.) Andrew, Peter, John, and perhaps James and others, went with Jesus from his temptation to Cana of Galilee, to Capernaum, back to Jerusalem, through Judea (where they baptized under his direction), and back into Galilee. For a short while they seemed to have returned to their own homes and private affairs; now they leave all to follow him permanently—and, indeed, to "catch men."

We can never fully realize the vast importance and superlative glory of winning souls to Christ until we stand complete in the end in the redemption which comes through Christ and realize the full meaning and blessedness of eternal salvation. "What will it be to be there?"

IV. Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law.

After calling the four disciples from their fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus and they went on the Sabbath day from the sea into Capernaum, and, as his custom was, he entered into the synagogue and taught. All were astonished at his teaching, and more greatly so when they beheld him cast an "unclean spirit," or demon, out of a man. "And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about." (See verses 21-28.)

29. From the synagogue Jesus and his disciples went at once "into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John." Andrew and Peter were of Bethsaida (John 1: 44), and their house was in Capernaum; hence, we conclude that Bethsaida was either a suburb of Capernaum or these men had removed from the one place to the other since they first met Jesus.

30, 31. Unlike his so-called "successors," the Popes of Rome, Peter was a married man, kept house, and his mother-in-law and brother, Andrew, lived with him. (See 1 Cor. 9: 5.) His mother-in-law was sick in bed "with a great fever." (Luke 4: 38.) By the gentle touch

of Jesus' hand "the fever left her" immediately; "and she arose, and ministered unto [served] him." (Matt. 8: 15.)

No one could doubt that this was a miracle.

While in mercy Jesus relieved suffering humanity miraculously, yet his miracles were to confirm the truth and to convince the world that he was the Son of God. (John 5: 36; 20: 30, 31.)

V. Other Afflicted Ones Healed.

This was the Sabbath; but at sundown the day ended, and, hence, after sunset they could bear burdens (John 5: 10) and go at their general work. So after sunset on this day "all the city" (comparatively speaking) was gathered at the door of the house where Jesus was, having "brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons." They may have come after sunset, too, because it was cool. From what they had seen and heard, they believed he could heal them all.

"He healed many that were sick with divers diseases"—not that he left any unhealed; but there were many, and he healed them all, "and cast out many demons" "with a word" (Matt. 8: 16); but, as before stated, "he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him" and his power.

This is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah: "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." (Verses 32-34.)

QUESTIONS.

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| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Describe the Sea of Galilee.
Give the size and situation of Capernaum.
What is the aim of these lessons about Peter and his writings?
Where do we first meet with him?
What was his name at first?
To what did Jesus change it?
What does this second name indicate?
Where was his home?
What was his business?
Who were his partners?
What was his father's name?
Who led him to Christ?
Why did Peter accomplish more than Andrew?
What can and should every one do?
14, 15 How much time elapsed between the temptation of Jesus and the calling of these four disciples?
Who was cast into prison about this time?
What was the subject of Jesus' preaching?</p> | <p>What did John the Baptist, the twelve apostles, and the seventy preach?
What is the kingdom of heaven?
What does "at hand" mean?
What is repentance?
After repentance, what were the people to do, and on whom were they to believe?
16-18 Who were these four disciples?
When did Jesus call them?
Why did Jesus call them?
Why did he get into the boat?
Whose boat was it?
When Jesus had finished teaching, what did he tell Peter to do?
How long had they toiled without success?
Why did Peter try again?
What was the result?
Why did the boats not sink?
What did Peter do and say?
What effect did this have upon all?
What did Jesus say he would make of these disciples?
What shows the business capacity, energy, and success of these men?
Whose disciples were they before they followed Jesus?
What was necessary in order to become an apostle?</p> |
|---|--|

- From what place did these disciples
first follow Jesus?
What shows the importance and glory
of winning souls?
29 Where did Jesus and his apostles go
from the city of Galilee?
What amazed the people in the syna-
gogue?
Into whose house did Jesus go from
the synagogue?
30, 31 Who was sick?

What did Jesus do for her?
What did she then do?
What did all the people of the city do
after sunset?
Why was this done after sunset?
What did Jesus do for the afflicted?
Why did he not allow the demons to
confess him?
Of what prophecy was this a fulfill-
ment?

GET SOMEBODY ELSE

The Lord had a job for me, but I had so much to do
I said: "You get somebody else, or wait till I get through."
I don't know how the Lord came out; no doubt he got along;
But I felt kind o' sneakin' like; I knew I'd done God wrong.

One day I needed the Lord—needed him right away;
But he never answered me at all, and I could hear him say
Down in my accusin' heart: "Child, I've got too much to do;
You get somebody else, or wait till I get through."

Now when the Lord has a job for me, I never try to shirk;
I drop what I have on hand and do the Lord's good work,
And my affairs can run along, or wait till I get through.
Nobody else can do the work that God has marked out for you.
(Selected.)

He holds the key to all unknown, and I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if He trusted me,
I might be sad.

I cannot read His future plans,
But this I know:
I have the smiling of His face
And all the refuge of His grace
While here below.

Enough! This covers all my needs, and so I rest;
For what I cannot see, He can,
And in His love I e'er shall be
Forever blest.
(Selected.)

LESSON II.—APRIL 10.

PETER'S LESSON IN TRUST.

Matt. 14: 22-33.

22 And straightway he constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, till he should send the multitudes away.

23 And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone.

24 But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, distressed by the waves; for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came unto them, walking upon the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a ghost; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the waters.

29 And he said, Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked upon the waters to come to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."* (Matt. 14: 27.)

TIME.—A.D. 29, in the spring, near the passover. (John 6: 4.)

PLACE.—Sea of Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Peter, and the other disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 91: 1-10.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Mark 6: 45-56.

HOME READING.—

- April 4. M. Peter's Lesson in Trust. (Matt. 14: 22-33.)
- April 5. T. The Floating Ax. (2 Kings 6: 1-7.)
- April 6. W. Jonah in a Storm. (Jonah 1: 4-16.)
- April 7. T. Paul in a Storm. (Acts 27: 27-44.)
- April 8. F. Hope the Anchor of the Soul. (Heb. 6: 13-20.)
- April 9. S. Trusting in Jehovah. (Ps. 31: 1-14.)
- April 10. S. The Security of the Godly. (Ps. 91: 1-10.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The facts of this lesson occurred during the night following the day on which Jesus fed the five thousand.

The many who had witnessed this miracle of feeding the five thousand were convinced by it that he was that Prophet that should come into the world.

Worked up to a high degree of enthusiasm over Jesus as the Messiah, they were ready to crown him, proclaim him king, raise his stand-

ard, and take the country for him, which means, of course, they intended to fight with carnal weapons to establish his kingdom. John 6: 15 says: "Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain himself alone."

Probably the apostles joined in this effort to make him an earthly political king, because they, with the people, at this time greatly misunderstood the nature of his kingdom.

There were five thousand men present ready to do this, besides the thousands who would join them in their onward march.

To escape this effort, Jesus sent his disciples over the sea, dismissed the multitudes, and retired alone to a mountain to pray.

It should not be difficult for us to see here, as in many other places, the difference and antagonism between earthly political governments, with their warlike spirit, and the spiritual kingdom of Christ, filled with the spirit of love and peace.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus Sent the Multitudes, Then the Disciples, Away.

22. Immediately after feeding the multitudes and their effort to proclaim him king, Jesus "constrained the disciples" to return to the other side of the sea. They were loath to leave him there in a desert place at night; hence, he had to "constrain" them—urge them by way of command—to go. (Compare Matt. 8: 18.) He desired to be alone. He started in the morning for the desert (verse 13) for retirement and prayer, but the multitude who followed had interfered with that purpose. "To enter into the boat"—the one in which they had crossed over that morning. It was not a very large one, for it could be propelled with oars. (Mark 6: 48.) "Go before him unto the other side"—the other side of the sea. Jesus intended to go later. John (6: 17) says, "toward Capernaum," and Mark (6: 45) says, "and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida." Capernaum and Bethsaida were on "the other side" of the sea from them at that time. This Bethsaida, then, was not the one near which he had that day fed the multitude. (Luke 9: 10.) The latter Bethsaida was on the northeastern shore, just east of where the Jordan flows into the sea; the other was near Capernaum, or a suburb to it; so they could go to "the other side" "unto Bethsaida" and "toward Capernaum," land at Bethsaida and go into Capernaum. Jesus had a double purpose in sending the disciples away: (1) He desired to be alone, and (2) to show them their weakness and their dependence upon him.

23. He dismissed the apostles before he sent the multitudes away. The last verse says, "till he should send the multitudes away." The multitudes, or the most of them, remained somewhere near there through the night. (See John 6: 22-24.)

II. Jesus Spent Nights in Prayer.

"He went up into the mountain apart"—that is, alone—where he spent most of the night in prayer. (Verse 25.) Jesus prayed often and spent much time in secret prayer. Here he spent nearly a whole

night after the work and weariness of the day. As we have already learned, Jesus became hungry, tired, weary, and sleepy; but he was never too hungry and tired to bless suffering humanity or too weary to pray to God. Just before choosing the apostles he spent the whole night in prayer. (Luke 6: 12, 13; see also Luke 3: 21; Mark 1: 35; Luke 5: 16; Matt. 11: 25; Luke 9: 18, 28, 29; 11: 1; John 11: 41, 42; 12: 27, 28; 17; Matt. 26: 36-46; Luke 23: 34.) It was necessary for Jesus to pray. He needed the strength, wisdom, encouragement, and spiritual blessings which come through earnest, sincere prayer. At this time one of his mightiest temptations was again presented—that is, to become an earthly king, with immediate success, and live in ease and splendor, instead of working out the salvation of the race and obtaining a spiritual kingdom through self-denial and death. Besides, John the Baptist had just been beheaded, and he knew that every day carried him nearer to the cross. He needed strength to endure. Jesus set us a beautiful example in praying so much, but he did not pray simply to set the example. God heard and blessed him when he prayed. (Heb. 5: 7, 8.) He prayed for himself, for his disciples through all time, and for sinners. If it was necessary for Jesus to pray, how much more is it necessary for us to pray! If he prayed much, how much more should we pray! If he gave thanks, should not we? Many do not appreciate the privilege of prayer because they never pray.

III. The Disciples Struggling Against the Sea.

24. While alone praying in the mountain, his disciples were struggling through the night with the boisterous and angry waves. They were "in the midst of the sea, distressed by the waves; for the wind was contrary." The sea was about six miles across, and they had gone twenty-five or thirty furlongs (John 6: 19), about three or three and a half miles. It had required nine or ten hours' hard rowing to go this far. From this we see how strong were the "contrary" winds. They could make no headway against them. The disciples were already tired and worn with the work of the day when they undertook this voyage.

This sea was a small inland body of water, six hundred feet below the surface of the Mediterranean Sea, in a long, deep valley, surrounded by lofty hills, intersected by deep gorges, and subject to such sudden storms as the one here described by the winds rushing down from the mountains of Lebanon or up the valley of the Jordan.

25. "The fourth watch of the night" is from three to six in the morning. Jesus knew his disciples were in distress in the sea. Mark (6: 48) says: "And seeing them distressed in rowing." From the mountain side and through the darkness of the night he looked down upon them in their toil and trouble. No doubt his prayer embraced them and their greatest good and the greatest good of all men. When, exhausted and helpless, they needed him, he appeared, "walking upon the sea." When they have done all they can, he does the rest. Even now he is a present help in time of need. The current and winds now are frequently contrary to his disciples, but his eye always sees them, and his heart is touched with a feeling of their infirmities. (Heb. 4: 14-16.) Matthew, Mark, and John all state the fact that Jesus

walked on the water. In his power over nature he walked bodily on the water. Mark (6: 48) says: "He would have passed by them." He did this to attract their attention and to reveal themselves to themselves.

26. The disciples were not expecting Jesus to come in that way. This was a new miracle to them. Mark (6: 52) says: "For they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened." Had this impressed them as it should, they would not have been so surprised at his walking on the water; but through failure to properly consider Christ's former miracles and to use the evidence he had already placed before them their hearts were hardened. So it is to-day. This is no miracle. Therefore, they could not think it was Jesus. They were troubled, and thought it was a spirit or apparition—"an unreal appearance of a real person"—"and they cried out for fear."

IV. "It Is I; Be Not Afraid."

27. In kindness to allay their fear, Jesus spoke to them at once, saying: "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." How comforting these words! They recognized the familiar voice of their Master, and their fears, like the heaving waves of the sea, were quieted by a word from him. The appearance of God through an angel to his people or the appearance of Jesus to his disciples in some unexpected way filled them with fear, and, hence, "fear not" or "be not afraid" is of frequent occurrence in the Bible. (See Gen. 15: 1; 21: 17; Heb. 12: 21; Judg. 6: 23; 13: 22; Luke 1: 13, 30; 20: 10; 24: 36-43; Matt. 28: 5.) God's children should not be afraid now and shrink from death and the judgment. God abides with them, comforts them in trouble, soothes them in sorrow, and receives and blesses them in the judgment. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." (Ps. 23: 4.) In death's valley or shadow and in death itself God's children should not fear: "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4: 18.) "It is I" is, literally, "I am." The same expression is used in John 8: 58, for which the Jews would have stoned Jesus, and in Ex. 3: 14, where God appeared to Moses. He rules the wind and waves. He made them, and they obey his voice. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1: 1-14.)

V. Peter's Attempt to Walk on the Sea.

28. Peter, impulsive and self-confident, made this request. He may have desired in this to outdo the rest, but he had higher and nobler motives. He loved the Master, and desired thus to show his confidence in him and his gladness at his return to them and to welcome him by going out to meet him. These must have been his motives.

29. Jesus granted the request, and Peter, through confidence in his Master, at once stepped out upon the water and walked toward him. We do not know how far: but so long as faith lasted, he succeeded.

While Jesus gave him this supernatural power, it was given only according to his faith. While God saves us now by his grace, it is also through faith (Eph. 2: 8), and the faith which justifies or saves is active and obedient (Gal. 3: 26, 27; 5: 6).

VI. Peter's Faith Fails.

30. When Peter's faith began to fail, he began to sink; and his faith began to fail when he looked at the boisterous waves and not to Jesus. We lose courage to-day when we look down at the hard road we have to travel and the high hills in the way and not up to God, who gives more strength; and we lose faith in sailing over life's rough sea when we trust something else and not our Savior. But Peter had faith and confidence enough in Jesus to call upon him to save him when through fear he was sinking. It is not our troubles and dangers which destroy us, but our lack of faith in Jesus.

VII. Jesus Rescues Peter.

31. Jesus immediately stretched forth his hand and rescued the doubting and sinking disciple, and kindly reproved him for his doubt and lack of faith. Peter's faith and courage were real, but were not of sufficient degree. A year after this Peter thought he would die before he would deny Jesus, but again his courage and faith failed. Our faith is tried in darkness and storm, and through exercise and trial is made strong; and through an increase of faith we are brought into clearer light, sweeter peace, and greater work.

32. Jesus helped Peter back into the ship; and when they entered it, the wind ceased. John (6: 21) says: "They were willing therefore to receive him into the boat." The same rough wind was blowing all the while up to that time. This sudden calm filled them with as much wonder as Jesus' walking upon the water. "And they were sore amazed in themselves." (Mark 6: 51.)

Jesus had bidden them cross the sea; and although it was rough and the winds were contrary, they should have considered that they were in the path of duty, and that Jesus never forsakes one so long as he does as Jesus bids him, and that he who could magnify the loaves and increase the fishes until they would feed thousands could walk upon the water and still the tempest; but they did not consider this. (Mark 6: 52.)

33. Their fear was gone, their faith was strengthened, and all gathered around him, worshiped him, reverently bowing before him, and avowed that he was the Son of God. John (6: 21) says: "And straightway the boat was at the land whither they were going." On account of the wind subsiding and the quiet sea, they came easily and at once into port.

Christ in the boat is its salvation. The life with Christ in it is a success; the home with Christ in it cannot be wrecked; the church with Christ in it cannot die. It has been truly said: "A ship in the sea is safe so long as the sea is not in the ship; the church is safe in the world so long as the world is not in the church."

Jesus and the apostles landed in the country of Gennesaret. (Mark 6: 53.) This is a beautiful plain on the western shore of the

sea, about four miles long and two or three miles wide. Capernaum was at the northern end of it. As soon as Jesus had landed, as he passed on toward Capernaum, the people from "all that region round about" flocked to him with their variously afflicted ones, and "besought him that they might only touch the border of his garment: and as many as touched were made whole." (Verses 34-36.) It was before this that the "woman, who had an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment," and was healed. (Matt. 9: 20-22.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Why did the people try to force Jesus to be king?
Why did he refuse to become king?
Can you tell what are the differences between temporal, political kingdoms and Christ's kingdom?
- 22 What did Jesus constrain his disciples to do?
Why were they loath to leave him?
Why had they come at first to that place?
What had interfered?
What boat did the disciples enter?
How large was it?
To what place did they start?
Where are the two Bethsaidas?
Why did Jesus send the disciples away?
- 23 What did he do with the multitudes?
How long did they linger about there?
Where and at what did he spend the evening and most of the night?
Did Jesus ever grow tired, hungry, etc.?
Did his own physical wants ever interfere with his blessing men or obeying God?
Can you name the different times and circumstances when Jesus prayed?
Let others name them or name others.
Why was it necessary for Jesus to pray?
Did God answer his prayers?
Then is it necessary for us to pray?
Do we pray often?
- 24 Where were the disciples now?
Why were they distressed?
How far had they gone?
How wide was the sea?
Why was this sea subject to such sudden storms?
- 25 When was the fourth watch of the night?
Did Jesus know his disciples were in distress?
What does Mark (6: 48) say?
Do you suppose Jesus embraced them in any way in his prayer that night?
In what condition were they when he appeared?
When may we expect God to help us?
How did Jesus reach them?
How did he walk upon the water?
- 26 What did the disciples think Jesus was?
Why were they not ready for this new miracle?
What must we do with our opportunities?
What hardens the heart?
What effect did this appearance of Christ have upon them?
- 27 Why did Jesus speak?
What did he say?
What effect did the appearance of angels or any unexpected appearance of Jesus have upon even God's children?
What expressions are frequently found in the Bible?
How does Jesus now quiet the fears of his disciples?
What does "it is I" mean?
- 28 What request did Peter make?
Why did he desire to do this?
- 29 What reply did Jesus make to him?
Did Peter walk upon the water?
According to what did Jesus give him this power?
How does God save sinners?
- 30 Why did Peter begin to sink?
Why do people lose courage and faith to-day?
Upon whom did Peter call for salvation from the sea?
What is it that frequently overcomes us?
- 31 What did Jesus do?
Why did Jesus rebuke Peter?

- What was wrong about his faith?
 How is our faith tried and strengthened?
 To what does greater faith lead us?
 32 When did the wind cease?
 How did the others receive Jesus into the boat?
 What filled the apostles with as much astonishment as Jesus' walking on the water?
 33 What allayed Peter's fear?

- What did they all do in honor of Jesus?
 What in the boat is salvation?
 What in the church is destruction?
 Where did Christ and the apostles land?
 Describe this plain.
 What did the people in the region around do?
 Who were healed?
 How did they show their faith in Jesus' power to heal?

Hold thou my hand, O Lord; no light o'erhead
 Shows me the path my faltering feet must tread.
 To what far depths of darkness and of woe
 Might I not fall if thou shouldst let me go?

Lord, hold my hand!

Hold thou my hand; that tireless clasp means strength,
 Patience, and peace, and blessing, till at length
 My storm-tossed soul can calmly take its way,
 And need no longer in such anguish pray:

"Lord, hold my hand!"
 (Annie Johnson Flint.)

Unanswered yet? The prayer your lips have pleaded
 In agony of heart these many years?
 Does faith begin to fail; is hope departing,
 And think you all in vain those falling tears?
 Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer;
 You shall have your desire sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Though when you first presented
 This one petition at the Father's throne,
 It seemed you could not wait the time of asking,
 So urgent was your heart to make it known.
 Though years have passed since then, do not despair;
 The Lord will answer you sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say ungranted;
 Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done.
 The work began when first your prayer was uttered,
 And God will finish what he has begun.
 If you will keep the incense burning there,
 His glory you shall see sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered;
 Her feet were planted firmly on the Rock;
 Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
 Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.
 She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,
 And cries: "It shall be done" sometime, somewhere.
 (Robert Browning.)

LESSON III.—APRIL 17.

PETER'S GREAT CONFESSION.

Matt. 16: 13-24.

13 Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is?

14 And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ.

21 From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.

22 And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*
(Matt. 16: 16.)

TIME.—A.D. 29, in the autumn.

PLACE.—Near Cæsarea Philippi.

PERSONS.—Christ and his apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 34: 1-8.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Heb. 12: 22-29.

HOME READING.—

- April 11. M. Peter's Great Confession. (Matt. 16: 13-24.)
- April 12. T. A Woman's Confession. (John 4: 20-29.)
- April 13. W. Courageous Confession. (Acts 4: 13-22.)
- April 14. T. The Sure Foundation. (1 Cor. 3: 1-11.)
- April 15. F. The Precious Corner Stone. (Isa. 28: 14-22.)
- April 16. S. Living Stones. (1 Pet. 2: 1-10.)
- April 17. S. Magnifying the Lord. (Ps. 34: 1-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Cæsarea Philippi, originally Paneas, was enlarged and adorned by Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, and named for Tiberius Cæsar and himself. It was situated on the eastern and most important source of the Jordan, at the foot of Mount Hermon, which rises seven or eight

thousand feet above it. It was built on a ledge of limestone rock, and was strongly fortified. It was the northern extremity of Palestine, and was twenty-five or thirty miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee. It is a small town now of about fifty houses, but with many ruins of towers, temples, columns, and the most remarkable castle of the Holy Land.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The great confession which Peter and the other apostles made and the good confession which Jesus made before Pilate and which Timothy witnessed before many witnesses (1 Tim. 6: 13-17) is of vast importance.

These hints and helps briefly trace the course of Jesus from the last lesson to this one.

After feeding the five thousand, spending the most of the night in prayer, walking on the sea to his disciples, landing and crossing the plain of Gennesaret into Capernaum, Jesus delivered in the synagogue there his discourse on "the bread of life." Then came the passover mentioned in John 6: 4.

Those who attended this passover from Galilee and reported his marvelous works and increasing fame helped to arouse those in authority at Jerusalem.

So "there came to Jesus from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes" (Matt. 15: 1), no doubt sent by the authorities there to counteract his mighty and wide-spreading influence in Galilee. They openly and boldly attacked him, charging his disciples with transgressing "the tradition of the elders." They held "the tradition of the elders" of equal authority with the law of Moses. These traditions they supposed were handed down orally from one generation to another from the time of Moses, while the law was written.

Jesus replied to this accusation, not by denying that his disciples did it, but by attacking the traditions themselves as wrong and showing that these Jews had set aside and transgressed God's law by their traditions. He showed how they did it, and condemned them strongly as hypocrites and vain worshipers, because they taught for doctrines the commandments of men.

Any worship at all to-day which springs from human authority is vain, and every human addition to God's word in a greater or less degree makes void some command of God. (See Matt. 15: 1-9; Mark 7: 1-13.)

Following this stern and severe rebuke to these scribes and Pharisees, he delivered a sermon to the multitude on purity, showing that it is not what one eats that defiles him, but the condition of his own heart. (Matt. 15: 10-20.)

When his disciples reported that the Pharisees were offended at what he said, he replied to them, saying: "Every plant [every religious doctrine or religious institution] which my Heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit."

While trying to teach these blind leaders was casting pearls before swine or throwing that which is holy to dogs, yet the apostles were not to cease to oppose their errors, but to disregard their criticisms and to preach the truth right on, regardless of the offense it gave them.

Preaching the truth offends some to-day; still, it must be preached. Wearied by these contentions and the importunate multitudes which thronged him everywhere, depriving him of sleep and rest, Jesus sought again solitude for this purpose and for communion with God and a convenient season to further instruct the apostles. When he went over the sea to "a desert place," the people followed and interfered. (Mark 6: 31-34.) This time he went in quite a different direction—"into the parts of Tyre and Sidon" (probably into the hills east of these cities), beyond the limits of Galilee and upon Gentile soil. This is the first recorded instance in the history of Jesus when he went out of Palestine.

Here Jesus healed the daughter of the Syrophenician woman of an unclean spirit.

"From the borders of Tyre" Jesus went through Sidon "unto the Sea of Galilee" and "through the midst of the borders of Decapolis," where he healed a deaf and dumb man. (Mark 7: 32-37.)

On a near-by mountain he healed many, and fed the four thousand, besides the women and children, on seven loaves and a few small fishes. (Matt. 15: 29-38.)

From this place he recrossed the sea in the vicinity of Magadan and Dalmanutha (Matt. 15: 39; Mark 8: 10), which were on the western shore.

He was again attacked by the Pharisees—this time in company with the Sadducees, and he reproved their hypocrisy.

Again he crossed the sea to Bethsaida, warned his disciples against the teaching of the Sadducees and Pharisees, and healed a blind man. (Matt. 16: 5-12; Mark 8: 13-26.)

Thence it is probable that Jesus went "into the parts of Cesarea Philippi."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "What Think Ye of Christ? Whose Son Is He?"

13. Mark (8: 27) says: "Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the village of Cesarea Philippi." "Parts," as Matthew puts it, means the country surrounding this city; and Jesus went through the towns of that country, no doubt, teaching the Jews. Again, Mark (same verse) says, "and on the way;" and Luke (9: 18) states that Jesus was alone praying with his disciples when he asked the question: "Who do men say that the Son of man is?"

In his humility and because he was in the flesh, he calls himself "the Son of man." He frequently thus spoke of himself.

All the miraculous, benevolent works of Jesus were to convince the world that he is the promised seed of Abraham, the long-looked-for Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God. If he is not this, he is false, a blasphemer, and an impostor.

The multitudes had flocked to him by the thousands, and had seen and enjoyed his various and numerous miracles. Now what do they say of him? He knew, of course; but he desired an expression from the apostles and to bring out and to strengthen their faith.

14. "Some say John the Baptist." This was the opinion of Herod Antipas and of some others. (See Matt. 14: 1-12; Mark 6: 16-29.)

Herod thought John had risen from the dead. Elijah, of old, had restored the true worship of God, and his return to the earth was expected. (Mal. 4: 5; Matt. 17: 10.) Others said he was "Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." They thought he was one of the old prophets risen from the dead. They all classed him with the prophets, which was a high honor, but not yet sufficient honor for Jesus. He was much more than this. But for their misconceptions and preconceived erroneous opinions as to what the Messiah was to do and to be, they doubtless would have accepted him as the Son of God and the Christ.

All his disciples, with the apostles, had these erroneous conceptions; but they were willing to learn, and did learn, of him until they were led into the clear sunlight of the true nature of his spiritual kingdom. If one will only study and learn, one can come to the knowledge of the truth.

II. The Confession.

15. He then asked an expression from the apostles themselves. He asked them all: "Who say ye that I am?"

16. Peter—not pert, but impulsive, decisive, bold, and courageous—answered at once. There was no hesitancy or delay. He spoke his sincere and deep conviction, but he answered for all the rest: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He is not only Jesus of Nazareth, a carpenter, and the son of Mary, but the Son of God and the Christ.

Other men were named "Jesus" (Acts 13: 6; Col. 4: 11), but there is only one Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." (Acts 2: 36.) Paul says "that this Jesus [who was crucified and raised from the dead], whom . . . I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." (Acts 17: 3.)

Two propositions concerning Jesus of Nazareth are true and must be believed—(1) that he is the Christ, and (2) that he is "the Son of the living God."

"The living God" is no false and lifeless God, but the "I Am that I Am." (Ex. 3: 14.) "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Ps. 90: 2.)

The "Word," which was with God in the beginning, and which was God, "became flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1: 1-14.) "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9; see also Col. 1: 15-17.)

This proposition shows the relationship of Jesus to God, and, therefore, his divinity.

"Messiah" is the Hebrew word and "Christ" is the Greek word for "Anointed." It shows the work or office of Jesus Christ. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed (Lev. 8; 1 Sam. 16: 12, 13; 1 Kings 19: 15, 16.) Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power (Acts 10: 38), and is Prophet, Priest, and King. He was "made" "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2: 36), and was made high priest (Heb. 7: 20-28). David was anointed king before he was "crowned" and began to serve; so was Jesus. (See Acts 2: 32-36; Phil. 2: 5-11; Heb. 2: 9; 7: 12-14; 8: 1-6.)

What else people believe about Jesus, they must believe in him as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," in order to be saved by him. (Be sure to read here Rom. 3: 26; 10: 6-10.) They must receive his teaching as a prophet (Matt. 7: 24-29); accept him as a sacrifice on the cross for their sins, whose blood cleanses from all sin (1 John 1: 7), and without which there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9: 15-28, especially 22); trust in him as Advocate, Mediator, and Priest (1 John 2: 1, 2; 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6; Heb. 8: 6; 7: 25; 9: 24; Rom. 9: 34); and must place themselves under him as King to be governed entirely by his laws (Heb. 5: 8, 9). The apostles and disciples grew into the firm conviction of the confession made here.

Those in the boat with him the night he walked on the water said, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Matt. 14: 33); and after the discourse on the bread of life, Peter said: "And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God" (John 6: 69).

17. "Simon Bar-Jonah" means the son of Jonah, or John. (John 1: 42.)

Appreciating and confessing this great truth brought Peter, and with him all who believe it, into the rich blessings of God, for Jesus owns and confesses such persons before God and the angels. (Matt. 10: 32, 33; Luke 12: 8, 9.)

"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee," because flesh and blood could not make such a revelation. People knew by "flesh and blood" that Jesus was the son of Mary and a descendant of Abraham, as Matthew and Luke show (Matt. 1; Luke 3: 23-38); but they could not know by "flesh and blood" that he was the Son of God. God must make this revelation. So he revealed it to Mary (Luke 1: 26-35), to Joseph (Matt. 1: 18-21), to John the Baptist, to Peter, and to others when he sent down the Spirit upon Jesus and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3: 17; see also John 1: 29-34.) Besides, all the miracles of Jesus were done in the presence of his disciples as the testimony of God to this fact: to reveal to them and to the world that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." (John 20: 30, 31.) The apostles were Christ's witnesses to the world. Guided by the Spirit of God, they made this revelation to the world. Hence, "no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." (1 Cor. 12: 3.)

Human wisdom and science could not invent or discover the remedy for sin. "The world through its wisdom knew not God." (1 Cor. 1: 21.) Man by searching cannot find out God. (Job 11: 7; Rom. 11: 33.) God must reveal his will and the remedy for sin, or the way of salvation, to men. Hence, it is absolute folly to trust in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies and science of men for the way of salvation. The wisdom of men is foolishness with God. (See 1 Cor. 1: 20-30; 3: 18-23.)

III. The Foundation of the Church.

18. Jesus, continuing his address to Peter, said: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my

church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." This declaration has called forth a great deal of controversy. Jesus does not say he would build his church on Peter, but he says: "Thou art *Petros* [a small stone], and upon this *Petra* [bed rock] I will build my church." We build houses of stone, but we lay the foundation upon a rock. (Matt. 7: 24, 25.) All Christians are "living stones" ("lithoi"—building stones, not rock) in this "spiritual house;" while Jesus under this figure is the "chief corner stone" (1 Pet. 2: 4-8), and under other figures he is "Petra"—rock (1 Pet. 2: 8; Rom. 9: 33; 1 Cor. 10: 4).

In the figure under consideration Peter is not the foundation, but the doorkeeper. (Verse 19.) There is (1) a builder, Jesus; (2) a foundation, a solid rock; (3) a "spiritual house," the church; (4) a doorkeeper, Peter; (5) the gates of the unseen world as a mighty power opposing this work.

Now, what is the foundation, the solid rock? It is the central truth of the whole Bible, the glorious fact that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Destroy this truth, and all the prophecies, promises, and purposes of God to redeem the race are absolutely false. This fact is the fulfillment of every promise and prophecy and the consummation of every purpose of God to save men from sin and the grave. Peter could not be in the same figure and at the same time both the rock foundation and the doorkeeper. But, aside from all doubtful verbal criticism, this matter is infallibly settled by what the apostles understood Jesus to mean. They never once thought he meant Peter was the foundation, and Peter never once claimed it. In his preaching on Pentecost, and ever afterwards, Peter held up Jesus, the Son of God, "made" "both Lord and Christ," as the one item of faith and as the foundation of Christ's church. Paul says: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3: 11.) "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone of sure foundation." (Isa. 28: 16.) No one can doubt this means Jesus, the crucified and risen Savior, the Son of God. Peter so declares it. (See, again, Rom. 9: 33; Eph. 2: 20; 1 Pet. 2: 4, 6, 8.)

Then the apostles were eyewitnesses of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and must be in order to be apostles (Acts 1: 15-26; 26: 16, 17); hence, they could have no successors, inasmuch as there can be no successors to eyewitnesses.

The gates of a city represent its power, and "the gates of Hades" represents the power of the grave, or unseen world, as a mighty city. Christ's enemies slew him, hoping to destroy him and his proposed kingdom. But the grave could not contain him; he conquered it, broke open "the gates of Hades," and came forth. "Hades" is put sometimes for "destruction." (Matt. 11: 23.) Jesus meant, therefore, not only that he would arise from the grave and establish his church, but that it should never be destroyed. "And it shall stand

forever." (Dan. 2: 44.) There have always been faithful disciples of Jesus on earth, and always will be. (See Heb. 12: 18-29, especially 28.) All other institutions of every kind will be destroyed.

IV. In One Way Only Could Peter and the Other Apostles Remit or Retain Sin.

19. Jesus further says: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." "Will build" and "will give" are future and show that the church, or kingdom, was not yet built when Jesus said this. "The kingdom of heaven" in this verse is used synonymously with "church" in the previous verse. Keys are used to open and close doors. All the apostles had the same power of loosing and binding. (John 20: 19-23.) That only means that Jesus had committed to them the important work of making known to the world the conditions of pardon or entrance into his kingdom. All who complied with these conditions were forgiven; all who did not were not forgiven. The apostles could not forgive sins in the sense of absolving from sin; neither can any other man. Paul says God committed to the apostles as his ambassadors the ministry and word of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5: 18-20.) They awaited in Jerusalem the guidance of the Holy Spirit before they undertook to tell the people what to do to be saved. (John 14: 26; 16: 13, 14; Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 8.)

In giving the keys to Peter, Jesus gave him only the privilege of taking the lead in this matter, because he was suited to that work. He was chief speaker on the day of Pentecost, and told people what to do to be saved, and several years later he says God made choice among the apostles that from his mouth the Gentiles "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe" (Acts 15: 7), which occurred at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10).

Jew and Gentile entered the church just alike. Even now when people either do or refuse to do as God directs through the inspired apostles, their sins are either "loosed" or "bound" in heaven. (Matt. 18: 15-18.)

This is a very important matter, and shows that there is no other way of learning how to be saved and how to live the Christian life, save through the teaching of the inspired apostles. If we do what God through them directs us to do, our sins are pardoned, or "loosed," in heaven; if we do not do that, whatever else we may do or not do, our sins are bound upon us, or not forgiven.

V. The Time to Preach That Jesus Is the Christ.

20. Jesus charged his disciples to tell no man he was the Christ, because the time had not yet come for this. He was not yet exalted to God's right hand and made "both Lord and Christ." One of the mightiest proofs of his divine Sonship was yet to be presented—his resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 1: 4.)

Although the apostles had the firm conviction that he was the Christ, yet they still entertained erroneous ideas of the nature of his

kingdom, and did until after his ascension to heaven and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Before his crucifixion and ascension they asked nothing of God in prayer in his name. (John 16: 24.)

After his death on the cross, "God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name," etc. (Phil. 2: 8-11.)

This restriction to tell no man he was the Christ lasted only until his resurrection and ascension. (See Matt. 17: 9; 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 45-47.)

VI. Peter Rebuked Jesus.

21. This is the first plain and distinct statement Jesus had made of his death and resurrection. He had made indistinct references to it before (John 2: 19-22; 3: 14; Matt. 12: 38-40), but "from that time" he repeated plainly the statement many times (Matt. 17: 22, 23; 20: 18, 19; 26: 2, 12, 31, 32). Still, after his resurrection it is said: "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." (John 20: 9.) With their erroneous ideas, it was hard for them to learn the truth. So it is with people now.

Jesus' suffering was foretold in such chapters as Isa. 53.

22. Jesus "spake the saying openly" (Mark 8: 32), but Peter took Jesus aside to say this to him. It was such a shock to Peter and so contrary to all his conceptions of the kingdom for Jesus to speak of yielding to the Jews and of suffering death that he impulsively and at once rebuked him—told him not to think it, not to talk so, and that it would never be. He thought such a thing unworthy of him who possessed such powers and who had come to establish a splendid earthly kingdom. He still thought Christ would rule by the sword.

VII. Jesus Rebuked Peter.

23. In this verse Jesus rebuked Peter. Mark (8: 33) says: "But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter." Peter had taken him to one side; so when Jesus turned to his disciples, his back was to Peter. In this attitude he said: "Get thee behind me, Satan." Jesus suited his action to his language, and literally turned his back upon Peter. This suggestion was from Satan, although made through Peter's honest intentions. It was a renewal of Satan's temptation not to suffer on the cross, and Jesus promptly resisted it. In this Peter was a "stumblingblock." To cause one to stumble is to lead him into sin. Had Jesus acted upon this suggestion, the world never would have been saved. Otherwise good men to-day, like Peter, would thwart the purpose of God to save the race by suggesting ways and methods different from his. This was a severe rebuke to Peter, but that spirit then was no more of Satan than the same spirit is now. When Jesus repeated this statement concerning his death, all the apostles were sorry; but Peter did not again rebuke him. (Matt. 17: 23.)

VIII. Self-Denial and Bearing the Cross.

24. Having stated clearly to his apostles that he must go into Jerusalem, "suffer many things," and finally be killed, Jesus added that

not only they, but if any man would come after him, or become his disciple, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him.

Self-denial, following Jesus, and suffering persecution are essential to salvation.

Self-denial is not denying something to oneself, but denying self—one's own opinions, notions, theories, conceits, and wisdom; one's own temporal and personal interest, "crucifying the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof"—putting self in the background and "counting all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," our Lord. (Phil. 3: 7, 9.)

Following Christ, as all should know, is obeying him—not doing that which one imagines Christ would do or what oneself thinks is right, but what Christ really did and commands in the gospel. (See 2 John 9.)

"The cross" is a synonym of persecution. It is not a gilded ornament to be worn as a piece of jewelry or to adorn church houses, but it means to suffer persecution even unto death for Christ's sake—that is, to obey Christ, even if for that one is ostracized, scoffed at, imprisoned, and killed.

To bear one's own cross means to suffer all things which one must endure in order at all times to obey Christ.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where and what was Caesarea Philippi?
Who built and named it?
What is said of this confession?
How did Jesus spend most of the night after feeding the five thousand and after the people attempted to crown him king?
Where were the apostles, and how did Jesus reach them?
What sermon did he deliver on the next day?
What passover followed this?
What report was made concerning him to the authorities at Jerusalem?
What steps did the authorities take to counteract Jesus' influence?
What accusation was made against Jesus?
What reply did he make?
What is "tradition"?
When is God now worshiped in vain?
What is meant by rooting up every plant which God has not planted?
Into what country did Jesus go?
Why did he go there?
Whom did he heal there?
Where did Jesus go from Tyre?
What miracles did he perform there?

Thence where did he go and what did he do?
Who again attacked him?
Thence where did he go?
13 Why does Jesus speak of himself as "the Son of man"?
14 What were the different opinions concerning Jesus?
Why did not the people accept Jesus as the Christ?
15 Why did he ask the apostles the question of this verse?
16 Who answered it?
Did he answer for all?
Give the answer.
What does "living God" mean?
What does "Jesus" mean?
Were any other men named "Jesus"?
What does "Christ" mean?
What two propositions concerning Jesus of Nazareth are true and must be believed?
What does this proposition show?
Who were anointed?
How was Jesus anointed?
Then what is it to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?
17 What does "Bar-Jonah" mean?
Why was Peter blessed for making this confession?
Why could not "flesh and blood" make this revelation?
How did God reveal this truth?
18 Repeat the five facts of this figure.
What is the difference between "stone" and "rock"?
What is Peter in this figure?

- What, then, is the rock foundation?
 What are all Christians in this "spiritual house?"
 What is Jesus?
 Did Peter and all the apostles understand Jesus in this verse to say Peter was the foundation?
 What did they preach as the foundation?
 Why could not the apostles have successors?
 What is meant by "gates of Hades?"
 Why could not they prevail against the church?
 Will the church ever be destroyed?
 What do "will build" and "will give" show?
 19 In these verses are the "church" and "kingdom" synonymous?
 What is meant by "keys?"
 Did all the apostles have the same power?
- What is meant by their binding and loosing?
 What privilege was granted to Peter?
 How are our sins pardoned or bound and loosed now?
 What important fact does this teach the world?
 20 Why did Jesus charge them not to tell that he was the Christ?
 21 Had Jesus made before this any reference to his death?
 What did he make in this verse?
 Why did not the apostles understand him?
 22 Why did Peter rebuke him?
 23 What rebuke did Jesus give Peter?
 What is the force of this temptation?
 How do some suggest such things now?
 24 What does Jesus teach is necessary in order to become his disciple?
 What is self-denial?
 What is it to follow Jesus?
 What is it to bear one's cross?

Our eyes see dimly till by faith anointed,
 And our blind choosing brings us grief and pain;
 Through Him alone, who hath our way appointed,
 We find our peace again.
 Let us press on; in patient self-denial,
 Accept the hardship, shrink not from the loss;
 Our guerdon lies beyond the hour of trial,
 Our crown beyond the cross. (Selected.)

In the cross of Christ I glory,
 Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time;
 All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
 Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
 Never shall the cross forsake me;
 Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
 Light and love upon its way,
 From the cross the radiance streaming,
 Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
 By the cross are sanctified;
 Peace is there that knows no measure,
 Joys that through all time abide.

(J. Bowring.)

LESSON IV.—APRIL 24.

PETER AT THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Mark 9: 2-10; 2 Pet. 1: 16-18.

2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them;

3 And his garments became glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

6 For he knew not what to answer; for they became sore afraid.

7 And there came a cloud overshadowing them: and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son: hear ye him.

8 And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should have risen again from the dead.

10 And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean.

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:

18 And this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"There came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son: hear ye him."* (Mark 9: 7.)

TIME.—A.D. 29, about eight days after the last lesson.

PLACE.—In all probability, Mount Hermon.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Moses, and Elijah; Peter, James, and John.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 6: 1-8.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Matt. 17: 1-20.

HOME READING.—

- April 18. M. Peter at the Transfiguration. (Luke 9: 28-43.)
- April 19. T. The Testimony of Peter. (2 Pet. 1: 12-21.)
- April 20. W. The Witness of the Father. (John 5: 30-40.)
- April 21. T. The Voice from Heaven. (John 12: 23-32.)
- April 22. F. The Glory of the Lord. (2 Cor. 3: 7-18.)
- April 23. S. The Glorified Savior. (Rev. 1: 9-18.)
- April 24. S. A Glorious Vision. (Isa. 6: 1-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

It is more than probable that this "high mountain" was Mount Hermon, or some spur of it, on a terrace of which Cesarea Philippi was

built. It is about ten thousand feet above the sea, and could be seen from almost all parts of Palestine.

Mount Hermon is frequently mentioned in the Bible. (See Deut. 3: 8, 9; Josh. 11: 3, 17; 12: 1, 5; 1 Chron. 5: 23; Ps. 89: 12; 133: 3; Song of Solomon 4: 8.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus Prayed.

2. "And after six days." (See also Matt. 17: 1.) Luke (9: 28) says, "about eight days after these sayings"—the confession and conversation of the last lesson. Luke counts the parts of the days before and after the entire "six days." There is no discrepancy.

"Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John," the three who stood with him in the death chamber at Jairus' house, who a few months after this lesson were with him in dark Gethsemane, and who were afterwards called "pillars." (Gal. 2: 9.) These were nearest to Jesus because they were fitted in character for this position. This was not favoritism or partiality. As they had proved faithful in little, they were prepared for greater opportunities. Learning what was committed to them, they were advanced to higher studies. This principle is true to-day and should encourage all to noble efforts. The other nine were left at the foot of the mountain. (Mark 9: 14-20.)

Mark (9: 30) says: "And they went forth [after Peter's confession, the transfiguration, and the healing of the demoniac] from thence, and passed through Galilee."

As on other occasions, Jesus withdrew from the world below and went up into this mountain "to pray" (Luke 9: 28)—to spend the night in prayer. He usually went alone (Mark 1: 35, 36; 6: 46; Luke 6: 12); this time he took these three.

Why did Jesus pray alone? He went out a great while before day to be alone in prayer. He spent whole nights alone in prayer. Why alone? The presence of others would interfere with his perfect communion with his Father. In Gethsemane he left the eight at the gate and left the other three who were with him on the inside and prayed alone. They could not understand and appreciate his prayer. There is the desire to be alone now, to pray in the still, quiet hours of the night, when one wishes to pour out the soul unreservedly to God for wisdom and courage, guidance and grace, and yearns to lay hold upon the strong arm of the Almighty One for support in weakness or distress. When all pray "with one accord" (Acts 4: 24), the case is very different; but when others cannot understand and appreciate the prayer, one prefers to be alone and undisturbed by the presence of others. Sometimes the apostles themselves slept while Jesus prayed.

There are numerous examples of Christ's praying. His prayers were not empty forms and ceremonies. He realized the need of prayer. He felt the infirmities of the flesh (Heb. 4: 15) and the power of temptation. At every important crisis in his life much time was spent in prayer. He prayed on the banks of the Jordan when he was baptized; he prayed all night before choosing his apostles; he prayed most of the night just after they sought to make him an earthly king; he

prayed in this lesson as the approaching cross cast its shadow over him, and Satan, through Peter, again tempted him; he prayed at the grave of Lazarus; he prayed in the trouble of his soul at Jerusalem (John 12: 27, 28); he prayed for his disciples on the night in which he was betrayed (John 17); he prayed in the deepest sorrow in Gethsemane; he prayed on the cross for his enemies and murderers; he gave thanks for the loaves and fishes when he fed the multitudes on two different occasions; and when he instituted the Lord's Supper, he prayed and blessed the loaf and the cup. But these are not all the occasions on which he prayed. "In the days of his flesh" he "offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears." (Heb. 5: 7.)

Since Jesus thus prayed, how much more do we need to pray! If, in the midst of all the strife, contention, troubles, and divisions in the church to-day, all the disciples of Christ would spend several whole nights in sincere and earnest prayer to God, these things would vanish as fog before the sun, and the peace of God would flow among them as a river.

We should pray for all things for which the Bible directs and encourages us to pray, while in everything we should give thanks.

II. Out of a Night of Prayer into the Transfiguration.

3. "As he was praying" (Luke 9: 29)—during his prayer—"he was transfigured."

"Transfigured" means to change the form. The original word is "transformed" in Rom. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 18; and in these passages it denotes a spiritual change. Jesus was transfigured in that "the fashion of his countenance was altered" (Luke 9: 29); "his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light" (Matt. 17: 2), "and dazzling" (Luke 9: 29), and "glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them" (Mark 9: 3).

Nothing but the purest, whitest, most brilliant, and most glorious objects—snow, light, sun—within our knowledge could be used to express the brightness of Christ's garments and the radiant glory of his face.

The light which shone from this same face around Saul of Tarsus was brighter than the sun at noon, and smote him blind (Acts 9: 3; 22: 6, 11; 26: 13) to the earth. To John on Patmos it was "as the sun shineth in his strength," and he fell at the feet of Jesus "as one dead." (Rev. 1: 16, 17.) It shone from the face of Moses when he came down from the mountain, so that he had to put a veil over it while he talked to the people. (Ex. 34: 29-35.) This was but a reflection from Moses' face of the true light.

In the beginning Jesus shared this light with God. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1: 1.) Jesus was "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance." (Heb. 1: 3.)

This same presence and glory light up the great city of God on high. "And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb." (Rev. 21: 23.)

Humanity cannot look upon this light without physical pain, blindness, and death; so Jesus veiled this glory in the flesh when he came to

earth, that he might sympathize with men and that they might be able to approach him. He was changed, transfigured, then, when he came to this earth. Now on this mountain he appears as he was in glory with God before he came. This brightness not only shone around him, but it shone from within him and through his flesh and garments, transforming them into exceeding whiteness and brightness. This is a glimpse, a foretaste, of what Christians will be in heaven. "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3: 21); and "we know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (1 John 3: 2).

From these and other circumstances it seems plain that in heaven in glorified bodies Christians will preserve their identity.

III. Moses and Elijah.

4. "Elijah with Moses." From the beginning God, through angels, or messengers, talked to men on earth. "Angel" means "messenger." Men, as we have seen, could not look upon God's face directly and live. (See also Ex. 33: 20-23.) Moses saw his glory, but not his face. So God sent messengers to talk with him. It is sometimes said they had seen God because they saw the messengers he sent, but no mortal eye could stand the brightness of God's face. (See Gen. 16: 7-13; 18: 19: 1; Judg. 6: 11; 23: 13.) On this occasion Moses and Elijah returned from the spirit land and talked with Jesus.

Moses was a prophet and the lawgiver to the children of Israel. He was the highest type, in the Old Testament, of Jesus. "When he was grown up," he gave up Egypt—its rich treasures, throne, and honors—and suffered affliction with the people of God as a slave in order to save them from Egyptian bondage. (Heb. 11: 23-29.) Jesus gave up the riches and glories of heaven for the poverty of earth (2 Cor. 8: 9), and "the form of God," and took "the form of a servant," and died on the cross to save the race from sin and the grave. He, too, was a Prophet and Lawgiver. He was "that prophet" of all prophets, of whom Moses was a fit type. (See Deut. 18: 15-22; Acts 3: 22-26.) The pupil should be sure to read these references. Space will not allow their quotation here. The law of Moses went from Sinai; the law of Jesus, from Mount Zion; and the word of the Lord, from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2: 1-5; Mic. 4: 1, 2; Heb. 12: 18-29.)

The passage, "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the sojourners of Gilead" (1 Kings 17: 1), gives us all we know about Elijah's early life. He has been called "the grandest and the most romantic character that Israel ever produced." (Read 1 Kings 17-19, 21; 2 Kings 2.) It was Elijah who prayed, and it did not rain for three years and six months; and then he prayed for rain, and it came. (James 5: 17, 18.) He lived, in round numbers, nine hundred years before Christ; he lived when the kingdom of Israel, under the very wicked king, Ahab, and his still more wicked wife, Jezebel, was most corrupt. He was the law restorer and preserver. He reproved the king, the queen, and false prophets alike. He was a fit type of John the Baptist, in whose spirit and power John came. (Mal. 3: 1; 4: 5, 6; Luke 1: 17.) Elijah never died; he "went up by a whirlwind into

heaven" in "a chariot of fire" drawn by "horses of fire." (2 Kings 2: 11.)

Moses died in the land of Moab, and was buried there in a valley, and no man knew of his grave (Deut. 34: 5-7); but it seems, since Michael, the archangel, and the devil contended about his body, that it was withdrawn from the grave by Him who had the power of death. (Jude 9.)

Moses was the head of the law, and Elijah was the head and representative of the prophets.

The New Testament speaks of the law and the prophets. (Matt. 5: 17; 7: 12.) It seems fitting that the great lawgiver and the greatest of the old prophets should return from the state of the dead to confirm the truth that Jesus, indeed, is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, in whom all center.

How the apostles knew Moses and Elijah, it is not stated; but most likely Jesus told them. Moses and Elijah were in spirit bodies, but these bodies bore a striking resemblance to their earthly bodies. They, with Jesus, in this glorified state, are examples of the complete redemption of the race. Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory" (Luke 9: 31) with Jesus. They were in glorified bodies, and the halo of light which emanated from Jesus surrounded them. They spoke to Jesus "of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem" (verse 31)—not only his death, but his ascension; his departure, as the word really means, which was soon to be accomplished at Jerusalem. They talked upon the most important matter of earth and heaven. As the angel from God strengthened Jesus in Gethsemane for his death in answer to his prayer (Luke 22: 43), may we not conclude that Moses and Elijah also encouraged him on this occasion to endure the cross and despise the shame? Did they and this glorification come in answer to his prayers?

The three apostles "were heavy with sleep." (Luke 9: 32.) This took place in the night. (Verse 37.) They climbed the mountain the evening before, were up through the night engaged in prayer, and were overcome with sleep, as in the garden. Moses and Elijah came, and Jesus was transfigured while the disciples were "heavy with sleep;" and "when they were fully awake [when they had succeeded in driving sleep back], they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." (Verse 32.) It must have been just before daybreak.

IV. Peter's Proposition.

5. "As they were parting from him" (Luke 9: 33)—leaving—Peter made this proposition. He would detain them. This visitation was too brief. It was good to be in such company. It increased their faith and enlarged their conceptions of Jesus, his work, and the glorified state of the redeemed. It must have produced a reaction from the shock and gloom they experienced a few days previous, when Jesus announced that he must suffer and die at Jerusalem. By "tabernacles" he meant booths made of the boughs of trees, as in the feast of tabernacles. He would make one for each, and have them remain.

6. He did not know, or realize, what he said (Luke 9: 33); "for they became sore afraid." They seemed confused and lost in wonder and delight.

V. The Chief Significance of the Transfiguration.

7. Jesus made no reply to this proposition. That which followed was the reply. The request was not granted, but God gave a better answer to Peter's prayer. So will he give to ours. "A bright cloud overshadowed them" (Matt. 17: 5), and "they entered into" it (Luke 9: 34.) This was the representation of God's glory. He was in the cloud, and veiled by it from their sight. They feared as they were enveloped in this cloud. It must have been like the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night which attended the Israelites.

Out of this cloud came the voice of God, saying: "This is my beloved Son." This was a repetition of the testimony God had borne to Jesus on the banks of the Jordan; but God adds here: "Hear ye him." This is the chief significance of the whole affair. They had heard Moses (the law) and Elijah (the prophets); now they must hear Jesus. If the world had heard truly Moses and the prophets, it would have been ready to receive Jesus. (Luke 24: 25-27, 44; John 5: 45-47.)

The Mosaic dispensation was ending, and Jesus must be heard. Jesus fulfilled the law in a double sense: (1) He kept every precept of it in spotless perfection; (2) he was the end to which the law led. (Gal. 3: 24.) "It was added because of transgressions" until Christ should come. (Verse 19.) In his death on the cross at Jerusalem he took it out of the way. (2 Cor. 3; Eph. 2: 14-22; Col. 2: 14, 15.) Having arisen from the dead, he established his kingdom, which "shall stand forever." (Dan. 2: 44.) Jesus is the Prophet and Lawgiver now. He is the one who speaks from heaven, and the Mediator of the new covenant. (Heb. 12: 22-25.) To hear him is to hear God. "Hear ye him."

VI. When Tell the Vision.

8. Matthew (17: 6) says when they heard this voice, "they fell on their face, and were sore afraid." They were awe-stricken at the voice and presence of God, and hid their eyes from the sight. Jesus kindly went to them, gently touched them, and lovingly bade them arise; "and suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves." (See also Matt. 17: 8.) All had gone, and Jesus had returned to his natural appearance.

9. "Coming down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should have risen again from the dead." Matthew (17: 9) says: "Coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead." With their erroneous conceptions of the nature of his kingdom and without the guidance of the Holy Spirit yet to be given, they were not prepared to preach Christ to the world.

10. They did not then understand what this vision meant, and questioned "among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean." After Jesus arose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and sent down the Holy Spirit upon them, they understood clearly everything Jesus had done and taught. Then they told it to everybody. From Peter, James, and John, who witnessed it, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who recorded the transfiguration, learned it.

VII. "The Word of Prophecy More Sure."

(2 Pet. 1: 16-18.)

Peter delighted to refer to the transfiguration. It made a lasting impression upon him, and he understood its import. "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount. And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." (Verses 16-19.)

"The word of prophecy" was always true and sure, but God's voice here pointed Jesus out more specially and directly as the antitype of Moses and the Son of God in fulfillment of all prophecy.

VIII. Elijah to Come.

"And they [Peter, James, and John] asked him, saying, How is it that the scribes say that Elijah must first come?" The "scribes" were teachers of the law and the traditions of the elders, and said "that Elijah must first come" before the Messiah could appear. They based this conclusion on Mal. 3: 1-3; 4: 5. The meaning of this question seems to be that since Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, whom they must hear, then how can it be true that Elijah must first come? Or, as some say, if the appearance of Elijah in this vision was the coming of Elijah, then why did he not stay? Jesus replied that it was true "that Elijah must first come," "and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they [the scribes] knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would. . . . Then understood the disciples that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." (Matt. 17: 12, 13.) John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah." (Luke 1: 15-17.) They did to John "whatsoever they would"—imprisoned and beheaded him. "Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them." (Matt. 17: 12.) As our lesson says, it was so written that the Messiah should suffer these things. (Luke 24: 26, 44, 46; 1 Cor. 15: 3, 4.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
- Repeat the Golden Text.
- Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
- Did you read the Devotional Reading?
- Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
- Did you read the Home Reading?
- 2 Why do Matthew and Mark say "after six days," and why does Luke say "about eight days?"
- What is meant by "after these sayings?"
- Whom did Jesus take with him on the mountain?

- At what other places were they with Jesus?
- Why did he take these?
- What mountain is this supposed to be?
- Where is this mountain?
- Why did Jesus go upon the mountain?
- Tell the different times and places Jesus prayed.
- For what should we pray?
- 3 What occurred while he prayed?
- What does "transfigured" mean?
- How was Jesus transfigured?
- Upon whom did this light shine at other times?

- What was Jesus before he came to earth?
 Why could not men see God's face and live?
 How did Jesus veil himself to come to us?
 Where did this light about Jesus come from?
 Of what is this a picture or glimpse?
 How will Christians be in heaven?
 4 How did God appear to men from the beginning?
 How much of God's glory was Moses permitted to see?
 Who came and talked with Jesus?
 In what was Moses a type of Jesus?
 From what place did the law of Moses go?
 From what place did Christ's law go?
 Who was Elijah?
 Did you read these chapters about him?
 What was the condition of Israel when he lived?
 At what time did he live?
 Of whom was he a type?
 What became of him?
 What became of Moses?
 What did Moses and Elijah represent?
 How did the apostles here know them?
 In what did they appear with Jesus?
 About what did they talk with him?
 Why did they talk about this?
 Why were the apostles "heavy with sleep?"
- 5 What proposition did Peter make?
 What are "tabernacles?"
 Why did Peter want these characters to remain?
 6 Why did he make this proposition?
 7 What answer was given to this request?
 What did this cloud represent?
 What did God say?
 Of what is Jesus a fulfillment?
 How did he fulfill the law?
 When did it end?
 What is the chief significance of the transfiguration?
 8 What did the apostles do when they heard God's voice?
 What did Jesus do?
 9 Why must they not tell the vision?
 When must they tell it?
 10 What question did they raise among themselves?
 16-18 What impression did the transfiguration make upon Peter?
 What did he say of it afterwards?
 How was the word of prophecy made more sure?
 What question did they ask Jesus?
 Who were the "scribes?"
 Upon what did they base this conclusion?
 What reply did Jesus make?
 Who was the Elijah to come?
 What did they do to him?
 What would be done to Jesus?
 Where was all this written?

King Jesus, reign for evermore,
 Unrivalled in thy courts above,
 While we, with all thy saints, adore
 The wonders of thy redeeming love.

No other Lord but thee we'll know,
 No other power but thine confess;
 We'll spread thine honors while below,
 And heaven shall hear us shout thy grace.

We'll sing along the heavenly road
 That leads us to thy blest abode,
 Till, with the vast, unnumbered throng,
 We join in heaven's triumphant song;

Till, with pure hands and voices sweet,
 We cast our crowns at Jesus' feet,
 And sing of everlasting love,
 In everlasting strains above.

(Ralph Wardlaw.)

LESSON V.—MAY 1.

PETER'S DENIAL AND REPENTANCE.

Mark 14: 53, 54, 66-71; Luke 22: 61, 62.

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and there come together with him all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter had followed him afar off, even within, into the court of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers, and warming himself in the light of the fire.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the court, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest;

67 And seeing Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and saith, Thou also wast with the Nazarene, *even* Jesus.

68 But he denied, saying, I neither know, nor understand what thou sayest: and he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And the maid saw him, and began again to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

70 But he again denied it. And after a little while again they that stood by said to Peter, Of a truth thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean.

71 But he began to curse, and to swear, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto them, Before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And he went out, and wept bitterly.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10: 12.)

TIME.—Thursday night, April 6, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in the high priest's palace.

PERSONS.—Jesus and the twelve.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 51: 1-9.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Matt. 26: 69-75.

HOME READING.—

- April 25. M. Peter Following Afar Off. (Mark 14: 53-62.)
- April 26. T. Peter Warned Against Temptation. (Luke 22: 31-40.)
- April 27. W. Peter's Denial and Repentance. (Mark 14: 63-72.)
- April 28. T. Despised and Rejected. (Isa. 53: 1-12.)
- April 29. F. Avoiding Temptation. (Prov. 4: 10-19.)
- April 30. S. Godly Sorrow Worketh Repentance. (2 Cor. 7: 1-10.)
- May 1. S. The Penitent's Prayer. (Ps. 51: 1-9.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Let us study all the facts connected with Peter's denial of Jesus and his repentance.

John 13 gives an account of the passover supper, during which the Lord's Supper was instituted; also a part of the conversation at the table.

At this point it seems that the warning to Peter and to the other apostles was given when Jesus made the startling statement that all

would forsake him that night: "For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad." (See Mark 14: 27; John 16: 32.) When Jesus announced that one would betray him, they each asked, "Is it I, Lord?" but now none can ask that, for all are included: "All ye shall be offended in me this night." (Matt. 26: 31.)

Some time before this Jesus sent to John the Baptist, then in prison, the following exhortation: "And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me." (Matt. 11: 6.) To "be offended" and "to stumble" mean the same, and "to stumble" means to do wrong—to sin.

How soon this followed! "But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee." (Matt. 26: 32.) Jesus offered to the apostles, startled over the declaration that they would all forsake him and scatter, the encouragement that they would again be gathered together, return to him, and see him in Galilee. He refers here again to his resurrection. After he arose from the dead, the angel told the good women who visited the empty tomb to "go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." (Mark 16: 7; Matt. 28: 7, 10, 16.)

This was not the first place or time the apostles saw Jesus, taking the entire record into consideration; but they saw him there, as he had appointed.

The impulsive and bold Peter declared vehemently that although all should "be caused to stumble" in Jesus, he never would be. But "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." (Matt. 26: 34.) Mark (14: 30) says: "Verily I say unto thee, that thou to-day, even this night, before the cock crow twice, shalt deny me thrice."

To make this declaration stronger, Peter added: "Even if I must die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." (Matt. 26: 35.)

In John 13: 31-38 Jesus states that he would leave his disciples, and that whither he went they could not go. Peter said: "Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow afterwards. Peter saith unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee. Jesus answereth, Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

Jesus was going, for one place, to the cross and to death, and Peter could not then go with him, because he was not prepared to die for Jesus, although he vehemently declared he would do so.

Jesus declared that Peter later on would have the faith and courage to die for him and that this is the way Peter's life would end. "Likewise also said all the disciples"—that is, all joined Peter in these declarations of being ready to die for Jesus.

When Jesus was arrested at the gate of the garden of Gethsemane, "Simon Peter having a sword drew it." (John 18: 10.) There were only two swords in the company of the twelve. How they came to be there, we are not told. Just before that Jesus had said: "And he that hath none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword. . . . And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough." (Luke 22: 36-38.) Why they should have a sword, we

do not know, unless it was for this occasion, that Jesus might the more strongly impress the lesson that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." He does not encourage its use.

All the apostles said, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" (Luke 22: 49); and, before the question was answered, Peter, who had one of the two swords, put the thought into action and cut off the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest (John 18: 10).

Jesus then said to Peter: "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. 26: 52-54.) Having said this, Jesus graciously healed Malchus' ear. (John 18: 10.)

The bewildered and hopeless disciples, not permitted to fight, seeing Jesus bound and in the hands of the enemy, "all left him, and fled." (Mark 14: 50.)

In addition to what he had already said, Jesus asked: "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Peter, with his sword, worldly wisdom, and physical courage, not only would hinder Christ's great work of redemption, but destroy it altogether. Just so to-day, in worldly wisdom and a warlike spirit, not a few, claiming to be followers of the meek and lowly Savior, would destroy the mission of Jesus of peace on earth and salvation of the race.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Priests and Sanhedrin.

53. Jesus was bound and led from Gethsemane back into Jerusalem, "to Annas first, . . . father-in-law to Caiaphas." Annas had been high priest, but had been deposed by the Romans. Five of his sons, it is said, were high priests in succession. Also his son-in-law was high priest. In Luke 3: 2 "the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas" is mentioned. In Acts 4: 6 Annas is called "the high priest." Originally the high priest was appointed for life, but the Romans removed him and appointed another when they saw fit. Annas may have been considered by the Jews the real high priest, while Caiaphas wore the title and served by Roman appointment. Caiaphas served about ten years—from A.D. 27 to A.D. 36 or 37. He was unfit to judge Jesus, because he had already expressed an opinion and had advised the condemnation of Jesus (John 11: 50, 51); but the Jews cared nothing for justice.

The Sanhedrin was the council, composed of seventy members. This is supposed to have originated with the seventy elders appointed by Moses (Num. 11: 16, 17), and was the highest court of justice among the Jews. The Jews could try cases and condemn criminals, but under the Romans could not inflict capital punishment. (John 18: 31.)

Jesus was bound and led from Gethsemane to Annas first and then to Caiaphas. "And there come together with him all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes." This was in the palace of the high priest. (Matt. 26: 58.)

II. Peter "Followed Him Afar Off."

54. Peter and John, having recovered their courage, after their first alarm and flight, followed Jesus to the high priest's palace; and John, being known to the high priest (how, we do not know), "entered in with Jesus into the court of the high priest; but Peter was standing at the door without." (John 18: 15, 16.) "Peter had followed" Jesus "afar off."

The palace was a square or rectangular building erected around a quadrangular space, in the center open to the sky for light and ventilation. This open space was called "the court." It was usually paved. It opened on the street through an arched way, or vestibule, called "the porch." On each side of this court were rooms, and back of it, opposite the entrance, was a hall elevated a few steps above the court floor (Mark 14: 66), in which the Sanhedrin at this time probably met with Caiaphas to try Jesus. It seems quite probable that Annas and Caiaphas occupied the same palace and that Peter's denials were made in the same court.

When Peter was refused an entrance, standing yet at the door on the street, John went back and spoke to the maid who kept the door, and brought him in also. This was during the trial before Annas.

III. Peter's First Denial.

66, 67. This maid understood that John was a disciple of Jesus, and, following Peter to the fire within, she gave him a scrutinizing look and said: "Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean." But Peter "denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest." (Matt. 26: 70.) John (18: 25) puts it as follows: "Art thou also one of his disciples?" Peter said: "I am not." John did not deny Jesus, yet he was not molested. The soldiers and officers had made a fire of coals in the court, because it was cool, being just before day, and Peter stood there warming himself with them. (John 18: 15-18.) This was the first denial. He got with the enemies of Jesus; he mingled with the wrong crowd, if he did not wish to deny the Lord. Much depends upon the company one keeps, the crowd one is in. One is known by the company one keeps. "Keep good company or none," is most excellent advice. Peter did not seek such company; he simply did not avoid it. His conviction and courage were not sufficient for this test. Not a few brethren would have exerted a much stronger and far better influence during and since the terrible war had they avoided warlike company. Many, Johnlike, pursued a firm and steadfast course, respectful always to civil officers, and fared as John did.

IV. Peter's Second Denial.

68. But Peter's conscience greatly troubled him, "and he went out into the porch; and the cock crew"—the first time.

69. What effect this had on Peter is not stated, but he heard it. While he was in the porch, this maid and "another maid" (Matt. 26: 71), who saw Peter, said to those who stood by: "This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth." "This is one of them"—that is, one of Jesus' disciples—one of those who were causing so much trouble!

LESSON VI.—MAY 8.

PETER AND THE RISEN LORD.

John 20: 1-10; 21: 15-17.

1 Now on the first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, while it was yet dark, unto the tomb, and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb.

2 She runneth therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb.

4 And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the tomb;

5 And stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths lying; yet entered he not in.

6 Simon Peter therefore also cometh, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he beholdeth the linen cloths lying,

7 And the napkin, that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself.

8 Then entered in therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 So the disciples went away again unto their own home.

15 So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. 1: 3.)

TIME.—April 9, A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Joseph's new tomb.

PERSONS.—Mary, other women, two angels, Jesus, and the apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 16.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—1 Pet. 1: 3-12.

HOME READING.—

- May 2. M. Peter at the Lord's Tomb. (John 20: 1-10.)
- May 3. T. Jesus and the Seven by the Sea. (John 21: 1-14.)
- May 4. W. Peter Tried and Commissioned. (John 21: 15-23.)
- May 5. T. Peter a Witness of the Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 1-10.)
- May 6. F. Jesus Appears to the Eleven. (Luke 24: 36-49.)
- May 7. S. Jesus Commissions the Disciples. (Acts 1: 1-14.)
- May 8. S. Our Hope. (1 Pet. 1: 3-12.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

After Jesus' body had been placed in the tomb, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate and said: "Sir, we remember that

of the truth and to associate with its enemies, unwilling to be known as its friend and defender, is to deny it. There is but one right way, and that is to quietly and meekly, but openly and firmly, avow the truth.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What warning did Jesus give all his apostles?

When did he give this?

What does "cause to stumble" mean?

What Scripture was fulfilled in this?

What did Jesus say to encourage his apostles to think they would return to him?

What did Peter declare?

What did Jesus say to him?

What did Peter add to make his declaration stronger?

What did Jesus say Peter would do later on?

What did all the disciples say?

What did Jesus, before his betrayal, advise his disciples to buy?

What reply did they make?

Why did he want the disciples to have a sword at all?

When Jesus was arrested, what did all the disciples ask?

What did Peter do?

Whom did Jesus say he could call to fight for him?

What did Jesus say to Peter in regard to those who take the sword?

What did Jesus do for Malchus?

What then did all the disciples do?

How would Peter destroy the mission of Jesus?

Is a warlike spirit the spirit of Christ?

53 What was done with Jesus?

Who were the high priests then?

What was the Sanhedrin?

54 Where did Peter and John go?

Describe the court and porch.

How was an entrance obtained for Peter?

66, 67 What did the doorkeeper say to Peter?

What reply did Peter make?

Where were all at this time?

Which denial was this?

68 Where did Peter then go?

When did the cock crow the first time?

69 What different ones there accused Peter of being Jesus' disciple?

What did Peter then say and do?

Which denial was this?

70 How long before Peter was again accused?

What had occurred in the meantime?

What did a kinsman of Malchus say?

71, 72 What did Peter do to make his denial emphatic?

What again was heard?

Which denial was this?

61, 62 What did Jesus do at this time?

What did Peter remember and do?

State the difference between Judas' regret and Peter's repentance.

What had Jesus said to Peter?

What had Satan done for Peter?

What different lessons should we learn from Peter's conduct?

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend,
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
No; when I blush, be this my shame:
That I no more revere his name.

(Joseph Grigg.)

LESSON VI.—MAY 8.

PETER AND THE RISEN LORD.

John 20: 1-10; 21: 15-17.

1 Now on the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, while it was yet dark, unto the tomb, and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb.

2 She runneth therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb.

4 And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the tomb;

5 And stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths lying; yet entered he not in.

6 Simon Peter therefore also cometh, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he beholdeth the linen cloths lying,

7 And the napkin, that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself.

8 Then entered in therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 So the disciples went away again unto their own home.

15 So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. 1: 3.)

TIME.—April 9, A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Joseph's new tomb.

PERSONS.—Mary, other women, two angels, Jesus, and the apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 16.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—1 Pet. 1: 3-12.

HOME READING.—

- May 2. M. Peter at the Lord's Tomb. (John 20: 1-10.)
- May 3. T. Jesus and the Seven by the Sea. (John 21: 1-14.)
- May 4. W. Peter Tried and Commissioned. (John 21: 15-23.)
- May 5. T. Peter a Witness of the Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 1-10.)
- May 6. F. Jesus Appears to the Eleven. (Luke 24: 36-49.)
- May 7. S. Jesus Commissions the Disciples. (Acts 1: 1-14.)
- May 8. S. Our Hope. (1 Pet. 1: 3-12.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

After Jesus' body had been placed in the tomb, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate and said: "Sir, we remember that

that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest haply his disciples come and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error will be worse than the first." Pilate granted them a Roman guard; and "they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them." (See Matt. 27: 62-66.)

All depends upon the resurrection of Jesus. On this rests the whole Christian system. If he be not the Son of God, he was an impostor and blasphemer, as the Jews charged; but if he arose from the dead, he is all he claimed to be. The Jews took every necessary precaution to prevent any imposture here, but God overruled this precaution to subserve the cause of Christ and to furnish the fullest possible evidence of his resurrection.

But did he rise? Study history, examine and weigh the testimony concerning numerous historic events, and see if any fact can be found in the history of mankind that is proved by fuller testimony and better evidence than the resurrection of Jesus.

The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning argument in favor of his divine Sonship. He "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1: 4.)

The chief point in all the apostles' preaching is to prove that Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Jews crucified, arose from the dead and is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (see Acts 1: 21, 22; 2: 32-36; 17: 1-3; 1 Cor. 2: 1, 2); and this all must believe in order to be saved (John 20: 30, 31; Rom. 10: 9, 10).

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Mary Magdalene and Other Women Visit the Tomb.

1. John mentions Mary only of the women who visited the tomb of Jesus on that memorable first day of the week, because she was the one who ran back to inform himself and Peter of the empty tomb and the one about whom he wished to write.

The other writers mention the other women who were with Mary Magdalene—namely, Mary the mother of James and Josés (Mark 15: 40; 16: 1), Salome, Joanna, and others (Luke 24: 10).

They followed the body of Jesus to the tomb, and in their great love for him sat "over against the sepulcher" while Joseph and Nicodemus buried him. "They returned, and prepared spices and ointments."

On the Sabbath day "they rested according to the commandment." (Luke 23: 56.)

Jesus kept the Sabbath in the grave, and his disciples would not break it even to anoint his body. Mark (16: 1) says they "brought spices, that they might come and anoint him." Every preparation was made for an early start on Sunday morning, "the first day of the week." Matthew (28: 1) says: "Now late on the Sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." Mark (16: 1, 2) says: "When the Sabbath was past, . . . very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen." This verse of our lesson says: "Early, while it was yet dark." They

started early, and reached the tomb at sunrise. They went probably from Jerusalem or Bethany.

All this shows they were not expecting him to rise from the dead, and strengthens the evidence that he did rise.

These women were not aware of the guard and the sealing of the tomb by the Jewish rulers, and their great concern was: "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb?" This stone "was exceeding great." (Mark 16: 3, 4.) God overcame this difficulty by causing an earthquake and sending an angel who removed the stone.

2. At the first sight of the empty tomb Mary ran back to report to Peter and John that the Lord's body had been removed, and these women knew not where to find it. Mary's expression, "We know not where they have laid him," shows that others were there with her. While she was gone, the angels appeared to the other women. (Matt. 28: 1-8.)

II. Peter and John at the Tomb.

3-9. Peter and John were greatly concerned over the fact stated by Mary, and hastened with all speed to the place. John outran Peter and reached the tomb first. Stooping down, he looked in and saw the linen cloths in which Jesus had been buried lying empty in the tomb. "Yet entered he not in." Peter, bolder and more impulsive, passed John, entered at once into the tomb, and found the linen cloths carefully folded and lying in one place, and the head napkin "rolled up in a place by itself." John then entered, following Peter's example. Upon him first gleamed the thought that Jesus was risen, for "he saw, and believed." "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead."

Had they understood that he would rise from the dead, they would not have been surprised at what they then beheld. Wrapping the body of Jesus with the hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, the preparation of these women to anoint him, and the great surprise of all at the empty tomb show they were not expecting him to rise.

The careful placing of the cloths is not insignificant. If the body had been taken from the tomb, the cloths would have been taken, too, or would not have been left in such order.

Every small detail goes to show that Jesus arose from the dead. The disciples could not have been mistaken or deceived. Had they expected the resurrection, their curiosity would have been at the highest pitch, and all would have been watching and eager to catch the first sight of him. They could not have deceived others, either, had they tried to do so.

On the testimony of these witnesses rests the faith of all Christians in Jesus as the crucified and risen Savior. Luke (Acts 1: 3) declares he "showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs."

10. Because they did not understand the Scripture concerning the resurrection of Jesus, "the disciples went away again unto their own home." After the crucifixion and burial, the disciples lost hope and went home. All did not leave Jerusalem and vicinity, but stopped with friends or at their lodging places.

III. Peter a True Leader.

(John 21: 15-17.)

15. As verse 14 states, this was "the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples" assembled together; but it was his seventh appearance since his resurrection. And as verses 1 and 2 state, this appearance was at the Sea of Tiberias (See of Galilee) to seven of his disciples. Peter was one of these.

While all present were benefited by this appearance, it seems to have been especially for Peter's benefit. "So when they had broken their fast," Jesus turned his attention directly to Peter.

Since Peter's fall, although Jesus had met him at least three times before this, the matter had not been mentioned. Although Peter sinned, he could repent and be restored as an apostle. He did repent; he "turned again." (Luke 22: 31, 32.) Immediately after he had denied his Lord, Jesus having given him such a reproving look (Luke 22: 61, 62), he went out and wept bitterly.

When Jesus foretold Peter's fall, he also predicted his restoration and laid upon him the obligation to strengthen his brethren. This obligation is renewed here in the language: "Feed my lambs." Peter was fitted naturally to be a leader. Few men are. Most people must be led. Hence the importance of wise, safe, and God-fearing leaders. Peter was bold and courageous, the first to speak and act. He was also impulsive and rash; but, tempered in the furnace of experience and discipline, he became wiser and was better prepared for his life work. He needed, too, to be assured by his Lord that he had been restored to his former position. Jesus was as kind to Peter as he was to Thomas, only he dealt with Peter in a different way.

It may be significant that Jesus here addressed Peter as "Simon, son of John," the name by which he was first called (John 1: 42), and not as "Peter"—"a stone." He had shown himself too weak to be called "a stone."

IV. Peter's Love for Jesus.

When Jesus first called Peter to be an apostle, it was just after a miraculous draught of fishes (Luke 5: 1-11); he now calls him the second time under similar circumstances. Three times Peter had denied his Lord, and three times he here avowed his love.

What does Jesus mean by the question: "Lovest thou me more than these?" Scholars differ as to what "these" refers to. Some say it refers to the fishes and bread; if so, then Jesus meant to ask Peter if he would forsake all things and suffer hunger and want for his sake. Others think it refers to the other disciples; if so, Jesus meant to ask if Peter loved him more than the other disciples loved him. The latter seems to be the true meaning, and was somewhat a reproof to Peter's boasted love heretofore. While now he could not know the depth of the love others had for Jesus, neither did he know it before, when he declared that, although all should forsake Jesus, he would not, but would die first. (Matt. 26: 33; Mark 14: 29; John 13: 37.) He once declared that he loved the Master "more than these" other disciples; now, since he had thrice denied the Lord, what does he think about it? He no longer boasts of his love or compares it with that of

others, but appeals to the Lord's own divine knowledge of the condition of his heart: "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Indeed, the Lord knew Peter's heart and assigned him work to do. This is the test of love: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John 14: 15.)

"Feed my lambs." "Lambs" are the young and tender ones in Christ, whether they are old in years or not. It is more difficult to give suitable spiritual food which will strengthen and edify the "lambs" of Jesus than it is to find fault, to scold, or to abuse. Carping criticism is not edification, comfort, or consolation.

16. This question was asked by the Lord the second time, and Peter answered in the same way.

"Tend my sheep." There is a difference between "feed" and "tend." "Tend" means to shepherd. It includes feeding, but means more; it means to watch, to guard, and to guide. Peter, who so well understood this, exhorted the elders to "tend the flock of God, . . . exercising the oversight." (1 Pet. 5: 2.) At first Jesus said Peter should become a fisher of men; here he makes him a shepherd. Later on Peter spoke of himself as an "elder." (1 Pet. 5: 1.) It is one thing to induce people to enter the kingdom; it is another thing to lead them as godly shepherds into the green pastures of truth and beside the still waters of peace.

17. For the third time Jesus asked Peter this question. The Lord, it seems, intended that Peter should avow his love as openly and as repeatedly as he had denied him.

By those who know it is pointed out that two different Greek words are used for "love" in these verses. The first one, "agapao," which was used by Jesus, is the stronger, and means love founded on admiration, veneration, esteem, unselfish love, given of choice, devotion. Such love God manifested for the world in the gift of his Son; such love Jesus manifested in his life of toil and in his death on the cross; such is commanded toward our neighbors and our enemies. It means action, duty, service; to regard the welfare of all; to wish well; to exhibit free good will toward all. The second word is "phileo." It was used by Peter, and means love prompted by sense and emotion, such as friends feel for friends; to be friendly, to be attached to, to long for, etc. Consult Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament on these words.

In his question Jesus twice used the stronger word, but Peter modestly replied with the latter. Then Jesus in the third question dropped the stronger word and adopted the one used by Peter, as much as to say: "Peter, are you sure that you have for me even the love which you declare?" "Peter was grieved" because Jesus, in asking this question the third time, seemed to doubt his love. Again, Peter, enlarging upon Christ's knowledge, said the third time, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee;" and again Jesus applied the test: "Feed my sheep."

This grief was good for Peter. He doubtless felt the shame of his denial. He is no longer boastful and his rashness is gone. He is wiser and stronger by discipline. Simon has become indeed "a stone" ("Peter"), and he goes on bravely to duty and finally to death.

V. The Manner of Peter's Death Foretold.

Peter's further duty and "by what manner of death he should glorify God" are foretold in verses 18-23. However interesting it would be to consider these, the lack of both time and space forbid. It is a very great thing to glorify God in one's death.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Places, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What request did the Jews make of Pilate?
What did their precaution turn out to be?
What reply did Pilate make to them?
What depended upon the resurrection of Jesus?
What is the supreme proof of his divine Sonship?
What is the chief point in the apostles' preaching?
What must all believe in order to become Christians?
- 1 Why does John mention Mary only?
Who went with her to the tomb when Jesus was buried?
On their return from the tomb, what did they prepare to do?
How was the Sabbath spent?
When did these women go next to the tomb?
What shows they were not expecting Jesus to rise?
What question did they raise on the way?
Who solved the problem, and how?
 - 2 What did Mary do upon finding the body gone?
 - 3-9 Give in detail what Peter and John did.
Why think it first dawned upon John that Jesus had risen?
How would the disciples have acted had they been expecting the resurrection?
How were they convinced that he did rise?
How are we convinced of the same fact?
 - 10 Why did the disciples go?
 - 15 How could this be the third time Jesus manifested himself to his disciples and yet his seventh appearance?
Why did he give his attention directly to Peter?
In what ways was Peter fitted to be a leader?
What are the similarities between this meeting and the one when Jesus first called Peter to be an apostle? (See Luke 5: 1-11.)
What does Jesus mean by the question, "Lovest thou me more than these?"
What did Jesus tell Peter to do?
What is the test of love?
 - 16 What did Jesus ask the second time, and what did Peter say?
What does "tend my sheep" mean?
 - 17 Why did Jesus ask this question three times?
What is the difference between the word Jesus used for "love" and the one Peter used?
Why, then, did Jesus, when asked the question a third time, adopt the word used by Peter?
What answer did Peter give this time?
What effect did Peter's experience and discipline have upon him?
What kind of death did Jesus say Peter would die?

ACTS OF APOSTLES.

Luke, as we have learned, is the author of the book of Luke and of "Acts of Apostles."

The title, "The Acts of the Apostles," or "Acts of the Apostles," was not given by inspiration, but was doubtless added after the book left Luke's hands. It does not give "the acts of the apostles" in full, but gives enough of the acts of some of the apostles to serve God's purpose in giving the book. "Acts of Apostles" is a more fitting title.

This book is a continuation of the book of Luke and begins where

that book leaves off. Luke closes with the commission and the ascension of Jesus (Luke 24: 46-53), and "Acts" begins with the commission and ascension of Jesus.

It is based on this great commission and grew out of it. Every convert made by the apostles and their coworkers, every church planted and set in order by them, and every epistle written to churches and individual Christians sprang from the commission, as the oak from the acorn or fruit from seed. Acts of Apostles shows how the apostles, guided by the Spirit of God, carried out this commission. This is the purpose of the book.

Ignorance of this book and its purpose has caused much confusion on the all-important subject of telling sinners what to do to be saved. It gives the account of thousands of cases of conversion which took place under the teaching of the apostles and their collaborators. From these examples of the conversion of all classes and conditions of people we see most clearly how the apostles understood the great commission and what they told people to do to be saved.

This has been called "the book of conversions."

Again, God promised the Holy Spirit when Jesus should be taken up. The Spirit was to bear witness, or testify, of Jesus (John 15: 26, 27); he was to teach the apostles and bring to their remembrance all things Jesus had said to them (John 14: 26), to guide them "into all the truth," to show them things to come (John 16: 13, 14), and to comfort them (John 14: 26; 15: 26; 16: 7); he was to "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16: 8-11). Acts of Apostles shows how the Spirit did all this. It demonstrates the work of the Spirit in convicting and converting sinners, and gives the agencies and instrumentalities used by the Spirit in accomplishing this work. Peter says the apostles "preached the gospel" "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven" (1 Pet. 1: 12), and this book shows how the Spirit did this preaching through the apostles; hence, it has been called "the gospel of the Holy Spirit."

Is it not strange that people will turn away from this book of the Spirit and seek the guidance of the Spirit in their own fleshly emotions, impulses, and experiences? "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." (Prov. 28: 26.)

This book also gives a brief account of the origin and progress of the church at Jerusalem until its dispersion on account of the persecution against Stephen (Acts 8: 1-4); the reception of the Gentiles; Paul's missionary tours and different churches planted by him; how churches were put to work and "set in order;" and how they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2: 42).

Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me. (Lowell.)

LESSON VII.—MAY 15.

PETER AT PENTECOST.

Acts 2: 12-14, 32-41.

12 And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words.

32 This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.

34 For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?

38 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.

40 And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

41 They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2: 38.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The apostles and their audiences.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 2: 5-11.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Luke 24: 44-49.

HOME READING.—

- May 9. M. Peter's Sermon at Pentecost. (Acts 2: 14-21.)
- May 10. T. Peter's Sermon at Pentecost. (Acts 2: 22-36.)
- May 11. W. The Result of Peter's Sermon. (Acts 2: 37-47.)
- May 12. T. The Promise of the Holy Spirit. (John 16: 7-15.)
- May 13. F. Spiritual Gifts. (1 Cor. 12: 1-11.)
- May 14. S. Precious Promises. (2 Pet. 1: 1-11.)
- May 15. S. The Acceptable Spirit. (Phil. 2: 5-11.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Study all of Acts 2. The teacher should briefly state to the class what “Pentecost” was (Lev. 23); why called “Pentecost;” what else it was called (Deut. 16: 10-16; Ex. 23: 16); what characterized the

people on that occasion (Deut. 16: 9-12). From the references we learn it always came on the first day of the week. This day has been called "the birthday of the church." (See Isa. 2: 1-4; Mic. 4: 1, 2; Luke 24: 47-49; Acts 1: 8.)

On the promise of the Holy Spirit, see Joel 2: 28-32; John 14: 16, 17, 25, 26; 15: 26, 27; 16: 7-15; Acts 1: 4, 5, 8.

Only the apostles were "baptized in the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1: 2, 5, 8, 26.) Acts 2: 1 says "they [the "apostles" of Acts 1: 26] were all together," etc. (See also verse 14.)

The apostles were either in that "upper room" (Acts 1: 13, 14) or in some part of the temple, probably the latter, since Luke (24: 53) says they "were continually in the temple, blessing God."

They were awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit came. (Verses 1-4.)

"Suddenly" means in an unexpected way.

The sound was "as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it [the sound] filled all the house where they were sitting."

This sound, no doubt, was to attract attention. After hearing this sound, the multitude came together. The multitude, therefore, were not baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The tongues were not fire, but were "like as of fire." They did not have the consuming properties of fire.

As the sound was heard and the flamelike tongues appeared, the apostles were also "filled with the Holy Spirit." Others before this had received the Spirit and had spoken by it (2 Sam. 23: 2; 2 Pet. 1: 21), and the apostles by it had worked miracles; but that was not called the "baptism of the Spirit." Such was the power of the Spirit on this occasion that it was called a "baptism."

"The sound" filled the house, "the tongues" sat upon the apostles, and the Spirit filled them. It was not a slight manifestation, like sprinkling, but such an outpouring and overwhelming of the Spirit that the apostles were said to be baptized in it. The Spirit took possession of their mental and spiritual faculties, controlled and directed their speech.

The Spirit spoke through them, or they spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance." They were the mouthpieces of God, who spoke by the Spirit through them. What they said, God said.

The tongues parted and distributed themselves among the apostles. "And it sat upon each of them"—one tongue to one apostle.

These tongues indicated how the Spirit would do his work—that he would speak, and that he would speak through the apostles, and that he would speak a language which all who spoke that language could understand.

"Other tongues" means other languages than their own, but intelligent languages.

Jesus promised that the Spirit would speak, and would speak the words of God. (John 16: 13, 14.)

To understand that the Spirit speaks to us now through the inspired apostles and other inspired writers of the Bible will help us much to understand how the Spirit enlightens, convicts, converts, and leads sinners to salvation and does all his other work. (See 2 Sam.

23: 2; 2 Pet. 1: 21; 1 Tim. 4: 7; Heb. 3: 7-11; Ps. 95: 7-11; Rev. 2: 7—to the seven churches of Asia.)

Jesus promised that the Spirit would do certain things—viz.:

1. He would teach the apostles and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them. (John 14: 26.)

2. He would guide them "into all the truth" and declare unto them the will of God. (John 16: 12-14.)

3. He would comfort them. This is the Comforter, who would abide with the apostles and the Israel of God forever. (John 14: 16-18.) He is called "the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14: 17.)

4. He would bear witness of the truth. (John 15: 26.)

5. He would do for the world the following: He would "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged." (John 16: 8-11.)

6. Let particular notice be given to Jesus' declaration concerning the world's not receiving the Spirit: "The Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him." "The world," of which the devil is prince, cannot receive the Spirit of God; it is filled with and ruled by another spirit.

There are to-day two spirits—(1) the Spirit of God; (2) the spirit of the world. There are two institutions—(1) the church, or the kingdom, of God, of which Jesus is head and King; (2) the world, of which Satan is prince, or ruler. God's Spirit fills the church, his kingdom, but not the world. God does not put his Spirit into the world; the church cannot have the spirit of the world. The world does not recognize and does not know the Holy Spirit.

7. The Spirit would not come in this power until Jesus went away; then Jesus would send him. (John 16: 7.)

8. Pentecost was the right time. Jesus had gone away. The right persons—the apostles, not the world—were present. They were in the right place—Jerusalem. (Luke 24: 49.)

9. For the above reasons the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This power qualified them for their future work.

10. Then there is another reason: When Moses had set up the tabernacle and had placed everything in it according to "the pattern" (Heb. 8: 5) which God had given, God filled it with his glory (Ex. 40: 33-35). So he filled the temple and accepted it when Solomon had finished it according to the divine plan. (2 Chron. 7: 1-3.) When Jesus had prepared "living stones" for his spiritual temple and had finished his work, God sent his Spirit at the right time and place and accepted it and filled it with his presence and glory. (Eph. 2: 19-22.)

The Spirit did for the apostles and the world all that was promised.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. False Conceptions Removed.

12-14. Everything was now ready for this work. All authority had been given to Jesus; he had ascended; the apostles had tarried at Jerusalem; the Spirit had come to guide them into all the truth and

bring to their remembrance all Jesus had said. This is a wonderful chapter. When the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit, the multitude was not present. They came together after "this sound was heard" (verse 6), not before, "and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language," and were amazed and marveled. Some, mocking, said the apostles were drunken. To remove this false impression, Peter, standing up with the eleven, denied the accusation, showing that they would not likely be drunken so early as nine o'clock. Further to remove the charge, he continued through verse 21 to show that what they heard was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, which he there quoted. This prophecy was not all then fulfilled, but began to be fulfilled. The false impression removed that they were drunken, they were ready to receive the truth. To-day people must have their prejudices and false impressions removed before they can receive the truth.

II. Peter Proves That Jesus Is the Christ, the Son of God.

32-35. Beginning with verse 22 and continuing through verse 35, Peter proves that Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Jews crucified, is the Christ. He makes the very multitude of Jews present witnesses of the fact that God approved of Jesus "by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him" in their midst and which they knew. He then quotes from the prophecies of David. The Jews claimed to believe the Scriptures; hence, Peter refers to them as proof of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. He showed that in these prophecies David could not have meant himself, for the reason that he was dead, buried, and his grave was with them then; but being a prophet and foreseeing these things, he spoke of the resurrection of Christ. The Jews looked for a Messiah, or the Christ; but they did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was he.

Peter shows not only that God approved of Jesus of Nazareth by the miracles that Jesus wrought, but that after the Jews had crucified him God raised him from the dead in fulfillment of these prophecies of David. That God had raised Jesus from the dead the apostles were witnesses: "Whereof we all are witnesses." They were most intimately acquainted with him before his crucifixion, and after his crucifixion and burial had seen him alive from the dead. They had handled him, had eaten with him, had talked with him, had seen him at different times and under different circumstances, and could not be mistaken. They saw him ascend.

Furthermore, being "by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit," he had poured forth that which the people saw and heard, as Peter says: "Which ye see and hear." Jesus had told the apostles before, as we have learned, of this promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father. This came through Jesus' prayer to God; and he, therefore, received it from God, and received it in answer to his prayer. (John 14: 16, 17.) The Holy Spirit was sent in Jesus' name. (John 14: 26.) Having thus received the Spirit from the Father, Jesus sent it. (John 15: 26.) The Spirit was to bear witness of Jesus, and so were the apostles (John 15: 26, 27); they were to bear witness of facts—of his resurrec-

tion, ascension, and exaltation at God's right hand. The people saw and heard; they saw the tongues "like as of fire," and they heard the Spirit speak through the apostles.

To further show that David did not refer to himself in the prophecies quoted above, Peter said David had not ascended into heaven, and understood the prophecies did not refer to himself, because he had said: "Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. 110: 1.)

III. The Conclusion and Effect of Peter's Sermon.

36. Peter's sermon on this occasion would necessarily be full and complete. It was the first one preached under the great commission, the first one after the ascension and coronation of Jesus, and the first one after the descent of the Holy Spirit.

It states clearly and fully who Jesus is, also as clearly and fully the terms of salvation as announced by Jesus in the commission.

Thus through the apostles the Spirit bore witness of the life, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension—and, therefore, of the Messiahship—of Jesus. He pointed out different prophecies of which Jesus was the fulfillment. (And if space would permit, we could analyze Peter's sermon and note with great interest the course he pursued to prove that Jesus is the Christ and was then on the throne of David and had shed forth the Holy Spirit upon the apostles.) He then said: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. This is a command to believe in Christ.

Thus in intelligent language the Spirit bore witness of Jesus; thus he convinced and converted sinners; thus he influenced and persuaded them; thus he led them.

IV. Faith Manifested—The Greatest Question Asked.

37. "Now when they heard this"—the truth presented to them by the Holy Spirit speaking through the apostles. More than once they were requested to listen to what the Spirit had to say. (Verses 14, 22, 33.) Hearing the truth spoken by the Holy Spirit convinced and convicted them of sin. "They were pricked in their heart" by what the Spirit said—the facts presented. They trembled in their guilt, "and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?"—that is, to escape from the consequences of their crime in the murder of Jesus.

This question shows that they believed what Peter preached, and, therefore, in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God and Savior of men. This shows, too, as Paul states, that faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 14-17.)

"This is the first time under the reign of Christ that this momentous question was propounded, and the first time, of course, that it received an answer. Whatever may have been the proper answer under any previous dispensation or on any previous day of the world's history, the answer given by Peter on this day of Pentecost, the day in which the reign of Christ on earth began, is the true and infallible answer for all such inquiries in all subsequent time." (McGarvey.)

Here on this day and at Jerusalem repentance and remission of sins were first preached in the name of Jesus. (Luke 24: 45-48.) Note "in the name of Jesus." Never before were people commanded to do this "in the name of Jesus." The disciples before this had never prayed in Jesus' name.

V. The Greatest Question Answered.

38. The answer of the Holy Spirit through Peter to this all-important question is simple, plain, and unmistakable: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Convinced that Jesus was the Son of God, the Christ, and Savior of men, and convicted of their sins against him, they could repent of such sins. Their faith in Jesus led to this repentance.

Those who repented did not cease to believe in Jesus or to trust God, but their faith was strengthened by their repentance and baptism, for faith is made perfect by obedience.

VI. Repentance.

Repentance is turning away in godly sorrow from all sin (2 Cor. 7: 10)—sins of thought, word, and deed; secret sins and known sins. He who repents is ashamed of and sorry for all sins alike because they are wrong, and turns from all alike.

It does not require a long time to repent; these people soon repented.

The following is a short Bible reading on repentance: Incentives and inducements to repentance (Matt. 11: 20-24; 12: 41; Luke 13: 1-5; Rom. 2: 4); godly sorrow precedes and works repentance (2 Cor. 7: 10); repentance is turning away from all sin with a changed purpose and with the determination to serve God (Isa. 55: 7; Jonah 3: 10); a penitent has a humble and contrite heart (Ps. 34: 18); he is ready to confess his sins (Mark 1: 5; Luke 15: 21); he feels and acknowledges his unworthiness (Luke 15: 18-21); he desires to right all wrongs, so far as is in his power, and shows by his fruits that he has repented (Jonah 3: 8; Ezek. 33: 14-16; Matt. 3: 7-9; Acts 26: 20); God commands all to repent (Acts 17: 30, 31).

VII. Baptism.

"And be baptized every one of you"—that is, all who believed and repented. Those who had not believed and repented would not and could not be baptized in obedience to God.

"Be baptized" means to be dipped, buried, immersed, overwhelmed. All Greek-English lexicons so define it. There is no other word in the Bible so well defined and whose meaning has been so sought as this one. All religious people agree that one who has been immersed in faith and penitence in obedience to God has been baptized.

The facts and circumstances in the Bible connected with obedience to this command show that it means immersion. Much water is necessary in order to baptize (John 3: 23); those who were baptized "went out" and "came" to the water (Matt. 3: 5; John 3: 23); they went down into the water (Acts 8: 38). Going to the water and

going down into it were necessary to baptism, but were not baptism. Baptism was performed in the water (Matt. 3: 6; Mark 1: 5-9; Acts 8: 38); hence, Saul of Tarsus must "arise" in order to be baptized (Acts 22: 16), and the jailer and his household left the house to be baptized, and when they had been baptized they went up into the house (Acts 16: 34). Baptism is a burial (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12); so when the people were baptized "in the river Jordan," they were buried. Thus John buried Jesus and Philip buried the eunuch. In baptism the body is washed; hence, it is a washing. (Heb. 10: 2; Tit. 3: 5; 1 Pet. 3: 21.) It is a birth (John 3: 5); hence, after people are baptized, they necessarily come "up out of the water" (Mark 1: 10; Acts 8: 39), and go away from the water (Matt. 3: 16; Acts 8: 39).

In our efforts to obey God we should always do that about which there can be no question or doubt.

"In the name of Jesus Christ" means, while in faith, turning from their sins, they were baptized "unto the remission" of sins, they must look to Jesus and rely upon his name for pardon and salvation.

VIII. "For Remission of Sins" Means What?

"Remission of sins" means release from sins—pardon, or forgiveness, of sins.

"For the remission of sins," as given in the Common Version, means unto, or into, the pardon, or forgiveness, of sins, or in order that sins may be forgiven. Hackett (Baptist), in his "Commentary on Acts," says: "In order to the remission of sins." Again, he says: "In order to the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26: 28; Luke 3: 3) we connect naturally with both the preceding verbs. This clause states the motive, or object, which should induce them to repent and be baptized." Broadus (Baptist), at Matt. 26: 28, says of the same expression: "For [or unto] the remission of sins,' in order that sins may be remitted." Hovey (Baptist) says: "Here repentance and baptism are represented as leading to the forgiveness of sins." Harkness (Baptist) says it may be rendered "in order to, or for the purpose of receiving." Harman (Methodist) says: "For [that ye may obtain] the remission of your sins." Meyer (German Lutheran) says: "'Eis' [for] denotes the object of the baptism, which is the remission of the guilt contracted in the state before 'metanoia' [repentance]." McClintock (Methodist) says: "To be baptized for the remission of sins means to be baptized with a view to receiving this." Schaff (Presbyterian) says: "He called upon his hearers to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, . . . that even they . . . might receive the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost." Thayer (Congregationalist) says: "To obtain the forgiveness of sins."

IX. What Is "The Gift of the Holy Spirit?"

"Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" means to receive the Holy Spirit as a gift. In that age there were various miraculous manifestations of the Spirit (see 1 Cor. 12), but all then did not work miracles. Since then all who obey God (Acts 5: 32) receive the Spirit, but not in miraculous power or measure.

39. "For" shows that they would receive the Spirit because Jesus had promised another Comforter. "To you, . . . and to your children," means the Jews and their descendants. "All that are afar off" means the Gentiles. God calls through the gospel (2 Thess. 2: 14), and all who obey the gospel are the called of God.

The Holy Spirit was to bring all that Jesus had said to the remembrance of the apostles and to guide them "into all the truth," and thus through-inspired men he guided all who heeded the gospel call into all truth and all blessings which are in Christ.

X. How Can People Save Themselves?

40. Peter continued "with many other words" to testify and exhort. To testify was to bear witness to Jesus and to prove that he was "both Lord and Christ." To exhort was to persuade people to accept him as such.

"Save yourselves." The Holy Spirit and the apostles understood then that people could save themselves. He who speaks against people's doing anything to be saved speaks against the Bible.

People cannot do anything that will merit, procure, or provide salvation. They cannot forgive their own sins. God does this through Jesus. Paul explains exactly how people save themselves: "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation [by continuing to obey God] with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." (Phil. 2: 12, 13.)

So the people addressed by Peter could save themselves by doing what God commanded. In this sense alone can people save themselves; but this they can do, and must do, if they would be saved. Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey him. (Heb. 5: 7-10.)

"Crooked generation" means wicked generation.

XI. The Answer Gladly Received.

41. All who gladly received the word of God, or terms of pardon, were baptized; those who did not gladly receive God's word were not baptized. So to-day those who believe in Jesus, trust God, and gladly receive the word of God, as gladly obey him in repenting and in being baptized; and those who do not gladly receive his word do not repent and are not baptized.

"And there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls," or persons. They were added that day. Since there was then one church—the church of God or of Christ—they were added to that church. They were added by virtue of their obedience to God and in becoming his children. There is given no form or ceremony of adding the saved to the church. Being saved, or becoming God's children, constituted them a part of the church or numbered them among the "called-out" ones.

This shows that the Lord adds people to his church; that only the pardoned, or saved, are added; and that he adds them as fast as he saves them. That which saves people adds them to the church.

XII. Were There Any Places for Baptizing?

It is the sheerest ignorance now which causes one to argue that there were no convenient places about Jerusalem for immersing so many people, or that so many could not have been immersed in so short a while. There were numerous large pools about Jerusalem quite suitable for this purpose.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What does "Pentecost" mean?

What was the feast of Pentecost?

What was its object?

What else was it called?

On what day did it come?

Of what was the Pentecost of this lesson the beginning, "the birthday" of what?

What had Jesus promised as a Comforter?

Show that only the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

In what place is it probable the apostles were?

For what were they waiting?

What came suddenly?

What filled the house?

Why this sound?

Show that the multitude were not baptized in the Holy Spirit.

What appeared upon the apostles?

Were the tongues fire?

What is meant by the tongues parting asunder?

What did these tongues indicate?

What was the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

What was it not?

Give examples of others before this speaking by the Holy Spirit.

Why, then, call this the "baptism" of the Spirit?

What is meant by "other tongues?"

What did Jesus say the Spirit would speak?

What will help to understand how the Spirit does his work?

State separately and clearly what Jesus says the Spirit would do for his disciples.

What would the Spirit be for the truth?

State separately and clearly what the Spirit would do for the world.

Why cannot the world receive the Spirit?

Who is the "prince of this world?"

How many ruling spirits do we come in contact with?

What two antagonistic institutions are these?

In which is God's Spirit?

When would the Spirit come in this power of a baptism?

Show that all things were ready.

Give another reason for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

12-14 What brought the multitude in to where the apostles were?

What effect did these wonderful things have upon the people?

What did some in mockery say?

How did Peter remove these false impressions?

What did he say all this was?

What did he send upon the apostles?

32-35 How did Peter prove that Jesus is the Christ?

What prophecies did he quote?

Why did these not refer to David?

What does this show Jesus to be?

36 What apostle took the lead on this occasion, and why?

Why would Peter's sermons be full and complete?

What does this sermon state clearly and in full?

To what did the Holy Spirit bear witness?

How did the Spirit bear this witness—that is, testimony?

From studying the whole chapter, answer the following:

Who heard this sermon?

Were they Jews or Gentiles, or both?

How many dialects were represented?

How could so many hear at the same time?

What were all exhorted to know?

Was this a command to believe in Christ?

How did this faith come, or how was it produced?

37 What effect did this sermon have upon the people?

How did the Holy Spirit influence and convict sinners?

How does he do so now?

By what were they pierced in their hearts?

What solemn and most important question did they ask?

What does this question show?

What was first preached on this day?

- 38 Repeat the answer given to this question.
 Why were they not told to believe in Jesus in this verse?
 Why could they now repent of their sins against Jesus?
 What is repentance?
 What kind of sorrow works repentance?
 What is the condition of a penitent heart?
 What does it confess?
 What does it really desire to do?
 How is repentance manifested?
 Who were commanded to be baptized?
 What does "baptize" mean?
 State the facts and circumstances in the Bible which prove this to be its meaning.
 What should we always do in our efforts to obey God?
 What does "in the name of Jesus Christ" mean?
 What is the meaning of "remission" of sins?

- What does "for the remission of sins" mean?
 What gift was promised to all who thus obeyed?
 Who receives the Spirit now?
 Do any have a miraculous measure of the Spirit now?
 39 What connection does "for" show?
 To whom was this promise made?
 Who are the "called of God?"
 40 What did Peter do in this verse?
 What is it to testify?
 What is it to exhort?
 In what way can people not save themselves?
 How, then, can they save themselves?
 41 Who repented and were baptized?
 Who did not repent and were not baptized?
 How many were added on that day?
 To what were they added?
 How were they added?
 Could so many be immersed in Jerusalem and in so short a time?

I THANK THEE.

For the earth and all its beauty,
 The sky and all its light;
 For the dim and soothing shadows
 That rest the dazzled sight;
 For unfading fields and prairies,
 Where sense in vain has trod;
 For the world's exhaustless beauty,
 I thank thee, O my God.

For an eye of inward seeing,
 A soul to know and love;
 For these common aspirations
 That our high heirship prove;
 For the hearts that bless each other
 Beneath thy smile, thy rod;
 For the amaranth saved from Eden,
 I thank thee, O my God.

For the hidden scroll o'erwritten
 With one dear name adored;
 For the heavenly in the human,
 The Spirit in the Word;
 For the tokens of thy presence
 Within, above, abroad;
 For thine own great gift of being,
 I thank thee, O my God. (Lucy Larcom.)

LESSON VIII.—MAY 22.

PETER HEALS THE LAME MAN.

Acts 3: 1-10; 4: 8-10.

1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them.

6 But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength.

8 And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they took knowledge of him, that it was he that sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders,

9 If we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* in him doth this man stand here before you whole.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"In none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."* (Acts 4: 12.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Peter, John, the lame man, the multitude, and the Jewish council.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 35: 1-10.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Acts 3: 1 to 4: 31.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|---------|----|---|
| May 16. | M. | The Lame Man Healed. (Acts 3: 1-10.) |
| May 17. | T. | Peter's Defense Before the Sanhedrin. (Acts 4: 1-12.) |
| May 18. | W. | The Lame Shall Leap. (Isa. 35: 1-10.) |
| May 19. | T. | Æneas Healed. (Acts 9: 32-35.) |
| May 20. | F. | Christian Helpfulness. (James 5: 13-20.) |
| May 21. | S. | Strength from God. (Mark 11: 20-25.) |
| May 22. | S. | The Glory of Zion. (Isa. 35: 1-10.) |

SOLOMON'S PORCH.

On this porch McGarvey says: "The structure that is here called a 'porch' was a colonnade constructed along the inner face of the inclosing wall of the outer court. It consisted, according to Josephus,

of rows of stone columns twenty-seven feet high, with a roof of cedar resting on them and on the wall, so as to constitute a covered portico, with its inner side open toward the temple. On the eastern side of the court there were two rows of these columns, making that portico sixty feet deep and as long as the wall, which Josephus estimates at a furlong, though its exact measurement to-day is fifteen hundred and thirty feet. Across the southern end, which now measures nine hundred and twenty-two feet, there were four rows of columns, making three walks, or passages, between them, each thirty feet deep, and consequently the depth of this portico was ninety feet. These immense covered porticoes, or 'cloisters,' as Josephus calls them, served as a protection from the sun in the summer and from the rain in the winter. They contained space sufficient for the great multitude of the disciples when assembled in one mass, and also for many separate meetings of large numbers to listen to different preachers speaking at the same time. All the twelve apostles might be preaching in them at the same hour, each to a large audience, and yet far enough apart to avoid confusion of sound. In which of these porticoes the present meeting was held we cannot tell, because we are not informed as to which was distinguished by the name 'Solomon's,' this being, of course, an honorary title."

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Healing this lame man furnished another great occasion for preaching Christ, and him crucified, unto the people; for when "all the people" knew of this, they "ran together" unto Peter and John "in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Sweet Hour of Prayer."

1. This miracle is introduced here because it marks the beginning of a series of persecutions which followed and which terminated when Saul of Tarsus was converted. It was one of the many miracles mentioned in Acts 2: 43 which filled the people with solemn awe and reverence. It was admitted by the enemies of the church to be "a notable miracle," which could not be denied and the influence of which must be counteracted in some other way than by trying to deny it. (Acts 4: 16.)

Peter and John were leading apostles.

The hours of prayer were the third hour (nine o'clock in the forenoon) and the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon). Then it is supposed the morning and evening sacrifices were offered and incense was burned. The Jews connected the burning of incense and the hour of prayer. "The whole multitude of the people were praying without at the hour of incense." (Luke 1: 10.)

This was the custom. Peter and John observed this custom.

The temple service was not at once abandoned by the apostles and other Jewish Christians, and probably not fully until the destruction of the temple. The apostles may have used this time, too, as a fit opportunity for teaching the people concerning Jesus and his kingdom.

II. "Indeed a Notable Miracle."

2, 3. This man was lame from his birth. He had never walked. He must be "carried" upon the loving hands of others. His inability to walk seemed to be in "his feet and his ankle bones." (Verse 7.) He was, when healed, "more than forty years old." (Acts 4: 22.) All this made it "indeed a notable miracle." It was done in daylight, at a most public place, and just when a multitude were passing in at the hour of prayer. He was well known, and the people easily recognized him after he was healed as the one who "sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple." (Verse 10.) It was the custom of his friends to place him there daily; hence, those passing would soon become familiar with his appearance.

"Josephus says that there were nine gates to the temple. The others were of equal size. This one was larger. He describes it: 'Its height was fifty cubits and its doors forty cubits, and it was adorned after a most costly manner, with much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold than the others.' This last was probably the gate called 'Beautiful.' It was broader than the others, and was the most common entrance to the temple." (Lipscomb.) It was thought to have been on the east side of the temple. The lame beggar was placed there because he would see more people; besides, when the people went to worship in the temple, they carried money to put into the treasury (Mark 12: 41-44; Matt. 27: 6) and to give to the poor. When Peter and John passed, he asked alms of them as of the rest.

III. How Healed.

4. Peter, with John, looked straight and intently at him and said: "Look on us." They desired his entire attention. They knew they would heal him, and wanted him to know it was not they, who were but men, who did it.

5. "He gave heed unto them"—that is, did what they told him, expecting nothing more than alms.

6. As usual, Peter spoke first, declaring that he had no silver and gold, but offering to bestow on him such blessing as he could bestow. Then Peter directed his attention to Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and that he and John acted in Christ's name and by his authority. So he said: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

7. Peter accompanied his command to walk by the action of extending his hand and taking the lame man by the right hand and lifting him up. This man saw from the earnest countenances of Peter and John that they meant what they said. When one attempts to obey God, God always gives him the needed assistance; but it is God's way that man should do all in his power. Encouraged by this action of Peter, the lame man made an effort to arise, and the blessing of God came with the attempt; "and immediately his feet and his ankle bones received strength."

8. Perceiving his newly gained strength, he leaped up and stood. He had never done this before. He stood first, and, well poised, he then walked, and then leaped, following the apostles on into the temple, praising God for his newly received strength and wonderful blessing. He realized the blessing came from Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Looking to the days of Jesus, Isaiah (35: 5, 6) says: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing."

IV. Effect Upon the People.

9, 10. The people were familiar, as stated, with this man's appearance, and for the reasons given; and when they "saw him walking and praising God," "they took knowledge of him [recognized him], that it was he that sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple." They could not be deceived or mistaken, and, hence, "were filled with wonder and amazement at" what had been done.

In his gratitude he clung to Peter and John. The people saw this and heard his loud expression of praise, and they "ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."

V. Lesson Connection.

Peter saw the amazement of the people, that they were unable to account for this miracle, and were ready to ascribe it to something superhuman in himself and John rather than to the power of Jesus Christ. He at once directed their minds to the fact that it was through no power or holiness of their own that the man was made whole, but through faith in the name of Jesus.

God bore "witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." (Heb. 2: 4.) This showed God's power was with the apostles. "And with great power gave the apostles their witness [testimony] of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 4: 33.)

These were all Jews and believed in "the God of our fathers" and claimed to believe the Old Testament Scriptures; hence, Peter appealed to these Scriptures to prove the claims of Jesus to be God's Son. He showed not only what had healed the lame man, but that Jesus was the holy and just One and Prince of life, who had suffered as God had fore-shown by the mouth of all the prophets (verse 18), whom God had raised from the dead, and of which fact he had made the apostles witnesses.

These Jews denied Jesus, the Author of life—he who came to earth to bring life (John 1: 4; 1 John 5: 11, 12)—and put him to death, while they desired the release of Barabbas, a murderer—one who destroys life. They delivered Jesus up and denied him in the presence of Pilate when Pilate had determined to release him. God had raised him from the dead, and through faith which the apostles had in his name the lame man had been healed. All this power was ascribed to Jesus as its source and came through their faith in him.

Peter did not hesitate to show them the great enormity of their sin, but he encouraged them to hope for forgiveness in that they did it in ignorance, as did their rulers. (See 1 Tim. 1: 13 and the rest of this chapter.)

VI. Peter and John Imprisoned.

Late in the afternoon Peter and John were arrested by the authorities—"the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees"—and placed in prison, because it was too late for trial.

Who the Sadducees and Pharisees were can be learned by reading Acts 23: 8; Matt. 3: 7; Matt. 22: 23-33; Mark 7: 1-13.

The Sadducees were distressed because the apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

There were common priests, chief priests, and high priests. There was really but one high priest at a time. Annas was the lawful high priest, but he had been deposed by the Romans about ten years before this, and Caiaphas, his son-in-law (John 18: 13), had been appointed by them. Hence, Luke (3: 2) states that both these men were high priests. They were Sadducees. (Acts 5: 7.) They were the leaders in crucifying Jesus, instigated different persecutions against the apostles, and were determined, if possible, to stamp out the doctrine of the resurrection. John and Alexander were men of authority, judging from the connection in which they are here mentioned. We know nothing more of them. There were twenty-four courses of the ordinary priests. Each course served at the temple, in turn, a week at a time, beginning on the Sabbath. (See 1 Chron. 24: 1-19; 2 Chron. 23: 8; Luke 1: 5.) The heads of these courses were "the chief priests." "The captain of the temple" (or "captains"—Luke 22: 4) was the head of the company of Levites who guarded the temple and precinct and kept order, and who were called "porters" or "doorkeepers" (1 Chron. 26: 1-19).

The rulers, elders, and scribes constituted the council, or Sanhedrin. It was composed of twenty-four priests, twenty-four elders, and twenty-four scribes, who were the lawyers spoken of in the New Testament. All were men morally and physically without fault, middle-aged men, wealthy and learned. They must be fathers and must have passed through lower offices.

This sudden arrest of the speakers was enough to cause a great commotion among the people and to deter them. Nevertheless, "many of them that heard the word believed."

Everywhere throughout the Bible it is taught that faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 11-17.) God made choice among the apostles that by Peter's mouth the Gentiles "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15: 7.) "And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18: 8; see also 1 Cor. 1: 14.)

Faith leads to obedience, and many more were added to the saved. "And the number of the men came to be about five thousand." The number who believed on this occasion, when added to the three thousand, made five thousand. The women were not included in this number. Likely not many women attended these great public gatherings; but later on they did attend, and it is stated that "multitudes both of men and women were added to the Lord." (Acts 5: 14.)

VII. Peter and John on Trial.

Peter and John were brought out of prison and placed in "the midst" of this court. The high priest presided, the members sat in a semicircle, and the prisoners were placed in front. The poor man who had been healed was present with true moral courage to show his appreciation of the good deed done to him and his sympathy for his benefactors, now prisoners. (Verse 14.) Peter and John were then asked "by what power, or in what name," they had done this "this," meaning, evidently, the miracle of healing the crippled man. They knew it had been done; this could not be denied, although they would have denied it, and would have obliterated this triumphant fact if they could have done so. But they admitted that it was a "notable miracle" which could not be denied. (Verse 16.) They knew, too, it had been done by superhuman power, and asked an explanation.

"Name" here is used synonymously with "power."

VIII. The Defense.

(Acts 4: 8-10.)

8, 9. Peter, as usual, spoke out and led in this defense. He must have remembered that only a few weeks previous to this time his own beloved Master had stood in the awful night of the betrayal bound before this same ungodly Annas and Caiaphas, and then, after daylight, before the regular council, and that he himself denied his Lord, and went out, repented, and wept bitterly. This must have made him braver and more fearless now. Besides, he was "filled with the Holy Spirit," according to the promise of Jesus: "Yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." (Matt. 10: 18-20.) "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay." (Luke 21: 15.) The apostles were not always under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, but he came upon them to teach and guide them as the occasion required. Peter addressed the council in a dignified and polite manner. He took advantage of this occasion to preach Jesus to them. As Jesus had promised, this imprisonment and trial had turned out unto them for a testimony. (Luke 21: 13.)

Notice, Peter makes prominent "a good deed done to an impotent man," who was standing in their midst "whole." He impressed upon them the fact that he and John had been arrested and were on trial for this "good deed." It was through envy that Jesus had been delivered up to death by these very men (Matt. 27: 18), and through jealousy they persecuted the apostles (Acts 5: 17, 18). Peter then sent the probe of truth directly into their hearts when he accused them of seeking to punish him and John for a "good deed."

10. He wanted them and "all the people of Israel" to know that the "good deed" of healing the lame man was performed through the "power" there is in the "name" of Jesus. This was the "means" by

which he had been "made whole." As Peter had said the day before to the multitude, it was through no "power or holiness" of their own, but through faith in "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." Two things here could not be denied—(1) that the man had been healed (verses 14-16); (2) that the miracle had been wrought, just as Peter explained, in the name of Jesus. They could not deny that the power was superhuman, or divine; and they could not reject the explanation given by the apostles that it came through Jesus. He worked miracles through his apostles.

IX. Peter's Accusations Against the Sanhedrin.

The lesson would be incomplete without showing the result of this trial.

Peter now turns accuser and charges them with the crucifixion of Jesus, and proves that they were great sinners in so doing, because God, in raising him from the dead, had showed that Jesus was just and they were murderers and betrayers; also Jesus now had power with God and had healed the lame man.

He presses their sins further upon them in accusing them of rejecting the very stone which God had selected and made "the head of the corner." He quoted Ps. 118: 22, 23. Jesus also quoted this and applied it to himself. (Matt. 21: 42, 43.) Peter refers to this on another occasion. (1 Pet. 2: 4-8.) The figure represents builders as rejecting as worthless the stone which was afterwards discovered to be the chief stone of the building. This stone is Christ. (See also Eph. 2: 19-22.) These "rulers and elders" addressed by Peter were builders, and had rejected the chief stone of the building, the despised Nazarene. (Verse 11.)

Not only is Jesus this stone, but now, dropping the figure, Peter declares there is salvation in no other name or power. If saved at all, people must be saved through Jesus and by his worth and merit. (Verse 11.) The great fabric of human redemption cannot go up without Jesus of Nazareth as the chief corner stone. He is the promised seed of Abraham, the star of Jacob, the hope of Israel, the Savior of the world. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.) "And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." (1 John 5: 11, 12.) It was Peter who said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." (John 6: 68, 69.)

Seeing the boldness of Peter and John and finding no way of making out a charge against them, they decided that all they could do was to threaten them strictly that they should "speak henceforth to no man in this name." Without fear or hesitation they responded: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." (Verses 19, 20.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
 Did you read the Devotional Reading?
 Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
 Did you read the Home Reading?
 Describe Solomon's porch and other porches about the temple.
 What occasion did healing this crippled man furnish to the apostles?
 From the Home Reading, what other cripples were healed?
 What prophecy was made about "the lame man leaping as a hart?"
- 1 Of what is this miracle an introduction?
 Which were the hours of prayer?
 Where were Peter and John going?
 What was associated with burning incense?
 When did the Jewish Christians probably give up the temple worship?
 - 2, 3 From what time had this man been lame?
 In what was he afflicted?
 How old was he when he was healed?
 What rendered this such a notable miracle?
 Why were the people so familiar with his appearance?
 What was the Beautiful Gate?
 What did the lame man ask of Peter and John?
 - 4 Why did they look so intently on him and request him to look on them?
 - 5 What did he expect?
 - 6 What did Peter say?
 To whom did Peter direct his attention?
 - 7 How did Peter show that he himself was in earnest?
 When did the man receive strength to stand and walk?
 From whom did he realize the power came?
 - 9, 10 What effect did this miracle have on the people?
 Where did the people gather?
 Give the different facts stated and points made in Peter's speech.
 What aroused the rulers of the people?
 Who arrested Peter and John?
 What were they doing when arrested?
 Why were they placed in prison?
 Who were the Sadducees?
 Who were the Pharisees?
- Give the different orders of priests.
 Who were "the chief priests?"
 How many high priests were there at one time?
 Why were Annas and Caiaphas both called "high priests?"
 Who was the captain of the temple?
 What was the council, or Sanhedrin?
 Of whom was it composed?
 Who were John and Alexander?
 What troubled these rulers at the time of this lesson?
 What effect did the preaching of Peter and John have upon the people?
 How many male disciples did the number become up to this time?
 Why probably were men only mentioned?
 What is said of the women later on?
 Why was this council assembled?
 Who were placed before them?
 How did the lame man show his gratitude and courage?
 What question were Peter and John asked?
 What did the council know?
- 8, 9 Who replied to this question?
 What did he doubtless remember?
 With what was he filled?
 What promise had Jesus made the apostles concerning such times?
 Were the apostles at all times under the direct guidance of the Spirit?
 Repeat in full Peter's reply.
 Why had the rulers crucified Jesus, and why were they now persecuting the apostles?
 - 10 What point did Peter make on "the good deed?"
 By what "means" was this deed done?
 What two things could the council not deny?
 With what did Peter then charge his accusers?
 How did he further press their sins upon them?
 Who was this "stone?"
 In whose name alone is there salvation?
 What astonished these rulers?
 What did they decide was the only thing they could do with the prisoners?
 What reply did Peter make to this charge?
 What does that teach us?

LESSON IX.—MAY 29.

PETER UNDAUNTED BY PERSECUTION.

Acts 5: 27-35, 38-42.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, We strictly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. 31 Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.

32 And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

33 But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and were minded to slay them.

34 But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honor of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while.

35 And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown:

39 But if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles unto them, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.

42 And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"We must obey God rather than men."* (Acts 5: 29.)

TIME.—Between A.D. 30 and A.D. 37.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The apostles, the high priest, and his associates.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 27: 1-6.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Acts 12: 1-19.

HOME READING.—

May 23. M. The Apostles Persecuted. (Acts 5: 17-26.)

May 24. T. The Apostles Beaten. (Acts 5: 33-42.)

May 25. W. The Disciple Not Above His Master. (Matt. 10: 16-25.)

May 26. T. Suffering for Righteousness' Sake. (1 Pet. 3: 8-22.)

May 27. F. Partakers of Christ's Sufferings. (1 Pet. 4: 12-19.)

May 28. S. Rejoicing in Persecution. (Matt. 5: 1-12.)

May 29. S. Security in Jehovah. (Ps. 27: 1-6.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Just after the miracle of punishment visited upon Ananias and Sapphira, recorded in verses 1-10, many other miracles of healing were wrought, "insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the

streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them."

The disciples still met in "Solomon's porch," but the death of Ananias and Sapphira filled the people with such fear and dread that they did not encroach upon the presence of the apostles; yet they honored and magnified them as persons through whom God manifested such power among men.

"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." This is the first mention of believers among the women since the apostles began to preach on Pentecost. There were women among the disciples of Jesus all along. (Acts 1: 13, 14.)

The report of all these miracles of healing and other wonderful things spread abroad throughout the surrounding country, towns, and cities; so that multitudes came, "bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." (Verses 12-16.) We must consider the widespread influence now of the apostles and the great praise swelling up from all over the land to God for the gospel.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Apostles Before the Council.

27. "And when they had brought them, they set them before the council."

This lesson begins properly with verse 17; hence, it is necessary to study in order the intervening verses (17-26).

(17, 18) The success mentioned disturbed again the Sadducees, who seemed determined to uproot by any means the doctrine of the resurrection. Before, as we have learned, only Peter and John were arrested, imprisoned, and threatened; but now, jealous and enraged, the high priest and his coadjutors arrested and imprisoned all the apostles.

The Sadducees, as we have already learned, were a religious sect among the Jews who denied the resurrection and the existence of angels and spirits. In this they differed from the Pharisees, who confessed both. (Acts 23: 8.) The rulers and other officers of the Jews were mostly from the Sadducees. Annas is called "high priest" in Acts 4: 6, and in Luke 3: 2 "the high priesthood" of both Annas and Caiaphas is mentioned. As stated in a previous lesson, Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas. (John 18: 13.) He had been deposed by the Romans and Caiaphas appointed in his stead; but he was "the power behind the throne," and virtually the high priest.

The apostles were placed in the public prison, the doors safely shut, and guards placed before the doors. (Verse 23.)

(19, 20) "But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors," released the apostles, and sent them back to speak in the temple "all the words of this Life."

"All the words of this Life" are very significant. Peter said to Jesus: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6: 68.) Jesus himself says, "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6: 63)—that is, the words of Jesus are spiritual and life-giving. The Word, who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God (John 1: 1-3),

dwells in and speaks through Jesus. Jesus is the Life and the Light. "In him is life." Because he is the Life the dead hear his voice and come forth. He is the Resurrection and the Life. Then "the words of this Life," which the angel exhorted the apostles to speak, embraced the resurrection and conditions of eternal life.

(21) As the angel directed, the apostles "entered into the temple about daybreak, and taught." By daybreak they were there teaching, although imprisoned the night before. At the appointed time the Sanhedrin assembled, and sent to have the apostles brought from the prison for trial.

(22, 23) But the officers returned with the startling news that they found the prison securely closed and the guards on duty without, but the prisoners gone. When the angel released the apostles, the guards were not disturbed; this was done in order to encourage the apostles and to demonstrate to the priests and people the power of God.

(24) The priests and captain of the temple recognized this as a demonstration of divine power; but instead of ceasing all opposition and surrendering, "they were much perplexed concerning" the apostles, and their only thought was "whereunto this would grow" and how to check its influence.

(25) The Sanhedrin not knowing yet where the apostles were, one reported that they were then teaching in the temple.

(26) The captain and officers were then sent to bring the apostles, "but without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned." The Hints and Helps for Teachers states the wonderful influence of the gospel—and, therefore, of the apostles—over the multitude; and had the officers and priests used violence upon the apostles, they might have been stoned.

28. Set before the council, the apostles were charged as follows: "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." The apostles were charged with disobedience to the Sanhedrin and with an attempt to bring the blood of Jesus upon the rulers. These rulers must accept this charge of murder and plead guilty, or they must suppress the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus. The apostles wanted them to feel their guilt and repent.

II. Must Obey God, Rather Than Men.

29. Peter and John left the presence of this court before with the words that they "must obey God rather than men," and these are the first words uttered on this occasion.

30, 31. The apostles showed that God's promise to the "fathers"—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—that in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed—he had fulfilled in Jesus, but that these rulers had crucified him. The charge that these rulers had crucified Jesus was again firmly and clearly repeated: "Whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree." The cross is called a "tree" because it was wood and stood upright as a tree. (Acts 10: 39; 13: 29; Gal. 3: 13; 1 Pet. 2: 24.) God gave repentance to the people by granting them the opportunity to repent and placing before them the incentives and induce-

ments to repentance. He gave remission of sins through the gospel of Christ when in the name of Christ people obeyed him. (Heb. 5: 7-9.)

32. "And we are witnesses of these things." The apostles knew that Jesus arose from the dead. They had seen him at different times and at different places, and they could not but speak the things which they "saw and heard." (See Acts 1: 8; 2: 32; 3: 15.) So they declared before. (Acts 4: 20.) "So is the Holy Spirit" a witness "of these things." Jesus said the Spirit would bear witness of him. (John 15: 26, 27.)

"The Holy Spirit is sent only to those who obey God. (John 14: 15-17.) A heart must be fitted, by casting out the evil and by a sincere effort to conform to the will of God, for a temple of the Holy Spirit before he will dwell in it. The gift of the Holy Spirit that enabled some of the early Christians to work miracles was enjoyed on the same conditions that his presence is enjoyed by the Christian—that is, by fitness of the heart as a temple of God through the Spirit. The conditions of enjoying were the same, but the manifestations were different." (Lipscomb.)

III. Cut to the Heart.

33. When the council heard Peter's speech, they were enraged—"were cut to the heart"—not with conviction and sorrow for sin, but in anger, and were disposed to mob the apostles.

IV. Gamaliel's Advice.

34, 35. The Sanhedrin had no power to put to death. (John 18: 31.) While the Sadducees were at the head of this persecution, the Pharisees were represented. Gamaliel, a Pharisee, a member of the council, made a speech in favor of moderation and calm deliberation. His was a wise and conservative speech. If the apostles were impostors, they would come to naught finally, as other impostors had done; if their teaching was of God, it could not be overthrown. He mentioned the cases of one Theudas and "Judas of Galilee."

38, 39. Gamaliel's advice was to "refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God." This prudent speech quieted the moblike council, and they agreed with Gamaliel not to kill the apostles, but "charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." Gamaliel was not a believer, but was seriously impressed with the truth that this work might be of God. According to his test, Christianity is of God; it has not been overthrown, but gains power with the centuries. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

40-42. The apostles left this council, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name." "And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ."

Thus the very persecution of the apostles gave them courage and strength, and emboldened them to preach through Jesus the resurrection.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Give an account of the miracles of healing which took place just after the death of Ananias and Sapphira.
Where did the disciples meet?
Why did the people not encroach upon the presence of the apostles?
What account is here given of numerous additions to the Lord?
To what extent did the report of all these wonders spread?
What different afflicted ones were brought to be healed?
- 27 Repeat this verse or state the facts in it.
- (17, 18) What effect did these things have upon the high priest and Sadducees?
Who were arrested?
Where were they placed?
Who were the Sadducees?
Who were the Pharisees?
To which sect did the rulers chiefly belong?
Who was high priest?
What was done to insure the safe-keeping of the apostles?
- (19, 20) By whom and when were they liberated?
Where were they told to go and preach?
What were they told to preach?
What do the "words of this Life" signify?
- (21) At what hour were they there teaching?
For whom did the council send?
- (22, 23) What report was brought back?
- Why were the door left closed and the guards not disturbed?
(24) What concerned the council most?
(25) How did they learn where the apostles were?
(26) What did they do?
Why did the officers use no violence?
28 With what two things were the apostles charged?
What one of two things must the rulers do?
What did the apostles want these rulers to do?
29 How did the apostles meet the first charge?
30, 31 How did they meet the second charge?
Why is the cross called a "tree"?
How does God give repentance unto people?
How does he give remission of sins?
32 Who were witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus?
How did the apostles know Jesus arose from the dead?
Who else was a witness?
To whom does God give the Spirit?
In what kind of heart does the Spirit dwell?
34, 35 Why could not the Jewish council put any one to death?
34, 35 Could the Jewish council put any one to death?
What were they about to do to the apostles?
Who made a speech?
What was the nature of Gamaliel's speech?
38, 39 Against what did he warn the rulers?
What effect did his speech have?
What then was done to the apostles?
40-42 In what did the apostles rejoice?
What and where did they preach?
What increased their courage?

O, give us strength to face our day
With courage, as thy sons of old,
To lift our voice in prophecies
Against the gods of stone and gold;
Give us to see and understand
The heart of man, and to forgive;
Give us the faith to touch thy hand.
Amen.

(Selected.)

LESSON X.—JUNE 5.

PETER PREACHING TO GENTILES.

Acts 10: 34-48.

34 And Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.

36 The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—

37 That saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judaea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree.

40 Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest,

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead.

43 To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him.”* (Rom. 10: 12.)

TIME.—A.D. 40.

PLACES.—Cesarea and Joppa.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 67: 1-7.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Acts 11: 1-18.

HOME READING.—

- May 30. M. Peter Preaching to Cornelius. (Acts 10: 34-48.)
- May 31. T. The Gentile Church at Antioch. (Acts 11: 19-26.)
- June 1. W. Jesus and the Gentile Woman. (John 4: 1-14.)
- June 2. T. Salvation for All. (Rom. 10: 11-21.)
- June 3. F. Partakers of the Gospel. (Eph. 3: 1-13.)
- June 4. S. Children of Abraham. (Gal. 3: 1-14.)
- June 5. S. The Gospel for All Nations. (Ps. 67: 1-7.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Joppa was about thirty-five miles from Jerusalem. It was the seaport of Jerusalem. Here Hiram, king of Tyre, landed the timber for Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 2: 16), here was landed the timber for

the second temple (Ez. 3: 7), and here Jonah took ship for Tarshish when he fled from the presence of the Lord (Jonah 1: 3). It is now a city of about twenty thousand inhabitants, and has railroad connection with Jerusalem.

Cesarea was built by Herod the Great and named for Augustus Caesar. It was about seventy miles northwest from Jerusalem, and was a seaport of Judea. It was the Roman capital of Judea. Cornelius, the centurion of this lesson, was stationed there. He was a captain of a hundred Italian soldiers, called "the Italian band." Cesarea occupies an important place in Acts of Apostles. There Paul appeared before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, and was in prison two years. Philip, the evangelist, resided there. (Acts 21: 8.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The whole chapter (Acts 10: 1-48) should be carefully studied. This is another of the many cases of conversion recorded in Acts. This is an account of the reception of the Gentiles into the church. Up to this time the apostles did not see how the Gentiles could become Christians, except as they first became Jews. We are as slow to grasp all the truth as they were. Now the time has come for the reception of the Gentiles. Jesus had given to Peter the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16: 19), or the privilege of opening the doors to Jew and Gentile, and, therefore, made choice of Peter, that the Gentiles by his mouth "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15: 7.) Note carefully every step taken in this man's conversion.

Let us begin, then, with

Cornelius.

Cornelius was a centurion, or captain of a company of soldiers, from Italy, and was stationed at Cesarea to protect the governor and aid him in maintaining order. In his association with the Jews, Cornelius had learned from them the true God, and had turned from idolatry to the worship of God.

(1) He was a devout man; (2) he feared and worshiped God; (3) he taught his family the fear of God, and his influence was felt by his soldiers and kinsmen; (4) he gave much alms to the people (the Jews); (5) he "prayed to God always," adopting the Jews' hours of prayer; (6) he fasted; (7) he was a just man and of good report among all the nations of the Jews. (Verses 2, 7, 22, 30.) Did the man who possessed this exalted character need conversion? Even his prayers and alms had gone up as a memorial before God, and in answer to his prayers God had sent to him an angel.

If any man to-day should be able to relate such a glorious experience before almost any church, would not most religious teachers say that he was converted and that his conversion was a very bright one? Yet this man had to send men to Joppa for Peter and hear words from him whereby he and all his house might be saved. (Acts 11: 14.) There are just, honest, and moral men to-day not so good as Cornelius who are depending upon their own honesty and morality to take them to heaven. If any man could be saved on his morality and without the church of Christ, Cornelius could have been. Men

owe reverence and obedience to God as well as duties to their fellow men, and there can be no greater sin than a refusal to obey God in his own appointed ordinances and commandments. If the devout Jew cannot be saved without Christ, neither can the honest and devout Gentile.

There is no salvation without Christ, "whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood: . . . that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3: 25, 26); and Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5: 9). Cornelius had turned from idolatry to the acceptance of the true God, and was walking according to the light he had; but he must accept Christ, and needed more light. To such as seek for it God sends the truth.

Why This Vision?

"He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him." The first step taken in bringing this man to Christ was the appearance of an angel, as in the conversion of the eunuch. Although in the eunuch's case the angel appeared to the preacher and in this one to the man to be converted, yet the mission of the angels was the same in both cases—namely, to bring the preacher and the men to be converted together.

Visions, angels, and even the appearance of Jesus himself did not set aside the necessity of human agency. Philip must go to the eunuch; Ananias, to Saul of Tarsus; and Peter, to Cornelius.

Jesus had committed this matter of preaching the gospel and telling people what to do to be saved to the apostles, and this is what he meant when he said, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16: 19); and, "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20: 23). The apostles could bind and loose or forgive and retain sins only in so far as they were commissioned to preach the conditions of pardon or salvation. God forgives those who do what the apostles teach and retains the sins of those who refuse to do so. The apostles were his ambassadors, and to them was committed "the ministry of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5: 17-21.) The majority of religious teachers ignore this fact to-day and scorn the idea of human agency, while not a few claim to be ambassadors of Christ.

Cornelius, "fastening his eyes upon" the angel, "and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord?" Cornelius feared in the presence of the angel, and wanted to know what was desired. The Lord answered through the angel: "Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God." God heard the prayers of Cornelius before he had accepted Christ. God always hears those who are ready to hear him, but he refuses to hear those who refuse to hear him. (Prov. 28: 9.) But God's answer was quite different from that which many under similar circumstances are now taught to expect. The angel did not tell Cornelius that his sins were already forgiven or that he was already saved, but directed him to send for Peter, who would tell him words whereby he might be saved.

The appearance of this angel was not a dream; it occurred when

Cornelius was engaged in prayer at the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon.

Peter was lodging "with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside." The angel gave minute directions as to where Peter could be found. Having given these directions, the angel departed.

Cornelius at once "called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa." The "devout soldier" was a Gentile, an Italian. (Verse 1.)

Peter Convinced.

Cornelius "forthwith" sent these men. On the morrow after they started on their journey they drew nigh unto Joppa.

While these men were on their way for Peter, God was preparing him to go; hence, the next step in the conversion of Cornelius is Peter's going. "Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour"—about noon. Peter was devout, and his example here is worthy of our emulation. He felt the need of prayer, of regular prayer, and prayed. It being the hour for the noonday meal, Peter "became hungry;" and while the good people of the house were preparing the meal, "he fell into a trance." Peter saw "heaven opened" and "a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth." This sheet hung by the four corners, and, suspended by the four corners by cords, made the "vessel" which contained "all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven." With this sheet came a voice from heaven, saying: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." Although this was a vision, Peter felt the force of hunger, but resisted the temptation to eat anything unclean, saying: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean." Under the law of Moses certain birds and beasts were unclean, and the Jews were forbidden to eat them. (Lev. 11; Deut. 14: 3-21.) Again the voice came, and, in response to Peter, said: "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common."

Under Christ the restriction from eating animals had been removed. (Rom. 14: 14; 1 Cor. 10: 25-33.) But under Christ we are commanded to "abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood." (Acts 15: 20, 29.) At this time Peter did not know this, and would not do what he considered wrong. But now Peter must learn that what God had cleansed and offered to him he must accept, or what God had accepted he must not reject.

This was done three times—that is, the sheet was lowered and drawn up three times, and then it "was received up into heaven." Some think this was done three times to correspond with the three messengers sent by Cornelius.

While Peter thought on the vision and was unable to decide what its meaning could be, the messengers sent by Cornelius approached the gate and called for him. Still meditating upon the vision and wondering what could be its purport, the Spirit informed Peter that the three men sought him and instructed him to go with them, saying: "Go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them."

The message of the holy angel, the vision of Peter, and the command of the Spirit to go thoroughly convinced Peter that he should preach the gospel to the Gentiles. He lodged the messengers overnight, and set out "on the morrow" with six Jewish brethren for Cesarea, which he reached on the fourth day after the appearance of the angel, and found Cornelius, his kinsmen and near friends, waiting for him. Declaring that Cornelius, who, falling before him, should not worship him, Peter went in, explaining that heretofore it had been considered unlawful for a Jew to come unto one of another nation, but that God had shown him that he should call no man "common" or "unclean," and that, therefore, he had come without gainsaying, and asked "with what intent" they had sent for him.

Cornelius Explained Why He Sent for Peter.

Cornelius related his experience to Peter in explanation as to why he had sent for him, and said: "Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." This last statement shows that all present realized they were in the presence of God, that what Peter had to relate was a message from God, and that they were ready to do all that God commands through Peter.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God Is No Respector of Persons.

34, 35. The Jews thought God was partial to them (Matt. 3: 7-12), but Peter now sees this is a mistake. He understands now that one does not have to become a Jew in order to serve God, "but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." God respects character, not persons; he was never a respector of persons. He gives the following as his reason for accepting Abraham: "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah; . . . that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. 18: 19.) When the Jews rejected the truth, God cast them off, and will graft them in again if they "continue not in their unbelief." (Rom. 11: 19-24.) The Gentiles were rejected because, "knowing God, they glorified him not as God." (Rom. 1: 18-32.)

Two things are essential—namely, to fear God and to work righteousness. To fear God is to obey him, and to work righteousness is to discharge all duties to our fellow men.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all need salvation, God loves all, Christ died for all, all must be saved alike through Christ.

II. Remission of Sins in the Name of Christ.

36-40. The gospel was first preached to the Jews, and this order was maintained by the apostles. (Acts 13: 46.) Jesus is "the Prince of Peace," and the gospel is "the gospel of peace." It breaks down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and Peter sees this as never before. Jesus is "Lord of all"—Jews and Gentiles.

Cornelius had heard of Jesus—his preaching, his miracles, and his death and resurrection. He had heard how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. Under the law of Moses, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with the holy anointing oil; Jesus was anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King. "Christ" means "Anointed;" so does "Messiah." Jesus was made "both Lord and Christ" when he ascended to heaven. (Acts 2: 36.) The Spirit descended upon Jesus after his baptism. Before this Jesus had performed no miracles. After this he "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

41-43. The apostles were witnesses of his miracles and of his resurrection. (Luke 24: 48; John 15: 27; Acts 1: 8, 22; 2: 32; 3: 15.) They ate and drank with him after his resurrection. (Luke 24: 43; John 21: 13.) In the great commission Jesus commanded the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature and to testify that "this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead." "To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." (Isa. 53: 11; Jer. 31: 34; Joel 2: 32.) The testimony of the prophets shows that it was God's purpose to save the world through faith in Christ.

Three facts are here stated: (1) Remission of sins is through the name of Jesus, (2) that it is promised to those only who believe on him, (3) and this promise is to every one—Jew or Gentile.

"Through his name" means through him or by his power, and must not be overlooked. Faith must work by love (Gal. 5: 6), and these very persons were soon commanded to be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" (verse 48); and all are baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28: 19). Peter said on Pentecost: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins," etc. (Acts 2: 38.) "And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19: 5.) "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.)

Peter preached on this occasion to the Gentiles just what he had preached to the Jews on Pentecost—that Jesus had risen from the dead; that he was made Lord and Christ; that the miracles of Jesus prove that he is the Son of God; that Jew and Gentile must believe these same facts; that the apostles were witnesses of his resurrection, and they also bear testimony to Jesus as the Savior; and on both occasions the Holy Spirit was manifested to show that the truth preached was from God. Notice, too, that the Gentiles are required to do just what the Jews were required to do on Pentecost—(1) to believe in Jesus as the Christ of God; (2) that this faith comes by hearing the word of God (Acts 15: 7); (3) that they must repent (Acts 11: 18); and (4) that they must "be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

No vision or miraculous manifestation in the case of Cornelius released him from any obligation to obey God. These all confirmed the truth and impressed the necessity of obedience.

III. Why These Gentiles Were Baptized in the Holy Spirit.

No vision now (should there be such a thing), dream, or experience of any kind, or anything else, can release one from the necessity of obedience to God.

44-48. Peter's speech was interrupted by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his friends. This was the baptism of the Spirit, "poured out" upon the Gentiles by the Lord, as upon the apostles "at the beginning" (Acts 11: 15), and, therefore, as it had never been poured out on any except the apostles on Pentecost. There are but these two occurrences of the baptism of the Spirit recorded in the New Testament. The baptism of the Spirit was a great miracle, and was the fullest measure, or greatest gift, of the Spirit bestowed upon men. All miraculous gifts of the Spirit were not baptisms of the Spirit. These miraculous gifts, or measures, of the Spirit which were bestowed by the imposition of hands must be distinguished from the baptism of the Spirit which was "poured out" by the Lord directly from heaven. Then the baptism of the Spirit and miraculous measures, or gifts, of the Spirit must be distinguished from that ordinary measure, or gift, which all who obey God receive. (Acts 2: 38; 5: 32.)

The baptism of the Spirit was not to convert people or to bring to them the knowledge of the remission of their sins. The apostles were Christians for three years before they were baptized with the Spirit, and the Samaritans had received the gospel and had been baptized some time before they received the miraculous gift of the Spirit (Acts 8: 14-17); so with those at Ephesus (Acts 19: 1-7). In none of these cases was the miraculous gift of the Spirit connected with the remission of sins.

Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit before they were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" to convince the Jews present and those at Jerusalem later that God had accepted the Gentiles, and they should be allowed to obey the gospel and be received into the church. Therefore, Peter at once said: "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?"

Then let it be further said and understood that the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or any other miracle, could not release Cornelius and cannot release one now (should such miracles occur) from the necessity of obeying God in baptism.

Since God had thus shown his approval, could any Jew object? Those who accompanied Peter were amazed "because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." None raised an objection, and Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Then at Jerusalem he used this fact to show the Jews there that God had accepted the Gentiles upon the same faith he had accepted the Jews.

Being baptized with the Spirit was not necessary to prepare one for baptism in water, since the apostles were Christians three years before they were baptized with the Spirit, and the Samaritans had believed and had been baptized some time before they received any miraculous measure of the Spirit.

Neither did the baptism of the Holy Spirit set aside the importance of obedience to God in baptism. Those baptized in the Spirit must still be baptized in water.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Locate and describe Joppa.
Where and what was Caesarea?
Of what does this chapter give an account?
What had the apostles thought the only possible way by which the Gentiles could be saved?
Had the apostles grasped this truth?
When was the gospel first preached to the Gentiles?
To whom did God give this privilege?
Where was Peter?
Who was Cornelius?
Why was he at Caesarea?
State the points in his character at the time we first meet with Cornelius.
From whom had he learned of God?
Was he not a Christian?
What must he hear in order to be saved?
Show from this case why one's morality cannot save him. (Let the teacher call out the distinct reasons.)
What progress had Cornelius made up to this point?
To whom does God send light?
Give the facts of Cornelius' vision.
What was the first step taken in Cornelius' conversion?
Why did the angel appear?
Did angels, visions, and the appearance of Jesus set aside the necessity of human agency?
Why were different men sent to these different ones to instruct them?
In what sense could the apostles remit and retain sins?
What effect did this vision have upon Cornelius?
What did the angel say to him?
Whose prayers does God answer?
Why did not the angel tell Cornelius that his sins were forgiven?
What did he tell Cornelius?
When did this angel appear?
What did Cornelius do?
Whom did he send?
What was the next step in this conversion?
Who was this soldier?
How long did it require to reach Joppa?
When and why did Peter pray?

What does the Bible teach Christians in regard to prayer?
Why did Peter become hungry?
How did God prepare Peter for this mission?
State the facts of this vision.
What did the angel say to Peter?
What was Peter's reply?
What again did the angel say?
What can we eat and not eat under Christ?
How often was this done?
What three things convinced Peter that he should go?
Whom did he take with him?
On what day did he reach Caesarea?
What did Cornelius do?
What did Peter say to him?
Whom had Cornelius gathered together?
What explanation did Peter make?
What important question did he ask?
What reason did Cornelius give for sending for Peter?
What did he say they were all ready to do?
34, 35 What facts does this statement show?
What great truth does Peter now perceive?
What had the Jews thought concerning this matter?
What does God respect?
Was God ever a respecter of persons?
Why, then, did he choose Abraham?
Why did he cast off the Jews?
When will he graft them in again?
Why did he reject the Gentiles?
What two things are necessary to acceptance with him?
What is it to fear God?
What is it to work righteousness?
36-40 In what are Jew and Gentile alike?
What had God "sent unto the children of Israel?"
What would this peace do?
Over whom is Jesus Lord?
Of what had Cornelius heard?
What did he not know?
What had God done for Jesus of Nazareth?
What does "Christ" mean?
What official positions does Jesus occupy?
When was he made "Lord and Christ?"
When was Jesus anointed with the Spirit?
What did he go about doing?
41-43 Of what were the apostles witnesses?
Why could they not have been mistaken?

What had Jesus commanded them to preach?

Of whom did the prophets bear witness?

What does this testimony show?

What is meant by "through his name?"

How are people saved through the name of Jesus?

State the different things preached here which Peter preached on Pentecost.

What are Gentiles required to do to be saved?

Did any miraculous appearance release Cornelius from obedience to God?

Can one now know, by any experience that he may have, that he is saved, without obedience to God?

4-48 How was Peter's speech interrupted?

What measure of the Spirit is this called?

What are the only two recorded occurrences of the baptism of the Spirit?

What is the difference between the baptism of the Spirit and other miraculous manifestations of the Spirit?

What is the difference between miraculous gifts and that which all who obey God receive?

What was the baptism of the Spirit not for?

For what, then, was the Spirit sent upon Cornelius and his friends?

What astonished the Jews with Peter?

What question did Peter then ask?

What use did Peter make of this at Jerusalem?

Give reasons why the baptism of the Spirit was not necessary to prepare one for baptism in water.

GO WIN SOME SOUL.

Go win some precious soul to-day,
That in the darkness long has trod;
Go win some soul to wisdom's way,
For every soul is dear to God.

Go help some soul to feel and know
That Jesus died for sinful men
Upon the cross in bitter woe;
Eternal life was offered then.

Perchance some soul is standing by,
And longs for words that you may say;
O, bring God's invitation nigh—
Go win some precious soul to-day. (Selected.)

A GOOD RESOLVE.

I am only one;
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything;
But still I can do something.
And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do something that I can do.
(Edward E. Hale.)

LESSON XI.—JUNE 12.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

Acts 12: 5-17.

5 Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod was about to bring him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and guards before the door kept the prison.

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed; and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision.

10 And when they were past the first and the second guard, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city: which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth, that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying.

13 And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a maid came to answer, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy, but ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she confidently affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison. And he said, Tell these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went to another place.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but Jehovah delivereth him out of them all.*” (Ps. 34: 19.)

TIME.—About A.D. 44.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Herod, James, Peter, and the church.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 34: 1-10.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—Ps. 21.

HOME READING.—

June 6. M. Peter Delivered from Prison. (Acts 12: 5-17.)

June 7. T. The Safety of the Godly. (Ps. 121.)

June 8. W. God Delivers His Own. (Ps. 97.)

June 9. T. Divine Care. (1 Kings 17: 1-9.)

June 10. F. Elisha Delivered. (2 Kings 6: 8-19.)

June 11. S. Daniel Delivered from the Lions. (Dan. 6: 14-23.)

June 12. S. The Guardian Angel. (Ps. 34: 1-8.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The Herods.

"Herod the king" was Herod Agrippa I, son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great.

Six Herods are mentioned in the New Testament: (1) Herod the Great, who slew the innocents (Matt. 2: 16-18); (2) Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee (Luke 3: 1), who beheaded John the Baptist (Matt. 14: 1-12); (3) Herod Philip I, whose wife Herod Antipas took (Matt. 14: 3-6); (4) Herod Philip II, tetrarch of Trachonitis, etc. (Luke 3: 1)—the last three, sons of Herod the Great by different wives; (5) Herod Agrippa I (our lesson); and (6) Herod Agrippa II (Acts 25), son of Herod Agrippa I.

The Herod of this lesson was a nephew of the one who beheaded John the Baptist. He was brought up in Rome, where he wasted an immense fortune. It has been said that his annual income was two million dollars, and yet he died in debt. He was made king over a small part of the former kingdom of Herod the Great by Caius Cæsar Caligula, and his kingdom was enlarged by Claudius Cæsar to include all the former kingdom of his grandfather.

To curry favor with the Jews, he not only observed the traditions of the Pharisees and offered sacrifices, but also persecuted the church. His intention was to destroy the leaders. (Verse 1.)

James Beheaded.

Herod beheaded James. This was the brother of John and son of Zebedee. (Verse 2.) It may have been because James was bold and aggressive in defending the faith that he was the first to be beheaded by Herod.

James was the first martyr among the apostles.

This was doubtless a source of great grief to the church.

He was slain only about ten or twelve years after the crucifixion of Jesus, and, therefore, soon drank of that cup and endured that baptism of suffering foretold by Jesus.

There was another James among the apostles—James, the son of Alphaeus—who, some think, was the brother or kinsman of the Lord. (Gal. 1: 19.) If not, then the Lord's brother was another James still. (Gal. 1: 19; 2: 9; 1 Cor. 15: 7.)

Peter Imprisoned.

Verse 3 shows Herod's motive in persecuting Christians. Encouraged by the Jews, he also seized Peter, the chiefest of the apostles.

"And those were the days of unleavened bread," so called because during the passover week no leaven was to be eaten or even found in the houses.

When he had succeeded in taking Peter, "he put him in prison," in order to confine him securely until "after the Passover." It would not be pleasing to the Jews to kill him during the passover week.

Peter had once escaped from prison, with the other apostles (Acts 5: 19), and the point now must have been to so securely imprison and guard him as to prevent any possible chance of escape this time.

A "quaternion of soldiers" is a company of four; and there were four such companies, corresponding to the four watches of the night. These were to guard Peter. He was placed in the prison between the two soldiers and "bound with two chains" to them—one arm bound to one soldier; the other arm, to the other soldier. Then "guards before the door kept the prison." (Verse 6.) These guards were placed apart, it seems, making "the first and the second guard" of verse 10. Besides the prison door and these guards, there was the iron gate, an outer gate leading into the city, locked and barred. There was no possible way of escape.

The version used in preparing these lessons very correctly says "the Passover" instead of "Easter." (Verse 4.) The context of the King James Version shows this feast was the Passover. Easter was not a Jewish feast. Certainly not. Any authentic church history which treats the subject, or any Bible dictionary, gives the origin of Easter. There is no such thing in the New Testament as "Easter," "Easter Sunday," or "Easter service." One Sunday as much as another is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Those who do not meet on the first day of the week to break bread, which God has appointed, need not put themselves to any trouble to keep Easter, a day God has not appointed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Prayer for Peter's Deliverance.

5. Peter must remain in prison until after the passover. During this time "prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him." "It seems that they kept up a continual prayer during his imprisonment" (Lipscomb), for "many were gathered together and were praying" in the house of Mary when he was released. (Verse 12.) Others may have met at other places, and at home and during the day in secret they doubtless prayed for him. They prayed for his deliverance; and, of course, following the example of Jesus in the garden, they prayed that not their will, but God's, be done.

Why God should suffer James to be beheaded and release Peter is a question we cannot decide. He does all things well, for his own glory and the good of all who serve him.

6. The execution of Peter was a foregone conclusion. The Jews wanted him killed, and Herod was ready to gratify them. Peter, as we have seen, was well guarded and securely locked and barred in; but locks, bars, chains, guards, and gates were no hindrance to the Lord Almighty.

II. The Prayer Answered.

7. The angel came to rescue Peter. The light shone in the prison, that he might see; the angel smote him to awake him, striking the chains from him and raising him up, saying: "Rise up quickly." The soldiers did not awake.

8. While God did all this, Peter must do what he could. He must arise quickly, gird himself, put on his sandals and outer garment, and follow the angel. He had laid off his outer garment, loosed his girdle, and taken off his sandals, that he might be comfortable while asleep.

9. Peter did all the angel directed, but could not yet tell whether it was a reality or a vision.

10. When the angel had led him "past the first and the second guard," through the iron gate which led into the city from the prison, and "which opened to them of its own accord," and "through one street," "straightway the angel departed from him." Peter could now find his own way. God does not do for men what they can do for themselves.

11, 12. Seeing now that he was really out in the city, free from prison, he realized what God had done for him. "Out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews," shows that Peter understood they expected to execute him on the morrow.

Fully realizing his release, he went "to the house of Mary the mother" of John Mark, "where many were gathered together and were praying." This must have been a meeting place for the disciples, since Peter knew where to go.

This Mark was cousin to Barnabas (Col. 4: 10); and, hence, his mother in this case would be aunt to Barnabas, or sister to Barnabas if Mark was Barnabas' nephew.

13-17. Peter "knocked at the door of the gate." This was a broad gate opening from the court of the house upon the street, in which was a small door to admit persons, the gate itself being wide enough for wagons.

The house girl, "Rhoda" ("a rose"), responded. She asked who was there before opening the door; and when she recognized Peter's voice without, she did not open the door for joy, but ran back to inform all in the house that he was there. But none could believe her; they thought the girl mad. They had prayed for his deliverance, but were not ready to receive the answer as God gave it. It may be they were not expecting the deliverance in that way.

This is an example to us to pray in faith to God and to accept the answer in the way God is pleased to send it.

"It is his angel." What they meant by this "angel" is not clear. They probably meant that it was Peter's spirit.

"Peter continued knocking" at the door until they opened; and when they were convinced, they were astonished. Peter declared how he had been delivered, and directed them to relate these things to James and the other brethren.

This James was quite prominent in the church at Jerusalem.

III. Peter Watched as Well as Prayed.

"And he departed, and went to another place" for safety. He left before day—another illustration of the fact that we should not expose ourselves unnecessarily to danger, and should use all possible means for the accomplishment of all purposes.

We can well imagine "there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter." None could account for his disappearance, not even the soldiers between whom he slept. Herod could obtain no information from guards, and he ordered them put to death.

Verses 20-23 tell of the providential and violent death of Herod soon afterwards. It is said that the "royal apparel" in which he arrayed himself was a robe woven entirely of silver.

After this "the word of God grew and multiplied." Thus another determined plot to exterminate the church served to extend it among men.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Who conducted the former persecutions?
Who conducted this one?
Name the Herods mentioned in the New Testament.
Which one was this?
Over what was he made king?
What did he do in order to curry favor with the Jews?
Whom did he behead?
Which James was this?
Of what cup did he drink, and to what baptism did he submit?
What other men named "James" are mentioned?
Whom did Herod seize and imprison?
Why did he not execute Peter at once?
Why was this time called "the days of unleavened bread?"
What is a "quaternion" of soldiers?
Tell how Peter was bound and guarded and barred in.
Why was he so securely guarded?
What is meant here by "Easter?"
Is there any "Easter Day" or "Easter service" in the Bible?
What should Christians celebrate?
5 What did the church offer up for Peter while he was in prison?
Where did some of the disciples meet to pray?
Where did others probably meet?
For what did they pray?
- For what did they pray on a former occasion?
6 When was Peter to have been executed in accordance with Herod's plan?
7 Who came to rescue Peter?
Why did the light shine in the prison?
8 What must Peter do?
9 What was Peter unable to decide at first?
10 How did Peter and the angel get through the gate?
How far did the angel go with Peter?
11, 12 What did Peter realize then?
Where did he go?
How did he know he would find the disciples there?
What Mary was this?
Who was John Mark?
13-17 Where did Peter knock?
What is meant by "the door of the gate?"
Who came to the door?
Why did they not believe her?
What did they say it was?
What is meant by "his angel?"
What convinced them that it was Peter?
What did he relate?
To whom did he say they should tell this?
What did he then do?
What lesson does this enforce?
What effect did this disappearance of Peter have upon the soldiers?
What did Herod order to be done with the guards?
Relate the facts of Herod's death.
How did all this turn out to the advantage of the church?

Though like a wanderer, the sun gone down,
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be—
Nearer, my God, to thee.

There let the way appear steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me, in mercy given;
Angels to beckon me—
Nearer, my God, to thee. (Sarah F. Adams.)

LESSON XII.—JUNE 19.

PETER TEACHES GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

(TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

1 Pet. 2: 11-17; 4: 1-5.

11 Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bond-servants of God.

17 Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

1 Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revelings, carousings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.*” (Rom. 13: 10.)

TIME.—About A.D. 63.

PLACE.—Place of writing, probably Babylon.

PERSONS.—Peter and the ones addressed.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 6-13.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—1 Pet. 1: 1-5.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|----------|----|--|
| June 13. | M. | Peter Teaches Good Citizenship. (1 Pet. 2: 11-20.) |
| June 14. | T. | Abstinence from Evil. (1 Pet. 4: 1-11.) |
| June 15. | W. | Fruits of Flesh and Spirit. (Gal. 6: 7-16.) |
| June 16. | T. | Denying Ungodliness. (Tit. 2: 1-15.) |
| June 17. | F. | Overcoming Evil with Good. (Rom. 12: 9-21.) |
| June 18. | S. | On Guard. (Matt. 26: 36-44.) |
| June 19. | S. | God's Care for the Needy. (Ps. 146: 1-10.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Peter wrote this Epistle, also Second Peter. It is not certain from what place this Epistle was written, probably from Babylon, since Peter speaks of the church in Babylon saluting the persons to whom this letter was addressed. (1 Pet. 5: 13—margin.) Some say Peter

wrote this letter from Rome, but there is no evidence of this. We do not know that Peter was ever in Rome.

1 Pet. 1: 1 states to whom this Epistle was addressed. Some of these people, doubtless, heard the gospel and became Christians at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and thereafter. (Acts 2: 7-11.) There were Gentile Christians, too, in these countries. After these Jews who had become Christians had returned to their homes, Peter, anxious for them to continue to develop in the Christian life, wrote to them this Epistle and also Second Peter.

This is a good lesson on temperance, which all should know is self-control, because much of it is directed against "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Self-control is greatly needed in order to overcome the flesh.

The lack of self-control leads to the greatest shame and disgrace, misery and woe.

The use of strong drink has done and is yet doing untold harm. It has slain and is yet slaying its thousands; has sent and is yet sending thousands of souls to perdition; has left and is yet leaving numerous destitute widows and helpless orphans. It is not only doing this, but is making thousands of lawbreakers and flooding the country with lawlessness.

The use of it is strongly condemned by the Bible. (See Prov. 20: 1; 23: 29-32; Isa. 28: 7; Hab. 2: 15; 1 Cor. 6: 9-11; Eph. 5: 18; 1 Thess. 5: 7, 8.)

But the use of strong drink is not the only intemperance by any means. The thoughts, tongue, temper, and whole body must be controlled and brought into subjection to the gospel.

In order to learn more of the necessity of exercising self-control, read Prov. 16: 32; 17: 27, 28; Tit. 2: 11, 12; James 1: 12-15; 1 John 2: 15-17; 2 Pet. 1: 4; 1 Thess. 5: 22; Ps. 19: 14; Heb. 12: 14.

The word of God is clear enough and strong enough on any subject; and if we will not hear and heed that, there is nothing that can reach us or do us any good.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Which War Against the Soul."

11. Christians are here addressed as "beloved," and tenderly besought to "abstain from fleshly lusts." Again addressing them as "beloved," Peter mentions "the fiery trials" which would come upon them. (1 Pet. 4: 12.) In Heb. 6: 9 they are called "beloved," with the statement that Paul (we think he wrote the letter to the Hebrews) was "persuaded better things" of them than falling away from faith in Christ. In other passages Christians are called "beloved." Peter refers to Paul as "our beloved brother Paul." (2 Pet. 3: 15.) We should be impressed with the tenderness of the gospel. When we are impressed with this tenderness, it will be manifested in both our speech and conduct. To affect it is pretense.

For two reasons Christians must "abstain from fleshly lusts:"

(1) They are "sojourners" and "pilgrims"—this earth is not their home, and all things here perish. A "sojourner" is one not permanently settled in a country—a "stranger" in a country not his own.

A "pilgrim" is a traveler—one journeying to another country. Christians should realize that they are not at home here on earth. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own." (Heb. 11: 13, 14.) This is the case with Christians. The home of Christians is "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11: 10.) Paul speaks of leaving this earthly body and of being "at home with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5: 8.) These are the facts; but how few professed Christians act upon them! How many buy and build, strive to accumulate and to lay up treasures upon the earth, and set their hearts upon fleshly comfort and ease and pleasure, as if this earth were their permanent home!

(2) These "fleshly lusts" "war against the soul." These "fleshly lusts" are the soul's chief enemies and greatest and mightiest foes. The flesh is the battle ground on which to fight "the good fight of the faith." Paul courageously met every false teacher and refuted every false doctrine; but he had to fight at the same time heroically his own body and to bring it into bondage, lest by any means, after he had preached to others, he himself should be rejected. (1 Cor. 9: 27.) This was embraced in and was a large part of the good fight which he had made and to which he looked back in triumph at the close of his eventful career, exclaiming: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." This good fight we must all make in order to enter heaven. Contending simply against false doctrines and even for the truth of the gospel is not enough. It is easier to refute false teaching and to contend that the Bible is true than it is to be always strictly honest, to always speak the truth, to correctly represent an opponent, to repent of sin and to apologize or beg pardon for a wrong done another, to never defraud any one, and always to "abstain from fleshly lusts." And all one's learning and logic and ability to refute false theories and to contend that the gospel is true cannot atone for injustice, lack of integrity and uprightness, and immorality of any form. Preaching and teaching Bible lessons are not enough; all fleshly lusts and passions must be subdued. Christians must deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" (Tit. 2: 11, 12); must "put to death" their "members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3: 5-11); must crucify "the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (Gal. 5: 17-24); and bring "every thought" into obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10: 5), and keep their hearts pure and their lives clean.

12. "Gentiles," who were idolaters, do not embrace the Gentiles who had become Christians. In places the Gentiles did not distinguish between the Jews in general and Christian Jews; hence, they spoke of Christian Jews, in common with all Jews, as "evildoers." All Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, are commanded to have their "behavior seemly," that, wherein the Gentiles speak against them as "evildoers," these Gentiles may, by the good works which they behold in Christians, glorify God "in the day of visitation." Christians were misrepresented, false charges were brought against them, and they were arraigned before rulers as criminals; hence, they were spoken against as "evildoers." This is referred to again in chapter 3: 16. The ques-

tion is: How were Christians to meet these evil things? The answer is: By good works. Just so Christians are to meet all such false charges and evil reports to-day. By being law-abiding, peace-maintaining citizens, honest and upright people, doing good for evil and overcoming evil with good, by being kind and generous to the needy, and in a tranquil and quiet life obeying God in all things, Christians will refute all false charges and constrain their accusers to glorify God. This is what Jesus teaches in Matt. 5: 13-16, 38-48.

"The day of visitation" means the time of affliction and suffering and chastisement, or the day of God's vengeance. (See Isa. 10: 3; Jer. 6: 15.) Whether this "day of visitation" means when God takes vengeance on his enemies or when Christians are sorely tried and persecuted, their meekness and patience, submission and godliness will testify that they are Christians indeed and will lead others to glorify God.

II. Submission to Rulers.

13, 14. In Rom. 13: 1-7 Paul teaches that which Peter does in these verses. Paul says, "in subjection to the higher powers;" Peter says, "subject to every ordinance of man." Paul says this must be done, not only because lawbreakers will be punished by civil authorities, "but for conscience' sake"—that is, because this is right; Peter says, "for the Lord's sake." Paul says civil authorities, hence civil governments, "are ordained of God." Since men at first chose to govern themselves rather than to submit to God's government, God has allowed them to choose their own form of government, whether monarchy, kingdom, empire, or republic; but he has always overruled all governments to serve his purpose, using one for one purpose and another for another, according as each is fitted to accomplish that purpose. Wicked nations are used to chastise and even to destroy other wicked nations. So God uses civil officers now to punish evildoers or lawless persons. Civil officers are God's servants, or "ministers," "attending continually upon this very thing." "Ministers of God's service" does not mean that they are preachers or Christians at all. On this point study Dan. 2: 21, 37; 4: 3, 17, 25, 34, 35; 5: 18. The king of Assyria was a bloodthirsty heathen, and attributed his military success to his own skill and false gods; but God overruled him as a battle-ax to punish and destroy other wicked nations. (See Isa. 10: 5-16; Isa. 37: 26-38.) Nebuchadnezzar, another heathen and wicked king, is called God's "servant"—not a servant of righteousness, as was Moses, Paul, and others, but to serve God's purpose in chastising the Jews and leading them away into captivity. (Jer. 27: 5-11.) These passages will point to many others, all of which show how God overrules the governments of the earth to protect his people in their righteousness and to chastise and punish the unrighteous and very wicked and cruel ones. So, whether the earthly ruler be a king, or governors sent by the emperor of Rome, or President of the United States, or governors of the States, or any civil officer under them, they are God's way in his own overruling power of taking "vengeance on evildoers and for praise of them that do well."

15. "For so is the will of God." It is the will of God that Christians be submissive to the civil officers, whatever the laws of the government under which they live may be; to pay tribute, custom, or

taxes in any form. They cannot take the law into their own hands, join mobs, or encourage lawlessness in any form. They are to be "subject to every ordinance of man," and to be so "for the Lord's sake." In no particular can Christians refuse or fail to submit to the laws of civil governments, except only when such governments forbid their obedience to God or require their obedience to that which God forbids. Then they "must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5: 29; 4: 19.) This is a clear command of God. By this rule Christians lived, went to prison and to death. By this they live to-day.

It is the will of God that Christians "by well-doing"—by being submissive to civil authorities, law-abiding, upright, and otherwise by doing good—"put to silence" the slanders, false charges, and all evil complaints of ignorant and foolish men who say Christians are not good citizens. This has been tested all along. Men who are not upright, law-abiding citizens, do not seek the peace and good of all men, are not Christians. It is only when the civil authorities require Christians to disobey God or forbid their obedience to him that Christians can refuse to submit to civil officers.

In no way are Christians to avenge themselves or to seek vengeance. On the other hand, they are to do good for evil, to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong, to "give place unto the wrath of God"—that is, to rely upon God to punish evildoers. One of God's ways of doing this is through civil officers. Civil officers have been sent out by civil governments "for vengeance on evildoers." In all cases Christians must leave vengeance to civil officers and "by well-doing" must influence others, and not by trying to avenge themselves or to see vengeance taken on any one else for any cause.

16. "As free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness [malice or maliciousness], but as bond servants of God." The Jews felt—and made the boast—that they had "never yet been in bondage to any man" (John 8: 33); and they were ready at any time to revolt against the Roman government, and did cause frequent trouble. Christians should not share this feeling or show this spirit; but, while they are free, they should not use their freedom as "a cloak of wickedness;" they should feel no malice toward any government or any person, and certainly should conceal none under any kind of cloak, but should realize they are "bond servants of God." They are under bondage to God and must at all times do his bidding. Christians to-day in liberty-loving America feel that they are free, but they are under bondage to God, and in obedience to him must cheerfully submit to all laws of any government under which they may live. The attitude of Christians toward civil governments is that of submission to the authorities.

17. "Honor all men." Treat all men kindly; "render to all their dues;" "owe no man anything, save to love one another." "Love the brotherhood." Love all Christians as the family of God and because they are Christians. "Love one another from the heart fervently." "Let love be without hypocrisy."

"Fear God." The deepest reverence is due God. "Hallowed be thy name." "Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him." To fear God is to feel and manifest abiding reverence for his name and all his service at all times, to tremble at his word (Isa. 66: 3, 5), and

to be afraid to disobey him, "for our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12: 28, 29). There is great lack of reverence for God and his worship in many professed Christians now.

"Honor the king." Respect the chief ruler of the country and, therefore, all subordinate officers. "Let every soul"—all Christians—"be in subjection to the higher powers."

In these verses are impressed duties to God, to civil authorities, to "the brotherhood," and to all men.

III. Arm Yourselves to Suffer as Christ Did.

(1 Pet. 4: 1-5.)

1, 2. "Christ suffered in the flesh"—suffered persecution and death—to save us from sin. For this reason we should "arm"—prepare—ourselves "also with the same mind," or determination to endure persecution and to suffer death for his sake. He has set the example of suffering persecution. (1 Pet. 2: 21.)

"For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." In what respect? He that resisteth "unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12: 4), is not likely to be overcome by sin. By suffering such persecution one shows strength and firm resolution to resist temptation, and to that extent "hath ceased from sin." But "he that died is justified from sin;" he is "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 6: 1-11.) He has ceased to live in sin and to serve sin and has shown it by suffering for righteousness' sake, and in that sense has ceased from sin. This is shown by the following statement: "That ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." "To the lusts of men" means the idolatrous and evil practices of men around them, striving to make them give up faith and the godly life in Christ for their sinful and wicked practices. "To the will of God" means according to God's directions.

3, 4. "For the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles." Enough time—far too much—already had been wasted in such abominable practices. The following is the life of the Gentiles which the Gentile Christians lived before they accepted the gospel: "Lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revelings, carousings, and abominable idolatries." "Lasciviousness," says Adam Clarke, "is every species of lechery, lewdness, and impurity;" "lusts" are "strong, irregular appetites and desires of all kinds;" "winebibbings" are "continual debauches," "to be inflamed with wine;" "revelings" are "lascivious feastings, with drunken songs, etc.;" "carousings"—the Authorized Version says "banquetings"—are "wine feasts, drinking matches, etc.;" "abominable idolatries" were "the abominations practiced at their idol feasts, where they not only worshiped the idol, but did it with the most impure, obscene, and abominable rites." The entertainments now called "banquets" which are free from wine and dissipation are not to be confused with these "carousings."

The Gentiles thought it strange that Christians from among them did not run into the same excess of riot, and spoke evil of them.

5. For all such sins those who practice them will have to give an account to Him who "is ready to judge the living and the dead."

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Readings?
Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Who wrote First and Second Peter?
From what place were these Epistles probably written?
Do we know that Peter was ever in Rome?
To whom were these Epistles addressed?
Why is this a good temperance lesson?
To what does the lack of self-control lead?
What great harm has strong drink done?
Give some passages showing the evil of strong drink.
What else is embraced in self-control?
Give passages showing this.
If we do not hear and heed the word of God, what can reach us?
- 11 Give examples of tender expressions of the gospel.
How do we manifest this tenderness?
To affect it is what?
For what two reasons must Christians abstain from fleshly lusts?
Why are Christians called both "sojourners" and "pilgrims"?
Where is their home?
What is the soul's greatest foe?
What is "the good fight of the faith"?
Where is the battle ground?
Whom and what did Paul refute?
What did he buffet and bring into subjection?
What must Christians deny and crucify?
Why is teaching and preaching the truth not enough to save the teacher and preacher?
 - 12 What must be the behavior of Christians?
How can they lead others to glorify God?
How can Christians meet and refute false charges?
What is the "day of visitation"?
 - 13, 14 Show that Paul and Peter teach the same in regard to Christians' relationship to civil governments.
When did men first begin to form governments of their own?
What form of civil government does God allow men to choose?
What use does God make of civil governments?
Cite the Scriptures which prove this.
Why are very wicked kings as well as civil officers of to-day called God's "ministers" or "servants"?
How does God take vengeance on evil-doers?
 - 15 What is the will of God to Christians concerning tribute, custom, taxes of every form?
Why cannot Christians join mobs or in any way take the law into their own hands?
For what reasons must they be "subject to every ordinance of man"?
When only are they justifiable in not submitting to civil authorities?
How alone does God direct Christians to put to silence evil-doers?
Why cannot Christians take vengeance?
Instead of taking vengeance and trying to punish evil-doers, what must they do?
 - 16 What is meant by being free and not using freedom for a cloak of wickedness?
Whose bond servants are Christians?
What is the attitude of Christians toward civil governments?
 - 17 What is it to "honor all men"?
To "love the brotherhood"?
To "fear God"?
To "honor the king"?
To sum up, what duties do these verses teach?
 - 1, 2 With what should Christians arm themselves.
Who is their example?
What is meant by "he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin"?
What is meant by living "to the lusts of men" and "to the will of God"?
3, 4 What is said about the time spent in serving the sins of the Gentiles?
Name the sins of the Gentiles?
Give the meaning of each one of these sins.
What did the Gentiles think was strange?
 - 5 To whom must all give an account for their sins?

LESSON XIII.—JUNE 26.

REVIEW—LIFE AND LETTERS OF PETER.

Read 1 Pet. 5: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men."* (Matt. 4: 19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 6-13.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS.—John 21: 15-17.

HOME READING.—

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|----------|----|--|
| June 20. | M. | Life and Letters of Peter. (1 Pet. 5: 1-11.) |
| June 21. | T. | Peter Becomes a Disciple of Jesus. (John 1: 35-42.) |
| June 22. | W. | Peter's Great Confession. (Matt. 16: 13-24.) |
| June 23. | T. | Peter's Sermon at Pentecost. (Acts 2: 14-38.) |
| June 24. | F. | Peter Exhorts to Faith and Good Works. (2 Pet. 1: 1-11.) |
| June 25. | S. | Peter's Final Warning. (2 Pet. 3: 8-18.) |
| June 26. | S. | The Happiness of Believers. (Isa. 55: 6-13.) |

From the lessons of this quarter we should have learned much of Peter's life, work, and character; also from his life and letters we should have learned much of the Christian life. And from what we have learned we should be further advanced in the practice of Christianity, stronger in faith, and brighter in hope.

What is more encouraging, more expressive of the gradual and upward development of the Christian, and more radiant with hope than the "like precious faith;" "the grace and peace;" "the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;" the "precious and exceeding great promises;" the escape "from the corruption that is in the world by lust;" becoming "partakers of the divine nature;" and the ascent, step by step, of the stairway of faith from earth to heaven, that Peter presents in the first chapter of his Second Epistle? His last exhortation is: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

"But the path of the righteous is as the dawning light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Peter was a fellow elder with other elders, a "witness of the sufferings of Christ," and "a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed." Let us study, analyze, and appropriate his instruction to elders and to the "younger" as well.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Did you read 1 Pet. 5: 1-11?

Repeat the Golden Text.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Additional Material for Teachers?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What lessons should we have learned this

quarter from our study of the life of Peter?

What are the successive steps in the gradual growth of Christians?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Where and when did Peter first learn of Jesus?
 When did he become a disciple of Jesus?
 Where was his home at the time?
 What was his occupation?
 What did he leave for the work of Christ?

LESSON II.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 In what way did Peter learn this lesson of trust?

LESSON III.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 What was this great confession?
 For whom did Peter make it as well as for himself?
 Who must make it now?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 Where and when and what was the transfiguration?
 What was the chief significance of it?

LESSON V.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 When and where and under what circumstances did Peter deny the Lord?
 What brought him to repentance?
 How did he show his repentance?

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 When did Peter first see the Lord after his resurrection?
 State what passed between Peter and the Lord on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias.

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 State what occurred on this Pentecost.

Why did Peter take the lead in preaching on this occasion?
 Give an outline of Peter's sermon.

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 State the facts and results of healing this lame man.

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 What is meant by, "We must obey God rather than men?"

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 Where did Peter first preach to the Gentiles?
 Give all the miraculous occurrences which brought Peter and Cornelius together.
 Why must Peter go to Cornelius?
 Notwithstanding all the miracles in this case, what must Cornelius and others do to be saved?

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 What was the motive for imprisoning Peter at this time?
 How was he delivered?

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 State the duties of Christians to civil governments.
 Do the will of God and civil governments ever conflict?
 What then must Christians do?

You have no right to judge a man
 Until he's fairly tried;
 Should you not like his company,
 You know the world is wide.
 Some may have faults, and who has not?
 The old as well as young.
 Perhaps you may, for aught we know,
 Have fifty to their one. (Selected.)

THIRD QUARTER.

EARLY KINGS AND PROPHETS OF ISRAEL: FROM SAMUEL TO ISAIAH.

(First Half of a Six-Months' Course.)

AIM: To promote personal and national righteousness by a study of Israel's early kings and prophets.

LESSON I.—JULY 3.

SAUL CHOSEN KING.

1 Sam. 10: 17-27; 11: 12-15.

17 And Samuel called the people together unto Jehovah to Mizpah;

18 And he said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you:

19 But ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saveth you out of all your calamities and your distresses; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before Jehovah by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their families; and the family of the Matrites was taken; and Saul the son of Kish was taken: but when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they asked of Jehovah further, Is there yet a man to come hither? And Jehovah answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence; and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, *Long live the king.*

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 And Saul also went to his house to Gibeah; and there went with him the host, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But certain worthless fellows said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day; for to-day Jehovah hath wrought deliverance in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before Jehovah in Gilgal; and there they offered sacrifices of peace-offerings before Jehovah; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6: 8.)

TIME.—The time is uncertain, probably about B.C. 1095.

PLACE.—Mizpah.

PERSONS.—Samuel, Saul, and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 119: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- June 27. M. Jehovah Rejected. (1 Sam. 8: 1-9.)
- June 28. T. Jehovah's Choice of a King. (Deut. 17: 14-20.)
- June 29. W. Saul Chosen King. (1 Sam. 10: 17-25.)
- June 30. T. The King's Folly. (1 Sam. 13: 5-14.)
- July 1. F. Saul Rejected. (1 Sam. 15: 13-23.)
- July 2. S. Discerning Christ's Kingdom. (Mark 12: 28-34.)
- July 3. S. Learning Jehovah's Law. (Ps. 119: 1-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

"Mizpah" means "watchtower" and was the name of several places in Palestine. The one of this lesson was in the tribe of Benjamin, a short distance northwest of Jerusalem, and was one of three places where Samuel judged Israel. It was on a hill from which all central Palestine could be seen. It was a meeting place for the Israelites on important occasions. (See Judg. 20: 1; 21: 1, 8; 1 Sam. 7: 5, 14, 16; 2 Kings 25: 23.) After the downfall of the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar made Gedaliah at Mizpah governor over the remnant of the people left in the land. (1 Kings 25: 22, 23; Jer. 40: 5, 6.)

Gibeah was a town between Ramah, Samuel's home, and Jerusalem, a few miles north of Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The lessons in the Old Testament left off six months ago with "Samuel the Just Judge," in 1 Sam. 7, and should begin properly now with the great crisis in the national history, "Israel Wanting a King," in 1 Sam. 8.

Study 1 Sam. 8, 9.

Read carefully 1 Sam. 8. Note who wanted a king. "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah." They had discussed this grave movement among themselves. They went to Samuel in a body. They gave three reasons for wanting a king—(1) "behold, thou art old;" (2) "thy sons walk not in thy ways;" (3) "to judge us like all the nations."

The government under judges was God's government. To change the government was to reject God as King.

Show the fearfulness of the sin of changing God's government and order of work and worship to-day.

After Samuel's solemn protest, the people said: "Nay; but we will have a king over us, that we may also be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

With this example before us (1 Cor. 10: 10; Rom. 15: 14), we should

see that the sin of changing God's government of the church is a greater sin than changing the government of Israel.

Chapter 9 gives the account of Saul's family, the circumstances which led him to Samuel at this time, Saul's humility, and Samuel's anointing him to be king.

THE AIM OF THE LESSONS.

It is stated above that the "aim" of these lessons is "to promote personal and national righteousness."

What is the difference between "personal" and "national" righteousness?

There are two kinds of righteousness—namely, God's righteousness and man's righteousness. "Righteousness" comes from the word "right." God's righteousness is that which he teaches is right, and man's righteousness is that which man teaches is right. There is a vast difference between these two. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so is God's righteousness different from and above man's righteousness. (Isa. 55: 8, 9.) All man's "righteousnesses are as a polluted garment." (Isa. 64: 6.) God's righteousness is a robe pure and white. (Rev. 19: 8.)

God's system of government in the Old Testament was very different from that of the New Testament. Having led the Israelites out of Egypt into Canaan, God governed them through judges. When they tired of this and asked for a king, God said they had rejected him. Yet he directed the king how to rule. He finally removed the king.

In the Old Testament the ecclesiastical and civil government was under one head. But not so in the New Testament. In the New Testament Christ is the King over God's government, the church. He is head over all things to the church. God allows any nation to choose any form of civil government its judgment dictates. There is nothing religious about the form of civil government. Church and state are separate. God gives certain principles which, if followed, bring peace and prosperity to any government on earth. He teaches Christians in any civil government to submit to the laws of that government in so far as these laws do not conflict with his laws in the New Testament. Otherwise God and not civil governments must be obeyed.

Submission to God's righteousness places people in his kingdom, or church. They cannot submit to his righteousness and remain out of his church. His righteousness—that is, obedience to him—is always the same, and the same to all people—kings and subjects, rulers and other citizens. His righteousness and, therefore, the subjects of his kingdom are the same in all nations and at all times.

In Christ there can be no difference between "personal" righteousness and "national" righteousness. What is right for an individual to do is right for a nation to do; what is wrong for one person to do is wrong for a nation to do.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Ye Have This Day Rejected Your God."

17. Having anointed Saul according to God's direction, it was now Samuel's duty to make known to the people God's choice of a king.

"And Samuel called the people together unto Jehovah to Mizpah." All the tribes and the families in the tribes were represented. Doubtless all "the congregation of Israel"—the males from twenty years old and upward (Num. 1: 3)—were present.

18. At Mizpah, in obedience to God's command, Samuel again solemnly set before the people the sin they were committing. "Thus saith Jehovah." That the Lord says a thing makes it most serious. The Lord reminded them that by many miracles he brought them up out of Egypt; that by these miracles he had persuaded them to leave and had forced the Egyptians to let them leave; that he had done for them that which had not been done for any other nation; that he had fought their battles all the way through; and that he had delivered them "out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed" them. What more could they ask for or have? This is like the all-sufficiency of the Bible to guide us and the all-sufficiency of the church now. What more can we desire or have? God had done for them all that they expected an earthly king to do, yet they were set on changing God's order.

19. "But ye have this day rejected your God." Besides that which God had done, as stated in verse 18, he had also saved them out of all their "calamities" and their "distresses;" yet they rejected him and said: "Nay, but set a king over us." God intended that they should understand clearly and fully that they were rejecting him in rejecting his system of government, or order of things. In calling attention again to this sin, another opportunity was presented to them to repent and return to God. Yet, since they had deliberately set their hearts on this course, knowing that it was a rejection of God, Samuel told them to "present" themselves "before Jehovah" by "tribes" and by "thousands." To "present" themselves "before Jehovah" was to come together probably before the altar of God in order to select the king by lot. Moses had divided the tribes into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. (Ex. 18: 25.) We ought to be able to see from this that to turn from God's commandments and church, sealed by the blood of Jesus, to human ways and organizations is to reject him.

II. Saul Selected.

20. "So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near." Each tribe, one by one, came before Samuel; and as it came, it was made known to Samuel if this was the one from which the king must come. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah." (Prov. 16: 33.) When the tribe of Benjamin came near, God let Samuel know this was the one.

21. From verse 19, which mentions the "thousands," it is probable that the different "thousands" of the tribe of Benjamin came near until the right thousand was "taken;" then the families of that thousand until "the family of the Matrites was taken;" then the men of that family until Saul was taken. In this way Achan was shown to be the transgressor. (Josh. 7: 16-21.) The tribe of Benjamin was the smallest of the tribes of Israel, having been almost destroyed because of the sins of the Benjamite against the Levite and his concubine. (Judg. 19, 20, 21.) Saul said his family, too, was "the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin." (1 Sam. 9: 21.)

Why should Samuel go through with this process of choosing a king, when the Lord had already made a choice? To let the people see that it was the Lord's choice, and, therefore, to satisfy them. When the lot fell to Saul and "when they sought him, he could not be found." He knew what had already passed between him and Samuel, and that he would be chosen; and being humble and modest, he had disappeared.

22, 23. When Saul could not be found, "therefore they asked of Jehovah further, Is there yet a man to come hither?" Jehovah answered, telling where Saul was: "He hath hid himself among the baggage." "They ran and fetched him thence; and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward." He was a splendid-looking man physically—such a man as they desired. They wanted one who could fight their battles according to human wisdom and with human weapons, and Saul seemed the very man.

24. "And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" There was no one so tall, so physically handsome, and so fine looking. The Lord had said they should set over themselves as king only the one whom he should choose (Deut. 17: 14-17), and he had now chosen Saul. As already stated, he could allow the people to do only as they had chosen to do. "And all the people shouted, and said, Long live the king." (See this expression in other places—2 Sam. 16: 16; 1 Kings 1: 25, 34, 39; 2 Kings 11: 12; 2 Chron. 23: 11.) The people were pleased—pleased with having their choice and going their own way, pleased with rejecting God, and shouted over their success. Many today are pleased, delighted, with their human ways, human religious institutions, and shout their own praises over their apparent success. Is not a "great convention" a bigger thing with many than the simple church of Christ?

III. The Manner of the Kingdom.

25. "Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom." What does this mean? This is the same thing God told Samuel to show the people in 1 Sam. 8: 9 and which he did as set forth in 1 Sam. 8: 10-18. The kingdom would prove an oppression instead of a blessing. Some say, however, since in Deut. 17: 14-20 God had foretold of this time, that now Samuel was to write out a kind of compact between the king and the people—"a charter" setting forth the relation of the king to the people, etc.; but it seems from the warnings given that this is another warning that it may be kept as a witness against them, because they went into this sin with their eyes open and against all the Lord had said. Samuel "wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah." To lay "it up before Jehovah" was to place it by the ark, where the law was. (Deut. 31: 26.) When this was done, "Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house." The kingdom was renewed at Gilgal (1 Sam. 11: 14), but he wanted to give the people time for reflection.

26. "And Saul also went to his house to Gibeah." There was no occasion for immediate action on the part of the king; and he needed time, too, for reflection and preparation for his new duties and responsibilities. "And there went with him the host [men of valor], whose

- What pleased the people?
 25 What did Samuel then tell the people?
 What is meant by this?
 What did Samuel write?
 Where was it placed?
 Where did Samuel then send the people?
 For what purpose?
 26 Where did Saul go?
 Where was Gibeath?
 Who went with him?
 27 Who are "children of Belial?"
 What did they say?
 What does giving him "no present" signify?
 What victory did Saul soon gain?
- Give in detail the facts which led to the war with the Ammonites.
 State the result.
 12, 13 To what conclusion did all the people come?
 What did some propose to do with those who did not want Saul as king?
 What position did Saul take?
 14, 15 To what place did Samuel then call the people?
 Why?
 What does this resemble?
 What did the people then do?
 What speech is it thought Samuel made?

I see not a step before me;
 God hangs a mist o'er mine eyes,
 And on each step in my forward course
 He makes new scenes arise,
 And every joy he sends to me
 Comes as a glad surprise.

Perhaps the dreaded future
 Is less bitter than I think,
 Or he may sweeten the waters
 Before I stoop to drink;
 But if Marah must be Marah,
 He'll stand beside the brink.

Or it may be he has waiting,
 For the coming of my feet,
 Some gift of such rare blessedness,
 Some joy so strangely sweet,
 That my lips shall only tremble
 With the joy they cannot speak.

So I go onward, not knowing—
 I would not if I might;
 I would rather walk in the dark with God
 Than walk alone in the light;
 I would rather walk with him by faith
 Than walk alone by sight. (Selected.)

Vice is a monster of such dreadful mien
 That to be hated needs but to be seen;
 But seen too oft, familiar with his face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
 (Selected.)

VI. The Conclusion.

12, 13. When Saul had gained this victory, the people were so rejoiced and so pleased with him that in their enthusiasm they wanted to kill those who said, "Shall Saul reign over us?" but Saul would not allow a man to be put to death. This was to Saul's credit.

VII. The Kingdom Renewed.

14, 15. After this victory, Samuel called all the people to Gilgal to renew the kingdom there. Saul had demonstrated his ability and had shown himself worthy, and Samuel saw that it was a fit time to confirm him as king. This was like the inauguration of a president or the crowning of a king. Then "they offered sacrifices of peace offerings before Jehovah; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly." At this time and place, it seems, Samuel made the speech recorded in 1 Sam. 12.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What does "Mizpah" mean?
Where was this Mizpah?
What could be seen from it?
What was it for the children of Israel?
Where and what was Gibeah?
Where did the lessons in the Old Testament six months ago stop?
Did you study chapters 8 and 9 of First Samuel?
Who wanted a king?
To whom did they go asking for one?
Give the three reasons they presented for wanting a king.
What was God's government at that time?
Show the fearfulness of the sin of changing God's government at any time.
Why is it worse, if possible, to change God's government and order of work in his church to-day?
What did the people say when Samuel solemnly protested against this rebellion?
What two kinds of righteousness do we read about in the Bible?
What is God's righteousness, and what is man's righteousness?
What is the difference between God's government in the Old Testament and in the New Testament?
Are the church and state now separate?
What form of civil government does God allow us to have now?
When only can Christians disobey civil rulers?
What is the difference between "personal" and "national" righteousness?
- 17 Why did Samuel call the people together to Mizpah?
What other important event had occurred at Mizpah during Samuel's life?
18 Of what did Samuel remind the people?
Why did he do this?
What have we that is all-sufficient now?
19 What did Samuel accuse them of doing?
What else had God done for them?
But what did the people say?
Why did Samuel again call their attention to their sin?
How were they to "present" themselves "before Jehovah"?
What lesson should we learn from all this?
20 How did Samuel proceed to select the right tribe?
Which tribe was taken?
21 Then how did Samuel select the right family and the right man?
How was the sin of Achan discovered?
What was the size of the tribe of Benjamin?
Why was it so small?
What did Saul say about the size of his family?
Since Samuel had already anointed Saul, why this procedure at Mizpah?
22, 23 When Saul could not be found, what did the people say?
What answer did God make?
What was the "baggage"?
Why did Saul hide?
What did the people do?
What kind of man did they desire as king?
24 What did Samuel then say?
What did the people shout?

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| What pleased the people? | Give in detail the facts which led to the war with the Ammonites. |
| 25 What did Samuel then tell the people? | State the result. |
| What is meant by this? | 12, 13 To what conclusion did all the people come? |
| What did Samuel write? | What did some propose to do with those who did not want Saul as king? |
| Where was it placed? | What position did Saul take? |
| For what purpose? | 14, 15 To what place did Samuel then call the people? |
| 26 Where did Saul go? | Why? |
| Where was Gibeah? | What does this resemble? |
| Who went with him? | What did the people then do? |
| 27 Who are "children of Belial?" | What speech is it thought Samuel made? |
| What did they say? | |
| What does giving him "no present" signify? | |
| What victory did Saul soon gain? | |

I see not a step before me;
 God hangs a mist o'er mine eyes,
 And on each step in my forward course
 He makes new scenes arise,
 And every joy he sends to me
 Comes as a glad surprise.

Perhaps the dreaded future
 Is less bitter than I think,
 Or he may sweeten the waters
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Vice is a monster of such dreadful mien
 That to be hated needs but to be seen;
 But seen too oft, familiar with his face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
 (Selected.)

LESSON II.—JULY 10.

SAMUEL'S FAREWELL.

1 Sam. 12: 1-5, 19-25.

1 And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you; and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day.

3 Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, Jehovah is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they said, He is witness.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart:

21 And turn ye not aside; for *then would ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.*

22 For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself.

23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.

24 Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth."* (Ps. 26: 3.)

TIME.—Uncertain, probably about B.C. 1095.

PLACE.—Gilgal.

PERSONS.—Samuel, Saul, and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 26: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- July 4. M. Jehovah Calls Samuel. (1 Sam. 3: 1-10.)
- July 5. T. Samuel a Prophet. (1 Sam. 3: 11-21.)
- July 6. W. Samuel Interceding for Israel. (1 Sam. 7: 3-12.)
- July 7. T. Admonishing the People. (1 Sam. 12: 6-18.)
- July 8. F. Samuel's Farewell. (1 Sam. 12: 1-5, 19-25.)
- July 9. S. An Apostle's Farewell. (Acts 20: 22-35.)
- July 10. S. A Life of Integrity. (Ps. 26: 1-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Gilgal was a town five or six miles west of the Jordan and about one and a half miles (some say farther) east of Jericho.

The Israelites had not kept the passover since they left Sinai, and had not observed the rite of circumcision since they left Egypt forty years before. Here God commanded Joshua to circumcise "all the peo-

ple that were born in the wilderness." "And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the nation, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of that place was called Gilgal, unto this day." (Josh. 5: 2-9.) "Gilgal" means "rolling."

From this time Gilgal was an important place in the history of the Jewish nation. There the manna ceased; there was observed the first passover in the promised land; there were set up the twelve stones as a memorial of the parting of the Jordan waters; there the Israelites encamped and the women, children, cattle, and baggage were left during the Canaanitish war (Josh. 9: 6; 10: 6-43; 14: 6); there the ark was kept until it was removed to Shiloh (Josh. 18: 1); there Saul was proclaimed king (1 Sam. 10: 8; 11: 14, 15); there Saul in rebellion would offer a sacrifice to God when God had commanded him to do entirely a different thing (1 Sam. 15: 1-23); there Agag, the king of the Amalekites, was slain (1 Sam. 15: 33); and there the men of Judah went to meet David on his return to Jerusalem after the death of Abalom (2 Sam. 19: 15).

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The teachers should be ready to relate the facts of Samuel's life from his birth up to this lesson.

After the victory at Jabesh-gilead, Samuel called all the people to Gilgal to renew the kingdom there. Saul had demonstrated his ability and had shown himself worthy, and Samuel saw that it was a fit time to confirm him as king. This was like the inauguration of a president or the crowning of a king now. "There they offered sacrifices of peace offerings before Jehovah; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly." (1 Sam. 11: 15.)

At this time, it seems, and at Gilgal, Samuel made the speech of this lesson.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Samuel Resigned His Office as Judge—His Integrity.

1, 2. Samuel first reminded the people of the fact that he had hearkened unto them in making them a king, and that the king was before them to lead and to judge them. Here Samuel resigned his office as judge. He said: "I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day." It is inferred from this reference to his sons that Samuel had removed them from office on account of their wickedness.

3-5. Samuel then called the people to witness before Jehovah and the king that he had not taken an ox or an ass from them, had received no bribe, and had never defrauded or oppressed them in any way. They replied that such was the case, and both he and they called upon God to witness their statements. (Verses 1-6.)

"No man was oppressed under his government; no man was defrauded. He had accumulated no riches for himself; he had procured none for his friends; nor had one needy dependent been provided for out of the public purse. He might have pardoned his own

sons, who had acted improperly, before he quitted the government; but though he was the most tender of parents, he would not, but abandoned them to national justice, with only a tacit solicitation of mercy: 'Behold, my sons are with you.' (Clarke.)

II. Intervening Facts.

(Verses 6-18.)

In the intervening verses Samuel recounted what God had done for them and showed them how faithful God had been. He again arraigned them before God for rejecting him in asking for a king.

When their fathers in cruel Egyptian bondage cried unto Jehovah, he heard them and sent Moses and Aaron and brought them out to dwell in the land of promise; when they forgot God, "served the Baalim and the Ashtaroth," and were overrun and oppressed by Sisera and by the Moabites, then in penitence they cried unto Jehovah, and he sent Jerubbaal (or Gideon), Bedan (or Barak), Jephthah, and Samuel and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies on every side and caused them to dwell in safety; but, notwithstanding all this, when they saw that Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, came against them, they said, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us," when God was their King.

Remember the many times Samuel reminded them of this declaration and this sin. He solemnly impressed upon them on every occasion that they had rejected God.

Should not faithful preachers now solemnly and constantly remind people of the fact that to turn away from God's blood-sealed commandments and order of things is to reject him? Because of God's faithfulness and of all that he had done, these Israelites owed it to him to trust in him as King and in his government and means as all-sufficient. Many now do not trust God's gospel, his church, his means, and his ways as all-sufficient.

Since the people would have a king, even to the rejection of God, Samuel said: "Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have asked for: and, behold, Jehovah hath set a king over you." The king had been selected and anointed and the kingdom had been confirmed.

Although they had sinned in asking for a king, God promised, upon their faithful obedience to him in the future, to overrule the kingdom to their good, even when it resulted in their chastisement. But if they should not obey God and should rebel against his commandments, his hand would be against them, as it had been against their fathers.

God confirmed that which Samuel had said and the great sin of the people by the miracle of sending rain and thunder during "wheat harvest," or on a clear and serene day.

III. The People Requested Samuel to Pray for Them.

19-22. Realizing now their sin in asking for a king, together with their other sins, in the power and presence of God, they feared his righteousness and his justice and requested Samuel to pray for them.

They had been brought also to a confession of their sin in asking for a king, and of all their sins: "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king."

"Is it not strange that they did not now attempt to repair their fault? They might have done it, but they did not; they acknowledged their sin, but did not put it away. This is the general way of mankind. 'God help us, we are all sinners,' is the general language of the people; but though to be a sinner is to be in the most solemn and awful circumstances, yet they are contented to bear the character, heedless of the consequences." (Clarke.) To say, "I know I do wrong," without trying to amend one's ways, is useless. Pharaoh requested Moses to "entreat Jehovah" that the plagues might cease (Ex. 9: 28), but Pharaoh continued in hardness of heart.

Samuel prayed for the people on different occasions when they were in great distress or when they had sinned. (See 1 Sam. 5: 7; 8: 6; 15: 11.) Samuel is placed in the Bible among those who have the greatest power with God in prayer. (See Ps. 99: 6; Jer. 15: 1.)

"And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not." When people realize their dependence upon God, fear him, tremble at his word (Ez. 9: 4; 10: 3; Isa. 66: 2, 5), and approach him with reverence and awe, then he says: "Fear not."

"Ye have indeed done all this evil." Although they had sinned, God would still bless them if they would from that time on continue to obey him and "turn not aside from following" him, "but serve" him with all the heart. This service must be sincere and hearty—with the whole heart. They must not "go after vain things [idols, or the "nothings"] which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain."

"For Jehovah will not forsake his people," upon the condition that they continue now to obey him and turn not after these "vain things." Although they had sinned and deserved to be cast off, yet God was merciful; and if they would obey him, he would not forsake them "for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself." On this point read the pleading of Moses. (Ex. 32: 7-14; Num. 14: 13-26.)

There is much strength and consolation in being "a people unto" God, with full purpose of heart to serve him. (See Tit. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 2: 9, 10.)

IV. Samuel's Promise to Pray for Them.

23. "Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you." God was merciful and would bless them upon the conditions described above; and Samuel, therefore, would pray for them as a servant of God. They had asked him (verse 19) to pray for them, and he said he would do so. He said, too, that it would be a sin against God for him not to do so.

When we see men go wrong to-day, and especially the church, do we not sin against God in failing to pray for them? There would be more peace and harmony in the church now—and, therefore, less division over untaught things—if more people would pray for the good and unity of the church. God teaches us to pray "for all men" (1 Tim. 2: 1-4); Christ prayed for his enemies.

Samuel promised to do two things for them—to pray for them and

to instruct them "in the good and the right way." These two things—(1) to pray and (2) to walk "in the good and the right way"—were necessary then; they are necessary now. We must pray and obey God; obey God and pray. It was "the right way" because it was God's way (his way is eternally right); it was "good" because God's way always brings good to those who walk in it.

V. Samuel, the People's Friend Forever.

Samuel was still their teacher, if not their judge. He was rejected in a sense, but he still loved the people and sought their good. He did not wish to see them go to ruin because they had done so wickedly; he did not give them up, or turn from them, so long as there was any hope of doing them any good and turning them back to God. Let us also learn a lesson from this.

Samuel was a most remarkable character. He did not hesitate to tell the people that they had sinned and had rejected God. He did not curry favor with them. He loved them, prayed for them, and taught them all his life. Notwithstanding they unanimously—with all the "intelligent," "leading," and "brainy" men, except Samuel, on one side—thought it best to have a king, yet they knew Samuel was their friend, and, after all, was the purest, most faithful, and most loyal man among them. They sought his help in trouble, and even the God-forsaken king, in utter despair, would call him up from the grave seeking his guidance. (1 Sam. 28: 8-25.)

People to-day cannot fail to realize who love the church and its peace, who seek its greatest good, who are most faithful and most loyal, and who pray and work for the maintenance of God's order of things. Such true and faithful men never fail to show wherein God has been rejected and the enormity of the sin of rejecting him, and they never fail to teach "the good and the right way," praying God for all.

To be always the same for truth and right, regardless of who goes wrong, is the principle which always guides and governs true and godly men.

VI. What Is It to Fear Jehovah?

24. To "fear Jehovah" is to respect and reverence him. (See Heb. 12: 28.) "And serve him in truth with all your heart"—that is, serve him truly, sincerely, and honestly, with all the powers of the inner man enlisted and engaged. People cannot serve God "in truth" unless they do his will.

"For consider how great things he hath done for you." Samuel had often reminded them of what God had done for them. After he had saved them from Egypt and had saved them all along from their enemies, they seemed to forget it all and rejected him in asking for a king; now Samuel would have them to nevermore forget what God had done for them. For this reason they were under great and lasting obligations to serve God. "He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen." (Deut. 10: 21.) For the same reason we should love and obey God. (See Rom. 2: 4-11; 12: 1, 2; 2 Cor. 5: 14; 1 John 4: 19.)

25. This declaration goes to show still further that God could not spare and save them in sin and rebellion. In Joshua's farewell address he placed these same principles and conditions before the people (Josh. 24: 20); so did Moses (Deut. 28).

Truly it has been said: "Never was a people more fully warned, and never did a people profit less by the warning." All this is admonition and warning to us.

Both the kingdom and the king were "consumed" because they did not heed this warning and walk "in the good and the right way."

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Can the teachers rehearse the facts of Samuel's life up to this lesson?
How did Saul show his ability and worthiness to rule the people?
To what place did Samuel call the people?
State all the facts that you have learned about Gilgal.
- 1, 2 Of what did Samuel first remind the people?
Why is this called Samuel's farewell address?
How long had he served them?
What did he mean by this reference to his sons?
- 3-5 What did he say he had not done during his life as judge?
What response did the people make?
Upon whom did he call as witnesses?
What does Samuel next recount?
What had God done for them?
But what did they say when the Ammonites came against them?
How often did Samuel tell the people of this sin?
What should faithful servants of God do to-day?
What did Samuel tell them to behold?
What did Samuel say they should do?
If they did this, what would follow?
What would be against them if they should fail to obey God?
Why were all these things written?
What miracle did God perform?
Why did Samuel call upon God to do this?
- 19-22 What did the people fear?
What did they confess?
What did they ask Samuel to do?
What did they not put away?
What custom have many about confessing their wrongdoing?
When did Samuel at other times pray for the people?
What does God say about Samuel as an intercessor?
What did Samuel say to the people?
When does God show his mercy?
Upon what conditions would God still bless them?
What had it pleased God to make of them?
For the sake of what would he not forsake them?
For what reason did Moses ask God to spare the people?
Upon what conditions would God even bless them for his name's sake?
- 23 What two things did Samuel say he would do for them?
Against whom would it be a sin for Samuel not to pray for them?
What two things are always necessary?
Why did Samuel call it "the good and the right way?"
What was the condition of Samuel's heart toward the people?
How long did Samuel work with them?
What lesson should this teach us?
- 24 What is it to "fear Jehovah?"
What is it to "serve him in truth with all your heart?"
Why should they thus serve God?
- 25 What other men warned the people as did Samuel?
When did they do so?
What became of the king and, finally, the kingdom?

In planting love for others,
Love's flowers for us are grown.
God is not mocked; the harvest is
Whatso'er is sown.

(Selected.)

LESSON III.—JULY 17.

SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID.

1 Sam. 16: 1-13.

1 And Jehovah said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And Jehovah said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah.

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which Jehovah spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice unto Jehovah: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely Jehovah's anointed is before him.

7 But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath Jehovah chosen this.

10 And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Jehovah hath not chosen thee.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.*” (1 Tim. 4: 12.)

TIME.—Uncertain, about B.C. 1063.

PLACE.—Bethlehem.

PERSONS.—Samuel, Jesse and his sons, especially David.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 3: 1-6.

HOME READING.—

- July 11. M. Jehovah Chooses David as King. (Ps. 89: 19-37.)
- July 12. T. Samuel Anoints David. (1 Sam. 16: 1-13.)
- July 13. W. My Servant David. (Ezek. 34: 20-31.)
- July 14. T. The Ministry of Music. (1 Sam. 16: 14-23.)
- July 15. F. Christ's Kingdom Foretold. (Isa. 11: 1-10.)
- July 16. S. Consecration of Youth. (2 Tim. 2: 14-26.)
- July 17. S. Loving Jehovah's Law. (Prov. 3: 1-6.)

INTRODUCTION TO THIS LESSON.

A Quotation from Brother Lipscomb.

For an introduction we cannot do better than to quote the following from Brother Lipscomb:

"God first selected Saul, a man of fine bodily appearance and great strength, and, withal, a brave and courageous man, modest and unassuming, to begin with. He soon showed that he could not bear elevation. He became uplifted in heart, proud and presumptuous in spirit, and set aside the commandments of God and substituted what he thought was best.

"Next, God selected David, a man of strong faith and courage and a man loyal to God in heart. No higher exhibits of faith and courage can be found than David gave on several occasions; yet David, by his exaltation and power, was led into such sin that God said to him: 'Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.' (2 Sam. 12: 10.) The course of David, the king, brought perpetual war and divided the children of Israel into two warring factions, making both a prey to the enemies of God. While David built the kingdom up in strength and power and brought present earthly greatness, he sowed the seeds of division and discord that brought weakness and destruction. It did not prepare the people to be a blessing to man, nor did it fit the children of Israel to receive the blessing of God.

"After David, and while the kingdom was yet united, God raised up Solomon, who was noted for his earthly wisdom and learning. He increased still the grandeur of the kingdom, but did not bring the people to worship God; on the contrary, by his example he led them into idolatry and prepared them for the division and strife that followed.

"After Solomon's time, a nation divided against itself, that could not stand, lingered out an existence through the reigns of a number of kings—some good, some bad; some fitted to receive the blessing of God, others calling down his wrath; but, as a whole, leading Israel farther and farther from God, fitting it less and less to be a blessing to the world, until God, who had given Israel a king in his anger, took him away in his wrath. Hosea (13: 9-11), speaking of this, says: 'It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help. Where now is thy king, that he may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath.'

"The kings brought Israel to ruin. None of them did more toward this than David and Solomon, who, while they brought the nation to the highest point of earthly power and greatness, sowed the seeds of pride, discord, and destruction.

"The kingly power lasted in Israel from about B.C. 1100 until about B.C. 400—about seven hundred years. They were no better fitted for being blessed of God or being a blessing to the world at the close of the ministry of the kings than they were at the beginning, save that

they had run the course of the experiment, had proved the folly of their own wisdom, and had exhausted the efforts of human ingenuity in seeking good by the wisdom of the world. This was something gained.

"During the remaining four hundred years, without an earthly head, they were unknown as a power in the world; but, without observation or outward show, they were being turned from idolatry and were learning to trust God as their only King and Lord. Under this discipline they were prepared to receive the forerunner, John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

It is strange that, with all this before them, the professed disciples of Christ should turn away from the all-sufficient, blood-bought, and Spirit-filled church of God to the experiments and ultimate failures of worldly wisdom manifested in the various human religious institutions of to-day.

The church stands out before the world as a manifestation of God's wisdom. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3: 10, 11.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Samuel Forbidden to Mourn Longer for Saul.

1. After Samuel and Saul separated at Gilgal, "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; for Samuel mourned for Saul: and Jehovah repented that he had made Saul king over Israel." (1 Sam. 15: 35.) "Samuel mourned for Saul" because he had anointed Saul, because he had counseled him, because he had been to him as a father, and because he was interested in the welfare of the nation. Saul's downfall greatly grieved Samuel. God forbade that Samuel should mourn any longer for Saul, for the reason that God had rejected him. When Nadab and Abihu sinned and were destroyed, God forbade that their father and brothers should show any signs of grief. (Lev. 10: 1-7.) When God rejects a character, all his loyal servants must join in that rejection—a lesson most difficult for many to practice.

II. Samuel Commanded to Anoint One of Jesse's Sons.

God instructed Samuel to fill his horn with oil and go "to Jesse the Bethlehemite," saying: "For I have provided me a king among his sons." Horns were then used for drinking vessels and were carried by people making journeys. The "oil" of verse 1 was probably the anointing oil described in Ex. 30: 22-25.

2. To anoint a rival king would arouse Saul's jealousy and anger; hence, Samuel said: "How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me." Then God told him to "take a heifer, . . . and say, I am come to sacrifice to Jehovah." The sacrifice was made in connection with the anointing and in order that the people might worship God; and

of a beautiful countenance [the margin says, "fair of eyes"], and goodly to look upon."

Somewhat after this manner Joseph and Moses are described. (Gen. 39: 6; Ex. 2: 2; Acts 7: 20.) David at this time was young, for Saul later on called him "a youth" (1 Sam. 17: 33); but he was active and strong, for he slew, single-handed, a lion and a bear (verses 34-36), and said his arms did "bend a bow of brass" (2 Sam. 22: 35). When he appeared, the Lord said: "Arise, anoint him; for this is he."

From the flocks David was taken to be the shepherd of God's people, and from the manger came forth "the Shepherd and Bishop" of our souls.

V. David Anointed.

13. Fulfilling his mission, and according to God's command in the preceding verse, Samuel "took the horn of oil, and anointed him [David] in the midst of his brethren," all of whom had been rejected by the Lord as unprepared in heart to be king. This anointing was doubtless done privately, as in Saul's case. The intention was not to proclaim it to the world yet. This assured David that God was pleased with him and had honored him in making him "the Lord's anointed." In this particular he represented the Lord on earth among the people.

As in the case of Saul, so in David's case, as soon as he was anointed, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. "The Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward." David was not always under the influence of the Spirit, but the Spirit was with him "from that day forward." The Spirit was not with Saul, for "the Spirit of Jehovah departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from Jehovah troubled him." (1 Sam. 16: 14.) The Spirit gave David wisdom and guided him to do the things which in his surroundings were best. The Spirit did not protect him from temptation and sin, as his after life shows.

God never miraculously endowed men with the Spirit to shield them from temptation and sin. Every one must overcome these, as Paul brought his body, with its passions, under. (1 Cor. 9: 26, 27.) The Spirit departed from Saul because he refused to be guided by the Spirit.

When his mission had been performed, "Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah."

The remainder of the chapter shows how David was introduced into Saul's family.

This lesson is only the beginning of David's eventful life. The following six lessons give much of David's experience with Saul, his sins and sorrows, and penitence; but much of his eventful life we have not space to study in these lessons.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Why did God select Saul as king?

Why did he reject Saul?

Who was selected next?

Mention here some good traits in David's character.

- Why did God say that the sword should never depart from his house?
 What did David's course bring upon the nation?
 Who followed David as king?
 What did he promote?
 Into what sins did he lead the nation?
 How long was Israel ruled by the kings?
 What was the general character of these kings?
 What did God finally say as recorded in Hos. 13: 9-11?
 How long, then, did the Israelites continue without a king?
 With their kings, were they any greater blessing to the world?
 For whom were they prepared, although they continued so long without a king?
 What lesson concerning the church and God's wisdom should all this teach us?
 What to-day is a manifestation of God's wisdom?
- 1 Why did God forbid Samuel's mourning longer for Saul?
 What did God direct Samuel to do?
 - 2 Why did Samuel fear to do this?
 - 3 How did God direct Samuel to manage this?
 Why was not this practicing deception?
 What did God promise to further show to Samuel?
 - 4 What is the meaning of "Bethlehem"?
 Where was it situated?
 Relate what occurred there.
 What was it originally called?
 Who were the elders of a city?
 How old was Jesse?
 What effect did Samuel's coming have upon these elders?
 - 5 What reply did Samuel make?
 What did he tell them to do?
 What was done in sanctifying themselves?
 What preparation is now necessary to worship God acceptably?
 - 6 Who first passed before Samuel?
 Why did Samuel think he was the one to anoint?
 - 7 What did God say to Samuel?
 What in regard to the heart is frequently stated in the Bible?
 - 8 Who came before Samuel next?
 - 9 Who, next?
 For what one thing only were these men rejected?
 By what other names is Shammah called?
 For what were two of his sons noted?
 - 10 How many sons had Jesse?
 How many daughters?
 What leads us to think that Jesse must have known Samuel's mission?
 - 11 What did Samuel direct Jesse to do?
 What would they not do until David should come?
 - 12 Give David's personal appearance.
 What was his age?
 What indicates his physical strength and courage?
 - 13 Why was this anointing done at this time?
 What then came upon David?
 In what sense was the Spirit upon David from that day forward?
 Why did the Spirit depart from Saul?
 What did the Spirit do for David?
 What did the Spirit not do for him?
 What did Samuel then do?
 How was David introduced into Saul's family?

Just to be tender; just to be true;
 Just to be glad the whole day through;
 Just to be merciful; just to be mild;
 Just to be trustful as a child;
 Just to be gentle and kind and sweet;
 Just to be helpful, with willing feet;
 Just to be cheery when things go wrong;
 Just to drive sadness away with a song—
 Whether the hour is dark or bright,
 Just to be loyal to God and right. (Selected.)

LESSON IV.—JULY 24.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

1 Sam. 17: 31-51.

31 And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him.

32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant was keeping his father's sheep; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock,

35 I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant smote both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 And David said, Jehovah that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and Jehovah shall be with thee.

38 And Saul clad David with his apparel, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head, and he clad him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his apparel, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his wallet; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and withal of a fair countenance.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the birds of the heavens, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

46 This day will Jehovah deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from off thee; and I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day unto the birds of the heavens, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 And that all this assembly may know that Jehovah saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is Jehovah's, and he will give you into our hand.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

51 Then David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Jehovah is my light and my salvation; in shall I fear?"* (Ps. 27: 1.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1063; the time is uncertain.

PLACE.—Valley of Elah.

PERSONS.—David and Goliath.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 27: 1-5.

HOME READING.—

- July 18. M. David and Goliath. (1 Sam. 17: 31-40.)
- July 19. T. A Victory of Faith. (1 Sam. 17: 41-51.)
- July 20. W. A Prayer for Defense. (Ps. 54: 1-7.)
- July 21. T. A Prayer for Deliverance. (2 Kings 19: 14-19.)
- July 22. F. God's Deliverance. (Ps. 44: 1-8.)
- July 23. S. Jesus and the Tempter. (Matt. 4: 1-11.)
- July 24. S. Fearless Trust in Jehovah. (Ps. 27: 1-5.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

See on the map the land of the Philistines.

"The valley of Elah" was about fourteen or fifteen miles southwest from Jerusalem and about nine or ten miles the same direction from Bethlehem. It extended from the hills in western Judah northwesterly into the Philistine country.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Study the entire chapter.

"There is some confusion in the order of events narrated in the history of David, but this arises largely from the fact that the Scriptures do not attempt a regular detail of the events in the order of occurrence. But one line is followed up until the end is reached; then it turns back, begins another, and follows it up. It is pretty clear that the events told in chapter 17 did not follow those of chapter 16. Some think the two chapters have become transposed in position, but this supposition is not necessary. A line of life is followed up in chapter 16, then the narrator turns back in time and tells the happenings of chapter 17." (Lipscomb.)

"There was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul" (1 Sam. 14: 52), and the events of this lesson occurred during these wars.

The Philistines were encamped at Ephes-dammim, "between Socoh and Azekah," on the western side of the valley of Elah; the Israelites were encamped on the eastern side of this valley, with still another valley, or ravine, between the two armies. (1 Sam. 17: 1-3.) The nearest Philistine city was Gath, not far to the west.

The champion of the Philistines was "Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was clad with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head

weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and his shield-bearer went before him." (Verses 4-7.) Goliath was one of a family of giants. (See 2 Sam. 21: 15-22; 1 Chron. 20: 4-8. His height was about nine feet and eight inches, counting eighteen inches for a cubit and eight inches for a span; his coat of mail has been reckoned to weigh about one hundred and fifty-seven pounds avoirdupois; and his spear's head weighed about nineteen pounds. The whole armor has been estimated to weigh over two hundred and seventy pounds.

As the two armies were thus opposite each other, this giant, thus clad in his armor, stepped out and challenged the army of Israel to settle the matter by single combat—to select one to fight him—saying: "If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us." He was bold and defiant, and said: "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." This filled Saul and the Israelites with dismay and great fear. (Verses 8-11.) Goliath kept this up, presenting himself morning and evening, for forty days. (Verse 16.)

During this forty days Jesse sent David to the camp to inquire after his three brothers who had followed Saul to the battle and to carry to them and to the captain of their thousand a present of food. David still watched his father's sheep, although he had been anointed, as stated in our last lesson; and he "went to and fro from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem." (Verse 15.)

David, sent on this mission, "left the sheep with a keeper" and went early in the morning to the camp. He left that which he carried with the baggage master in camp and "ran to the army [on the battle ground], and came and saluted his brethren."

While he talked with them, Goliath came out and repeated his challenge. David heard him and saw how all the army of Israel "fled from him, and were sore afraid." The soldiers asked David if he had seen this giant, and stated that he came out to defy the army of Israel; they also rehearsed to David the promise that Saul had made to any one who would fight and kill this giant.

From David's question it appears that he felt ashamed and humiliated that one should have to be thus hired to fight the Lord's battle: "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (Verses 12-27.) It is a shame now that people should seek pay for doing right. It is a shame that one should have to be hired to preach the gospel. One should be moved to preach, to sing, and to obey God in every way as was David to fight the Lord's battle.

To David, Goliath had reproached God; and faith in God and the power of his cause and the desire to take away this reproach, and not worldly aggrandizement, prompted him to declare at once his readiness to fight the Philistine champion.

This was a reproof to David's brothers for lack of faith and courage, and Eliab felt it; for his "anger was kindled against David, and he said [contemptuously], Why art thou come down? and with whom has thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down that thou

mightest see the battle. And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause? And he turned away from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner." (Verses 28-30.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. David Offered to Fight Goliath.

31-37. What David said was rehearsed to Saul, "and he sent for him." David said: "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Saul said: "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." To assure Saul that he was able, David related how he had slain both a lion and a bear and had rescued the lambs they had carried away, adding: "And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." David depended upon God and realized by the Spirit of God, which he possessed, that God would deliver him. "And Saul said unto David, Go, and Jehovah shall be with thee."

II. David Could Not Fight in Saul's Armor.

38. This act of David seemed rash to Saul, and he had but little confidence, it seems, in David's ability to slay Goliath; yet if David would go, Saul clad him in his own armor. Saul's armor was similar to that of Goliath, except in weight. Worldly wisdom suggested that David should bear such armor as the giant whom he proposed to fight.

39. David put Saul's armor on and tried to go; but he had not sufficient confidence in this, "for he had not proved it." He was unaccustomed to this armor, which could be used only by practice and skill. He discovered that it would be a hindrance rather than a help; so he said to Saul, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them;" and he "put them off." It is worthy of note that, moved by the Spirit of God, David realized that he could not fight the Lord's battle with weapons made by human wisdom and skill. Human wisdom suggested these as the only possible means of success, but God's wisdom selected something else. Let these represent human wisdom and skill, human devices and plans. These David laid aside to fight the Lord's battle.

III. David's Armor, Saul's Armor.

40. "His staff" was doubtless the one he brought from home—his shepherd's crook. As he crossed the brook which flowed in the valley between the armies, he selected five smooth stones and put them in his "wallet," or "shepherd's bag;" and, with his sling in his hand, "he drew near to the Philistine." Not human skill and wisdom, but faith in God, moved him—a tender, ruddy youth—to go thus against this giant. The weapons which he carried seemed wholly unfitted to the end to be accomplished; yet, moved by the Spirit, he went to conquer. God's way and means now revealed by the Holy Spirit seem to many worldly-wise people of the church to be inadequate to accomplish his

purpose; hence, they are trying to fight the Lord's battles in Saul's armor.

41. As David approached the Philistine, the Philistine also "came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him." This man—Goliath's armor-bearer—bore the shield to ward off any strokes that might be made. Here is a marked contrast: The giant, clad in the armor above described, with a man bearing a shield, and a young, tender boy, with no armor-bearer and no weapons, save his staff and his sling. To human wisdom the giant must prevail and the boy must utterly perish.

42. The appearance of David has before been described. Here it is given again because it so filled the giant with disdain. Seeing David thus equipped, he raged with contempt.

43. "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods." Probably the giant had not yet seen David's sling. He said this in derision. David's weapons seemed to this self-reliant giant such as were suited to kill a dog, but not suited to contend against one clad as he was. The chief gods of the Philistines were Baal and Ashtoreth—male and female. This, then, as has been suggested, was a battle between Jehovah and idols.

44. The Philistine—haughty, self-confident, boastful, and disdainful—thinking there could be only one result of such an uneven conflict, said to David: "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the birds of the heavens, and to the beasts of the field." This meant that he would not only kill David, but that David would not be honored with a burial.

IV. The Issue Stated.

45. This verse states the issue. David said: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin." Upon these the Philistine relied for success. His confidence and trust were in these and in human strength. These were the most approved weapons of offense and defense that human wisdom up to that time had invented. "But I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." David trusted God and relied upon him. He brought no sword, javelin, or shield to this conflict and asked no protection, save the name of his God. He was expecting to slay this giant, not because of the superiority of his own physical strength and weapons of war, but because he trusted in God, whom the giant had defied. David knew that God would fight this battle and destroy this enemy. God always brings to naught and destroys those who array themselves against him and his cause. If those who claim to be God's people to-day would trust him and faithfully use his means with Davidlike confidence, he would give them the victory in every conflict against error and sin. The world stands, giantlike, clad in the overawing armor of human wisdom and with the terrible weapons—moral evils, social vices, political corruption, and millions of money—opposed to the church to-day. The way to successfully overcome all this is to fight it, like David, trusting in God, and not in human armor or wisdom—that is, not in human religious institutions organized to do the work that God has committed to the church. This is like fighting the devil with fire, or with his own weapons. Saul's armor was simi-

lar to Goliath's, but David discarded this. The only way now to overcome all enemies of the truth is to use God-ordained means.

46. David said that he would do to Goliath what Goliath had threatened to do to him: "I will smite thee, and take thy head from off thee; and [more would he do] I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day unto the birds of the heavens, and to the wild beasts of the earth." The motive which moved David and the purpose for which he fought was "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." This motive actuated Elijah (1 Kings 18: 36) and Hezekiah (2 Kings 19: 19). The armies of Israel had been filled with terror over the challenge of this uncircumcised Philistine, and none were willing to meet him; and this declaration of David, no doubt, was a reproof to them for their cowardice and lack of faith in God. From their cowardly course the nations of the earth would conclude that there was no God in Israel to fight their battles. David "fought God's battle in God's name, with God's approved weapons, and for God's glory and honor. Failure in such a combat would be God's failure, and such is impossible. He fought, too, with such weapons as showed to the world that God gave the victory." (Lipscomb.)

V. "The Battle Is Jehovah's."

47. Hence, David said: "And that all this assembly [the armies of Israel] may know that Jehovah saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is Jehovah's, and he will give you into our hand." Their conduct, contrasted with David's conduct, shows that the children of Israel had lost confidence in God and could not see how he could save them without such weapons as those borne by Goliath, and even mightier than these. Those who lack confidence in God do not see how God can, through his simple gospel and church, overcome sin and the denominationalism of to-day without denominational machinery or denominational weapons. The true servants of God have ever realized that God saves "not with sword and spear." So Hannah sung (1 Sam. 2: 1-10); so said Jonathan (1 Sam. 14: 6); so say the prophets (Hos. 1: 7; Zech. 4: 6); and Paul says: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness. . . . Wherefore let no one glory in men." (1 Cor. 3: 19-21.) David sought only the glory of God. The battle was God's battle, and David knew that God would give Goliath into his hands. The only way to be a true servant of God is to lose all sight of self and self-glory and seek only the accomplishment of God's purpose and glory.

48. After the utterance of these threats by the Philistine and these confident statements on the part of David, the Philistine drew near to fight David, and David ran toward the Philistine's army to meet him.

49. One stone from David's sling brought the giant to the ground. This stone was guided by the Lord; and it "sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth."

It must not be forgotten that while David could not use Saul's armor, he must use with all diligence the weapons that God had placed in his hands—that is, the ones that God approved. What God approves to-day must be diligently used. Such seems to men unfitted to accomplish the end, but God gives the victory.

50, 51. "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone; . . . there was no sword in the hand of David." This is stated to emphasize the fact that it was God that gave the victory. Then David took off Goliath's head with the giant's own sword; then the Philistines fled, pursued by the children of Israel. It has been truly suggested that many people will chase a foe when they will not meet an enemy. These facts may teach us many important lessons:

(1) That to fear God's enemies and to think his humble means are insufficient to accomplish his purposes is to distrust him.

(2) If we trust God and use diligently his approved means in fighting his battles, he will turn, as in the case of Goliath's sword, the many inventions of his enemies into means of their own destruction.

(3) We must not go beyond what is written and use means that God has not approved, yet we must not be idle and fail to use diligently what he has approved.

(4) We must fight the Lord's battles, not our own battles, and in the Lord's name and for his glory.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Describe the valley of Elah.

How do we account for the fact that the events in Bible history are not always related in the order of their occurrence?

For how long was there war, during this period, between the Philistines and the Israelites?

Where was the valley of Elah?

Give the relative positions of the two armies at the time of our lesson.

Who was the Philistines' champion?

Give his height.

Describe his armor.

Give the weight of his coat of mail and his spear's head.

What challenge and proposition did he make to the armies of Israel?

For how long and how often did he do this?

What was his position when he did this?

What effect did this have upon the Israelites?

For what purpose was David sent to the army at this time?

What shows the humility and faithfulness of David?

What did he see and hear while saluting his brethren?

What effect did this have upon David?

What did the men of Israel ask David?

What reply did David make?

What did he mean by this reply?

What did Eliah say to him?

What answer did David make to him?

31-37 What did David say to Saul?

What reply did Saul make?

What assurance did David give that he could kill Goliath?

Who would deliver the giant into his hand?

What did Saul then say?

38 What did Saul place upon David?

What would worldly wisdom suggest?

39 Why did David not use Saul's armor?

What may Saul's and Goliath's armor represent?

40 With what was David equipped?

What was his "staff"?

What was his "wallet"?

What moved him to thus make this attack?

What did his weapons seem?

What do God, the church, and the gospel now seem to many?

41 What did the Philistine do?

Who went before him?

Why did this man go before him?

42 With what was Goliath filled?

43 What did he say?

How did David's weapons seem to him?

By what did he curse David?

Between whom really was this battle?

44 Of what result was the Philistine confident?

What did he say that he would do with David?

45 With what did the Philistine come, and in what did he trust?

In what did David come?

Whom had Goliath defied, and how?

Why did David expect to slay him?

In whom and in what should we now trust?

- What does God always bring to naught?
 What stands opposed to the church to-day?
 With what armor and weapons is the world equipped?
 In what way only can the church overcome the world?
 What does human wisdom now suggest?
 46 What did David say that he would do to Goliath and with the Philistines?
 What was the motive which moved David to enter into this combat?
 Why had not the armies of Israel done this?
 In whose name and for whose honor did David fight this battle?
 How did David reprove the Israelites?
 47 What did he say that all the assembly should know?
 What shows that the Israelites had lost confidence in God?
- What now shows that many have lost confidence in God?
 What have God's true servants ever realized?
 Who have uttered the same sentiment?
 What alone did David seek?
 48 What did Goliath and David then do?
 49 What was the result?
 How many stones did David throw?
 Since David could not use Saul's armor, must he use any weapons at all?
 What means should we use to-day?
 50, 51 Why is it stated that David had no sword, but prevailed with a stone and a sling?
 How did David take off the giant's head?
 What did David do with the giant's armor and head?
 State clearly the different lessons that we should learn from this.

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
 Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
 I will believe the hand which never fails
 From seeming evil worketh good for me.
 And though I weep because those sails are tattered,
 Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered:
 "I trust in Thee."

I will not doubt, though all my prayers return
 Unanswered from the still, white realm above.
 I will believe it is an all-wise love
 Which has refused these things for which I yearn;
 And though at times I cannot keep from grieving,
 Yet the pure ardor of my fixed believing
 Undimmed shall burn.

I will not doubt, though sorrows fall like rain,
 And troubles swarm like bees about a hive;
 I will believe the heights for which I strive
 Are only reached by anguish and by pain;
 And though I groan and writhe beneath my crosses,
 I yet shall see through my severest losses
 The greater gain.

I will not doubt. Well anchored is this faith.
 Like some stanch ship, my soul braves every gale,
 So strong its courage that it will not quail
 To breast the mighty unknown sea of death.
 O, may I cry, though body parts with spirit,
 "I do not doubt," so listening worlds may hear it,
 With my last breath. (Selected.)

LESSON V.—JULY 31.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

1 Sam. 18: 1-4; 19: 1-7.

1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his apparel, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

1 And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should slay David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David.

2 And Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to slay thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself in the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and if I see aught, I will tell thee.

4 And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good:

5 For he put his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and Jehovah wrought a great victory for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As Jehovah liveth, he shall not be put to death.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as beforetime.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."* (Prov. 18: 24.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1063.

PLACE.—Gibeah of Saul.

PERSONS.—Saul, David, and Jonathan.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 15: 9-17.

HOME READING.—

July 25. M. David and Jonathan. (1 Sam. 18: 1-9.)

July 26. T. A Father's Love for His Son. (Gen. 44: 25-34.)

July 27. W. Wearing Friendship as a Mask. (1 Sam. 18: 12-21.)

July 28. T. The Test of Friendship. (1 Sam. 20: 12-23.)

July 29. F. Love Stronger than Death. (2 Sam. 9: 1-13.)

July 30. S. Love Characterized. (1 Cor. 13: 1-13.)

July 31. S. The Divine Friendship. (John 15: 9-17.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

"Gibeah of Saul." Gibeah was a town in the tribe of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem, the home and capital of Saul. It is the place of the shameful story of the Levite, which caused the almost extermination of the tribe of Benjamin. (See Judg. 19, 20, 21.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Continuing from the last verses of the last lesson, 1 Sam. 17: 55-58 states that "when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine," he asked Abner, "the captain of the host:" "Whose son is this youth?" Abner could not say, and Saul said: "Inquire thou whose son the stripping is." When David returned, Abner took him to Saul, "with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jonathan's Soul Was Knit with David's Soul.

18: 1-4. "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his apparel, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."

Jonathan was a most noble and worthy young man, but he thought David, in his heroism and undaunted courage and sublime reverence for God, more worthy of this apparel—even his sword and bow and girdle—than himself. Like attracts like. What is in one's own heart is shown by that which one admires in others. A thoroughly truthful, honest, upright man—a God-fearing man of sterling integrity—is attracted by and greatly admires men of like good qualities. There is such a thing as judging men by oneself. An unbounded and undying admiration for David sprang up at once in Jonathan's heart. His soul was knit to that of David, and he loved David "as his own soul."

As strange and beautiful as was the love of Jonathan for David, that cruel and diabolical plot, as we shall learn, was the result of the envy and hatred of Saul for him. A strange contrast between father and son!

The friendship of David and Jonathan has been proverbial and a model for the world ever since. It sprang up, as we have seen, when David, in the fear and glory of God, slew Goliath, and it continued undisturbed through the lives of each.

To love one "as his own soul" is expressive of the dearest and strongest friendship. (See Deut. 13: 6.) Of this friendship David sung over the death of Jonathan: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam. 1: 26.) Jonathan was courageous and trusted God always. He scaled the heights at Michmash and routed the Philistines because he relied upon God, saying: "For there is no restraint to Jehovah to save by many or by few." Jonathan recognized the worth and merit, the heroism and faith of David; David likewise admired the same traits in Jonathan.

The more wisely David acted and the more popular he became, the more jealous and envious Saul was of him and the more he hated him.

II. David Honored.

"And David went out [on military expeditions] whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely." He acted prudently, discreetly, humbly, and with good judgment. It was natural and right that Saul should promote David after his victory over Goliath and the Philistines, so he set David "over the men of war." The people and Saul's servants approved of this promotion.

III. David Envied.

After giving the facts recorded in chapter 18: 1-4, as above, the historian returns, beginning with verse 6, to the account of what happened on David's return "from the slaughter of the Philistine." It is not stated how much time was consumed by the armies of Israel in pursuing the Philistines after the death of Goliath and following up the advantages gained by the victory. When the army returned, "the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with timbrels, with joy, and with instruments of music." They "sang one to another [that is, alternately] as they played [that is, danced], and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." Saul had saved the Israelites at the beginning of his reign from the Ammonites (1 Sam. 11), the Philistines, and others (1 Sam. 14: 47, 48); but while Saul had done this, David had done more—he had saved Israel when Saul had failed. It is no wonder the people honored David, while they did not forget to honor Saul. This song to the praise of David spread and lived among the Israelites and was not soon forgotten by the Philistines. (1 Sam. 21: 11; 29: 5.) But "the saying" displeased Saul, and he became wroth that they placed David above him. His jealousy was aroused, and he said: "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?" Samuel had told Saul that God had taken the kingdom from him and had given it to a neighbor better than himself (1 Sam. 13: 14; 15: 28), and he doubtless began to suspect that David was that one. "Saul eyed David from that day and forward." He was suspicious, jealous, and envious. These evil passions soon drove Saul mad.

"On the morrow" after the women had celebrated David's triumph "an evil spirit from God came mightily upon" Saul, and "he prophesied in the midst of the house." The Spirit of God never departed from Saul, and this evil spirit never came upon him until he rebelled more than once against God. God never forsakes those who trust and obey him. This evil spirit was from God, because God permitted it to take possession of Saul, just as God sends "a working of error" that the rebellious may "believe a lie." (See 2 Thess. 2: 8-12.) God is not the author of error, but overrules it, as he does all things. He sent this evil spirit to Saul because Saul was a fit subject to be possessed by Satan. When Saul prophesied this time, he did not do that which he did when he prophesied under the Spirit of God. (1 Sam. 10: 11-13; 19: 23, 24.) The margin says he "raved." The prophets of Baal "prophesied," which embraced their gesticulations and prayers to their god. Saul must have performed some frantic gesticulations and prayed in madness.

IV. Saul's Attempts to Kill David.

All remember that David was first sent for by Saul to quiet this evil spirit with music. (See 1 Sam. 16: 14-23.) On this occasion he "played with his hand, as he did day by day;" but Saul, not being thus quieted this time, threw his spear at David, saying: "I will smite David even to the wall."

Jealousy cannot bear in its sight the object that arouses it. It leads to murder. There is nothing too low or mean for it and envy to do. The Bible everywhere warns against it. (See Gal. 5: 19-21; 1 Pet. 2: 1.)

David, on the alert, dodged Saul's spear and escaped. "Saul was afraid of David, because Jehovah was with him, and was departed from Saul." It is stated more than once that Saul "stood in awe of" David, and "was yet the more afraid" of him and was his "enemy continually." The more wisely David acted and the more he accomplished, the more Saul hated him. Saul saw in every act of David, David's prudence and wisdom; he saw that David grew in influence with the people and that God was with him; and he realized more and more his own weakness.

Fearing David and desiring his death, Saul removed him out of his sight and made him captain over a thousand men, hoping he would be slain in battle; but in courage and wisdom David led his men out to battle and returned in victory. Again it is stated that David acted "wisely in all his ways; and Jehovah was with him." While Saul stood in awe of David, hated and sought to kill him, "all Israel and Judah loved" him. They loved him for the very reasons for which Saul hated him—namely, because "he went out and came in before" the people wisely and successfully in fighting their battles and gaining their victories.

Failing in the scheme above, Saul hit upon another treacherous scheme to kill David. He first promised his elder daughter, Merab, in marriage to David upon condition, it seems, that he prove himself valiant to fight the Lord's battles, hoping the Philistines would slay him; but when the time came that Merab should have been given to David, she was given to another. Then, perceiving that his daughter, Michal, loved David, Saul promised her to him upon the condition that he would, as a dowry, slay a hundred Philistines, thinking that most certainly he would be killed in the attempt; but David slew two hundred Philistines, and Saul then gave him Michal; but he was still more afraid of David. Saul's wicked plans to take David's life always turned out to David's promotion and honor.

V. The Covenant Between David and Jonathan.

(1 Sam. 19: 1-7.)

19: 1-4. When all Saul's schemes up to this time to kill David had failed, he then said "to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should slay David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. And Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to slay thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself in the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: and I will go out

and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and if I see aught, I will tell thee."

5-7. Jonathan revealed to David Saul's order that he be slain. He arranged to bring about "in the morning" a conference between his father and David and, if possible, to effect a seeming reconciliation of Saul to David. He remonstrated with Saul that he should not sin against David, because David had not sinned against him; but, on the contrary, his works had been good toward Saul, "for he put his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and Jehovah wrought a great victory for all Israel." Saul saw this and rejoiced over it. Jonathan concluded by saying: "Wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?" This, for the present, had its influence upon Saul, and he swore: "As Jehovah liveth, he shall not be put to death."

Then "Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as beforetime."

Soon, however, another victory gained by David over the Philistines aroused again all the evil within Saul, and he sought to smite him "even to the wall with the spear;" but again David escaped, and the spear stuck in the wall.

Saul then sent messengers to watch David's house and to slay him the next morning; but Michal, his wife, let him down through a window and he escaped that night. David went to Samuel to Ramah "and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth."

Saul first sent messengers to Naioth to take David, but the Spirit of God came upon these messengers, and they prophesied instead of seizing David; he sent other messengers, and they prophesied; he sent still others, and they likewise prophesied; and then he himself went, and he prophesied; and they said: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Let it be said here that Saul and his messengers were not made any better by the Spirit of God coming upon them to cause them to prophesy.

David then "fled from Naioth" and came to Jonathan, and, like a true and brave man, said: "What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?" Jonathan assured him that he should not die; that his father kept nothing, small or great, from him; that he would not hide his intention to kill David from him; and that he knew it was not so that Saul still desired to take his life. David swore that since Saul knew that he had found favor in Jonathan's eyes, Saul would hide this from Jonathan, saying: "But truly as Jehovah liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death." Jonathan then said that he would do whatever David should request him.

David and Jonathan went out into the field together and made there a covenant. Jonathan called God to witness that when he had "sounded" his father, he would let David know if Saul intended good or evil toward him. Jonathan realized that David would succeed his father; and, without a single emotion of evil, he gladly conceded this honor to David. Jonathan requested David to show unto him "the loving-kindness of Jehovah" so long as Jonathan should live; and when he should die, not to cut off any of his house forever. This was the covenant

referred to above. Jonathan had David to swear to it again because of the love he had for David. (1 Sam. 20: 12-17.) David remembered this promise and protected Jonathan's family after Jonathan had been slain and he had become king. (See 2 Sam. 9.)

To test the matter, David proposed to be absent from the king's table on the morrow at the feast of the new moon (see Num. 10: 10; 28: 11-15), when he should not fail to be there; and when Saul should inquire about him, Jonathan should explain that he had asked leave to be at a yearly sacrifice for all his family at Bethlehem. If Saul should accept the explanation, then it would be well; but should he "be wroth," then Jonathan would know that evil was determined against him. On the third day, in the evening, David would have returned from Bethlehem and would hide himself in the field where Jonathan could report the result. According to the covenant between David and Jonathan, David further proposed that if there had been discovered in him any disloyalty to Saul or any scheming after the kingdom, Jonathan himself should slay him, and not take him to Saul. "And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee; for if I should at all know that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?"

Then an arrangement was made by which Jonathan could let David know in the field, where he would hide himself, if Saul should answer Jonathan roughly or otherwise, so that David would know what course to pursue. This arrangement is in 1 Sam. 20. (Read the entire chapter.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What and where was Gibeath of Saul?

When Saul saw David go forth after the Philistines, what question did he ask Abner?

How did Saul learn who David was?

What did David still have in his hand?

To what place did Saul take David?

18: 1-4 Who was Jonathan?

What sprang up between him and David?

How well did Jonathan love David?

What did Jonathan give to David?

What attracts men to each other or repels some from others?

Give expression of David's love for Jonathan.

How did David act?

To what position was David promoted?

To what now does the historian return?

Who went out to meet Saul and his army on their return?

How did they show their joy?

What is meant by singing one to another?

What is meant by "as they played?"

What did they sing?

To what extent did this song spread?

What had Saul done for Israel?

What had David done more than Saul?

How did this song affect Saul?

What did he say?

What is meant by his eyeing David?

What came upon Saul?

Why?

How can it be said that this evil spirit was from God?

In what condition must one be for an evil spirit to possess him?

For what purpose was David first sent for by Saul?

What is meant by Saul's prophesying in his house?

What then did David do?

What did Saul attempt to do?

What will envy do?

Can you quote any Scriptures against envy?

Are you jealous and envious?

How did David escape Saul's spear?

Why did Saul fear David?

What was the next effort Saul made to have David slain?

Why did the people love David?

Upon what other scheme did Saul next fall to have David killed?

19: 1-4 What more and more intensified Saul's determination to slay David?

Whom did he command to slay him?

5-7 What course did Jonathan pursue here?

"The cave of Adullam" was fourteen or fifteen miles southwest from Jerusalem, in the vale of Elah, where David slew Goliath.

"The wilderness of Ziph" was about four miles southeast of Hebron and about twenty miles south of Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Study the chapters intervening between our last lesson and this one.

When David and Jonathan separated, as stated in our last lesson, David went "to Nob to Ahimelech the priest."

At Nob, David told a falsehood in his fear and haste to escape from Saul, ate the showbread to which Jesus referred (Matt. 12: 3, 4), and received the sword of Goliath.

David went from Nob to Gath, of the Philistines, the home of Goliath. David feared the Philistines less than he feared Saul. Soon after his arrival there, the Philistines recognized him as the one who slew Goliath and of whom the women sung: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." When David knew of this, he became "sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath" and feigned himself mad in order to escape unhurt. Having thus escaped from Gath, David went "to the cave of Adullam."

Here his parents and brethren joined him; there also went to him "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented; . . . and he became captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men." Later on this number increased to six hundred. (1 Sam. 25: 13; 27: 2.)

David went from Adullam to Mizpeh of Moab and left his parents in the care of the king of Moab until he should know what God would do with him, or how, in the providence of God, this struggle would end.

By the direction of the prophet Gad, David departed from Moab, returned to the land of Jehovah, "and came into the forest of Hereth." From this place, by the direction of God, David fought the Philistines at Keilah, "and slew them with a great slaughter," but saved the inhabitants.

There were those always ready to report to Saul the movements of David.

Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, the priest, fled to David at Keilah and related that Doeg had reported to Saul David's conduct at Nob, and that, accusing Ahimelech of conspiring with David, Saul had killed eighty-five priests, besides other men and the women and children. Some one reported to Saul that David was at Keilah, and Saul made ready to go with an army down to Keilah; but upon learning that David had left, he did not go.

David went from Keilah into the wilderness of Ziph.

"And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand."

While in the wood of this wilderness of Ziph, Jonathan and David met for the last time, it seems, when they renewed the covenant which was between them, and Jonathan assured David that Saul would not hurt him and that he would one day be king. The Ziphites reported to Saul that David was in this wood, "in the hill of Hachilah," and Saul went to take him; but David and his men removed to the wilderness of Maon. When Saul learned this, he pursued David thither.

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QUESTIONS.

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Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Gibeah of Saul?
When Saul saw David go forth after the Philistines, what question did he ask Abner?
How did Saul learn who David was?
What did David still have in his hand?
To what place did Saul take David?
18: 1-4 Who was Jonathan?
What sprang up between him and David?
How well did Jonathan love David?
What did Jonathan give to David?
What attracts men to each other or repels some from others?
Give expression of David's love for Jonathan.
How did David act?
To what position was David promoted?
To what now does the historian return?
Who went out to meet Saul and his army on their return?
How did they show their joy?
What is meant by singing one to another?
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To what extent did this song spread?</p> | <p>What had Saul done for Israel?
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In what condition must one be for an evil spirit to possess him?
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Can you quote any Scriptures against envy?
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DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 8: 31-39.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|---------------------------|---------------------|
| August 1. | M. | Saul Pursuing David. | (1 Sam. 26: 1-6.) |
| August 2. | T. | David Spares Saul. | (1 Sam. 26: 7-14.) |
| August 3. | W. | Loving the Enemy. | (Luke 6: 27-36.) |
| August 4. | T. | Proper Regard for Rulers. | (Rom. 13: 1-10.) |
| August 5. | F. | Converting the Enemy. | (1 Sam. 26: 17-25.) |
| August 6. | S. | Safe in God's Care. | (Ps. 91: 1-16.) |
| August 7. | S. | If God be for Us. | (Rom. 8: 31-39.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Nob was not far from Jerusalem. (Isa. 10: 32.) Nob was then the religious capital and Gibeah of Saul was the political capital of the nation. The tabernacle and high priests were there.

What did Saul swear to Jonathan?
 What soon aroused Saul's jealousy again?
 How did he try this time to slay David?
 How did David escape?
 How did Saul next seek David's life?
 How did he escape this time?
 To whom did he go?
 Why could not Saul's messengers and Saul himself take David at Naioth?
 What did David then say to Jonathan?
 What reply did Jonathan make?

What promise did Jonathan here make?
 What did David propose as a way to test Saul in this matter?
 Where would David be found on the evening of "the third day?"
 If David had done Saul any wrong, what did he request Jonathan to do?
 What reply did Jonathan make to this?
 Into what place did David and Jonathan go?
 What covenant did Jonathan and David make?
 How did David treat Jonathan's son?

"The cave of Adullam" was fourteen or fifteen miles southwest from Jerusalem, in the vale of Elah, where David slew Goliath.

"The wilderness of Ziph" was about four miles southeast of Hebron and about twenty miles south of Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Study the chapters intervening between our last lesson and this one.

When David and Jonathan separated, as stated in our last lesson, David went "to Nob to Ahimelech the priest."

At Nob, David told a falsehood in his fear and haste to escape from Saul, ate the showbread to which Jesus referred (Matt. 12: 3, 4), and received the sword of Goliath.

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While in the wood of this wilderness of Ziph, Jonathan and David met for the last time, it seems, when they renewed the covenant which was between them, and Jonathan assured David that Saul would not hurt him and that he would one day be king. The Ziphites reported to Saul that David was in this wood, "in the hill of Hachilah," and Saul went to take him; but David and his men removed to the wilderness of Maon. When Saul learned this, he pursued David thither.

Saul and his men surrounded David and were almost ready to capture him, when news came to Saul that he should come in haste, because the Philistines had made a raid upon the country.

David then went "and dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi." This was just west of the Dead Sea. With three thousand men Saul returned to seek David. At this time David spared Saul's life in the cave of Engedi, when Saul, seemingly penitent, said to him: "Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rendered unto me good, whereas I have rendered unto thee evil. . . . I know that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand. Swear now therefore unto me by Jehovah, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house." Then "David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the stronghold." David was afraid to risk Saul.

Sparing Saul here is similar to the circumstance of our lesson, but is not the same.

At this time Samuel died, at a ripe old age, and was buried "in his house at Ramah" by "all Israel," who "lamented him."

"And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran." This was south of Ziph and Engedi.

Here David had his experience with Nabal, a rich man of folly; and when Nabal died, David married Abigail, Nabal's wife, a woman of remarkable wisdom and beauty. "David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they became both of them his wives. Now Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim."

Again the Ziphites reported to Saul where David was—that he was "in the hill of Hachilah, . . . before the desert;" and, ignoring all his former promises and resolutions not to hurt David, Saul again, with three thousand chosen men, went to take David. When David had learned through his spies "that Saul was come of a certainty," and the very place he had encamped, he went to the place and saw where Saul and Abner lay. A barricade was formed with the baggage wagons, and Saul lay within this, while the army lay around him. This made it more difficult and dangerous for David to approach him.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. David's Proposition and Refusal of Abishai's Request to Be Allowed to Slay Saul.

7. David proposed to go down to Saul's camp, and asked who would go with him. Abishai said he would go. When David and Abishai reached Saul's camp, they found him asleep within the barricade, with his "spear stuck in the ground at his head." David and Abishai crept sufficiently close to Saul to remove his spear and the cruse of water and to pin him to the earth with his own spear had David been disposed to kill him.

8. Abishai took this to be a sign that God had delivered Saul into David's hand, and desired to slay Saul. He said he would strike him only once, meaning that with one stroke of the spear he would pin Saul to the ground.

9. David forbade this, because Saul was God's anointed, and none could raise his hand against God's anointed and be guiltless. This David said also to his men in the cave of Engedi. (1 Sam. 24: 4-7.) God forbade that one should speak evil of a ruler of the people. (Ex. 22: 28; Acts 23: 5.)

10-12. David further said that Saul would come to his death in one of three ways—(1) God himself would smite Saul, (2) or Saul would die (3) or be slain in battle at the right time. So David told Abishai to take the spear and the cruse of water, and they would go. Neither Saul nor any of his soldiers knew that David and Abishai had been to the camp, "for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from Jehovah was fallen upon them." This was more than an ordinary sleep. "It is the same word which is used (Gen. 2: 21) to describe the sleep which God caused to fall upon Adam when he formed Eve out of his side." (Clarke.)

II. David's Victory Over Himself.

In resisting the temptation to slay Saul as these opportunities presented themselves and as his men urged him to do, David gained a greater victory over himself than he ever gained over an enemy. To treat one's enemies as God directs and to leave them with him is true wisdom.

III. The Conclusions.

13, 14. After David and Abishai returned, David called to the soldiers and to Abner, calling Abner in strongest irony a "valiant man," because he had allowed Saul's spear and cruse of water to be taken away, saying he was worthy of death because he had not guarded the king.

17. Saul recognized David's voice. David expressed himself as ready to submit to God's judgment, if it be Jehovah that stirred Saul up against him; but if men stirred Saul up against him, then the curse of God would rest upon them. If he had committed any sin worthy of death, he was ready to die in the presence of Jehovah; but Saul, pursuing him, was pursuing one as helpless as "a flea" or "a partridge in the mountains." (See also 1 Sam. 24: 14.)

21. Saul again acknowledged himself a fool and confessed his sin against David, as he had done several times before. Under the impulse of the moment, Saul was doubtless sincere and really thought then that he would never again seek to harm David. He was forced to see, as he expressed it, that his life was "precious" in David's eyes. He was compelled to see that David did not seek to harm him. David knew Saul too well to accept this invitation to return home. David then requested Saul to send one of his young men to come and get his spear. David again expressed himself as willing for God to settle this matter. He expected God's blessings, inasmuch as he was conscious of doing God's anointed no harm and was innocent of any sin in this particular.

A righteous man is willing to leave his cause with God.

David said that as Saul's life was "precious" in his sight, as had been time and again demonstrated, so his own life would be "precious" in God's eyes, and asked that God would deliver him out of all the tribulation which he was then suffering from Saul. He did

not request Saul to spare his life or to cease pursuing him; he left all with God. "Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail." If Saul was not sincere in thus blessing David, he no doubt realized that David would do great things and prevail. Saul was like many people to-day who for a moment, under good influences, think they will change their lives and realize that they should; but the good impulse gone, they are back at their sins as usual. This is not repentance. David could not risk Saul; so he "went his way, and Saul returned to his place." That Saul "returned to his place" goes to show that he was sincere for the moment in what he said to David. After this, David again went among the Philistines, where he remained a year and four months. (1 Sam. 27.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where did David go after he and Jonathan separated?
What was at Nob?
What falsehood did David tell at Nob?
What did he eat there, and what did he receive?
To what place did David go from Nob?
What did the Philistines say about him?
In what way did he effect his escape?
To what place did he then go?
Where was this cave of Adullam?
Who joined him there?
To what number did these increase?
To what place did David go from Adullam?
In whose care did he leave his parents?
To what land did he return?
By whose direction did he do this?
Whom did David then fight?
At what place?
What was the result of this battle?
Who fled to David while at Keilah?
What sad news did he carry concerning the priests at Nob?
Why did not Saul go to Keilah to seek David?
To what place did David go from Keilah?
Where was the wilderness of Ziph?
How constantly did Saul seek David?
Who delivered David out of Saul's hands?
Who met David for the last time in this wilderness?
What did the Ziphites do as regards David?
What did Saul do?
What prevented Saul's capturing David at this time?
To what place did David next go?
Where was this?

In what way did David spare Saul at Engedi?
What did Saul say?
What did he ask David to swear to him?
Who died at this time?
To what place did David then go?
Where was this?
Relate David's experience with Nabal.
Whom did David here marry?
What had become of Michal?
What report did the Ziphites again make to Saul?
What did Saul again do?
How did David learn Saul's exact position?
What did he then do and see?
7 What proposition did David make to two of his men?
Who accepted David's proposition?
At what time did they go?
What formed a barricade to protect Saul?
In what condition was Saul and his men?
Where was Saul's spear?
How close did David and Abishai get to Saul?
8 What did Abishai think, and what did he say to David?
What did he request David to allow him to do?
9 Why did David forbid this?
Relate the conversation which took place between David and his men on this point in the cave of Engedi.
What did God forbid to be done as regards a ruler of the people?
10-12 In one of what three different ways did David say that Saul would die?
What did David tell Abishai to take?
Why did not a single one awake?
13, 14 What question did David ask Abner?
What is the greatest victory?

- 17 State the facts in the conversation which then followed between David and Saul.
- 21 What did Saul then confess?
Was Saul sincere?
What did David do?
Why did David not accept Saul's invitation?
What did David then request Saul to do?

What will God render to every man?
What was David willing for God to do?
Why was David so willing for God to settle this matter?
Why did David think that his life would be preserved by the Lord?
What did Saul then say?
In what are many now like Saul?
Why would David not risk Saul?
To what place did David then go?

HEREAFTER

"Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." (John 13: 7.)

We do not know how blessings flow
From tears that follow laughter;
How Joy within her hand conceals
The stab that sorrow dumbly feels;
We do not know how blessings flow,
But we shall know hereafter.

We do not know how good will grow,
With Evil the ingrafter;
How, hidden in the briers of care,
The blossomed soul scents all the air;
We do not know how good will grow,
But we shall know hereafter.

We do not know how wind will blow,
With Love himself the waffer;
How from the clouds of pain they bring
Fall showers that feed joy's deathless spring;
We do not know how winds will blow,
But we shall know hereafter.

We do not know what Death will show
Of life that comes thereafter;
How all that we have hoped or willed
By wondrous Power will be fulfilled;
We do not know what Death will show,
But we shall know hereafter.

(Mary Alethea Woodward.)

LESSON VII.—AUGUST 14.

DAVID BRINGS THE ARK TO JERUSALEM.

2 Sam. 2: 3, 4; 5: 1-3; 6: 12-15.

3 And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.

4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, The men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul.

1 Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

2 In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel.

3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Jehovah: and they anointed David king over Israel.

12 And it was told king David, saying, Jehovah hath blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with joy.

13 And it was so, that, when they that bare the ark of Jehovah had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.

14 And David danced before Jehovah with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of Jehovah with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, thy holy temple."* (Ps. 65: 4.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1055.

PLACE.—Hebron.

PERSONS.—David and the men of Judah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 1: 8-12.

HOME READING.—

- August 8. M. The Cultivation of Reverence. (2 Sam. 6: 1-11.)
- August 9. T. David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 6: 12-19.)
- August 10. W. Piety in the Home. (Deut. 6: 1-9.)
- August 11. T. Religious Decorum. (1 Chron. 15: 1-3, 11-15.)
- August 12. F. God Enthroned Among the Nations. (Jer. 3: 11-18.)
- August 13. S. Jehovah Entering His Sanctuary. (Ps. 24: 1-10.)
- August 14. S. Worship in God's House. (Ps. 84: 1-10.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Hebron was south of Jerusalem, between Jerusalem and Beersheba, about twenty miles from each. "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." (Num. 13: 22.) It is one of the oldest cities in the world now in existence. In this respect it is a rival of Damascus. Its original name was "Kiriath-arba" (Judg. 1: 10)—the city of Arba, the father of Anak (Josh. 15: 13, 14). Abraham dwelt there and erected an altar to God. (Gen. 13: 18.) Isaac also dwelt there, and

there was the family dwelling place. (Gen. 23: 19, 20; 25: 8-10; 37: 27-29; 50: 12, 13.) The country around Hebron was the richest in the land of Judah. Near this city the spies cut the famous cluster of grapes which gave the name "Eshcol" to the valley. It was about the center of the land of Judah and was its capital.

"Kiriath-jearim" means "city of the woods," and was about eleven miles northwest from Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Show how the news of Saul's death affected David. (1 Sam. 31.) Having been made king over all Israel, David captured Jerusalem, called it "the city of David," and made it the seat of his government.

David increased his number of wives and concubines at Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 5: 13-16; 1 Chron. 3: 1-9.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

(2 Sam. 2: 1, 2.)

I. David Seeks Directions from God.

"And it came to pass after this"—after the battle on Mount Gilboa and the death of Jonathan and Saul—"David inquired of Jehovah"—doubtless through Abiathar, the high priest. (See 1 Sam. 23: 2-4, 9-12.) He sought the guidance of the Lord. One is always safe when he does the will of God and goes according to God's directions. We can now have no direct communication from God and can know that we are guided by the Lord only when we go according to his revealed will in the Bible. One who is faithful and loyal to God desires to do only God's will. David realized that since God was to give him the kingdom, God would direct him as to the steps he should take. "Commit thy way unto Jehovah; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." (Ps. 37: 5.) David fully realized this. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths." (Prov. 3: 6.)

"Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" David desired to do this first; and when the Lord told him to go, he then asked, "Whither shall I go up?"—that is, to which city? God said: "Unto Hebron."

"So David went up thither"—to Hebron, as God directed. At this time he had two wives—"Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite." We have learned how Abigail became David's wife. (1 Sam. 25.) Ahinoam was of Jezreel in Judah, and not the famous Jezreel at the head of the Jezreel Valley.

2 Sam. 2: 3, 4. At this time David had six hundred men. (1 Sam. 30: 9.) They removed with David from Ziklag to Hebron. This removal was wise and safe, because God directed it. David was well acquainted with the inhabitants of the southern end of Palestine. They knew his achievements, courage, and wisdom. Since exiled by Saul he had spent much of his time near Hebron.

East of the Jordan, at Mahanaim, Abner, Saul's general, was making preparation to hold the kingdom for Ish-bosheth, Saul's surviving son. (2 Sam. 2: 8-10.) Still, if God had directed David to go into the midst of his enemies, it would have been a wise move, because God directed it.

David and his men were no more to wander from place to place, but were to return to their homes and seek the peace of the country.

II. David Made King Over the Whole Nation.

2 Sam. 5: 1-3. Abner and Ish-bosheth dead, all the tribes of Israel went to David to Hebron to make him king over the whole nation. They had no hope of maintaining longer a separate kingdom. They gave three reasons for making him king: (1) "We are thy bone and thy flesh;" (2) even "when Saul was king" "thou leddest out and broughtest in Israel"—was their general; (3) "and Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel." (See 1 Sam. 25: 30.) "So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron." Verse 1 says "all the tribes of Israel." These tribes were represented by their elders. 1 Chron. 12: 23-37 gives the soldiers of the different tribes who went to Hebron to make David king. All did this "with a perfect heart." David made a covenant with them before Jehovah at Hebron.

"And they anointed David king over Israel." This event was celebrated with a three-days' feast. (1 Chron. 12: 38-40.) Three times David was anointed—(1) when Samuel anointed him (1 Sam. 16: 13); (2) when he was anointed king over Judah (2 Sam. 2: 4); and (3) when, in this lesson, he was anointed king over all Israel. As stated above, the last two anointings were the public choice—an inauguration by the people.

"David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years;" he reigned in Hebron seven years and six months over Judah, and in Jerusalem thirty-three years over all Israel. (Verses 4, 5.)

As an intervening lesson, let us study the following:

III. The Ark, the Tabernacle, the Temple, and Where God Meets with Us.

In order to learn all about removing the ark, read 1 Chron., chapters 13-16 and the references given in the lesson. This calls for the use of our Bibles. For the dimensions and descriptions of the ark, see Ex. 25: 10-22.

The pupils will be asked to give these dimensions; they will also be asked to describe the mercy seat, the cherubim, etc. What was the size of the ark in feet and inches, if a cubit was eighteen inches? What was placed in the ark? (See Deut. 10: 1-5; Heb. 9: 3-5.) What place in the tabernacle, or temple, did the ark occupy? (See Ex. 26: 31-34; Heb. 9: 3.) Where did God meet and commune with Moses? (See Ex. 25: 22.) The ark was called by the name of God. "Which is called by the Name, even the name of Jehovah of hosts that sitteth above the cherubim." (2 Sam. 6: 2.) "That is called by the Name." (1 Chron. 13: 6.) It was called "the ark of God" because it contained his law, because he sat enthroned above the overshadowing wings of the cherubim, and because there he met with and taught the people. (See Ex. 25: 22.) Where God writes his name he promises to meet with and to bless the people. (Ex. 20: 24.)

The overshadowing wings of the cherubim represented God's guidance and protecting care. This is called "the ark of the testimony."

God meets us now where he records his name. In the name of Jesus alone is salvation. (Acts 4: 12; 10: 43.) We must believe on his name. "In his name shall the Gentiles hope." (Matt. 12: 21.) Repentance and remission are preached in his name. (Luke 24: 47.) We are baptized in his name (Acts 2: 38) and into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28: 19). God's name is called upon his church. (1 Cor. 1: 2.) We pray in Christ's name. (John 14: 13, 14; 15: 16; 16: 23, 24, 26.) All we do, in word or in deed, must be done in his name. (Col. 3: 17.) We meet in his name. (Matt. 18: 20.) We glorify God in the name "Christian." (1 Pet. 4: 16.)

The high priest alone could go into the most holy place before the ark, and that only once a year. (Lev. 16: 11-34; Heb. 9: 7.) It is a very great and serious mistake to teach that the ark, the most holy place, and the holy place of the tabernacle, or temple, at Jerusalem have anything in common with houses of worship now or impress any truth concerning such houses. Those who so teach have studied the Bible to little profit. The holy place of the tabernacle, or temple, typified the church, or temple, of God now, and God is now in his house, or temple (see Matt. 18: 20; 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; 6: 19, 20; 1 Tim. 3: 15; Heb. 3: 4-6; 1 Pet. 2: 4, 5); while the most holy place typified heaven (Heb. 9: 8-10).

By referring to the Scriptures given, the following questions can be answered: Where was the tabernacle—and, therefore, the ark—located first after the children of Israel settled in the land of promise? (Josh. 18: 1.) It remained there through all the period of the judges until the time of Samuel. (1 Sam. 1: 3.) Where was Samuel brought up? (1 Sam. 1: 24; 3: 1.) Why was the ark removed from Shiloh? (1 Sam. 4.) Who captured it? Where did they place it? What befell Dagon? How were the people afflicted? (1 Sam. 5.) How long was the ark among the Philistines? How did they send it back? To whom did they send it? What befell the men of Beth-shemesh? To whom did they send messengers concerning the ark? (1 Sam. 6.) What did the men of Kiriath-jearim do? In whose house was the ark placed? Who was sanctified to keep it? (1 Sam. 7: 1, 2.)

IV. The Ark at Kiriath-jearim.

The ark was placed in the house of Abinadab, in Kiriath-jearim, after Samuel had become a prophet and before Saul was made king. If it remained there during Saul's reign of forty years (Acts 13: 21) and during David's seven-years-and-six-months' reign at Hebron and until he removed it to Jerusalem, it was there a long time. "And it came to pass, from the day that the ark abode in Kiriath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years; and all the house of Israel lamented after Jehovah." (1 Sam. 7: 2.) This probably refers to the time occupied by Samuel in reforming Israel—that is, the time of the events of this chapter—and not to the whole time the ark remained in the house of Abinadab. Because Nob (not far from Jerusalem) is called "the city of the priests" and because David ate the showbread there when he fled from Saul, some have thought the tabernacle was

there at that time; so it seems that it would be. Still, it is nowhere recorded that the ark was ever removed from Kiriath-jearim to Nob. If it was ever removed to Nob from Kiriath-jearim, it was returned to this place before David could have thence removed it to Jerusalem. There is no record that the ark was ever returned to the tabernacle after Eli's wicked sons carried it out to battle from Shiloh. It is stated, too, that they "sought not unto it in the days of Saul." (1 Chron. 13: 3.) Hence, it was not at Nob. It must have remained, then, all the while in the house of Abinadab, at Kiriath-jearim. The tabernacle was removed at some time to Gibeon. (1 Kings 3: 4; 1 Chron. 16: 29, 40; 2 Chron. 1: 3-5.)

V. David Prepares to Remove the Ark.

(2 Sam. 6: 1.)

David "gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand," and "consulted with the captains of thousands and of hundreds, even with every leader," concerning this matter of removing the ark. "If it seem good unto you, and if it be of Jehovah our God." David was wise in consulting the leaders—and, hence, all Israel—and was loyal to God in not desiring to remove the ark if God should not approve it. All the priests from all cities were invited to this gathering. "And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we sought not unto it in the days of Saul. . . . So David assembled all Israel together, from the Shihor the brook of Egypt even unto the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim"—from the southern extremity of the country to the northern extremity of the country. (See 1 Chron. 13: 1-5.) This was an important event, and it helped to unite the nation. "And David made him houses in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent." (1 Chron. 15: 1.)

VI. The First Attempt at Removing the Ark.

(Verses 2-5.)

David and "all Israel" went to Kiriath-jearim, "set the ark of God upon a new cart," and started with it. The Philistines sent it home on a new cart (1 Sam. 6: 7, 8); but they were heathens, not pretending to obey God, and knew no better. God permitted them to thus send it back, but he smote the men of Beth-shemesh with a great slaughter because they "looked into the ark of Jehovah." (Verses 17-19.) David, it seems to us, should have known better.

While it seems to us strange that David should have done this, it is stranger still that God's professed followers to-day, in the face of this example and others, will undertake to accomplish his purposes not by the use of his way and means, but, like David, upon their own "carts," or ways and means. They have their own "new carts" for carrying on the work of the church.

When the ark was made, God expressly said that it should be carried by hand, not hauled, and that only certain priests should carry it. The high priest and his sons were to wrap the ark in the veil of the screen first, then with a covering of sealskin,

and then with a cloth of blue, and put it in the staves, by which it was carried. Thus were the table, the altar of incense, the golden candlestick, etc., prepared for removing. Then the sons of Kohath came to bear it; but they were not to touch "the sanctuary," or holy things, "lest they die." They were not even to see it for a moment, lest they die. (See Num. 4: 1-20.) The Israelites presented to God six covered wagons and twelve oxen, which were given to the Levites—two wagons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon and four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari—for the purpose of hauling the tabernacle, etc. "But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none, because the service of the sanctuary belonged unto them; they bare it upon their shoulders." (See Num. 7: 3-9.)

Since the ark remained so long in the house of Abinadab, this law, it seems, was forgotten; still, this did not excuse the offense. It was a "new cart"—not defiled by human service; still, this was not God's law. When the ark was placed in the house of Abinadab, his son, Eleazer, was sanctified to keep it. It is not stated what had become of Abinadab. His sons, Uzzah and Ahio, "drove the new cart."

Eleazer was sanctified to keep the ark; and after David's failure and when he made the second effort to remove the ark, he said: "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath Jehovah chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him forever." He then called "the sons of Kohath," with the Levites, and said: "Sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel, unto the place that I have prepared for it." (See 1 Chron. 15: 2-15.) This implies that Uzzah and Ahio were not even sanctified for this service.

It was God's will for David to remove the ark to Jerusalem, but he violated God's law in these particulars—that is, in the way he undertook to do it. People now would have argued that it did not matter how he got the ark to Jerusalem, so he got it there.

"Ahio went before the ark." He would prevent the oxen from going too fast. Uzzah went behind to drive the oxen. David and all the thousands who had gathered for the purpose accompanied the ark and "played before Jehovah with all manner of instruments." They used the instruments here mentioned and others. This "playing" was "the dance," with which they at that time praised God.

VII. Uzzah Smitten.

(Verses 6, 7.)

As they proceeded, "the oxen stumbled." The ark was about to fall; and Uzzah, being near, "put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it." This he did, no doubt, in all good intention, as David had likewise with good intention placed it on the cart. All this disobedience to God culminated in the death of Uzzah. They had violated God's law in hauling the ark, in the priests' not sanctifying themselves, and in Uzzah's touching the ark. God now showed his disapproval of all this by smiting Uzzah on the spot. He was the priest, the custodian of the ark, and should have known the law and should have obeyed God.

This is a warning to us. People now just as easily mistake what is acceptable service to God. God teaches in this that his authority must

be respected and his law must be obeyed. The church now is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15), and it is destruction to one's soul to change or modify God's order in it. His work and worship must be performed according to his directions. To define God's temple now is to be destroyed. (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.)

VIII. David "Displeased" and "Afraid of Jehovah."

(Verses 8, 9.)

"David was displeased, because Jehovah had broken forth upon Uzzah." While David was loyal in heart to God and sought God's honor, he was a human being. He seemed here to be displeased with God's severity in destroying Uzzah, and not with his own ignorance or disregard of God's law. He was not rebellious in heart; he acted either in ignorance or in disregard of God's law. He was not removing the ark against God's will (1 Chron. 13: 2), but he went at it in the wrong way. "The end did not justify the means." The thousands of Israel, in their jubilant procession, were suddenly halted over the dead body of Uzzah; their music and dancing were suddenly turned into mourning. This was discouraging and humiliating to David, and that God should thus severely show his disapproval displeased him.

We now can honor God only in regarding his law and in following his way. "Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever." (Eph. 3: 21.) Some people to-day, who seek to honor God in their own ways and through their own institutions, manifest great displeasure at the effort of faithful servants of God to show them God's way, but not at their own ignorance and disregard of God's way and means.

"Perez-uzzah" means "the breach of Uzzah."

"David was afraid of Jehovah that day." This was enough to fill him with fear. He knew that God was greatly displeased. "And he said, How shall the ark of Jehovah come unto me?" He did not yet seem to realize his own failure and the sin of Uzzah, the priest, who should have known the law. He was doing his best to honor God; and if God would not accept this, then what could he do? He could stop and learn God's will; or, if he knew it, he could be more careful to do it.

Just so, many persons to-day, if they cannot worship God after their own ways and evangelize the world through their own missionary societies, want to know how it is to be done. Like David, they should give up their ways and consult God's law and pleasure. We are not to help God in the formation of plans, but to use in faith the ones he has made.

IX. The Ark in the House of Obed-edom.

(Verses 10, 11.)

David proceeded no farther at that time, but carried the ark aside into the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite. This man, it seems, was a Levite of the family of Kohath. (See 1 Chron. 26: 1-8.) Then he was the proper one to have charge of the ark. (Num. 4: 15.) It has been supposed that he was called "the Gittite" from the city Gath-rimmon, which belonged to the Kohathites. (Josh. 21: 20-26.) The

ark remained there for three months. For his courage and service in taking care of the ark, God blessed Obed-edom and his house. What blessings God bestowed upon this man and his house, so that all could realize that they came because he preserved the ark, are not stated.

To-day we should teach the word of God, pray, and otherwise worship God in our homes and make them fit places for God's presence. Christianity in our homes purifies them, beautifies them, fills them with the atmosphere of heaven, lightens their burdens, sweetens their sorrows, and fills them with happiness and peace; Christianity brings both temporal and spiritual blessings into homes.

X. The Second Attempt at Moving the Ark.

2 Sam. 6: 12, 13. The people saw why God blessed Obed-edom, and reported the same to David. David and the people had learned the important lesson that their own sin had brought this curse of God upon them. "And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David." How did he do it at this time? "Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites." (1 Chron. 15: 2; see also Num. 4: 15.) Then David gathered together the priests and said: "For because ye bare it not at the first, Jehovah our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not according to the ordinance." Then the priests sanctified themselves and "bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of Jehovah." (See 1 Chron. 15: 1-15.) David proceeded again, with a joyful company of Levites and leaders of the people, to bring up the ark from the house of Obed-edom. David himself "was clothed with a robe of fine linen," and "all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, sounding aloud with psalteries and harps." (Verses 25-28.) When they "had gone six paces," David "sacrificed an ox and a fatling."

XI. David Danced Before Jehovah.

14, 15. "David danced before Jehovah with all his might"—he leaped as well as danced. He and all Israel, as has just been stated, "played," which means danced, before Jehovah as the ark was moving on the first time. Thus the people "played," or danced, around the golden calf (Ex. 32: 6-9; 1 Cor. 10: 7); thus Miriam and other women danced (Ex. 15: 20, 21); thus the women sang and danced when they went to meet Saul (1 Sam. 18: 6, 7); and so David danced at this time.

This was a religious service, and is as justifiable now in the worship of God as is the use of musical instruments used on this occasion. If we use such instruments because David used them and because he says praise God with them, we should also dance because he danced and says also: "Praise him with timbrel and dance." (See Ps. 150: 4.)

Jephthah's daughter thus came to meet him. (Judg. 11: 34.) As a religious act the daughters of Shiloh thus danced. (Judg. 21: 19-

23.) "The Hebrews . . . seem to have left dancing with the women." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

This marks the peculiarity of David's conduct in dancing before the ark, which excited the displeasure of Michal.

"So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of Jehovah with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet." This was an expression of joy and gratitude in anticipation of God's blessing in removing the ark to Jerusalem.

XII. The Ark Put in Its Place.

(Verses 20-23.)

Thus "they brought in the ark of Jehovah, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Jehovah." Then he blessed the people and gave to every one—man and woman—"a cake of bread, and a portion of flesh, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed every one to his house."

Michal, David's wife, came out to meet him as he returned to bless his own household, and reproved and shamed him for dancing before the ark. He replied that he would make himself more vile than that and become base in his own sight before God. For this "Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death."

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Hebron?
Relate what occurred there.
What is the meaning of "Kiriath-jearim?"
What was "the city of David?"
About what did David inquire of the Lord?
What answer did he receive?
What is the only safe course to pursue?
Whom did David remove to Hebron?
2 Sam. 2: 3, 4 How many men had David at this time?
Why was it safe and wise to go to Hebron?
What did all Israel then do at Hebron?
What three reasons did they give for making David king over them?
How many times was David anointed, and when, and where?
How old was David when he began to reign?
2 Sam. 5: 1-3 Where was David first crowned?
How was the event celebrated?
How long did he reign at Hebron?
How long did he reign at Jerusalem?
Give the dimensions of the ark.
With what was it lined and covered?

Describe the mercy seat.
What was in the ark?
What place did it occupy in the tabernacle?
Where did God meet with the people?
Who alone could go into the place where the ark was?
How often could he go there?
What must he carry with him?
Did the tabernacle, or temple, at Jerusalem in any way typify houses of worship now?
What is God's building, house, or temple, now?
Why was it called "the ark of the covenant?"
Where was the tabernacle first located after the Israelites became settled in Canaan?
How long did it remain there?
Why was the ark carried away from Shiloh and separated from the tabernacle?
How long was it among the Philistines?
What befell Dagon and the Philistines?
How did they return the ark?
What befell the men of Beth-shemesh?
Whom did they request to come and get the ark?
In whose house was it placed?
Who was sanctified to care for it?
How long was the ark there?
To what place was the tabernacle removed?

How many men did David gather together?
 When had Israel before assembled?
 What men did David consult?
 What did he say about God's pleasure?
 Into what had they not sought in Saul's day?
 What did David build for himself?
 What place did he prepare for the ark?
 To what place did they all go?
 By what other name was Kiriath-jearim then called?
 What was the ark called?
 Why is it called "the ark of God?"
 Where did God promise to meet with and bless the people?
 Where did he now meet with and save them?
 Relate different acts which must be done in Christ's name.
 How did David and the people proceed to remove the ark?
 Why did God permit the Philistines to thus send the ark home?
 Why, then, did he destroy the men of Beth-shemesh for looking into it?
 What should David and the priests have known?
 In the face of this history, what is stranger to-day than David's effort then to remove the ark in a manner different from the one God had specified?
 Relate God's law in full on removing the ark from place to place.
 Who were presented with carts and oxen?
 Who drove this cart?
 In what did David's mistake consist?
 What positions did Ahio and Uzzah occupy in this procession?
 Why did Uzzah touch the ark?
 What befell Uzzah?
 What lesson should it teach us?
 What is "the pillar and ground of the truth?"
 What will befall him who changes God's order in the church?
 How did this affect David?

In what way alone can we honor God?
 Through what institution is God glorified to-day?
 At what do many who would honor God to-day in their own institutions show their displeasure?
 Why was David afraid of Jehovah?
 What is the force of David's question, "How shall the ark of Jehovah come unto me?"
 What do many think to-day about their own ways of doing God's service?
 What did David do with the ark?
 Who was Obed-edom?
 How long was the ark in his house?
 What came upon him for thus receiving and taking care of the ark?
 What should we have in our homes to-day?
 2 Sam. 6: 12, 13 What did the people report to David?
 What did he then do?
 How did he go about removing the ark this time?
 Who should carry it?
 In what did he say they had failed before?
 How had David been made to realize this?
 How again did the multitude proceed?
 How was David dressed?
 What offering was made?
 14, 15 What acts did David himself perform?
 What kind of dancing was this?
 Give examples of others' dancing.
 What marks the peculiarity of David's dancing before the ark to the displeasure of Michal?
 Of what was this action on the part of the multitude an expression?
 What did David offer at Jerusalem?
 What did he give to every man and woman?
 What did Michal say to him?
 What reply did he make?
 How was Michal punished for this?

If you your lips
 Would keep from slips,
 Five things observe with care—
 Of whom you speak,
 To whom you speak,
 And how, and when, and where. (Selected.)

LESSON VIII.—AUGUST 21.

GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID.

1 Chron. 17: 1-12.

1 And it came to pass, when David dwelt in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of Jehovah dwelleth under curtains.

2 And Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thy heart; for God is with thee.

3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith Jehovah, Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in:

5 For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel, unto this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

6 In all places wherein I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to be shepherd of my people, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedar?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, that thou shouldst be prince over my people Israel:

8 And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast gone, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee; and I will make thee a name, like unto the name of the great ones that are in the earth.

9 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the first,

10 And as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel; and I will subdue all thine enemies. Moreover I tell thee that Jehovah will build thee a house.

11 And it shall come to pass, when thy days are fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; and the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of thy kingdom."* (Heb. 1: 8.)

TIME.—Probably soon after the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—David and Nathan.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 1: 8-12.

HOME READING.—

- August 15. M. God's Promise to David. (1 Chron. 17: 1-12.)
- August 16. T. Thanking God for His Promise. (1 Chron. 17: 19-27.)
- August 17. W. God's Faithfulness. (Ps. 89: 19-37.)
- August 18. T. God's Larger Plan. (Gen. 22: 9-19.)
- August 19. F. A Spiritual House. (1 Pet. 2: 1-10.)
- August 20. S. Christ the Foundation. (1 Cor. 3: 1-17.)
- August 21. S. Christ's Throne Eternal. (Heb. 1: 1-14.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

We cannot be certain as to the order of the occurrences of events recorded here and of other events in the early life of David. Facts are recorded not always in order, but as related to other facts.

The last lesson records the fact that the ark was removed to Jeru-

salem and placed in a tabernacle—"within curtains"—and this lesson relates David's desire to build a house for it.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. David's Desire to Build a House for God's Name.

1. This desire arose in David's heart after he had built his own "house of cedar." "And it came to pass, when the king dwelt in his house, and Jehovah had given him rest from all his enemies round about, that the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." (2 Sam. 7: 1, 2.)

Cedar was the best and finest wood of that country. It is said to last hundreds of years. It was of a rich color and emitted a pleasant odor arising from the oil within the wood.

Hiram, king of Tyre, sent the wood and the carpenters and masons to build this house for David. (2 Sam. 5: 11.)

Unsettled and devoting their time and attention to war, the Israelites had not developed the mechanical and architectural arts.

David had been engaged in constant warfare almost ever since he had been king. He now enjoyed "rest from all his enemies round about." He consulted God as to all his battles and how he should proceed; and, hence, it is stated that God "had given him rest." For God's guidance and protection he was grateful. Dwelling in his own magnificent house, secure from his enemies, he was not forgetful that God had given him victory and success; that the ark was "within curtains" only; and he formed the purpose to build for the ark—and, therefore, for God—a permanent and worthy house. This was a noble purpose, for which the Lord blessed David.

Centuries after this, to encourage the Israelites who had returned from the captivity to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, Haggai (1: 4) said: "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your ceiled houses, while this house lieth waste?"

2. Nathan was a prophet, and he said: "Go, do all that is in thy heart; for Jehovah is with thee." (2 Sam. 7: 3.) God approved this desire. For this purpose God blessed David and permitted him to gather material and to contribute largely toward building this house.

"As for me, it was in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and for the footstool of our God; and I had made ready for the building." (1 Chron. 28: 2.) God gave to David in writing the plan and specifications of this house and of all its vessels, etc.; and David gave them to his son, Solomon. This house was built by inspiration. "All this, said David, have I been made to understand in writing from the hand of Jehovah, even all the works of this pattern." (See verses 11-19; also 1 Chron. 29.) "Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel. But Jehovah said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart." (1 Kings 8: 17, 18.) God may approve our noble purposes, but he may not approve the persons or the means employed to accomplish them. High and noble aims are essential to good and great deeds.

This is the first appearance of Nathan, the prophet.

3. God did not disapprove David's purpose to build the house, yet that "same night" (the night after David expressed his purpose to Nathan) God in a vision revealed his will further to Nathan concerning the house, or temple, and the way to build it.

II. David Not Permitted to Build the House of God Because He Was a Man of Blood.

4. God sent Nathan to David to make known his will concerning the erection of this house. "Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in." The reason David could not build the house is as follows: "And David said to Solomon his son, As for me, it was in my heart to build a house unto the name of Jehovah my God. But the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about; for his name shall be Solomon ["peaceful"], and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever." (1 Chron. 22: 7-10.) "Thou knowest how that David my father could not build a house for the name of Jehovah his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until Jehovah put them under the soles of his feet. But now Jehovah my God hath given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrence." (1 Kings 5: 3, 4.) "But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood." (1 Chron. 28: 3.)

God made David king, preserved him from Saul, directed his battles, gave him the victory over all his enemies, and David was a man after God's own heart and was loyal to him; yet because his hands were stained in so much blood he was not permitted to build the temple. This temple, in part, was to be a type of God's spiritual temple, or building, on earth now (1 Cor. 3: 9, 16, 17; 6: 19; 1 Tim. 3: 15; Heb. 3: 4-6); and this spiritual house is one of peace, governed by laws of peace, the weapons of whose warfare are not carnal, whose head is the "Prince of peace," and the establishment of which marks the beginning of the time when swords shall be beaten into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks, and nations shall learn war no more.

III. God Dwells in the Midst of His People.

5. God told Nathan to further say to David that since he had "brought up Israel," he had "not dwelt in a house," but had "gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another." The "tabernacle" was the building of boards, pillars, and bars; and the "tent" was the covering of the different curtains. The tabernacle, with everything in it, was made according to God's pattern (Ex. 25: 9-39); was filled with his glory (Ex. 40: 34-38); and was the place where he met with and blessed them (Ex. 25: 21, 22; 29: 42, 43; 30: 6.) He "walked" in this tabernacle, in that wherever it was removed he still

dwelt in it to bless the people. It was carried around with the people as they journeyed through the wilderness according to the movement of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire (Num. 9: 15-23), and after they reached Canaan it was removed from place to place. "And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." (Lev. 26: 11, 12.) "Even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (2 Cor. 6: 16.)

So God "walks" with his people in his spiritual tabernacle to-day.

6. But while the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness and were even unsettled in the land of promise, God "walked" with them "in all places" to guide and to bless them, and never at any time asked "any of the judges of Israel" why they had not built him a house of cedar. While they had no fixed habitation, he "walked" with them in all their journeys, and he never required them to build for him any fixed house in which to dwell. Now, however, that they are settled in the land, he intends to choose a place to put his name there and to which all shall come to worship and offer sacrifices before him. (See Deut. 12: 5-14; 2 Chron. 6: 4-6.)

IV. Jehovah of Hosts.

7. "Jehovah of hosts" means that God is the God of all powers in heaven and on earth—of angels and men.

While God did not permit David to build the house, he promised, as recorded in the following verses, to greatly bless David and his family after him. God here rehearses what he had done for David in the past as evidence that these promises for the future will be fulfilled. While Nathan was to inform David that he could not build the house, he was at the same time to let him know what God would do for him and his family. God took David "from the sheepcote, from following the sheep," to be king over his people.

"The sheepcote" is, properly, "the sheepfold;" but here it seems to mean the pasture. We know that God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be king instead of Saul, and that the young, ruddy David was the one anointed. "And the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward." (1 Sam. 16: 13.)

V. God Greatly Blessed David.

8. "And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast gone." God guided and protected him through the vicissitudes of his eventful life. God was with him in Saul's house; when he dared to fight Goliath for God's glory; when he was hunted by Saul as one hunts wild and ravenous beasts; when he hid in caves and sought protection among the Moabites and the Philistines; when he fought the Amalekites, the Philistines, and all foreign enemies; and God had cut them all off. All this God had done for him, and he felt under obligations to God for it; but God would do still more. "I will make thee a name, like unto the name of the great ones that are in the earth"—that is, a name as great as the names of the kings of earth.

David was human and sinned through his weakness, as do all men; but in heart he was loyal to God and sought the honor and glory of God.

9, 10. "And I will appoint a place for my people Israel." This probably means a permanent place, which he had promised (Deut. 12: 5, 11, 14) for his name and worship, where the temple was built, and to which the people could come regularly as commanded. He would also "plant them" permanently in a settled place—"their own place"—that they might "be moved no more." "Neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the first, and as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel"—that is, from the time they left Egypt until God gave David the victory over all his enemies. God had guided and directed them; and when they had sinned, he had allowed their enemies to greatly afflict them for their correction; and he had developed them into that great nation. He does not promise unconditionally, either, that their enemies shall never afflict them. God said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (Jonah 3: 4.) By this it is implied that, unless the people repent, Nineveh shall be overthrown. In this case it is implied that if the Israelites continue loyal and faithful to God, their enemies will nevermore afflict them. "Moreover . . . Jehovah will make thee a house." That means, as the next verse explains, that God would establish the kingdom with David's family after him.

11. When David should die, one of his descendants should succeed to the throne, and his kingdom should be established.

12. This son, who was Solomon, should build the house that David desired to build for God's name. "I will establish his throne forever." This means that one of Solomon's descendants should occupy the throne from generation to generation. After the kingdom had fallen down and the spiritual kingdom was ushered in, Jesus, of the seed of David, was placed upon the throne; and his kingdom will never be destroyed. (See Isa. 9: 6, 7; Amos 9: 11, 12; Acts 13: 21-23; 15: 16.)

God would be a father to David's son, Solomon. God would guide and protect him; and when he sinned, God would chastise him "with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." (2 Sam. 7: 14.)

The only way that David's descendants could enjoy these promised blessings was by obedience. When they refused to obey God, they must suffer the consequences. While Solomon obeyed God, God extended Solomon's kingdom from Egypt to the Euphrates (1 Kings 4: 21); but when he sinned, God raised up adversaries against him (1 Kings 11: 1-40), and thus chastised him "with the rod of men." God used all these wicked nations to chastise Solomon and the Jews. "And I will not take my loving-kindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee." This one was Saul. Saul sinned willfully and presumptuously, and God rejected him as king and his family as the royal line. God destroyed Saul's family and gave the kingdom to David and his family. He promised not to remove the kingdom from Solomon's family, as he had taken it from Saul's family. David's family should remain the royal family, and the kingdom should be sure to remain in it forever, and "his throne shall be established forever." As stated above, this was on condition that David's descendants remain loyal to God.

The earthly kingdom went down when all were carried into captivity; but the promise was fulfilled, as above stated, in Christ, of the seed of David, who reigns in the spiritual kingdom. He has "the sure mercies of David." (Isa. 55: 3; see also Acts 13: 34.)

"According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David." (1 Chron. 17: 15.) These were to David greater blessings than being permitted simply to build the temple. They filled him with gratitude. He "went in, and sat before Jehovah," and offered the prayer recorded in the remainder of this chapter, which we should study.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
How are many facts in David's history recorded as to the order of occurrence?
- 1 In what kind of house did David dwell?
Who assisted him in building it?
What kind of wood was cedar?
Why had the Israelites not developed the mechanical arts?
In what did the ark of God dwell?
What purpose of heart did David make known to Nathan?
What produced this desire in David's heart?
 - 2 What reply did Nathan make?
Was this purpose pleasing to God?
What did God permit David to do toward building this house?
What did he cause David to understand in writing?
What is said about God's approving a good purpose, but not approving the means of carrying it out?
Whose name is first mentioned here as a prophet?
 - 3 For what purpose did God appear to Nathan that night?
 - 4 What message did God send to David concerning the house?
Why could not David build the house?
Of what was this house a type?
Why could Solomon build the house?
 - 5 In what had God not dwelt?
For how long?
What is meant by the Lord's walking "in a tent and in a tabernacle?"
With whom does he walk now?
 - 6 What had God not asked any tribe or judge to do?
Why would God have no fixed dwelling place so long as his people were wandering from place to place?
- Had God promised to choose a place for his name and worship?
7 Why did God rehearse here what he had done for David?
What does this verse say God had done for David?
8 What else had God done for David?
In what way had God given David a great name?
Through what did David sin?
9, 10 What place did God promise to appoint?
What also would he do for his people?
What should the wicked nations not do to them as formerly?
What had God done for them, and why had he allowed wicked nations to afflict them?
What is meant by God's making David a house?
- 11 What would God do for David's family after he was dead?
- 12 What should this son build?
What is meant by God's establishing his throne forever?
How was this promise fulfilled, since the kingdom did go down?
What would God be to David's son?
How would God chastise him?
What did God do for Solomon so long as he obeyed God?
Whom did he raise up against Solomon when he sinned?
How did God then chastise him "with the rod of men?"
What did God do to Saul and his family?
Why?
What would he do to Solomon's family?
How were Solomon's house and kingdom established forever?
What did David do then?
Did you study this prayer?

LESSON IX.—AUGUST 28.

NATHAN LEADS DAVID TO REPENTANCE.

2 Sam. 12: 1-10, 13.

1 And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in his sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."* (Ps. 51: 17.)

TIME.—B.C. 1034.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—David and Nathan.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 103: 8-14.

HOME READING.—

August 22. M. Nathan Leads David to Repentance. (2 Sam. 12: 1-10, 13.)

August 23. T. David's Confession. (Ps. 51: 1-17.)

August 24. W. Penitence and Pardon. (Isa. 55: 6-13.)

August 25. T. Humility and Forgiveness. (Luke 18: 1-14.)

August 26. F. The Blessedness of Being Forgiveness. (Ps. 32: 1-11.)

August 27. S. The Joy of Salvation. (Isa. 12: 1-6.)

August 28. S. God's Loving-kindness. (Ps. 103: 8-14.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The facts leading to this lesson begin with David's sins in taking Uriah's wife and having Uriah killed.

Ps. 51 is said to be a confession by David of the sins recorded in this lesson and a prayer for forgiveness.

Ps. 32 is a thanksgiving for forgiveness. Paul quotes from this Psalm as one of David's.

Nathan.

Nathan was a prophet, courageous and faithful. We first meet with him when David expressed to him his purpose to build the temple. On the night after David expressed this purpose God appeared to Nathan in a vision and revealed his further will concerning the temple and the way to build it. Nathan was then sent to make known God's will to David. The present lesson shows other work that Nathan did. He and Zadok later anointed Solomon king. (1 Kings 1: 34.)

INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSON.

It is necessary to know what were David's sins, and it is helpful to learn what led to them, that others may avoid them. Hence, let us study these in chapter 11.

Does Leisure Lead to Temptation?

While Joab continued the war against the Ammonites and during the siege of Rabbah, "David tarried at Jerusalem." While this may have been right, yet when Joab had conquered the city he urged David to go out and take it, lest he (Joab) should take it and it should be called by his name. (2 Sam. 12: 26-31.) Did David's leisure, luxury, unbroken prosperity, and continued victories have anything to do with his falling into temptation? Leisure and "prosperous ease" now are dangerous to the poor as well as to others, and is a curse.

David's Sin.

(2 Sam. 11: 1-5.)

As David walked upon the roof of his house, "he saw a woman bathing." She was "very beautiful." When David inquired who she was, he was informed that she was Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah, a very valiant man. Had David controlled his thoughts here, he would have gone no farther in sin. Once he prayed: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer." (Ps. 19: 14.) No one who does not control his thoughts, imaginations, and fleshly desires can control his conduct. "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which define the man." (Matt. 15: 19, 20.) One thinks murder or theft, then plans and executes it. David thought adultery, planned it, and executed it. If we think pure thoughts and indulge in no lustful and sinful imaginations, our speech and conduct will be pure. David was moved by Bath-sheba's beauty, sent for her, and committed adultery, which led to murder.

Was Bath-sheba none to blame? Was she not very immodest? Did she not unnecessarily expose her beauty? Did she not yield herself to temptation? She did all this, and more. She made no refusal when David sent for her, and was unfaithful to her husband, who was from

home on duty. Had not God revealed these sins, when would they have come to light?

Poor Uriah would have blindly thought his wife was faithful and might have praised her for her virtue.

Bath-sheba conceived, and reported the fact to David.

David's Effort to Conceal His Sin.

(Verses 6-25.)

Informed of Bath-sheba's condition, David then conceived a plan to conceal his sin. He sent for Uriah and desired him to spend some time at home. Had he done so, who would ever have known but that the child was his? In his nobleness and loyalty of soul, he would not do this. David then "made him drunk," and still he would not go home. Then David had him slain in battle, and was virtually, as the Lord says, his murderer. When the messengers from Joab reported to David the result of the battle and that his "servant Uriah the Hittite" was dead, David went through the pretense of consoling Joab over the loss of a brave soldier, saying that he should not be displeased and discouraged, "for the sword devoureth one as well as another," when he and Joab both knew it was a devised scheme to get Uriah killed.

David and Bath-sheba Marry.

(Verses 26, 27.)

When Bath-sheba "heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she made lamentations for" him. This was only a custom and an empty performance. She cared nothing for Uriah. "And when the mourning was past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son." David married Bath-sheba as soon as possible after the death of her husband in order to make it appear that the child was legitimate.

One sin certainly leads to another; and, as in David's case, some sins lead to lies and murder.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. David Reproved.

1-6. But after all of David's scheming, his sin found him out. "The thing that David had done displeased Jehovah." He sent Nathan to David to reprove him. How was it done? Read these verses. David could see the sin of the rich man who slew the poor man's little ewe lamb. To-day some men seem not to feel their sins of lying, stealing, trickery, impurity, slander, and mistreatment of others; yet they pick at the mote in a brother's eye and become enraged over some mistake or fault of others. It would help all to see themselves as God sees them.

7-12. All teachers to-day should have the courage to truly and kindly say: "Thou art the man." Nathan pressed this terrible conclusion home to David's heart: "Wherefore hast thou despised the word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in his sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy

wife. Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."

II. What Is It to Despise God?

Nathan says David despised the word of God and despised God. To do that which is evil in God's sight is to despise the word of God. God teaches all now through his word that which is true, pure, good, and right, and not to do that is to despise his word.

Saul rejected God and rebelled against him in rejecting the word of God. (1 Sam. 15: 22-26.) Not to repent of sin is to despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long-suffering. People will not own that they despise God; but when they turn from his word and do evil, they demonstrate that they do. (Rom. 2: 4.) Not to obey God is to despise him, as to obey him is to love him. (John 14: 23, 24.)

III. David Repented.

Thus David was brought to repentance. We must not conclude that David's sins gave him no trouble before Nathan reproved him. From Ps. 32: 3 we learn that his conscience smote him: "When I kept silence, my bones wasted away through my groaning all the day long." From Ps. 51: 3 we also learn that his conscience smote him: "My sin is ever before me." While Nathan reproved David, this reproof helped him to repentance.

David was not simply sorry that his sins were known (as yet only God and Nathan knew of them); he was also sorry that he committed these sins. Nothing short of that is repentance. It was God's law that the man and the woman thus guilty should die. (Lev. 20: 10.) But God, on account of David's repentance, forgave him. These sins David had committed against God because he had broken God's law. Adultery and murder now are sins against God.

13. "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house." (Verses 14, 15.)

IV. The Consequences of Sin.

While David repented and God forgave him, we must not conclude that all the terrible consequences mentioned by Nathan never came upon David. Much of this came in the sin and death of Amnon, and especially in the rebellion of Absalom, when he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel and "in the sight of this sun." (2 Sam. 13; 16: 20-23.) It is a woeful mistake to think that men can sin as did David or otherwise, and even repent and be forgiven, without bringing great reproach upon themselves and their families and suffering the consequences in this life. To try to palliate the sins of adultery, drunkenness, murder, etc., in public men by referring to Da-

vid's sins is a manifestation of dense ignorance, as well as a sin against God and a crime against decency and virtue. No truly penitent man will flaunt his sins in the face of others. The true penitent humbly accepts the consequences of his sins and says: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities." (Ps. 103: 10.) There is no excuse to be made for David's sins. He himself made none; nor did he lay them on others. In true penitence he acknowledged that he had sinned. David committed these sins, while the purpose and course of his life were to serve and honor God; and so we must view his character. Some wicked men perform a good deed now and then, however, with no purpose of honoring God, while the course of their lives is to serve sin. They will be lost; while David, upon repentance, was forgiven and saved. Saul, the first king of Israel, sinned in deliberately setting aside God's law—and with the intention, too, of more greatly honoring God. When Samuel told him of his sin, he withstood Samuel to the face that what he had done was obedience to God—that is, that God would so accept it. When Samuel declared that his sin was rebellion, stubbornness, and rejection of God's word, and was as witchcraft and idolatry, and that God had rejected him from being king, he requested Samuel to pray to God to pardon him; but God would not pardon him, because he had "rejected the word of Jehovah." (1 Sam. 15.) His was stubborn, rebellious, and presumptuous sin. David's sins were not cool, presumptuous ones, but were prompted by fleshly impulses and passions. They were grievous sins, and brought upon him and his family shame and continued suffering; yet, upon repentance, God forgave him. Our lesson is David's confession of his sins. A full and frank confession of sins comes out of true penitence.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What is Ps. 51?
What is Ps. 32?
Where was David's army at the time of his sin?
Where was David?
What was David's sin?
What led to this sin?
In what different ways was Bathsheba to blame?
In what ways did David seek to conceal his sin?
What kind of man was Uriah?
How did David have him killed?
What did Joab tell the messengers to say to David if he should complain at the result of the battle?
What reply did David make to Joab?
What did Bathsheba do when she heard of her husband's death?
What then took place between her and David?
- 1-6 How did God show David his sin?
Relate what Joab said he had done.
How are some like David to-day in regard to their own sins and the mistakes of others?
- How do some show that they despise God, or how that they love him?
- 7-12 What evils did God say should come upon David?
What shows that David's conscience smote him before this?
Of what does true repentance consist?
What did God say should be done to those guilty of such sins?
Why was David not killed?
- 13 What confession did he make to Nathan?
Give Nathan's answer.
Did these evils come upon David?
What great mistakes must men now not make concerning the consequences of sins?
Can any excuses be made for David's sins?
Give the difference between David, who sinned thus one time and repented, and bad men who continue in sin.
Give the difference between David's sin and Saul's sin.
Why did God forgive David and reject Saul?

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 4.

SOLOMON'S WISE CHOICE.

1 Kings 3: 4-15.

4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

5 In Gibeon Jehovah appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great lovingkindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great lovingkindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

7 And now, O Jehovah my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in.

8 And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?

10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice;

12 Behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days.

14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

15 And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream: and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding."* (Prov. 3: 13.)

TIME.—B.C. 1014.

PLACE.—Gibeon.

PERSONS.—Solomon and the Lord.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 8: 12-19.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|--------------|----|---|
| August 29. | M. | Solomon's Wise Choice. (1 Kings 3: 4-15.) |
| August 30. | T. | David's Charge to Solomon. (1 Chron. 28: 1-10.) |
| August 31. | W. | Joy and Thanksgiving. (1 Chron. 29: 10-19.) |
| September 1. | T. | Wisdom a Defense. (Eccles. 9: 13-18.) |
| September 2. | F. | Life's Priorities. (Matt. 6: 25-34.) |
| September 3. | S. | God's Good Gifts for the Asking. (Luke 11: 5-13.) |
| September 4. | S. | Why Seek Wisdom? (Prov. 8: 12-19.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Gibeon was a royal city about six miles north of Jerusalem. Its inhabitants deceived Joshua and became bondmen. (Josh. 9.) At this place Joshua defeated five kings. (Josh. 10: 1-27.) As this lesson states, Solomon had his dream here. The tabernacle was here for a while. (1 Chron. 16: 39; 21: 29.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

We cannot consider too well the conditions upon which God promised to bless Solomon and perpetuate his kingdom. (See 1 Chron. 28: 9, 10.)

Note David's dying instruction to Solomon. (1 Kings 2: 1-4.) Solomon must do this that God may fulfill his promise to David to place one of David's descendants upon the throne forever.

God does not choose and bless people unconditionally and with no reference to fitness and character. See what he said of Abraham. (Gen. 18: 19.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Assembly at Gibeon.

4. The time of the beginning of Solomon's reign is placed at B.C. 1015, and early in this reign he called this assembly at Gibeon. This was the same assembly his father had called to confirm him as king. (1 Chron. 28: 1.)

"And Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every prince in all Israel, the heads of the father's houses. So Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of Jehovah had made in the wilderness. But the ark of God had David brought up from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. Moreover the brazen altar, that Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of Jehovah: and Solomon and the assembly sought unto it." (2 Chron. 1: 2-5.) This tabernacle, altar, etc., were about five hundred years old.

Gibeon was a hill, or famous "high place." Hills and groves were used by Jews and heathens as places of sacrifice. (1 Kings 2: 2; 2 Kings 18: 4, 22; 23: 5-9, 15; 2 Chron. 28: 4; 31: 1.) The "high place" was a hill, or raised place, for the idol, or for the tabernacle and the altar of God. The Israelites were commanded to offer their sacrifices at "the door of the tent of meeting." David had placed Zadok at Gibeon for this purpose. (1 Chron. 16: 39-42.) Solomon and this assembly "sought unto" the altar there, or sought God there according to his directions.

Solomon called this assembly in order to unify the nation under him as king and to worship God and to seek his guidance. He went to Gibeon to offer a thousand burnt offerings to God. The burnt offering was wholly consumed, or burned, on the altar. (See the law on burnt offering in Lev. 1.)

II. God Appeared to Solomon.

5. "In that night did God appear unto Solomon" (2 Chron. 1: 7)—the night after these offerings were made. He "appeared to Solomon in a dream." God then appeared to people in dreams. He appeared in a dream to Jacob (Gen. 28: 12-17); to Joseph (Gen. 37: 5-10); Joseph interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker and Pharaoh (Gen. 40: 41); to Daniel (Dan. 2, 4, 7); to Joseph, Mary's husband (Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13-22). So Joel prophesied: "I will pour out my

Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." (Joel 2: 28; see also Acts 2: 17, 18.) These dreams then came through the influence of the Holy Spirit and were supernatural, or miraculous. Paul had "visions and revelations of the Lord." (2 Cor. 12: 1, 7.) Dreams, as such, it seems, were nothing; they were significant only as the Lord gave them meaning or interpretation. (Jer. 23: 25-32.)

"Ask what I shall give thee." This privilege would reveal what was uppermost in Solomon's heart. "And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him." (1 John 5: 14, 15.) "And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3: 22.) That which we most greatly desire we are most apt to pray for; and if it is in accordance with God's will, he will give it to us. God is pleased with our asking for much if we will use it to his glory. We receive not when we ask amiss, that we may consume it upon our lusts. (James 4: 2, 3.)

III. Solomon's Choice.

6. Solomon prefaced his petition by speaking of the "great loving-kindness" God had shown David. God had not done this for David unconditionally, but only "according as he walked before" God "in truth [sincerity and honesty of purpose], and in righteousness [justice and right to men and obedience to God], and in uprightness of heart [loyalty to God]." While David sinned sometimes, he desired God's will to prevail, even if he himself must suffer the consequences. When David did wrong, God chastised him. Solomon recognized this as just and thanked God for all that he had done for David. One's gratitude for past favors capacitates one for the reception of future blessings. To all that God had done for David he had added "this great loving-kindness"—that he had "given him a son to sit on his throne." Solomon attributed his being king to God's favor, and not to his own desert.

7. God had chosen and had made Solomon king. (1 Chron. 22: 9-13.)

"I am but a little child." Solomon was a young man about twenty years of age. As his father expresses it, he "is yet young and tender, and the work is great." (1 Chron. 29: 1.) He had the good sense to acknowledge his own unworthiness and incapability for such work and his need of wisdom. God cannot give wisdom to a fool. God blesses men as they are capacitated to receive and use his blessings. "He that hath, to him shall be given." One who acknowledges himself a child in knowledge and wisdom is ready to be led by the Lord. "If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise." (1 Cor. 3: 18.)

"I know not how to go out or come in." The expression, "go out or come in," was a familiar one, denoting one's conduct in public affairs. (See Num. 27: 17; Deut. 28: 6; 1 Sam. 18: 13.) Solomon by this acknowledged his need of wisdom.

8. In the preceding verse Solomon confessed his own youth and inability, and in this verse he gave the magnitude of the work. He was "in the midst" as king over the people whom God had chosen. That God had chosen him made him feel his incompetency to lead them aright. That they were "a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude," is another reason why he felt his need of wisdom. "That cannot be numbered nor counted" is an expression denoting a great multitude.

9. "Give thy servant therefore [for the foregoing reasons] an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?" The people would have difficulties and differences among themselves to be settled, and probably there was a party opposed to Solomon as king, and he desired wisdom to "discern between good and evil." He desired to render justice to all. It requires wisdom now "to discern between good and evil." Paul reproved the Hebrews because they were yet babes, "without experience of the word of righteousness," and had not "by reason of use . . . their senses exercised to discern good and evil." (Heb. 5: 13, 14.) Solomon desired wisdom that he might guide the people for their own good and for the glory of God. He was actuated by no selfish motive. He sought not his own aggrandizement; he sought the good of the people and the glory of God. Whatever promotes the real and permanent good of the people also honors God, and that which honors God promotes the greatest good of the people. Solomon realized, as he exhorts others, that "wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; yea, with all thy getting get understanding." (Prov. 4: 7.)

By this choice Solomon showed what was in his heart. One's choice now shows his character and reveals his destiny. We all make some choice; we choose wisdom or folly, right or wrong, good or evil; and this choice shapes our course in life and seals our destiny. People are known by the company they keep; they choose their company. People are known by the books they read; they choose their books. Solomon's choice made him a great man.

10. "And the speech pleased the Lord." It pleased God because Solomon was unselfish, and because, therefore, he sought the greatest good of the people and the honor of God.

11, 12. Solomon could have asked for himself "long life," "riches," or "the life of" his "enemies;" but these requests would have been selfish, and selfishness is of Satan. But because he had proven himself entirely unselfish and had asked for "understanding to discern justice," God said: "Behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart."

Knowledge is information, but wisdom is the power to make proper use of knowledge and all opportunities. People may know many things and yet be very unwise. "Understanding" is power to perceive the true situation; it is clearness of judgment. Wisdom makes the right application of means to the accomplishment of an end. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Prov. 9: 10.) The following is a Bible reading on the value of wisdom: Prov. 1: 1-22; 2: 1-9; 3: 13-26; 4: 5-9; 8: 10-36; 16: 16; Eccles. 9: 15-18; 1 Cor. 3: 18-23. We are exhorted to pray for wisdom. (James 1: 5-8.)

God did not give Solomon wisdom without mental exertion and the proper use of God-appointed means; neither does he give us wisdom without an effort on our part. We must incline our ears to wisdom and apply our hearts to understanding; we must cry after discernment, seek wisdom as silver is sought, and search for it as for hidden treasures; then we will obtain it, for God gives wisdom to all such. (Prov. 2: 1-8.) Many instances of Solomon's wisdom are given. One instance is his determining who was the mother of the living child. (1 Kings 3: 16-27.) Solomon's proverbs and his knowledge of natural history are other instances. (1 Kings 4: 29-34.) "So that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore." (1 Kings 4: 29.)

IV. God Gave Solomon More Than He Asked.

13. God did more for Solomon than he asked. In addition to wisdom and understanding, he gave him riches and honor—that is, personal good. This shows that we are personally benefited and blessed in seeking the good of others and the glory of God. "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6: 33.) God does for us now more than we can think or ask. (Eph. 3: 20.)

14. God also promised to give Solomon length of days, or long life, if he would walk in God's ways, statutes, and commandments, as David had done. Solomon did not do this, but allowed his heathen wives to lead him into idolatry and to turn his heart from God. God for this reason became angry with him, raised up adversaries against him, and took ten tribes of the kingdom from him and gave them to his servant. (1 Kings 11: 1-25.) Solomon died at about sixty years of age. (1 Kings 11: 41-43.)

15. "And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream." But God appeared to him, and he made this famous choice of wisdom. He then returned to Jerusalem, where he continued his offerings before the ark of the covenant. He "offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants."

QUESTIONS.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Tell where and what Gibeon was and what occurred there.
Upon what conditions did God promise to bless Solomon?
When David came to die, what did he exhort Solomon to do?
Why did God say that he could bring to pass that which he had promised to Abraham?
4 What assembly did Solomon call?
Why did they go to Gibeon?
Where was the ark?
How old was the tabernacle now?</p> | <p>What were the "high places?"
Where was Gibeon?
Who was priest at Gibeon?
Why did Solomon call this assembly?
What disposition was made of the burnt offerings?
How many did Solomon offer at this time?
Why?
5 Who appeared to Solomon?
When?
Can you mention others to whom God appeared in dreams?
Were all dreams significant?
What made them significant?
What privilege did God grant to Solomon?
When does God promise to hear us?</p> |
|---|---|

- For what are people most apt to pray?
 When do we not receive?
 6 Why did Solomon refer to what God
 had done for David?
 Upon what condition had God done
 this for David?
 What other great thing had he done
 for David?
 In what did Solomon recognize the
 justice of God?
 7 How did Solomon look at himself?
 In what, to begin with, did he show
 his good sense?
 When does God bless men now?
 What does Solomon mean by saying
 that he knew not "how to go out
 or to come in?"
 8 For what further reason did Solomon
 realize his need of wisdom?
 9 For what, then, did he pray?
 Why did he say he needed wisdom?

- For what is wisdom now necessary?
 What motive actuated Solomon?
 What is indicated now by one's choice?
 10 Why did this speech please the Lord?
 11, 12 For what could Solomon have
 asked?
 What is "wisdom?"
 What is "understanding?"
 Did you read this Bible reading on
 wisdom?
 In what ways did Solomon show his
 wisdom?
 How great was Solomon's wisdom com-
 pared with the wisdom of others?
 13 What more did God do for Solomon?
 When are we personally benefited?
 14 Upon what condition did God promise
 to give Solomon long life?
 How old was he when he died?
 15 What did Solomon do when he awoke?

JUST SUPPOSE.

If all that we say
 In a single day,
 With never a word left out,
 Were printed each night
 In clear black and white,
 'Twould prove queer reading, no doubt.

And then just suppose,
 Ere one's eyes he could close,
 He must read the day's record through,
 Then wouldn't one sigh,
 And wouldn't he try
 A great deal less talking to do?

And I more than half think
 That many a kink
 Would be smoother in life's tangled thread
 If one-half that we say
 In a single day
 Were left forever unsaid.

(Selected.)

Preparation for Building the Temple.

David had it in his heart to build this house for God's name, and this desire was pleasing to God; but he did not allow David to build it, because he was a man of war and had shed blood. God promised that Solomon should build it. (1 Chron. 22: 7-10; 2 Chron. 6: 10.) David was permitted to gather an abundance of material and to contribute largely out of his own private treasury for the house. (1 Chron. 22: 14-16; 29: 1-9.) This would make over one billion dollars in gold in our money and almost one billion dollars in silver, besides the value of the precious stones, brass, and iron.

God gave David by the Holy Spirit "the pattern" of the temple, as he gave Moses "the pattern" of the tabernacle; and David delivered it to Solomon, saying: "All this . . . have I been made to understand in writing from the hand of Jehovah, even all the works of this pattern." (See 1 Chron. 28: 11-19.) By this example and instruction David helped to prepare the people for the building of this house. He had already removed the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem.

Solomon's reign was one of peace. (1 Kings 4: 21-25.) In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt and in the fourth year and the second month of his reign he began to build the temple, and he finished it in the eleventh year and the eighth month (1 Kings 6: 1, 37, 38); hence, he was seven years and six months in building it. The Bible puts it seven years, in full numbers.

Solomon was greatly assisted by Hiram, king of Tyre, for which assistance he paid Hiram in wheat, barley, wine, and oil. (1 Kings 5; 2 Chron. 2: 1-10.) The cedar sent by Hiram was highly prized and of great reputation then.

Building the Temple.

A great many laborers, overseers, and skilled workmen were engaged in building the temple. A levy of thirty thousand Israelites was raised to work in Mount Lebanon, ten thousand of them working a month at a time and remaining at home two months. (1 Kings 5: 13, 14.) There were, besides these, one hundred and fifty thousand laborers, who were probably foreign subjects. (1 Kings 5: 15; 9: 20-22.) There were one hundred and fifty-three thousand and six hundred of these "sojourners," but three thousand and six hundred of them were overseers. (2 Chron. 2: 17, 18.) Three thousand and three hundred of these overseers were subordinates, it seems (1 Kings 5: 16), five hundred and fifty chief overseers (1 Kings 9: 23), and two hundred and fifty of this number were Israelites (2 Chron. 8: 10). Besides these, there were King Hiram's workmen, who cut and hewed the timbers (2 Chron. 2: 8-10) and cut the stones (1 Kings 5: 18). King Hiram also sent a most skilled workman, named "Hiram," the son of a Jewess and a Tyrian. (2 Chron. 2: 13, 14; 1 Kings 7: 13-47.)

The temple was built on Mount Moriah, overlooking the brook Kidron. The mountain top was leveled, and the precipitous sides next to the brook Kidron were faced up with immense stones. The dimensions of the temple proper were twice those of the tabernacle. (See 1 Kings 6: 1-22.) Before the holy place was a porch ten cubits long and the width of the temple proper. Around this were the

courts (2 Chron. 33: 5), which were inclosed with walls. For a description of the fine work done on the temple, see 1 Kings 6, 7.

The Temple Not a Type of Houses of Worship, But of the Church.

This temple had no significance as to present houses of worship; yet nearly all Sunday-school papers draw the conclusion that since this temple was costly, richly ornamented, and magnificent, so our houses of worship should be. While houses of worship should be comfortable and well adapted to the purpose for which they are erected, we learn none of this from the temple. Many houses of worship are but little less than monuments of vanity and pride and exhibitions of denominational rivalry.

There was one tabernacle, and that gave place to the one temple, which was a type of the one tabernacle, or temple, "which the Lord pitched." (Heb. 8: 2.) Christians constitute God's house now. (1 Cor. 3: 9; 1 Tim. 3: 15; Heb. 3: 6.) Christians, "as living stones, are built up a spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2: 4, 5); and they are God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; 6: 19, 20). Christians are also priests—one as much as another—"a holy priesthood," "a royal priesthood, a holy nation," "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 2: 5, 9.) God has but one house, or temple, now. (See Eph. 2: 14-22.) This, like the temple and the tabernacle, was built after God's pattern, or plan, by Jesus, and its organization and order of service and work are divine (Matt. 16: 13-20); it was dedicated by the blood of Christ (Acts 20: 28); it was filled with God's Spirit (Acts 2: 1-4; Eph. 2: 19-22); and in it God dwells, and God's name is called upon in it (1 Cor. 1: 2; 2 Cor. 1: 7).

A house of worship is only a meeting place for the church. It is only a matter of comfort and convenience. It is no more "the house of God" than one's dwelling house should be. A courthouse is not the court, a statehouse is not the State, a schoolhouse is not the school, a customhouse is not the custom, etc.; and a "church house" is not the church. Anything may be done in a "church house" that Christians can morally do in any other house. But nothing can be done in the worship of God which he has not made a part of that worship.

The worship of God is no longer limited to any certain place or places. Jesus explained this to the woman at the well. (John 4: 20-26.) Anywhere and everywhere now "the true worshippers" may worship God "in spirit and truth." Proud temples and stately church edifices, beautifully adorned and magnificently equipped, are no part of God's spiritual service, and are not, therefore, essential to it. Parents and teachers should not fail to impress upon all this difference.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel," etc. This is the same assembly called by David just before he died (1 Chron. 28: 1) and by Solomon soon after he became king (2 Chron. 1: 2, 3). The temple was now completed (1 Kings 7: 51); and this assembly was "to bring up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of the city of

David, which is Zion" (see 2 Sam. 5: 6, 7). The temple was built on Mount Moriah, and Mount Zion was west of Mount Moriah. On these two hills Jerusalem was built.

2. "All the men of Israel." Three times during the year all the grown males in Israel had to assemble before the Lord at Jerusalem to keep the three annual feasts. (Deut. 16: 16, 17.) On these feasts, see Lev. 23. This was the feast of tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. "They kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days." The people assembled on the eighth day of the seventh month and were dismissed on the twenty-third day. (2 Chron. 7: 8-10.) The dedicatory services were held before the feast of tabernacles.

3. "And the priests took up the ark." It was their duty to bear the ark (Num. 7: 9), as we have seen in our lesson on David's removing the ark to Jerusalem.

4. "And they brought up the ark of Jehovah [from the tent in which David had placed it on Mount Zion—verse 1], and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent." This was the tabernacle, which was at Gibeon. The Levites brought these. This was the duty of the Levites. (Num. 4: 21-49.) The temple took the place of the tabernacle. Both could not stand at the same time.

5. David sacrificed before the ark every "six paces" (2 Chron. 6: 13); Solomon and the congregation sacrificed before it "sheep and oxen, that could not be counted nor numbered for multitude." This was done before the ark reached its destination, and was done in praise and gratitude to God.

6. "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of Jehovah unto its place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim." For the dimensions and a description of this place, see 1 Kings 6: 19-22. It was called "the oracle" because there, above the ark, between the wings of the cherubim, God promised to reveal himself to the people. (Ex. 25: 22.)

7. For a description of the cherubim and their situation, see 1 Kings 6: 23-28.

8. "The staves" were placed through the rings on the ark in order to carry it (Ex. 25: 12-15), and were never to be removed. In putting the ark in its place in the most holy place, it was necessary to draw out the staves to some extent, so that the ends projected into the holy place, but could not be seen without that place; and so they remained.

9. The ark was made to contain the tables of stone, and, hence, is called "the ark of the covenant of Jehovah." (See Ex. 25: 16, 21; Deut. 10: 2-5.) Hence, these stones were placed in it and kept there. In it were also placed the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. (See Ex. 16: 32-36; Num. 17: 8-11; Heb. 9: 4.) It is not stated what became of the pot of manna and the rod.

10, 11. "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place [after they had placed the ark in the most holy place and had come out of the temple], that the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah." This was the cloud in which God frequently appeared to the Israelites and

which concealed his glory, for no man could look directly on him and live. (See Num. 12: 5, 10; 16: 42; Deut. 31: 15.) With this cloud God covered "the tent of meeting" and filled it with his glory when Moses had set it up in its completion. (Ex. 40: 34.) God did this to show that he had accepted the tabernacle, and then the temple, as his dwelling place on earth. So God filled his spiritual temple with his glory when Jesus had finished it (Acts 2: 1-4), and in it he now dwells (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; 6: 19, 20; Eph. 2: 19-22). Solomon built the temple after the divine pattern, and then God accepted it and took up his abode in it and there met with and blessed the people. He now meets with and blesses us in his spiritual temple, the church, which Christ built.

The Dedication.

62, 63. In connection with these verses we must study the dedicatory prayer. (See 1 Kings 8: 22-66; 2 Chron. 6 and 7.)

For these services "Solomon had made a brazen scaffold, five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court." This he occupied during the dedicatory services. (2 Chron. 6: 12, 13.) When the cloud filled the house, he faced the temple and spoke to Jehovah in the language of 1 Kings 8: 12, 13. Then he turned his face again to the audience and blessed all the assembly and recounted what God had said to David concerning this house. Solomon then "stood before the altar of Jehovah in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven," and offered the dedicatory prayer.

From verse 54 and 2 Chron. 6: 13 we learn that he stood on his knees and prayed. He thanked God for what he had done for David and himself in making them king. He prayed that indeed that house might be a place for God's name; that his eyes would be opened toward it continually; that he would hear the prayer offered there, or, if his people could not reach there, that he would hear the prayer offered toward that house. Solomon also prayed for the foreigner who should come there for Jehovah's name's sake. Then Solomon arose from his knees and stood and blessed the people and called upon them to thank God for what he had done for them.

"Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house." (2 Chron. 7: 1.) This showed that God had heard Solomon. This filled the assembly with reverence and awe, and they bowed their faces to the ground and worshiped and thanked God.

Then Solomon and the assembly offered this great number of peace offerings. The fat of the peace offering was burned, and the right shoulder and breast were given to the priest, and the rest was eaten. (Lev. 7: 11-36.) Solomon's sacrifice of peace offerings was twenty thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. This

was a great feast, and many animals were necessary. The altar of burnt offering was too small to receive the burnt offerings, the meal offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings; so "the middle of the court" was hallowed for this purpose. (1 Kings 8: 64.) This was a grand and great service to the Israelites.

The spiritual temple of God, the church of Christ, is dedicated to God by the blood of the Lamb of God.

Dedicating Solomon's temple is no precedent for dedicating houses of worship now.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What four things should we consider?
What is necessary to the remission of sins?
Why could not this sacrifice be made at any place and by any person?
What must be dedicated by blood?
Whose blood cleanses from all sin?
Where did God promise to meet with and bless the people?
Where did God first meet with the people from the time he gave the law until the temple was built?
What did God promise to choose when the Israelites should become settled?
What place did he choose?
For what purpose did Solomon build the temple?
Who taught Israel to worship elsewhere?
In what did this result?
What did Jesus say to the woman at the well on the subject of the right place to worship?
Why was David not permitted to build the temple?
How much did he collect for it?
What did he himself give?
Who gave the pattern, or plan, of the temple?
When did Solomon begin to build the temple?
How long was he in building it?
Who assisted him?
How did Hiram get the timbers to Solomon?
How did Solomon remunerate Hiram?
How many Israelites did Solomon send to Mount Lebanon to work?
How were they divided?
How many common laborers among the sojourners did he have?
How many overseers did he have?
How many of these were Israelites?
What other laborers were there?
Upon what was the temple built?
How were the top and sides of the mountain prepared to receive the building?

Give the size of the temple proper.
How was it finished inside?
Had the temple any significance as to our houses of worship?
Of what is the temple a type?
Who constitute this spiritual temple?
How many temples, or churches, did God build, and how many has he now?
How was the temple dedicated?
With what was it filled?
Whose name is called upon it?
Where does God now dwell?
Are houses of worship, any more than others, God's houses? Is God's worship limited to any place now?
1 Whom did Solomon assemble?
For what purpose was this assembly?
What were Mount Moriah and Mount Zion?
Upon what was Jerusalem built?
2 Who were required to assemble at Jerusalem three times each year?
For what purpose?
How long did the dedicatory service continue?
Were these before or after the feast?
3 Who bore the ark?
4 Where was the ark?
Where was the tabernacle?
What was done with it and its vessels?
5 What were sacrificed before the ark?
What did David sacrifice when he removed the ark?
6 Where was the ark placed?
Why was this called "the oracle?"
7 Describe "the cherubim."
8 What were "the staves?"
What disposition was made of them?
9 For what was the ark made?
What other things were put in it?
Where were they now?
10, 11 What filled the house?
What was this "cloud?"
Why did God fill the tabernacle and the temple with his glory?
With what did he fill the church?
After what pattern was the temple built?
If Solomon had changed the pattern, would God have accepted it?
Where does God meet with and bless us?

62, 63 What platform had Solomon arranged for these services?
 When the cloud filled the house, what did Solomon do and say?
 To whom did he then turn?
 What position did he occupy while praying?
 When would God hear the prayers of his people?

What prayer did Solomon offer for the foreigner?
 What came down from heaven when Solomon ended his prayer?
 How did this affect the congregation?
 Is the dedication of the temple any precedent for "dedicating" houses of worship?

I take my pilgrim staff anew,
 Life's path untrodden to pursue;
 Thy guiding eye, my Lord, I view;
 My times are in thy hand.
 Throughout the year, my heavenly Friend,
 On thy blest guidance I depend;
 From its commencement to its end
 My times are in thy hand.

(Charlotte Elliott.)

Hand in hand with angels
 Through the world we go;
 Brighter eyes are on us
 Than we blind ones know;
 Tenderer voices cheer us
 Than we deaf will own;
 Never, walking heavenward,
 Can we walk alone.

(Lucy Larcom.)

SLANDER.

A whisper broke the air—
 A soft, light tone, and low,
 Yet barbed with shame and woe;
 Now might it only perish there,
 No further go.

Ah me! A quick and eager ear
 Caught up the little-meaning sound;
 Another voice has breathed it clear,
 And so it travels round
 From ear to lip, from lip to ear,
 Until it reached the gentle heart,
 And that it broke.

(Selected.)

LESSON XII.—SEPTEMBER 18.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED.

1 Kings 12: 12-20.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him,

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of Jehovah, that he might establish his word, which Jehovah spake by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the men subject to taskwork; and all Israel stoned him to death with stones. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."* (Prov. 16: 18.)

TIME.—B.C. 975.

PLACES.—Shechem, Penuel, Bethel, and Dan.

PERSONS.—Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 1: 20-26.

HOME READING.—

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|---------------|----|---|
| September 12. | M. | The Kingdom Divided. (1 Kings 12: 12-20.) |
| September 13. | T. | The Sin of Apostasy. (2 Chron. 13: 5-11.) |
| September 14. | W. | Pride versus Humility. (Prov. 15: 22, 23.) |
| September 15. | T. | Coöperation versus Division. (1 Cor. 3: 1-9.) |
| September 16. | F. | A Prophecy of Reunion. (Ezek. 37: 21-28.) |
| September 17. | S. | United in Christ. (1 Cor. 12: 25-31.) |
| September 18. | S. | Seeking Counsel of God. (Prov. 1: 20-26.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Shechem was an important town of Palestine. It was in Samaria, in the valley between Mount Gerizim on the south and Mount Ebal on the north, the mount of blessing and mount of cursing. (See Deut. 27.) There Abraham stopped, received the promise of God, built an altar, and worshiped Jehovah. (Gen. 12: 1-9.) There Jacob and family stopped, returning from Padan-aram, and had trouble with the Shechemites. (Gen. 33: 18-20; 34.) About a mile east of Shechem was the village of Sychar. (John 4: 4-12.) Shechem was made a city of refuge (Josh. 20: 7); there Joshua addressed the Is-

raelites (Josh. 24: 1-15); Joseph's bones were buried there (Josh. 24: 32); there in conspiracy Abimelech was made king (Judg. 9: 6); there the people assembled to make Rehoboam king (1 Kings 12: 1). Jeroboam rebuilt it and made it his capital. (First see Judg. 9: 45-49; then 1 Kings 12: 25.) It now has about fifteen thousand inhabitants.

Bethel is another prominent town of Palestine, about ten miles north of Jerusalem. Its former name was "Luz." From Jacob's vision there he named it "Bethel," which means "house of God." (Gen. 28: 10-22; 31: 13.) Before this Abraham built an altar there and called upon Jehovah. (Gen. 12: 8.) Near there Deborah lived. (Judg. 4: 5.) For a time the ark of God was there, and Israel assembled there to ask counsel of God. (Judg. 20: 26-28; 21: 2.) There Samuel judged Israel. (1 Sam. 7: 16.) There Jeroboam located one of his golden calves. (This lesson.)

Dan was a town in the northern limits of Palestine near the source of the Jordan. Its original name was "Laish." It was rebuilt by a part of the tribe of Dan and named for him. Idolatry, through the image of Micah, had long since been established there. (Judg. 18: 11-31.) There Jeroboam located one of his golden calves. (This lesson.)

We are familiar with the expression, "from Dan to Beersheba," Beersheba being in the southern extremity of Palestine.

Jeroboam rebuilt Peniel. (Judg. 8: 9, 17; 1 Kings 12: 25.) Jacob called the place where he wrestled with the angel "Peniel," which means "the face of God." This place was east of the Jordan and on the south side of the brook Jabbok.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THIS LESSON.

In the place of "Hints and Helps for Teachers" a more extensive introduction to this lesson is necessary.

The books of Kings were originally one, the present division having been made in the Septuagint translation.

It is nowhere stated in the Bible who wrote these books. Jewish tradition attributes them to Jeremiah. For a lengthy discussion of this, see Smith's Bible Dictionary.

The history given in these books extends through about four hundred years. They give the history of the undivided kingdom through Solomon's reign (1 Kings 1-11); the history of the two kingdoms, Judah and Israel (1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17), to the downfall of Israel; the history of the kingdom of Judah to the Babylonian captivity (2 Kings 18-24).

The author of these books cites other books of history and prophecy—"the book of the acts of Solomon" (1 Kings 11: 41), "the chronicles of the kings of Judah" (1 Kings 14: 29), "the chronicles of the kings of Israel" (verse 19). These histories and prophecies were written by different ones—namely, "Nathan the prophet," "Gad the seer" (1 Chron. 29: 29), "Ahijah the Shilonite," "Iddo the seer" (2 Chron. 9: 29), and "Shemaiah the prophet" (2 Chron. 12: 15). In 2 Chron. 13: 22 "the commentary of the prophet Iddo" is mentioned; 2 Chron. 24: 27 mentions "the commentary of the book of the kings;"

2 Chron. 20: 34 refers to "the history of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is inserted in the book of the kings of Israel." Isaiah wrote of Uzziah (2 Chron. 26: 22), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32: 32; Isa. 36-38), and Ahaz (Isa. 1: 1; 7). Read all these references.

The Division of the Kingdom.

This lesson marks the beginning of the kingdom of Israel, which continued two hundred and fifty-four years. Some put the time a few years less. The division of the kingdom, as we shall learn, was produced by Solomon's sins and the selfishness, vanity, and unwisdom of Rehoboam. The books of Kings and Chronicles give parallel histories of these kingdoms until the captivity of Israel.

These lessons, with their connections, furnish a good opportunity for studying the history of these kingdoms.

Rehoboam.

This lesson presents to us two prominent persons, Rehoboam and Jeroboam (1 Kings 12: 1-11)—the former, prominent for his weakness; the latter, for his wickedness and rebellion.

Rehoboam was Solomon's son. His mother was "Naamah the Ammonitess" (1 Kings 14: 21), for whom Solomon built a temple for "Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites," or "Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon" (1 Kings 11: 5-7). His mother doubtless had an evil influence over him.

He is the only recorded son of Solomon; and Adam Clarke says he "was a poor, unprincipled fool." The wisest man had a fool for a son! Solomon must have realized this when he wrote: "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him." (Prov. 17: 25; see also Prov. 10: 1; 13: 1; 15: 20; etc.) A thousand wives (1 Kings 11: 3), and only one recorded son!

It is stated that "Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign" (1 Kings 14: 21; 2 Chron. 12: 13); but this is supposed to be a mistake in the record, and it must be twenty-one years. Solomon reigned only forty years; and if Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he succeeded his father, he was born a year before Solomon began to reign, which was not the case. Besides, it is said that he was "young and tender-hearted," and not able to withstand the "worthless men" and "base fellows" gathered by Jeroboam against him. (2 Chron. 13: 7.)

Solomon left his son a magnificent kingdom and great opportunities. Solomon "ruled over all the kings from the River [Euphrates] even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt." (2 Chron. 9: 26.) For a description of Solomon's wealth and resources, see 1 Kings 10: 11-29; 2 Chron. 9. There was no other nation so wealthy and whose commerce extended so far. Solomon's wisdom, wealth, glory, sins, and downfall were great.

Many young men, like Rehoboam, with splendid opportunities, have come to naught. "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." Boys and young men may follow the advice of foolish and wicked associates or act upon the counsel of wise and older men.

The people were oppressed by "the grievous service," and were restless under "the heavy yoke" placed upon them by Solomon. They were greatly taxed and forced to labor, just as God had foretold they would be. (1 Sam. 8: 10-20.)

When Solomon died, his son came to the throne. The people met Rehoboam at Shechem "to make him king," but not without first making the following request: "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." (1 Kings 12: 1-4.)

Rehoboam should have readily granted this request, but he begged three days for consideration, saying: "Depart yet for three days, then come again to me." The people did this. (Verse 5.)

Rehoboam first "took counsel with the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people?" (Verse 6.) This was a wise course, if he had only acted upon the counsel given.

Had he followed his father's example—sought counsel of God and prayed for wisdom—it would have been still better and safer for him; but he turned from Him from whom alone he could receive perfect wisdom and guidance.

The old men gave him safe and wise counsel. It is said: "Old men for counsel." They advised him to lift the burdens of the people and to be lenient and generous, saying to him: "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever." The king should "serve" the people and seek their peace and greatest good.

This course did not suit the young king; so he turned away from the safe advice of the old men and sought the counsel of "the young men that were grown up with him, that stood before him." (Verse 8.) These "young men" were his associates. "It was the custom of different countries to educate with the heir to the throne young noblemen of nearly the same age." (Clarke.) This stimulated him to greater efforts in every way and gave him a knowledge of men.

These "young men" gave Rehoboam the following dangerous advice: "Thus shalt thou say unto this people, . . . My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (Verses 10, 11.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Message.

12. After kindly, patiently, and prudently waiting the three days for Rehoboam to take counsel and consider what reply to make, the people came to him to hear upon what principles he proposed to serve them as king. They met at Shechem.

13, 14. By a prudent and wise course the young king could have preserved the unity and peace of his kingdom and won the respect and affection of all his subjects; but he answered them "roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him."

We should learn from this that rough language and harsh means are signs of weakness, not strength; of cowardice, not courage; and of un wisdom, not wisdom.

The king accepted the counsel of the "young men," which seemed to him, in his weakness and vanity, the only way to put down the threatening rebellion.

He "spoke to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." The burdens of taxation and labor which he would place upon them would be as much greater than those of his father as the loins are thicker than the little finger. (1 Kings 12: 10.) It is said that "the scorpion was a severe whip, the lashes of which were armed with iron points that sunk into and tore the flesh." (Clarke.) The rebellious were thus chastised as slaves. Rehoboam's chastisement would be as the sting of scorpions compared to his father's whips.

15. "So the king hearkened not unto the people"—that is, to make the yoke easier and the burdens lighter. (1 Kings 12: 4.) "For it was a thing brought about of Jehovah, that he might establish his word, which Jehovah spake by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat."

II. Sin and Division.

In this way was fulfilled that which God said he would do. Solomon, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the people were responsible for their conduct; and this division was a result of Solomon's sins and oppression of the people and the imprudence, rashness, and vanity of Rehoboam. God at first warned the people against having a king, and clearly pointed out the oppression and suffering to which it would lead. Under Solomon the people experienced this, and under Rehoboam they revolted. Solomon's great sins led to this result. He "loved many foreign women . . . of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which Jehovah said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you [see Ex. 23: 18-33; 34: 10-17; Deut. 7: 1-5; Josh. 23: 12, 13]; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart." He turned "after other gods"—the gods of his wives; built altars and erected temples for their worship; and spread idolatry through his kingdom. (1 Kings 11: 1-8.) For this reason "Jehovah was angry with Solomon," and said he would take the kingdom from him and give it to his servant. "Notwithstanding," said Jehovah, "in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen." (Verses 9-13.)

While, then, this "was a thing brought about of Jehovah," it came as a severe consequence of sin, cruelty, and oppression. God did not thus bring about this division for division's sake. He teaches unity and peace; yet he overrules factions, divisions, and the wicked for the

good of his people and to his own glory. He makes the wrath of men praise him. (Ps. 76: 10.)

Religious divisions and strife are to-day carnal (1 Cor. 1: 10-13; 3: 1-9); denominationalism and factions in the church are mightily opposed to "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4: 3-6); and woe is unto him who causes factions and divisions contrary to the doctrine of Christ (Rom. 16: 17, 18). Yet God overrules all this to the good of his people. By all this their faith is tested and they are approved as loyal to him. This is the crucible in which the dross is consumed and the gold is refined. "For there must be also factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Cor. 11: 19.) The religious divisions and denominations of the world to-day are the consequences of disobedience to God and rebellion against his will; yet he overrules them to his own glory and for tests and other good of his children.

III. The People Rebelled.

16. The people were determined on the course they would pursue; and as soon as they saw that Rehoboam would not grant their most reasonable request, they gave the signal for the revolt. "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse." Rehoboam was David's grandson and a descendant of Jesse.

David was first made king over Judah (2 Sam. 2: 1-4); and Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was made king over "all Israel" (verses 8-11). After seven years and six months, David was made king over all Israel and Judah (2 Sam. 5: 1-5); and he then made Jerusalem the seat of government. There existed all along in the ten tribes this feeling against Judah, which was frequently manifested. (2 Sam. 19: 43; 20: 1, 2.) Benjamin was embraced in the kingdom of Judah.

"To your tents, O Israel," meant for them to leave Rehoboam as their king, go home, and prepare for the consequences. In our language this means: "To arms!" (See 2 Sam. 20: 1, 2.)

"Now see to thine own house, David," means that Judah was all that was left to Rehoboam, and he must prepare to take care of that. "So Israel departed unto their tents." They went home and began to prepare to care for themselves.

17. According to the promise of God, for David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake and that David might always have "a lamb" before Jehovah (1 Kings 11: 13, 36), two tribes, Judah and Benjamin (1 Kings 12: 21), remained with Rehoboam (1 Kings 11: 35); so, as this verse states, Rehoboam reigned over the inhabitants of the cities of Judah.

18. Since Adoram was over so many workmen (see 2 Sam. 20: 24; 1 Kings 4: 6; 5: 13, 14), Rehoboam naturally supposed he could have some influence over them, and sent him to them, but they stoned him to death.

19. This rebellion against the house of David was fully settled by these acts.

IV. Jeroboam Made King.

20. Jeroboam was the son of Nebat, of the tribe of Ephraim; his mother was Zeruah, a widow at the time of our lesson. He was also

a young man, Solomon's servant, and worked on the fortifications about Jerusalem. He was a man of valor and industry, for which Solomon gave him "charge over all the labor of the house of Joseph."

One day as "Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem" he was met by the prophet Ahijah, who informed him that, because of Solomon's sins, God would take ten of the tribes of Israel out of Solomon's hands and give them to him, and that he should reign over them, promising that if he would obey God, God would establish his kingdom. Jeroboam, ambitious and destitute of reverence for God, could not await God's time for doing this, but lifted up his hand against Solomon.

Solomon became jealous, and tried to kill Jeroboam, who fled to Egypt for protection, remaining there until the death of Solomon. (See 1 Kings 11: 26-42.)

Having thus rebelled, Israel made Jeroboam king.

Rehoboam first thought of trying to put down this rebellion by war; but when forbidden by Jehovah through Shemaiah to do this, his army returned, "according to the word of Jehovah." (Verses 21-24.)

V. Jeroboam's Transgressions.

(Read verses 25-33.)

Let us study these verses, because if we do not we will miss the great lessons all these facts teach.

God said to Jeroboam: "And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in mine eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee." (1 Kings 11: 38.) By building him "a sure house" God meant that he would continue his posterity upon the throne.

Jeroboam threw away this great blessing and opportunity by turning at once from the commandments of God. He distrusted God's promise at once, and began to establish and solidify his kingdom in his own wisdom and way and in transgression of God's law. (See verse 25.)

He recognized in his own heart the true reason for his establishment of idolatry, but did not give this reason to the people, as 1 Kings 12: 28 shows. He knew as well as any man that Jerusalem was the place of worship.

When God led the Israelites out of Egypt, he said: "In every place where I record my name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee." (Ex. 20: 24.) When they should reach Canaan, God promised to choose a place out of all their tribes to put his name there. They were to break down all the altars and destroy all the places used by the nations of that land for the worship of idols and bring their own offerings, sacrifices, tithes, etc., to the place which God should choose for his name, and there they must eat their annual feasts. They were forbidden, too, to erect an altar in every place to which they should come. (Read Deut. 12; 16: 16, 17.) God chose Jerusalem to put his name there; there the temple of Solomon, or "house of Jehovah," was built. (See 1 Kings 8: 17, 29, 43, 46, 48; 9: 3; 2 Chron. 6: 5, 6, 10, 20; 7: 1, 2, 12, 16.) Every Israelite knew this.

God promised to establish Jeroboam and his posterity upon the throne of the kingdom of Israel, and he should have believed God. God could, and would, have done this in his own way, had Jeroboam and all his kingdom gone on faithfully with the worship at Jerusalem. Like many to-day, Jeroboam did not see how God could accomplish this end by the means he ordained. To Jeroboam, God's way would result in complete failure. He thought that if the people continued to go to Jerusalem to worship (although this was God's command, and God had promised to establish his kingdom if he would do this), they would soon return as subjects to Rehoboam and would kill him to get him out of the way. He had no more confidence in the people than he had in God.

He who has no faith in God or confidence in men is himself a bad man.

"Whereupon the king took counsel." He consulted, doubtless, with some of the leading men of his kingdom, who, like himself, placed temporal and personal success above the true worship of God. To worship God truly, obeying him in all things, was the only way Jeroboam and his house could be established upon the throne; but to him this seemed the way of his overthrow and ruin. So he deliberately set aside God's worship and law for his own personal advantage and glory. His counselors agreed with him that this course was the only safe one to pursue.

"And made two calves of gold." In making an idol, why should they make a calf or calves? Aaron made a golden calf. It has been supposed by some that this was in imitation of the religion of Egypt. The Egyptians worshiped their god, Apis, under the form of an ox or bull. It is probable that these images were made of wood and overlaid with gold. The cherubim of the temple were made of olivewood and overlaid with gold. (1 Kings 6: 23, 28.)

"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem." This was the first pretext which Jeroboam offered to the people. He did not reveal to them the real motive of his heart. The margin says: "Ye have gone up long enough" to Jerusalem. Jeroboam could not see how the two kingdoms could exist with only one place and system of worship. With a rival kingdom, he must establish a rival religion and rival places of worship.

The woman at Jacob's well said to Jesus: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus replied: "Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews." (John 4: 20-22.) This woman and her fathers, like Jeroboam, were wrong. This contention over the place of worship in Christ's day shows how long a false theory and system will continue, and this woman is an illustration of how tenaciously people cling to the erroneous traditions of "our fathers."

Jeroboam persuaded the people that it was not necessary to go to Jerusalem in order to worship. Had he lived in our day, he probably would have said: "What difference does it make where we worship, so we worship? The worship is the principal thing; and so that is done, it matters not when or where it is done." It is a pleasing argument with people to-day that it matters not what is done in

religion or how it is done, so something is done, whether that be just what God has commanded or not. Jeroboam persuaded the people that going to Jerusalem was a "nonessential."

People to-day are persuaded that some of God's commandments in the New Testament, sealed by the blood of Jesus, are "nonessential." Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) He himself was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3: 15.) The Holy Spirit says to all who believe in Jesus as the Savior and desire to obey him and be forgiven: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) Jesus sent out the apostles to teach all nations and to baptize all who would receive the teaching (Acts 2: 41) "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28: 19; see also Luke 7: 29, 30; Acts 8: 5, 12, 14, 38; 9: 18; 10: 48; 16: 33; 18: 8; 19: 1-7; Rom. 6: 3, 4, 17, 18; 1 Cor. 1: 14-16; Col. 2: 12; 1 Pet. 3: 21). With all this before one, how can any one say that baptism to the proper subject is a "nonessential?" Since Jesus says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21), how can any one think that any commandment of God is "nonessential?" Let no modern Jeroboam persuade you that God's commandments now and implicit obedience to Jesus (Heb. 5: 7-9) are "nonessential." It is absolutely right and safe to obey God in faith.

It was the want of faith which led Jeroboam to doubt God and to establish idolatry. It is not faith, but the want of it, which leads many now to set aside God's appointed way and substitute ways and means of their own.

"Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." These calves were to represent God to them. This is the language used by Aaron when he made the golden calf. He said: "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (Ex. 32: 4.) Jeroboam and his people should have remembered the disastrous consequences of Aaron's effort. Like Aaron, Jeroboam did not intend to give up the worship of Jehovah altogether, but to worship him through these images. He persuaded the people that it was the same worship carried on in the way and places which "seemed best to them." (See 1 Kings 12: 32.)

"And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan." From all that had occurred at Bethel, how easy it must have been for Jeroboam to persuade the people that this was a sacred place, called by the very name of "God!" This was convenient to all on the southern side of his kingdom. An altar at Dan would be convenient to all in the northern portion of the kingdom.

"And this thing became a sin." No worship is acceptable to God except that which he has ordained; no "aid" to the worship of God which violates any principle of the gospel of Jesus is now acceptable to God. Idolatry broke the first two commandments of the Decalogue. It embraced, too, obscene rites—such as adultery—and sometimes hu-

man sacrifice. "For the people went to worship before the one [the margin says "each of them"], even unto Dan." It was a sin because the people thus worshipped.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Repeat the first Psalm.
When was the book of Kings divided into two books?
Who wrote these books?
What period of time do they cover?
What history do they give?
Name the other books to which reference is made.
Who wrote these books? (See that all these books and their authors are correctly given.)
Of what does this lesson mark the beginning?
How long did the kingdom of Israel continue?
Which two tribes constituted the kingdom of Judah?
What was the relative situation of these kingdoms?
In what books do we have a history of these kingdoms?
What two prominent men are presented?
Whose son was Rehoboam?
Who was his mother?
What did Solomon erect for her?
How many sons did Solomon have?
What was his character?
How old was he when he began to reign?
What opportunities did Solomon leave his son? (State the extent, wealth, and condition of his kingdom.)
What have many young men, like Rehoboam, done?
Under what were the people suffering?
Where did Jeroboam and the people meet Rehoboam, and for what purpose?
What did they request of Rehoboam?
What did he request them to do?
Of whom did he seek counsel?
What advice did they give him?
Why did he not take their advice?
Of whom did he next seek counsel?
Who were these "young men"?
What advice did they give him?
- 12 After three days, what did the people do?
Where was Shechem?
13, 14 How did the king answer them?
Was the people's demand a fair and just one?
What should we learn from the king's course?
What did he mean by saying his little finger would be thicker upon them than his father's loins?
What did he mean by saying he would chastise them with scorpions?
- 15 Why did the king not hearken to the people?
Were the parties concerned responsible for their conduct?
What had Solomon done to cause this?
What did Rehoboam do?
How, then, was this of God?
What does God teach now concerning division in his church?
How does he overrule the divisions of to-day for good?
- 16 When Rehoboam delivered his message, what did the people say?
Why did they say they had no portion in David?
What did they tell Rehoboam to look after?
- 17 Over whom did Rehoboam reign?
18 Why was Adoram stoned to death?
19 How long did this rebellion continue?
20 Whose son was Jeroboam?
What was his work?
Why did he flee into Egypt?
When did he return?
What prophecy did Ahijah make concerning him?
Why and when was he made king?
How did Rehoboam think of putting down this rebellion?
What opportunities had Jeroboam?
Upon what conditions would God have made him "a sure house"?
What did he say and recognize in his heart?
What facts concerning the worship of God did he know?
Like many to-day, what did Jeroboam fail to see?
What did he think the people would do if allowed to worship God at Jerusalem?
With whom did he take counsel?
What was determined upon as the best course to pursue?
Why did he make calves and not some other idol?
Of what were the cherubim of the temple made?
What did Jeroboam say to the people?
What did he do with his heart's real motive?
What did he fail to see?
What question did the woman at Jacob's well request Jesus to settle?
What fact does this impress as regards the errors and traditions of our fathers?

What did Jeroboam mean by saying,
"It is too much for you to go up to
Jerusalem?"

What do some people say of some of
God's commandments now?

What leads people now to disobey God
and to change his way?

What did Jeroboam say when he had
set up his calves?

What did Aaron say when he made
the golden calf?

Did Jeroboam intend to turn away en-
tirely from the worship of God?

Where did he put his calves?

Relate the facts concerning Bethel.

Relate the facts concerning Dan.

What did this become?

In what different ways was idolatry
sinful?

CRITICS AND THE BIBLE.

Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he; then said with twinkling eye:
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone.
(Selected.)

When tempest clouds are dark on high,
His bow of love and peace
Shines sweetly in the vaulted sky,
Betokening storms shall cease.
Walk on thy way with hope unchilled,
By faith and not by sight,
And we shall own His word fulfilled—
At eve it shall be light! (Barnard Barton.)

Is isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives a bit of a heartache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.
(Selected.)

LESSON XIII.—SEPTEMBER 25.

REVIEW—THE EARLY KINGS OF ISRAEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*” (Ps. 103: 19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 105: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|---------------|----|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| September 19. | M. | Saul Chosen King. | (1 Sam. 10: 17-25.) |
| September 20. | T. | Samuel's Farewell. | (1 Sam. 12: 1-5.) |
| September 21. | W. | Samuel Anoints David. | (1 Sam. 16: 4-13.) |
| September 22. | T. | David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem. | (2 Sam. 6: 12-19.) |
| September 23. | F. | God's Promise to David. | (1 Chron. 17: 1-12.) |
| September 24. | S. | Solomon's Wise Choice. | (1 Kings 3: 4-15.) |
| September 25. | S. | Thanksgiving for God's Care. | (Ps. 105: 1-8.) |

The lessons of this quarter have been devoted to Kings Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and Jeroboam, and the divided kingdom. The first three reigned each forty years over the united kingdom. Rehoboam reigned over Judah seventeen years, and Jeroboam reigned over Israel twenty-two years. Many are the valuable lessons we should learn from God's dealings with these men.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Why did the children of Israel ask for a king?

Where and on what occasion was Saul anointed to be king?

At what place was he chosen king by the people?

Of what tribe and family was he?

What was his height?

How did he convince objectors of his ability to serve as king?

Why was he and his house “rejected from being king?”

LESSON II.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

What position did Samuel fill?

Give the strong and admirable points in his character.

What questions concerning his integrity did he ask the people?

What reply did the people make?

What did Samuel promise to continue to do for the people?

How long did he serve after this?

LESSON III.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Whose son was David?

Where was his home?

What was his occupation?

Whom did Samuel think of anointing before he anointed David?

Upon what does man look, and upon what does God look?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the cause of David's fight with Goliath.

Give the main facts of this battle.

What aroused Saul's jealousy?

LESSON V.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Why did Jonathan so love David?

What was the depth of their love?

Give the different circumstances under which Jonathan manifested his love for David.

What was the covenant between them?

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the different attempts Saul made to kill David.
When and how did David spare Saul's life?

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What was the ark?
Where was it?
How came it there?
What was David's failure in his first attempt to remove it?
Into whose house was it carried?
How long did it remain there?
How did David proceed the second time to remove it?
Where was it placed?

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Why did David desire to build a house for the ark?
Why was he not permitted to do so?
What promises did God make to David?

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What sins of this lesson had David committed?
Who was Nathan?

In what way did Nathan lead David to see his own sins and to repent?
Give the difference between the nature of Saul's sin and that of David's.

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What was Solomon's wise choice?
What else did God give Solomon, and why?
Why did Solomon ask for wisdom?
How can we obtain wisdom?

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who built the temple?
According to whose pattern and directions was it built?
What furniture was placed in it?
With what did God fill it?
Of what was it a type?
State the facts of the dedicatory services.
What was Solomon's position of prayer?
With what has God filled the church?

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who succeeded Solomon?
What was Rehoboam's character?
State the facts which led to the division of the kingdom.

IT DOES NOT PAY—

To "have a good time" at the expense of an uneasy conscience the next morning.

To lose our temper at the expense of losing a friend.

To cheat a corporation at the expense of robbing our own souls.

To have an enemy if we can have a friend.

To sow wild oats if we have to buy our own crop.

To spend the last half of life in remorse or regret for the first half.

To be discourteous, irreverent, cynical, cruel, or vulgar.

To give God the husks instead of the heart. (Selected.)

FOURTH QUARTER.

EARLY KINGS AND PROPHETS OF ISRAEL: FROM SAMUEL TO ISAIAH.

(Second Half of a Six-Months' Course.)

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 2.

ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL.

1 Kings 18: 30-39.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was thrown down.

31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of Jehovah came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of Jehovah fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” (Josh. 24: 15.)

TIME.—B.C. 906.

PLACE.—Mount Carmel, Cherith, and Zarephath.

PERSONS.—Elijah, Ahab, and prophets of Baal.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 115: 1-3, 9-11.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|---------------|----|---|
| September 26. | M. | Elijah on Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18: 36-46.) |
| September 27. | T. | Gideon's Victory. (Judg. 7: 19-25.) |
| September 28. | W. | Samson's Victory. (Judg. 15: 14-20.) |
| September 29. | T. | Standing for God and the Right. (Dan. 8: 8-18.) |
| September 30. | F. | Ruth's Wise Choice. (Ruth 1: 8-18.) |
| October 1. | S. | Avoiding Evil. (1 Thess. 5: 15-28.) |
| October 2. | S. | God our Helper. (Ps. 115: 1-18.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

"Mount Carmel." "Carmel" means "garden land." It is one of the most noted mountains of the Bible, being connected with two famous prophets, Elijah and Elisha. (This lesson and 2 Kings 4: 25.) It extended southeast from the Mediterranean about twelve miles into the corner of Samaria, as a wall between the famous plain of Esdraelon on the north and the plain of Sharon on the south. The western end was a promontory, running almost into the sea. The highest point is about four miles from the eastern end, and is seventeen hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea. Its sides, we are told, are covered with flowers, shrubs, and trees of the most beautiful and fragrant kind.

No other mention is made in the Bible of "the brook Cherith." It flowed into the Jordan. Elijah was commanded to hide himself by this brook. (1 Kings 17: 1-7.)

Zarephath was a town "in the land of Sidon." It was brought into notice by being the place where Elijah spent the latter part of the drought mentioned in this lesson and where he raised to life the widow's son. It is mentioned by Obadiah and by Jesus. (Luke 4: 26.)

INTRODUCTION.

Instead of "Hints and Helps for Teachers," an Introduction to this lesson is necessary.

Previous Kings.

Since we are studying the history of the kingdom of Israel, together with some of its prophets, we should know its kings down to Ahab.

The last lesson gave the origin of this kingdom. Jeroboam was its first king, and reigned twenty-two years. He was succeeded by his son, Nadab, who reigned two years. Baasha, the son of Ahijah, slew Nadab and all the house of Jeroboam, and reigned twenty-four years. He reigned in Tirzah, the second capital. (1 Kings 15: 21-34.) Elah, the son of Baasha, succeeded his father and reigned in Tirzah two years. Zimri, Elah's servant, slew him and all the house of Baasha and reigned only seven days. (1 Kings 16: 5-15.) Israel then made Omri, the captain of the army, king, and he reigned twelve years and six months. He built Samaria and made it the capital of his kingdom. Ahab, Omri's son, succeeded him and reigned twenty-two years. (1 Kings 16: 16-33.)

The kingdom down to Ahab had already had four different dynasties and had been filled with assassinations, wars, and bloodshed otherwise.

The Condition of Israel.

Ahab was king of Israel, and the wicked Jezebel was his wife. Israel had forsaken the faith and worship of Jehovah. While Jeroboam had introduced the calves, he and other kings acknowledged Jehovah and endeavored to worship him through these calves; but Ahab had introduced the worship of Baal, the idolatry of the heathen Sidonians.

The kingdom was in the deepest and densest darkness of idolatry

and wickedness, for which it was suffering a terrible drought. Jesus and James say it continued "three years and six months." (Luke 4: 25; James 5: 17.)

Elijah and His Character.

We know nothing concerning the parentage and birthplace of Elijah or of his early life. "He was of the sojourners of Gilead," which implies that he removed to Gilead from some other place. No reason is given for his doing this. He had the characteristics of a Gileadite and has been called a "typical mountaineer." He manifested great physical courage and was strong and fleet.

He wore the dress of a prophet—a garment of hair and "a girdle of leather about his loins." (2 Kings 1: 8; Isa. 20: 2; Zech. 13: 4.) He wore also "a mantle," or cape. (See 1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 2: 8, 13, 14.)

In this he hid his face in reverence for Jehovah (1 Kings 19: 13); this he cast upon Elisha (verse 19); with this he divided the Jordan; this he dropped as he ascended to heaven; and with this Elisha also divided the Jordan (2 Kings 2: 8, 13, 14).

"'Elijah the Tishbite' has been well entitled 'the grandest and the most romantic character that Israel ever produced.' Certainly there is no personage in the Old Testament whose career is more vividly portrayed or who exercises on us a more remarkable fascination. His rare, sudden, and brief appearances; his undaunted courage and fiery zeal; the brilliancy of his triumph; the pathos of his despondency; the glory of his departure; and the calm beauty of his reappearance on the mount of transfiguration—these throw such a halo of brightness around him as is equaled by none of his compeers in the sacred story. The ignorance in which we are left of the circumstances and incidents of the man who did and suffered so much doubtless contributes to enhance our interest in the story and the character." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

When we have studied Elijah's character and work, we can well see that John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah." His dress was similar to that of Elijah. (Matt. 3: 4; Luke 1: 17.)

There is no parallel history in Chronicles.

A Challenge to Baal.

As "lightning from a clear sky," as we sometimes say, Elijah, in our first introduction to him, appeared before Ahab and said: "There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

God had foretold that if his people would not obey him, with other curses should come drought: "And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron." (See Deut. 28: 15-24.) This was a direct challenge to Baal, because Baal was the god of production and agriculture. Since Ahab had turned away from Jehovah to serve Baal, let Baal supply the dew and rain. If he could not, then he was nothing. God spoke through Elijah, and it did not rain except as Elijah said. God did this through Elijah to show that he was with his true and loyal prophet. He sent Elijah to Ahab to let Ahab know that it was "the God of Israel" against whom he was sinning and that God was thus chastising him and Israel.

A Test of Elijah's Faith.

"In the third year" of the drought God commanded Elijah, saying, "Go show thyself unto Ahab." (Read here 1 Kings 18: 1-12.) He promptly obeyed God, as usual, knowing that God, who had preserved him at Cherith and Zarephath, could still save him from the wrath of Ahab. Prompt obedience to God always gives courage and strength. "And I will send rain upon the earth"—that is, after Elijah had stood before Ahab and the contest which followed was over. God sent this famine as a challenge to Baal or his worshipers and as chastisement to the people for Baal worship.

When the people learned that Baal was nothing, they would return to Jehovah. But Ahab did not repent. In the distress of this famine Ahab directed Obadiah to go through the land in search of water and grass. He and Obadiah divided the land between themselves and went through it, one going in one direction and the other in another. When the wicked Jezebel was feeding four hundred false prophets at her table (1 Kings 18: 19) and was trying to exterminate the prophets of Jehovah, Obadiah hid a hundred, fifty in a place, in caves, and fed them with bread and water.

Passing through the country, Obadiah met Elijah. Elijah directed him to go and tell Ahab that Elijah was there. Obadiah declined, knowing that Ahab wanted to punish Elijah for the famine and thinking that God, as he had protected Elijah before, would again remove him out of Ahab's reach and Ahab would then kill him for allowing Elijah to escape. But Elijah assured Obadiah that he would not disappear. Obadiah believed Elijah, went to Ahab, and told him what Elijah had said. Ahab went to meet Elijah. (Read now verses 13-24.) As soon as Ahab saw Elijah, "with impudent and shameless bravado, that only disclosed his inherent weakness and contemptibility," he said: "Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?"

With shameless boldness he made this bare attempt "to turn the tables" on Elijah by accusing him of being the criminal. The enemies of Jesus and the apostles tried this very trick of Satan. They accused Jesus of having a demon and of raising insurrection, etc.; and they accused Paul of stirring up the mobs which they had raised. (Acts 17: 5-8.) The same tactics still are resorted to. Elijah met Ahab's charge with a direct denial, saying: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed the Baalim." These sins brought on all these troubles. Elijah reproved the sinners and announced the coming famine.

Many now turn from God's order and true worship. His faithful servants, like Elijah, oppose all such departures, and trouble and divisions arise; then those who introduce the departures accuse the ones who oppose them of causing the trouble and producing division. This charge is as bold and brazen, as weak and contemptible, and as shameful and false now as it was then. God has preserved this charge of Ahab and Elijah's reply to forever settle the question of who troubles Israel. The true servants and friends of God to-day are the ones who maintain God's order of things.

"Limping Between Two Opinions."

After denying the charge that he was the troubler of Israel and showing that Ahab had caused all the trouble by forsaking the commandments of God and maintaining the worship of Baal, Elijah then challenged Ahab to the contest of our lesson between Baal and Jehovah. By the majesty of right and the authority of Jehovah speaking through him, Elijah issued the following order to Ahab: "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, that eat at Jezebel's table." Ahab accepted the challenge and obeyed the order, and "sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel." It seems "the prophets of the Asherah" did not attend this contest (verses 22, 40); neither did the wicked queen. It doubtless required several days to collect this assembly.

Then "Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long go ye limping between the two sides? if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The people hesitated, and were undecided between Jehovah and Baal. Clarke's "Commentary" makes the following pertinent remark: "They were halt; they could not walk uprightly; they dreaded Jehovah, and, therefore, could not totally abandon him; they feared the king and queen, and, therefore, thought they must embrace the religion of the State. Their conscience forbade them to do the former, their fear of man persuaded them to do the latter; but in neither were they heartily engaged. At this juncture their minds seem in equipoise, and they were waiting for a favorable opportunity to make their decision. Such an opportunity now, through the mercy of God, presented itself." Indecision between right and wrong is a decision in favor of the wrong. Too many now are "limping between the two sides." God's true and loyal servants, like Elijah, are decidedly and wholly for his way. Joshua put this test to the people. (Josh. 24: 14, 15.) To Elijah's exhortation "the people answered not a word."

"Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of Jehovah; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. . . . And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Jehovah: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken."

The Challenge Accepted.

The above was a challenge for a fair test. This the people saw, and they accepted it. The prophets of Baal also accepted it. When the bullocks were brought, Elijah allowed them to choose one and to proceed first, for they were many. This was logically right, because Baal worship had been introduced where God's worship prevailed, and the prophets of Baal were logically bound to show the superiority of their god. They should affirm their practice was right. All people are logically bound to do the same to-day.

This was a contest between a false god and the true God, a false

religion and the true religion, corruption and righteousness, licentiousness and virtue, four hundred and fifty false prophets on one side and one true prophet on the other side. This is one of the greatest victories of right over wrong and truth over error on record.

A thousandfold would we rather be on Jehovah's side in this or any other struggle, although, like Elijah, alone, than to be on the popular side and wrong. He who follows the popular side to do wrong is strongly condemned. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak [bear witness] in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest justice." (Ex. 23: 2.) So now we must choose the right and serve God truly, like Elijah, though we are alone. We must do this at all hazards.

The prophets of Baal prepared their bullock, "and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped about the altar which was made." From morning until noon they called upon Baal, but received no answer. As the time passed and they received no answer, they became more frenzied, until they "leaped about the altar." "They danced round it with strange and hideous cries and gesticulations, tossing their heads to and fro, with a great variety of bodily contortions." (Clarke.) See a description of the dance of dervishes in "Lands of the Bible," pages 422, 423.

Then Elijah, in the keenest sarcasm and the bitterest irony and with the most withering ridicule known in all literature, began to mock them, saying: "Cry aloud; for he is a god [of course it requires loud calling in order to make a god hear]: either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked."

They did cry aloud; and not only so, but they "cut themselves after their manner with knives ["swords"—margin] and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them." It was customary in idolatrous worship, as a kind of penance to satisfy their god, for the worshipers to thus punish themselves.

Thus these prophets of Baal acted in wild frenzy, growing more frantic, "until the time of the offering of the evening oblation [or three o'clock in the afternoon]; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

God Answers Elijah.

30. After all the loud crying, wild gesticulations, and frenzied bodily afflictions of the prophets of Baal for about nine hours had most signally failed, Elijah, full of faith in Jehovah and confidence which such faith inspires, called the people to him, that they might see the fairness of this whole matter. He wanted them, too, to witness the result of this test.

"And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was thrown down." This altar of Jehovah was probably built before the erection of the temple at Jerusalem. This altar had been thrown down by the enemies of Jehovah. (1 Kings 19: 10.) This Elijah first "repaired," that his offering might be made on an altar consecrated and acceptable

to God. Our services to-day must be rendered in a manner acceptable to God. Elijah honored God in repairing his altar and obeying his commands (1 Kings 18: 36), and we can honor God now only as we conform to his way.

31. Elijah took not ten, but twelve, stones, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. God was called "the God of Israel" after the ten tribes revolted to show that he was still their God if they would serve him faithfully. Jacob was still the father of all twelve tribes. The name "Jacob" had been changed to "Israel." (Gen. 32: 22-32.) Jacob had been blessed by clinging to Jehovah in prayer, and Elijah was about to pray to him. This altar was to represent the whole nation, not some division of it.

32. "And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah." Elijah was there by God's command, and this altar was built by his authority to the honor of his name, and was intrusted to his care and protection. To avoid the barest possibility of any charge of deception, this trench was made about the altar to be filled with water. "As great as would contain two measures of seed," or, as the margin says, "a two-seah measure"—that is, deep and wide enough for such a measure to sit in it. This measure contained two or three gallons.

33-35. The altar erected and the trench dug, the wood was then put on it in order, and the bullock was cut in pieces and laid on the wood. This done, Elijah then directed that "four jars" of water be poured "on the burnt offering, and on the wood." These "jars" were such as maidens used to carry water upon their heads and held about three gallons.

Twelve "jars" of water were poured on; thirty-six gallons of water, in all, were poured on. The water thoroughly saturated the sacrifice and wood, running all through them and all over the altar, and it also filled the trench. This was done to show that there was no fire concealed about the altar and to preclude any possibility of any thought of deception.

36. Elijah not only built the altar according to God's directions, but the offering was made at the time the evening sacrifice was offered to God. Everything was done in strict compliance with God's law. So we must now implicitly obey God in observing his order. Then Elijah addressed God, as he is frequently called, "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel."

God had promised to bless the descendants of these faithful men when these descendants were likewise faithful; and as the descendants of these men, Elijah and the people then addressed God. Elijah wanted them near, that as much as possible this might be their prayer as well as his. Elijah desired this done for God's honor. "Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."

This shows the faithfulness and loyalty of Elijah. In all this Elijah was proceeding only as God commanded. To hear him whom God sends is to hear God. (John 13: 20.)

37. Elijah prayed God to hear him and consume, therefore, the sacrifice for God's own glory and the salvation of the people. He prayed in a calm and trustful spirit. God wrought miracles to convince the people that he had sent his servants and was with them and to confirm the truth. (Ex. 4: 29-31; Heb. 2: 4.)

38. In answer to Elijah's prayer "the fire of Jehovah fell," consumed the burnt offering and wood, melted the stones and dust with intense heat, and "licked up the water" in the trench. God sent fire upon the altar which Moses built (Lev. 9: 24), the one David built (1 Chron. 21: 26), and the one Solomon built (2 Chron. 7: 1). See also the cases of Abraham (Gen. 15: 17) and of Gideon (Judg. 6: 21).

39. The agreement and test was: "And the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." The people saw this and were convinced. They hesitated no longer, "limping between the two sides." Acknowledging Jehovah as the true God, in reverence and awe "they fell on their faces" and said: "Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God."

This was the answer to Elijah's question whether Baal or Jehovah is God. (1 Kings 18: 21.) To own Jehovah as the true God, or now to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, and at the same time to refuse to obey him, is to prove false and untrue to one's convictions.

These people proved their sincerity and convictions by acting at once upon Elijah's order to "take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." All these Elijah "brought . . . down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there." (Verse 40.) It was God's law that such prophets should be slain. (Deut. 13: 1-5; 18: 20.) In the goodness and mercy of God for the salvation of the nation these false prophets were slain.

It seems that Ahab consented to it. The execution of these prophets was just, because God had it done, and his judgment is righteous. (Rom. 2: 5.) All idolaters, false teachers, with all who know not God and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, will be punished with "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." (2 Thess. 1: 7-10; see also Rom. 2: 4-11.) After the false prophets were slain, there was an abundant rain. The idolatry of the king and people had occasioned the drought; and now that it had accomplished its chastening effect, rain would come. (See an account of this in verses 41-46.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Describe Mount Carmel.
What is said of the brook Cherith?
What is said of Zarephath?
Name the kings and the length of the reign of each to the time of this lesson.
How many dynasties had this kingdom to this time?
What do we not know about Elijah?
Describe his dress.
Tell what he did with his mantle.
Give Elijah's characteristics.
In what was John the Baptist like Elijah?
Who was king of Israel at this time?
When do we first meet with Elijah?
How was this drought a challenge to Baal?
How was this a test of Elijah's faith and courage?

What increases faith and courage?
What did God say he would send upon the earth?
In what manner did Elijah always obey God?
What was the condition of Samaria?
What is said of the continuance of God's chastisement?
What effect did the famine have on Ahab?
Who was Obadiah?
What had Jezebel done to God's prophets?
What did Obadiah do to preserve them?
What did Ahab direct Obadiah to do?
Why must they find water and grass?
In what order did they go?
Who met Obadiah?
What did Elijah tell Obadiah to do?
What did Obadiah think would become of Elijah as soon as he himself should go to tell Ahab?
Why did he think Ahab would kill him?

- What did Elijah reply?
 What effect did this have on Obadiah?
 What did Ahab accuse Elijah of doing?
 What reply did Elijah make?
 Who really troubles the church to-day?
 To what did Elijah challenge Ahab and the prophets of Baal?
 Who did not attend this contest?
 What question and proposition did Elijah put to the people?
 What does "limping between the two sides" mean?
 What is indecision between right and wrong?
 What test did Elijah then propose?
 Why was this an appropriate and fair test?
 Why should Baal's prophets proceed first?
 Between what was this a contest?
 How long did Baal's prophets call at first before any interruption?
 How did they afflict their bodies?
 How then did Elijah mock them?
 How much longer did they call upon Baal?
 What was the result?
 30 Why did Elijah call the people to him?
 What then was the first thing he did?
 Why had this altar and others been thrown down?
- What is necessary that our worship may be acceptable to God?
 31 How many stones did Elijah use?
 Why use this number?
 Why was this trench made about the altar?
 How large was it?
 How much water was poured on?
 Why pour it on?
 Where could water be obtained after so long a drought?
 36 When was the offering made?
 As what did Elijah address God?
 Why address him thus?
 Why did Elijah request God to do this?
 What shows Elijah's faithfulness and loyalty?
 37 For what did Elijah then pray?
 What was the principal purpose of miracles?
 38 How did God answer this prayer?
 What other offering at other times did God thus consume?
 39 What did the people do and say?
 Why did Elijah slay these prophets?
 Why did God order such to be slain?
 What will become of all false teachers and those who obey not the gospel?
 Give an account of the rain and how it came.

Peace does not mean the end of all our striving;
 Joy does not mean the drying of our tears.
 Peace is the power that comes to souls arriving
 Up to the light where God himself appears;
 Joy is the wine that God is ever pouring
 Into the hearts of those who strive with him,
 Light'n'ing their eyes to vision and adoring,
 Strength'n'ing their arms to warfare glad and grim.
 (G. A. S. Kennedy.)

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill,
 Be a scrub in the valley—but be
 The best little scrub by the side of the rill;
 Be a bush if you can't be a tree.

.....
 If you can't be a highway, then just be a trail;
 If you can't be the sun, be a star;
 It isn't by size that you win or you fail—
 Be the best of whatever you are.
 (Douglas Malloch.)

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 9.

ELIJAH HEARS GOD'S VOICE.

1 Kings 19: 9-18.

9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of Jehovah came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before Jehovah. And, behold, Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; but Jehovah was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

14 And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And Jehovah said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria;

16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

17 And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

18 Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Wait for Jehovah: be strong, and let thy heart take courage.” (Ps. 27: 14.)

TIME.—906 B.C.

PLACES.—Jezreel, Beersheba, the wilderness south of Beersheba, and Mount Sinai.

PERSONS.—Ahab, Elijah, his servant, an angel, and Jehovah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 57: 1-5.

HOME READING.—

- October 3. M. Jezebel's Threat. (1 Kings 19: 1-8.)
- October 4. T. Elijah's Flight and Return. (1 Kings 19: 9-19.)
- October 5. W. Jehovah's Charge to Joshua. (Josh. 1: 1-9.)
- October 6. T. Hagar Encouraged. (Gen. 21: 14-21.)
- October 7. F. John the Baptist Encouraged. (Matt. 11: 1-10.)
- October 8. S. Fearless Trust in Jehovah. (Ps. 27: 1-14.)
- October 9. S. A Prayer for Deliverance. (Ps. 57: 1-11.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Horeb” was probably the name of the group of mountain peaks, and “Sinai” that of the particular peak on which God met with Moses and from which he spoke to the people and gave the law. It was in the southern part of the peninsula of Arabia, between the arms of

the Red Sea, and was about two hundred miles south of Beersheba. The occurrences and scenes about Horeb make this mountain one of the most memorable spots on the earth.

"Beersheba" means "the well of an oath." (Gen. 22: 21-34; 26: 23, 32, 33.) It was the southern extremity of Palestine—"from Dan to Beersheba." (Judg. 20: 1.) It was about forty-five miles south of Jerusalem.

Jezreel was about fifty miles north from Jerusalem; Beersheba was about forty-five miles south from Jerusalem; and Mount Horeb was about two hundred miles south from Beersheba. Hence, Elijah's journey from Jezreel (1 Kings 18: 46) to Mount Horeb was almost three hundred miles.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Verses 1-8 of the chapter containing this lesson relate the effect upon Jezebel of Elijah's having the prophets of Baal slain; her rage and threat and oath to her gods to kill Elijah in less than twenty-four hours; Elijah's flight for his life from Jezreel to Beersheba, where he left his servant, went a day's journey into the wilderness, and requested Jehovah to take his life; the invitation of an angel to him to arise and eat of "a cake baken on the coals" and to drink of a cruse of water which lay at his head; the second visit of the angel, inviting him the second time to eat, because the journey was too great for him without food and the strength it gave; and of his going "in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."

However interesting, instructive, and inviting to comment on these stirring facts, space forbids our dwelling at large upon them, although they are really a part of the lesson.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Elijah's Discouragement.

9. Study first the effect that having the false prophets slain had upon Jezebel. (Verses 1-8.) "And he came thither." From his rest and meals under the juniper tree Elijah came "unto Horeb the mount of God" (verse 8), "unto a cave." Caves were common in that country, as we have seen. Sometimes people dwelt in them. Elijah "lodged" in this one. Whether he spent one night or more is not stated.

"The word of Jehovah came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?" Elijah had gone there from the juniper tree in the wilderness, it seems from verse 7, by the direction of the angel; but he had fled from the field of action in Israel. Elijah's reply to this question in the next verse shows what he understood Jehovah to mean by it.

There is now, and will ever be, a mighty struggle between right and wrong, truth and error, Christ and Satan; and "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3: 12), and none can retire from the fierce conflict with impunity. He who would retire from the struggle to the wilderness of idleness and ease would sacrifice God's cause and his own soul; on the other hand, the truest,

bravest, boldest, and most courageous person needs at times rest and encouragement.

The physical reaction of Elijah's mighty struggle on Carmel and the ferocity of Jezebel had depressed him, and he sought relief. God is a present help in every time of need, a stay and comfort in human weakness; therefore, he came to Elijah's assistance.

Though weak, weary, and persecuted, fight on, and God will give the victory. There can be no cessation of the warfare.

10. In reply to God's question, Elijah explained why he was there: "I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." Indeed, Elijah was "jealous for Jehovah." He was unwilling that any other god should be served, and had done, it seemed to him, all that he could to put down idolatry. God himself is "a jealous God," forbidding idolatry and that any object or person shall be loved even above himself. (Ex. 20: 4-6; Matt. 10: 37-39; 22: 37.)

Baal was the sun god, and Ashtoreth was the moon goddess. They were the deities of reproduction, agriculture, etc.

"The God of hosts" means the God of all the heavenly hosts and all intelligences in the universe, and is used in contrast with "Baal" and "Ashtoreth."

Not only had the children of Israel turned away from God and broken his covenant in worshiping idols, but they had thrown down his altars and slain his prophets, that his worship might not be restored. It is true now that he who does not gather with Jesus scatters, and he who would build up other religious institutions than the church of Christ does so to the detriment and destruction of that church.

Elijah was discouraged. He felt that he was the only one left to plead God's cause, and God's enemies were seeking his life. Elijah's faithfulness and jealousy for God caused him to feel more sensibly and keenly the sin of Israel in forsaking God. The faithfulness and loyalty of God's people to-day cause them to feel more sensibly any apostasy from the truth. Some have not "their senses exercised to discern good and evil." (Heb. 5: 13, 14.) On Mount Carmel, Elijah made the statement that he was alone. (1 Kings 18: 22.) The faithful at different times have been forsaken, and they have always felt it; they would not be human if they did not feel it. Paul, in prison in Rome, said: "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me." (2 Tim. 4: 16.) The disciples of Jesus forsook him and fled, and on the cross he said: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

II. The "Still Small Voice;" Elijah's Encouragement.

11, 12. God then directs Elijah to "go forth, and stand upon the mount." On this mountain top God met Moses, and here he would meet Elijah. After Elijah had reached the mountain top, "Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind." After the wind, there was an earthquake; "but Jehovah was not in

the earthquake." After the earthquake, there was a fire; "but Jehovah was not in the fire." After the fire, there was "a still small voice," or "a sound of gentle stillness" (margin).

What lesson would God teach Elijah by all this? God was not in the rushing, roaring wind which rent the mountains and split the rocks; he was not in the cracking, quivering earthquake; he was not in the bright, blazing fire. Ahab and Jezebel were moving in pomp and pageantry, and seemingly all Israel had gone with them after Baal. Baal worship was the state religion. God was not in the outward show and noise and manifestations of worldly power. Ahab and Jezebel were in the majority, and made the display and noise of apparent great success; but God was not there. The very kingdom itself in the beginning was a rejection of God as King (1 Sam. 8), and was rebellion against him, and its kings were leading the people farther from God. Those in error sometimes make the most noise and greatest display. God was in his word and with those who obeyed his voice. If this is not the lesson God would here teach Elijah, then what is it? God assured Elijah by this that he should not be discouraged by the power of these earthly kings and the fact that the great majority of the people had followed Baal. So to-day we should not become disheartened because the majorities go contrary to God's will in religion.

Unless God is in a work and upholds it, it is vain and will come to naught. "Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Ps. 127: 1.) These rulers were mighty, like the wind, the earthquake, and the fire; but God was not with them. Elijah felt his weakness, but God was with him.

13. When Elijah heard this voice, he recognized the presence of Jehovah, and in reverence and awe "he wrapped his face in his mantle." His "mantle" was his cape of perhaps undressed skin. He then returned to the cave to receive further instruction from God. While standing "in the entrance of the cave," the voice of God came again, saying: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" As the verses below show, this was a kind of reproof for desiring to remain in the cave in quiet when God had further work for him to do. Elijah, it seems, had not yet learned the lesson which God sought to teach him on the mountain.

14. He made the same reply as before.

III. Elijah Back to the Field of Action.

15. "And Jehovah said unto him, Go." This was a positive, direct command. There was yet more work for Elijah to do; there were greater victories for him to gain. The quiet of the wilderness and cave was peaceful and restful, and the "sound of gentle stillness" was refreshing; but Elijah must not remain there.

"Return on thy way by the wilderness to Damascus." Damascus was the capital of Syria and was several hundred miles north of Sinai.

"Thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria." Hazael was the servant, or officer, of Benhadad, king of Syria. He became a powerful ruler and greatly oppressed Israel. God used him as an instrument to punish Israel for its idolatry, persecuting Elijah, and slaying God's prophets. A record of the atrocities and horrible afflictions imposed upon Israel by Hazael is given in 2 Kings 8: 7-29; 10: 32, 33.

Elijah did not with his own hands anoint Hazael, but Elisha made known to him the fact that he was to be king over Syria.

16-18. Also, Elijah was to anoint "Jehu the son of Nimshi" king over Israel. Jehu was the son of a man named "Jehoshaphat" and grandson of Nimshi. He was a general in the army of Israel under Joram, the son of Ahab and king of Israel. The ferocious and bloody deeds of Jehu are recorded in 2 Kings 9: 1 to 10: 31. Read all these references, and all the facts will be gathered. Elijah did not anoint Jehu, either, with his own hands; it was done by Elisha through "one of the sons of the prophets." Furthermore, Elijah was to anoint "Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah" to be prophet in his stead. Abel-meholah was west of the Jordan and not far to the northeast from Tirzah, the former capital of Israel. Elisha was to succeed Elijah as God's prophet to direct in all these matters.

In returning to Abel-meholah, Elijah would go back to the field of action whence he had fled from Jezebel; but he would go back encouraged by the Lord and assured that all these transgressors would suffer just punishment for their idolatry and sin. Hazael and Jehu were anointed kings and Elisha prophet to execute judgment against evil-doers. God assured Elijah that there were left "seven thousand in Israel" which had not bowed the knee to Baal and kissed him.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What did Ahab relate to Jezebel?
What did she bind herself by oath to do?
What did Elijah hasten to do?
To what place did Elijah flee?
What request did he make to the Lord?
For what reason did he request to die?
What did an angel invite him to do?
Why must he eat?
How long did he then go without any other food?
To what place did he go?
How far was Jezreel north of Jerusalem?
How far was Beersheba south of Jerusalem?
How far was Horeb south of Beersheba?
9 Where did Elijah lodge in Horeb?
What did God ask him?
What was meant by this question?
What lesson do we learn from this?
10 What reply did Elijah make?
What is it to be jealous for Jehovah?
How is Jehovah jealous?
Why is he called "the God of hosts"?
Why did Elijah feel so keenly the apostasy from God?
Who else were forsaken?
Who to-day feel deeply and sensibly any departure from the gospel of Christ and the church of God?
11, 12 What did God direct Elijah to do?
What passed by?
Where was God not?
What lesson does this teach?
Who sometimes makes the greatest noise and display?
13 What did Elijah do?
Why?
To what did he return?
What question did God ask?
14 What reply did Elijah make?
15 What in this verse did God command Elijah to do?
Where and what was Damascus?
Who was Hazael?
What deed against Israel did he commit?
16-18 Who was to be anointed king over Israel?
Who was Jehu?
What deeds of atrocity did he commit?
Did Elijah anoint Hazael and Jehu with his own hands, or how was it done?
Who was to succeed Elijah as prophet?
What would these men do?
How many were left who had not bowed the knee to Baal?

LESSON III.—OCTOBER 16.

ELIJAH IN NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

1 Kings 21: 5-10, 16-20.

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

6 And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and that dwelt with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people:

10 And set two men, base fellows, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him to death.

16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 And the word of Jehovah came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be sure your sin will find you out."* (Num. 32: 23.)

TIME.—About B.C. 900.

PLACES.—Jezreel and Samaria.

PERSONS.—Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel, Naboth, and his false accusers.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 94: 17-23.

HOME READING.—

- October 10. M. Ahab Covets Naboth's Vineyard. (1 Kings 21: 1-4.)
- October 11. T. Jezebel's Wicked Plan. (1 Kings 21: 5-16.)
- October 12. W. Elijah Denounces Ahab. (1 Kings 21: 17-26.)
- October 13. T. The Sin of Covetousness. (Rom. 7: 7-25.)
- October 14. F. Sin Cannot Be Hid. (Gen. 4: 3-15.)
- October 15. S. Sowing and Reaping. (Gal. 6: 1-10.)
- October 16. S. Jehovah the Just Judge. (Ps. 94: 17-23.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Jezreel was a town at the northwestern end of Mount Gilboa and several miles north of the city of Samaria.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

This lesson is an exemplification of the sin of covetousness and other sins to which it leads.

Jesus says: "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12: 15.)

Covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 6.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Ahab Coveted Naboth's Vineyard.

5, 6. This story is given to show Ahab's depraved character. Naboth's vineyard was "hard by" Ahab's palace in Jezreel, and Ahab wanted it to make of it an herb garden. Ahab proposed to exchange for Naboth's vineyard a better one or to pay for it in money; but Naboth declined to part with it because God's law forbade his disposing thus of the family inheritance. (See Lev. 25: 23-28; Num. 36: 7-9; Ezek. 46: 18.) Ahab returned to his home, it seems, in Samaria (verses 14, 16, 18; 1 Kings 20: 43), and, petulant and sulky, rolled on his bed, pouted, and refused to eat. Jezebel, upon discovering the cause of his moroseness, bade him arise and be merry, for she would secure for him the coveted vineyard. She was one of the most, if not the most, ungodly, impious, and daringly wicked women who has ever lived. She spread whoredom and witchcraft throughout the kingdom (2 Kings 9: 22), and stirred up her husband to sell himself to do evil (1 Kings 21: 25). Her name is a synonym of wickedness and rebellion.

II. Jezebel's Wicked Plot to Take the Vineyard.

7. "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?" The wicked Jezebel intimated by this question that Ahab was king and could take Naboth's vineyard from him; and if he could not, she could. Then she laid a most diabolical plot to have Naboth and his sons (1 Kings 9: 26) stoned to death upon a false accusation of blasphemy and his vineyard confiscated.

8-10. "She wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal," to "the elders and to the nobles" of Jezreel, ordering them to "proclaim a fast" and to "set Naboth on high among the people," and to have two "base fellows" to falsely accuse him of cursing, or renouncing, God and the king, and then to take him out and stone him to death. The directions were imperative; there must be no parleying or hesitancy. This was a horrible conspiracy and murder most foul to gratify the whim of a depraved character. What does this wicked and idolatrous woman care for God? Had she not many times committed the sin of blasphemy? How many sins, like hissing serpents, coiled together in her heart as a nest! She knew only "base fellows"—worthless men—would perjure themselves; hence, for those she called. A hypocrite, she used religion to enforce a lie and commit murder. Suborner, hypocrite, robber, liar, and murderer was she in this case. The legal punishment of blasphemy was death by stoning (Lev. 24: 16), but Naboth was as innocent as was Jesus. Jesus was accused of

blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God, and on this false charge was crucified.

Naboth's sons were likewise stoned to death (2 Kings 9: 26), that there would be no heirs.

III. Ahab's and Jezebel's Sins Found Them Out.

16. "The elders and nobles" of Naboth's city, having received Jezebel's letters, acted as directed. They then sent the news to her. With much complacency and satisfaction she said to Ahab: "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." She gloated over her success. (See verses 11-15.) Ahab then "rose up to go down" to Jezreel to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

While Ahab did not possess the cunning and daring of Jezebel, she stirred him up (1 Kings 21: 25), and, in abject moral weakness, he was guilty of all the sins mentioned above—hypocrisy, suborning witnesses, robbery, lying, and murder—of which she was guilty. His sins sprang from more than covetousness; they sprang from a petulant, morose, and depraved nature.

17, 18. The sins of Jezebel and Ahab found them out. While the news was going to Jezebel that her orders had been carried out, the black crimes were going to Elijah, but in different ways, Elijah receiving his news from God. "The word of Jehovah came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of it." As Ahab stepped in to take possession, there was Elijah to meet him.

19. Others may not have known Jezebel's and Ahab's sins, except themselves and those who executed them; but God knew them. So Nathan made known to David the fact that God knew his sins. God told Elijah to say to Ahab: "Thus saith Jehovah, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" God knew all. Elijah was to say further: "Thus saith Jehovah, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."

IV. Who Is One's Enemy?

20. "Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Ahab had seen enough of Elijah to dread his presence. Ahab was Elijah's enemy, but Elijah was not his enemy; Elijah sought Ahab's good and the good of the people. To reprove one of sin and to point out to him the right way is true friendship and love. Too many, like Ahab, call him who tells them the truth their enemy. So people treated Paul. He asks: "So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?" (Gal. 4: 16.) Jezebel was Elijah's enemy and an enemy of all truth and righteousness. Elijah answered: "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah." All covetous persons sell themselves to do evil; all who do wrong in any way or in any way leave undone what they should do for money sell themselves—sell their souls.

Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; Judas sold himself (not Jesus) for thirty pieces of silver; so all who, for the sake of

fleshly pleasure or earthly gain, do wrong, sell themselves, and sell themselves to do evil. "They that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 6: 9, 10.) We should heed the Golden Text.

Elijah then declared the doom of Ahab and Jezebel: (1) As stated in verse 19, the dogs should lick Ahab's blood in the place where they had licked the blood of Naboth; (2) as the house, or dynasty, of Jeroboam and the house, or dynasty, of Baasha had been destroyed, so would God destroy Ahab's house, cutting off "every man-child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel;" (3) the dogs should not simply lick Jezebel's blood, but should eat her body "by the rampart of Jezreel;" and (4) "him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the birds of the heavens eat." (Verses 21-24.) They should not be buried even.

Upon hearing this, Ahab humbled himself before God. "He rent his clothes," "put sackcloth upon his flesh," "fasted," "lay in sackcloth," and "went softly." God said because Ahab had done this he would not bring this evil in Ahab's day, but he would bring it in the days of Ahab's son. (Verses 27-29.) Ahab was accidentally killed in battle away from home, yet the dogs licked his blood from his chariot at the pool of Samaria. (1 Kings 22: 34-38.) But Jehu, when he slew Ahab's son, Joram, ordered his body cast into Naboth's vineyard because God had said this. (See 2 Kings 9: 21-26.)

Jezebel was thrown alive from a window and some of her blood was sprinkled upon the wall and some upon the horses; she was trodden "under foot," and the dogs ate her flesh, leaving nothing except her skull, feet, and the palms of her hands. Jehu said: "This is the word of Jehovah, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the body of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel, so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel." (2 Kings 9: 30-37.) Jehu then had all the sons of Ahab, all his great men, all his familiar friends, and all his priests killed. (2 Kings 10: 1-11.)

This was in fulfillment of that which God spoke by Elijah concerning Ahab's house.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Places, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where did the last lesson leave Elijah?

Who was Naboth?

Where was Jezreel?

What did Ahab want of Naboth?

5, 6 Why would Naboth not part with it? How did this affect Ahab?

Give the character of Jezebel.

7 What did she say to Ahab when she discovered why he was displeased?

8-10 Give her wicked plan to obtain the vineyard?

Of how many sins was she guilty in this plot?

Why select "base fellows" as false witnesses?

- What was the legal punishment of blasphemy?
 16 What did the elders and nobles do?
 What news was sent to Jezebel?
 What did she then say to Ahab?
 What did Ahab do?
 Of what sins in this case was he guilty?
 Why was he guilty?
 17, 18 How did the sins of Ahab and Jezebel find them out?
 19 What did God tell Elijah to say to Ahab?
 20 What reply did Ahab make?
 Why did he call Elijah his "enemy?"

What is it to love any one?
 For what had Ahab sold himself?
 Who sell themselves now?
 What do those who are minded to be rich do?
 What springs from the love of money?
 State, in order, the doom of Ahab and his house?
 What effect did this have upon Ahab?
 State, in order, what he did to show his repentance.
 State, in order, how this punishment came upon Ahab, Jezebel, and Ahab's house.

THE WAY OF LIFE.

I walked in the wood and was lonely,
 All things were desolate;
 I saw in the stream myself only;
 I saw—and sighed at Fate.

I fought in a war-ridden land
 'Mid the surging tide of strife;
 That my house was built upon sand
 I saw—and railed at Life.

I danced with the mistiest of moonbeams
 Down the crowded floor at the ball;
 I saw that I had no place in her dreams;
 I saw—and deplored Adam's fall.

I confessed my faith in my Savior,
 I obeyed God's holy word;
 I saw that I was forgiven;
 I saw—and loved Christ the Lord.

(Truey Marie McConnell.)

If I knew the light of a smile
 Might linger the whole day through,
 And brighten some heart with a heavier part,
 I would not withhold it, would you?

A trifling kindness here and there
 Is but a simple, small affair;
 Yet if your life has sown this free,
 Wide will your happy harvest be.

(Selected.)

LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 23.

THE CALL OF THE PROPHET.

1 Kings 19: 19, 20; Amos 7: 14, 15; Isa. 6: 1-8.

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing, with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed over unto him, and cast his mantle upon him.

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again; for what have I done to thee?

14 Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore-trees:

15 And Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple.

2 Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.

8 And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me."* (Isa. 6: 8.)

TIMES.—Time of Elisha's call, about B.C. 900; of Amos' call, about B.C. 785; of Isaiah's call, about B.C. 756.

PLACES.—Tekoa and the temple in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Elijah, Elisha, and Amos.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 40: 5-10.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|-------------|----|------------------------|-------------------|
| October 17. | M. | The Call of Isaiah. | (Isa. 6: 1-8.) |
| October 18. | T. | The Call of Abram. | (Gen. 12: 1-9.) |
| October 19. | W. | The Call of Moses. | (Ex. 3: 1-12.) |
| October 20. | T. | The Call of Samuel. | (1 Sam. 3: 1-11.) |
| October 21. | F. | The Call of Peter. | (Matt. 4: 18-25.) |
| October 22. | S. | The Call of Saul. | (Acts 9: 1-9.) |
| October 23. | S. | Delighting in the Way. | (Ps. 40: 1-10.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Tekoa, Amos' home, was a town in the kingdom of Judah, about twelve miles south of Jerusalem and about six miles south of Bethlehem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The order of the call of the prophets of this lesson is: Isaiah, first; Elisha, second; and Amos, third. The lesson changes this order, for which we see no reason; and, still, it matters not which call we study first.

This and the following two lessons furnish fine opportunities for studying the book of Amos.

This book is direct and pointed and can soon be read through.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Elisha's Call.

(1 Kings 19: 19, 20.)

As we learned from the last lesson, God sent Elijah from Horeb back to the field of action in the kingdom of Israel and directed him to anoint Hazael king over Syria, Jehu king over Israel, and Elisha prophet in his stead.

Elijah, always promptly obedient to God, returned from Sinai and began the work of anointing Elisha prophet in his stead, Jehu king over Israel, and Hazael king over Syria. This work was not all done at once and with Elijah's own hands.

He found Elisha plowing "with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth." There were twelve plows running in the same field. Elisha's father or Elisha himself must have been a wealthy farmer. Elisha lived with his father.

It is worthy of note that Elisha was at work and in the faithful discharge of the duty at hand when called to succeed Elijah, also that he made a financial sacrifice to become a prophet of God.

It is the boy or young man who knows how to do well that at which he is at work and is cheerfully doing it who is called to a greater work.

Elijah "passed over unto" Elisha in the field "and cast his mantle upon him."

From this and Elijah's mantle falling upon Elisha when Elijah was taken up (2 Kings 2: 9-14) sprang the familiar expression of the mantle of one falling upon another.

Elisha understood that this was a call for him to follow Elijah. "And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee"—that is, bid them farewell. Elijah said: "Go back again [go bid your parents farewell, as you desire]; for what have I done to thee?" Elijah did not mean by this that what he had done to Elisha signified nothing; but, on the contrary, this was an important call which God, and not Elijah, had made; and while Elisha could return home for all necessary preparation, yet he must not forget his obligations in this matter, "for [remember] what have I done to thee?"

Elisha returned home and celebrated this call with a feast, slaying the oxen with which he plowed, and "roasted [margin] their flesh with the instruments of the oxen." He then left home and became a pupil of Elijah.

II. Amos and His Call.

(Amos 7: 14, 15.)

Who was Amos? Why did he prophesy? When and where did he prophesy? His name means "burden." It is different from "Amoz," the father of Isaiah (Isa. 1: 1), which means "strong." The names of Amos' parents are not given. He was a subject of the kingdom of Judah, but was sent to prophesy to the kingdom of Israel. He was a true missionary.

He "was a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees." (Amos 1: 1; 7: 14, 15.) He kept a sycamore orchard. The sycamore tree, not like our sycamore, was a fruit tree, whose fruit was something like the fig, but sweet and watery, and not very valuable.

Amos was a humble man, who made no pretensions to be a teacher and leader. He was the author of the familiar saying: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son." He meant, as the margin states, that he was not "one of the sons of the prophets." He did not belong to any school of the prophets. He had never attended any of the schools of the prophets with the view of making a prophet. He was a righteous and God-fearing man, who studied God's will, loved the truth and hated iniquity. He was moved by the Spirit of God to prophesy against other nations, and especially against Israel. He said: "The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3: 8.) This is similar to Paul's expression: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 16.) This is the true spirit of the preacher of the gospel to-day. Like Amos, like Paul, such a man cannot be turned from his course in preaching the truth.

When Amos prophesied in Bethel the destruction of the king's house by the sword and the downfall of the kingdom (Amos 7: 7-11), "Amaziah the priest of Bethel" informed the king that Amos had conspired against him and the land was not able to bear all his words. He also invited Amos to leave the country and return to Judah and prophesy there. He foretold the downfall of Amaziah's family. (Verses 16, 17.)

Amos prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II, son of Joash, king of Israel, "two years before the earthquake." (Amos 1: 1.) The reigns of these kings are given in 2 Kings 14: 23 to 15: 12; 2 Chron. 26. The prophet Jonah preceded Amos. (2 Kings 14: 25; Jonah 1: 1.) Joel, it is thought, belonged to this period.

Amos was a brave and heroic prophet. He fearlessly pronounced God's solemn words of condemnation against Israel. He very wisely began by prophesying against other nations—namely, Damascus (the Syrians), Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron (the Philistines); Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah. This showed that God was just and impartial in his judgments.

III. Isaiah's Call and Glorious Vision.

(Isa. 6: 1-8.)

1, 2. "In the year that king Uzziah died" Isaiah saw this vision. Some think this vision marks the beginning of Isaiah's work as a

prophet; but this is hardly probable, because prophets, like other servants of God, grew and developed in their prophetic work from one degree of service to another, and the vision in this chapter shows a high degree of advancement and close relationship to God. Fidelity in little prepares one for the reception of much; so being faithful in much, God gave Isaiah a true insight into the condition of affairs, the cause, and the remedy. He saw it all clearly and felt it keenly. The more righteous he became and the nearer to God he drew, the more heinous and terrible became to him the sins and crimes of his people and the more deeply he felt for them in the awful retribution which overhung them. All that is in the book of Isaiah (2: 1; 6: 1; 8: 1; 13: 1) was not revealed to him at the same time.

This was a glorious vision—the Lord sitting upon a throne in the most holy place in the temple, “high and lifted up,” while the skirts of his garments filled the temple, and above him stood the seraphim, each one having six wings. With two wings a seraph covered his face; with two, his feet; and with two he flew. The seraphim, it seems, correspond to the cherubim whose wings overshadowed the mercy seat. (Ex. 25: 10-22; 37: 7-9; 1 Kings 6: 23-28; 2 Chron. 3: 10-14.) From between the two cherubim which were upon the ark of the testimony, above the mercy seat, God gave commandments concerning the children of Israel. (Ex. 23: 22.) The “four living creatures” in Ezekiel’s vision had each “four wings;” but in the vision of John on Patmos “the living creatures” had “each one of them six wings.” John saw “a throne set in heaven” and these “four living creatures” “round about the throne.” (See Rev. 4: 1-8; 5: 6-14; 6: 1, 6; 7: 11; 14: 3; 15: 7; 19: 4.) Some say that covering their faces with two wings showed humility, and covering their feet with two wings showed respect; but I do not know, and care not to guess.

3. The twofold mission of the seraphim was to declare the holiness and praise of Jehovah and to communicate Jehovah’s message through Isaiah to the people. (See verse 6.) The “one cried unto another,” or spoke alternately, it seems: “Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.” So said “the four living creatures” in John’s vision. (Rev. 4: 8-11.)

4. “And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.” Sinai “quaked greatly” when God came down upon it and spoke. (Ex. 19: 18.) “Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven.” (Heb. 12: 26.) The smoke may have been to veil the presence of Jehovah, as “the cloud of the incense” covered the mercy seat when the high priest went into the most holy place. (Lev. 16: 12, 13.) This vision and prophecy, like others, not only referred to the people then, but to Christ and the Jews in his day. John (12: 41) says that in this vision Isaiah spoke of Christ: “These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory; and he spake of him.”

5. Isaiah felt his sinfulness and that he was undone in the presence of God. God said to Moses: “Thou canst not see my face; for man shall not see me and live.” (Ex. 33: 20.) Different ones saw angels and God’s glory; but this filled them with fear and trembling, as in the case of Moses and the children of Israel (Heb. 12: 18-21); Gideon

(Judg. 6: 22); Manoaah (Judg. 13: 23); Peter, James, and John (Matt. 17: 6; Rev. 1: 17, 18).

6, 7. When Isaiah declared that he was "a man of unclean lips" and dwelt "in the midst of a people of unclean lips," one of the seraphim touched his mouth with "a live coal" which he had taken with tongs from the altar, and said: "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven."

IV. Isaiah's Response.

8. When the Lord said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah answered in humility and submission: "Here am I; send me." Samuel, when a child, said to Jehovah, "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3: 10); and Saul of Tarsus said: "What shall I do, Lord?" (Acts 22: 10). Saul meant not only what should he do in order to be saved from his past sins, but what should he do at all times, and that he would do whatever God would have him to do in the future. Therefore, when God sent him to the Gentiles, he went. (Acts 26: 16-20.)

Every one now should manifest the spirit of Isaiah and be as ready to work for the spread of the gospel and to do every other duty. Every Christian is ready to do this. One cannot become a Christian or live the life of a Christian without being ready always to do this.

V. Isaiah's Message.

Verses 9-13 state the message which God sent through Isaiah to the people. It was a sad one indeed. Jesus and Paul frequently quote this passage and apply it to the Jews of their day. They say it was fulfilled by the Jews of their day. (See Matt. 13: 14, 15; Mark 4: 12; Luke 8: 10; John 12: 40; Acts 28: 26, 27; Rom. 11: 8.) The prosperity, luxury, ease, pleasure, fashion, vanity, pride, and evil associations described in chapters 2-4 closed the eyes and stopped the ears of the people against the truth and the pure worship of God. Their hearts became "fat" and slow and dead to act in obedience to God. God had predicted that when the people had eaten, become full, "waxed fat," they would turn to idols, despise him, and break his covenant (Deut. 31: 20); and Jeshurun, or Israel, "waxed fat, and kicked" (Deut. 32: 15). Jesus says the people closed their eyes, stopped their ears, would not understand with their hearts, and would not turn that he might heal them. (Matt. 13: 15.) It is said that Isaiah closed the eyes, stopped the ears, and made "fat" the hearts of the people because he declared their true condition. This sad message is like Jeremiah's declaration, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer. 8: 20), and Jesus' lamentation over Jerusalem (Matt. 23: 37, 38).

Isaiah said: "How long?" How long was this sad condition of the people to continue? The response was: "Until cities be waste without inhabitant," "houses" be "without man," "the land become utterly waste," "Jehovah have removed men far away," "and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land." Even if "a tenth" of the people be left, it in turn shall be eaten up. There should nothing be left only a remnant called "the holy seed," which was "the stock," or

substance, like the roots of a terebinth tree and an oak. The terebinth was a small tree of Palestine, from whose stump, when cut down, new branches would spring up. So the remnant left of God's people was like this stump. This condition continued until the Babylonian captivity, until the personal ministry of Jesus on earth, until the final destruction of Jerusalem, and still continues.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Times, Places, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Tekoa?
In what order did the call of these prophets come?
What is said of this book?
- 19, 20 What persons and to what positions did God direct Elijah to anoint on his return from Horeb?
Where did he find Elisha?
What kind of people does God call to his work?
What did Elijah cast upon Elisha?
How did Elisha consider this?
What did Elisha request to be permitted to do?
What gave rise to the idea of the mantle of one person falling upon another?
How did Elisha celebrate this call?
Whose pupil did he become?
- 14, 15 What does the word "Amos" mean?
What does "Amoz" mean?
Tell what we know about Amos—his parents, his work and home.
What was the sycamore fruit?
What was Amos' character?
What is meant by not being a prophet or "one of the sons of the prophets?"
In what respect are Samuel, Amos, and Paul alike?
What to-day is the true spirit of the preacher of the gospel?
What report did Amaziah make to the king concerning the prophecy of Amos?
What did Amos declare concerning Amaziah and his family?
During whose reigns did Amos prophesy?
- Against what nations did he prophesy?
1, 2 When did Isaiah see this vision?
Why is it probable that this was not his first call to become a prophet?
Why did the sins of Judah appear so heinous and their punishment so inevitable to Isaiah?
Describe his vision.
Who had similar visions?
3 What was the twofold mission of the seraphim?
What did one cry to the other?
What did "the four living creatures" that John saw cry?
4 What effect did the voice of him that cried have upon the foundation of the temple?
Repeat Heb. 12: 26.
For what purpose may have been the smoke?
Why say this vision embraced Christ?
5 What effect did the appearance of an angel, or the presence of God, have upon Isaiah and others?
What did Isaiah say?
6, 7 What did one of the seraphim do and say?
8 What did the Lord say to Isaiah?
What reply did Isaiah make?
What did Samuel and Saul of Tarsus say when the Lord spoke to them?
What spirit should all manifest to-day?
What message was Isaiah to deliver?
To whom do Jesus and Paul frequently apply this message?
Describe the condition of the people's eyes, ears, and hearts.
What produced this condition?
What had God predicted?
Why is it said that Isaiah closed the eyes, stopped the ears, and made the heart of the people gross?
Similar to what is this sad message?
What question did Isaiah ask?
What was the Lord's reply?

Dumb idols, having hearts of stone,
Heed not the sinner's cry;
If I heed not the mission call,
What better heart have I?

(Selected.)

LESSON V.—OCTOBER 30.

AMOS DENOUNCES SIN.

(TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

Amos 2: 4-12.

4 Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have rejected the law of Jehovah, and have not kept his statutes, and their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers did walk.

5 But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

6 Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes—

7 They that pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek; and a man and his father go unto the same maiden, to profane my holy name:

8 And they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined.

9 Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

10 Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

11 And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith Jehovah.

12 But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say.” (Amos 5: 14.)

TIME.—About B.C. 785.

PLACE.—The kingdom of Israel.

PERSONS.—Amos and the people of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 15: 1-5.

HOME READING.—

October 24. M. The Sin of Israel. (Amos 2: 4-12.)

October 25. T. Judgment on Israel. (Amos 3: 1-15.)

October 26. W. Dangers of Intemperance. (Lev. 10: 8-11.)

October 27. T. Degraded by Intemperance. (Isa. 28: 1-8.)

October 28. F. Intemperance in the Church. (1 Cor. 11: 17-34.)

October 29. S. Good Citizens. (Rom. 13: 1-7.)

October 30. S. Dweller of Zion. (Ps. 15.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Hamath was far to the north from Damascus, on the river Orontes.

“The sea of the Arabah” was the eastern arm of the Red Sea.

The Arabah was the valley extending from Mount Hermon to this sea. In the Authorized Version this is called “the plain,” except in Josh. 18: 18.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

While the kingdom of Israel had attained a great degree of worldly wealth and glory—and, therefore, of outward success—it was in the depths of intemperance and sin.

Intemperance is not only indulgence in intoxicating liquors, but is the gratification of any and all lusts and passions of the flesh. Any lack of self-control is intemperance.

There can be impressed upon the hearts of the young nothing more important than the principles of temperance.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Judgments of God Against Other Nations.

To show that God is not partial, but just, in his condemnation of sinners, Amos very wisely begins God's judgments against idolatrous, wicked, and rebellious people with the nations which surrounded Israel. He begins with Damascus and foretells what will befall the Syrians. Likewise he speaks against Gaza and Ekron, towns of the Philistines. Then the people of Tyre, the Edomites, the Ammonites, and the Moabites are likewise condemned for their sins. Some of the sins of these various peoples are given as reasons for God's condemnation. (Amos 1: 1 to 2: 3.)

II. God's Condemnation of Judah.

4. "For three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." "These expressions of *three* and *four*, so often repeated in this chapter, mean *repetition*, *abundance*, and anything that goes toward *excess*. *Very, very exceedingly*; and so it was used among the ancient Greek and Latin poets." (Adam Clarke.) Judah had repeatedly or continually transgressed God's commandments. Amos brings three indictments against the people of Judah: (1) they had rejected the law of Jehovah; (2) they had not kept his statutes; (3) they had followed lies, which had caused them to err. After these things their fathers had walked. They had gone into idolatry and had otherwise followed the teaching of false prophets.

God had taught them most clearly and most fully how to tell the difference between true prophets and false prophets. (See Deut. 18: 21, 22.) They should not have allowed false prophets under any circumstances to deceive them into idolatry or into the practice of anything which God had forbidden. (See Deut. 13: 1-5.)

God permitted false prophets and dreamers of dreams to do signs and wonders, trying to induce his people to disobey him, to test them to show whether or not they would obey him fully.

To-day Christ warns against false teachers. He does this in every possible way to reach people. (See Matt. 7: 15-27; Acts 20: 28, 29; 1 Tim. 4: 1-3; 1 John 4: 1-6.) The test is, whether or not one will do and teach the will of God. God has never, either in the Old Testament or the New, performed miracles in order to release people from implicit obedience to him. All his signs and wonders have been to confirm the truth and to impress the necessity of obedience to it. Note the cases of Cornelius, Saul of Tarsus, and others, and see Heb. 2: 4. Every man, however learned and eloquent he may be, who teaches people in serving God to do more or less than he commands, is a false prophet.

5. Because the people of Judah had done the three things named above, God declared he would send "a fire" upon them and "devour the

palaces of Jerusalem." This he did when Nebuchadnezzar through his army captured and destroyed Jerusalem, burning the temple, the king's palace, and the great houses, breaking down the walls of the city, and leading the people into captivity. (2 Kings 25: 8-12.)

III. God's Condemnation of Israel.

6-8. For the continued transgression of Israel, God would not turn away the punishment from that people, either. These verses and many others declare the injustice, lack of mercy, and repeated wickedness of the rulers as well as others. The judges took bribes of silver to condemn the righteous, and would even take so small a bribe as a pair of shoes to condemn the needy. Justice and mercy did not appeal to them. They panted "after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor," which may mean they oppressed the poor to the last degree, bruising their heads in the dust. They turned "aside the way of the meek," or showed them no consideration and mercy. (See Amos 5: 11.) In their licentiousness "a man and his father" went "unto the same maiden." Such licentiousness was practiced in the worship of idols. They "lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge." The law of God was: "If thou at all take thy neighbor's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him before the sun goeth down: for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious." (Ex. 22: 26, 27; see also Ezek. 18: 7; 33: 14-16.) These people had violated this command. Also they drank the wine which had been paid as a fine.

If God to-day, who sees and knows all things which are being done by civil officers, should state them to the world, as he did through Amos, would some not appear as guilty as the ones whose lives we are studying? Would there not be an awakening?

IV. What God Had Done for Israel.

9. In these verses Amos enumerates that which God had done for the Israelites. He does not mention these blessings in order. He first mentions the destruction of the Amorites. "Sihon the king of the Amorites" lived at Heshbon. He was first overcome by the Israelites. The Israelites next attacked Og, the king of Bashan. (Num. 21: 21-35.) The Amorites are represented in this verse as a race of giants, "whose height was like the height of cedars, and he was strong as the oaks." Og was a remnant of these giants, the size of whose bedstead is given in Deut. 3: 11. The Amorites were one of the Canaanite nations defeated by Joshua. (Josh. 10: 6-14.) God destroyed the Amorites "root and branch"—"his fruit from above, and his root from beneath."

10. The next blessing which God bestowed upon Israel here mentioned was bringing them up out of the land of Egypt. This was a wonderful deliverance, in remembrance of which the Israelites should be forever faithful and obedient to God. But they were not. The third blessing was leading them through the terrible wilderness for forty years, preserving their clothes, feeding them upon manna, and giving them water to drink.

The fourth blessing was driving out the Canaanites and settling them in the land of promise, having divided it unto them by lot.

11. Another blessing is, God raised up their sons to be prophets in order to declare unto them his will. The teaching of these prophets they would not heed. God gave them the order of the Nazarites, that he might teach them what it was to be entirely separated or consecrated to the service of God. This also they disregarded.

God then called upon the children of Israel to witness that this is true. They knew it was true.

12. The law of the Nazarite is given in Num. 6, which read. The one under the Nazarite vow was to separate himself from wine and strong drink. "He shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the grapevine, from the kernels even to the husk." The children of Israel had disobeyed this and had induced the Nazarites to break their vow by drinking wine. Also they had forbidden the prophets to teach the will of God, saying: "Prophecy not."

It is no wonder that the destruction of God was solemnly pronounced against such people and, in their impenitence, followed swiftly on.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Hamath?
What was "the sea of the Arabah?"
What was the Arabah?
In its worldly prosperity, into what had Israel sunk?
What is intemperance?
What is one of the most important lessons to be impressed?
Why does this lesson furnish a good temperance one?
With what nations does Amos begin God's condemnation?
4 What is meant by "for three transgressions of Judah, yea, for four?"
What three things had Judah done?
After what had their fathers walked?
Give the passages and the way in which they teach that God had clearly shown the difference between false and true prophets.
Why did God permit false prophets to do signs and wonders?
Give passages in which Jesus and the apostles clearly warn us against false prophets.
Has God ever given signs and wonders to release people from obedience to him?
What cases in the New Testament demonstrate this?
What, then, is the test of the true teacher?
However learned or eloquent one may be, what will show that one is a true or false prophet?
5 What did God declare would come upon Judah?
When and how did this come?
6-8 Name, in order, the different sins for which in these verses God condemned Israel.
What is meant by selling the righteous for silver, the needy for a pair of shoes, and panting "after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor?"
What is meant by turning aside the way of the meek?
What law had they violated in not restoring the pledge?
What would occur if God should as clearly reveal the injustice, oppression, and rivalry of people to-day?
9-11 Name, in order, that which in verses 9-11 God had done for Israel.
Who were the Amorites?
Name two of their kings.
What is said of their size?
Give the dimensions of Og's bedstead.
What had God done against the Amorites?
What did God call upon the children of Israel to witness?
12 Who were Nazarites, and what was the law concerning them?
How had the children of Israel disobeyed this law?
What had they forbidden the prophets to do?
Repeat 1 Cor. 10: 11, 12.

LESSON VI.—NOVEMBER 6.

AMOS PLEADS FOR JUSTICE.

Amos 5: 1-15, 21-24.

1 Hear ye this word which I take up for a lamentation over you, O house of Israel.

2 The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is cast down upon her land; there is none to raise her up.

3 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went forth a hundred shall have ten left, to the house of Israel.

4 For thus saith Jehovah unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live;

5 But seek not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Beth-el shall come to nought.

6 Seek Jehovah, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, and there be none to quench it in Beth-el.

7 Ye who turn justice to wormwood, and cast down righteousness to the earth,

8 Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth (Jehovah is his name);

9 That bringeth sudden destruction upon the strong, so that destruction cometh upon the fortress.

10 They hate him that reproveth in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.

11 Forasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof.

12 For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins—ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right.

13 Therefore he that is prudent shall keep silence in such a time; for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say.

15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate: it may be that Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

21 I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

22 Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.

24 But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."* (Amos 5: 24.)

TIME.—About B.C. 785.

PLACE.—The kingdom of Israel.

PERSONS.—Amos and the people of Israel

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 21: 1-17.

HOME READING.

October 31. M. Amos Pleads for Justice. (Amos 5. 10-15.)

November 1. T. At Ease in Sin. (Amos 6: 1-6.)

November 2. W. Social Justice Proclaimed. (Luke 4: 14-21.)

November 3. T. A Call to Repentance. (Joel 2: 12-17.)

November 4. F. Fruits Meet for Repentance. (Matt. 3: 7-12.)

November 5. S. Love Exemplified. (Phil. 2: 1-11.)

November 6. S. In the King's Hand. (Prov. 21: 1-7.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Outwardly Israel flourished at this time; but these prophecies give us an insight to the intemperance and wickedness of the people, and especially the rulers and leading men. The following passages give us further ideas of the outward flourishing condition and internal sins of Israel: Amos 3: 15; 6: 1-6; 8: 4-6.

The wealth and extent of the kingdom under Jeroboam II were greater than they had been since the division, or the days of Solomon. "He restored the border of Israel [see 2 Kings 10: 32; 13: 25] from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher." (2 Kings 14: 25.)

With this great wealth there was great sin. Covetousness, greed, drunkenness, licentiousness, debauchery, lying, and murder preyed upon the national body as cancerous sores. There was no truth or mercy or knowledge of God left in the land. (Hos. 4: 1-3.)

The shameful worship of Baal and the abominable worship of Ash-toreth had supplanted the pure worship of the true God, leaving the people spiritually impoverished. Vice flourished in Bethel and Samaria as plants in a hotbed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Exhortation to Seek Jehovah.

1-3. "Hear ye this word." That which God wished Israel to hear expressed in "this word" is stated in verses 2, 3. The kingdom of Israel, as a virgin, had fallen, and there was none to help; unless she would repent and seek God, she would "no more rise." Hence the exhortation to seek Jehovah.

4. "Seek ye me, and ye shall live." By his goodness and chastisement God had tried to lead Israel to repentance. For their oppression of the poor, the violence and robbery they had stored up in their palaces, and their transgressions of his law in their pretended worship, God had "sworn by his holiness" that they should be carried "away with hooks, and your residue with fishhooks." God had sent famine, blasting, mildew, palmer worms, pestilence, and the sword, and had overthrown cities among them, as Sodom and Gomorrah had been overthrown; yet they had not repented. Under all this chastisement and because God would lead them into captivity they were solemnly exhorted: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." (Amos 4.) "For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went forth a hundred shall have ten left, to the house of Israel." (Amos 5: 3.) With all these warnings before them and all their sins upon them, if they would seek Jehovah, they had the promise of life. How graciously good God is! To seek God is to learn and obey his will.

God must be sought in the right way. All who seek do not find him. (See Prov. 1: 24-33.) "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, ye cannot come." (John 7: 34.) "Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him

return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. 55: 6, 7.) To seek God, then, is to turn away from sin and obey him.

5. In order to seek God they must turn away from the idolatry practiced at Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba; they must not seek these places. Beersheba, where Abraham had called on the name of Jehovah (Gen. 21: 33), had become famous for its corrupt worship. People swore "by the sin of Samaria," the god (idol) of Dan, and "the way [manner] of Beersheba." (Amos 8: 14.) Gilgal should "go into captivity;" Bethel, the house of God, should become "Beth-aven" (margin), the house of "naught."

6. The exhortation to seek God is repeated, with the promise of life. Another motive to repentance is the sure punishment which will follow without it. God would break forth upon them, like a devouring fire which could not be quenched, if they did not repent.

II. Again Reproved.

7-9. Again they were reprov'd for sin—this time for perverting justice and casting righteousness down. Instead of the sweetness of justice, they had given the righteous the wormwood of injustice. Because of this, with other sins, they are again exhorted to seek God, the Creator of "the Pleiades and Orion." God turns "the shadow of death into the morning," or night into day, "and maketh the day dark with night," or turns day into night—that is, he is the Author of day and night. He sends the rain by calling "for the waters of the sea" and pouring "them out upon the face of the earth." "Jehovah is his name." Compare Amos 4: 13; 5: 27; 9: 6. Jehovah, the Almighty Creator, is able to bring this destruction upon Israel. He brings "sudden destruction upon the strong, so that destruction cometh upon the fortress." God pours contempt upon princes. (Ps. 107: 40.) The rich and great cannot so intrench themselves in their strongholds that he cannot reach them.

10. "They [the unjust rulers] hate him [the righteous judge] that reproveth in the gate." The gate of a walled city, with the broad place before it, was an important place, being the place for public assemblies, holding court, etc. It was the same as an exchange, courthouse, and council chamber of modern times. (Judg. 5: 8, 11; Ruth 4: 10; Neh. 8: 1.)

11. Amos charged Israel again and again with oppressing the poor, and with oppressing them in different ways. "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that hath mercy on the needy honoreth him." (Prov. 14: 31.) Any oppression of the poor to-day is likewise a reproach to God and will not go unpunished. Any government which allows the rich to oppress the poor stands in its own light, or way of prosperity and progress. The kingdom of Israel oppressed the poor by exorbitant taxation. There was an *ad valorem* tax on personal property and growing crops, and the poor man was trampled upon by taking "exactions from him of wheat" before he was allowed to cut and thresh it.

Many expressions in this prophecy show the wealth of the rich and the luxuriant style in which they lived. They had "built houses of hewn stone," "winter houses," "summer houses," "houses of ivory,"

and "great houses." (Amos 3: 15.) They had "beds of ivory" and "silken cushions," and reveled in voluptuous music. They "planted pleasant vineyards," and men and women drank "wine in bowls" and anointed themselves with "chief oils." They said "unto their lords, Bring, and let us drink." (Amos 4: 1.) They did this by the oppression and at the expense of the poor. Feasting, drunkenness, licentiousness, and debauchery—high living—necessarily lead to exorbitant taxation and the oppression of the poor. Such in any government will lead to the same results to-day, as such in any family leads to poverty and perdition. For these sins God said Israel should not be permitted to dwell long in these fine houses or drink the wine of these "pleasant vineyards."

12. "For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins." They afflicted the just, took bribes, and turned "aside the needy" from his righteous judgment "in the gate." "In the gate" they held court; but when a decision was justly rendered in favor of the needy, it was wrested by bribes, and the righteous were sold for silver. (Amos 2: 6.) God knew all this; he was not deceived; and he would not let it pass unpunished. The wicked say yet: "How doth God know? And is there knowledge in the Host High?" (Ps. 73: 11.)

13. "Therefore he that is prudent shall keep silence," because the people were so bent on sin that protest and warning would do no good. (See Hos. 4: 1-5.) Hosea reproveth the same people for the same sins.

III. Exhortation to Repentance.

14. Again Amos exhorts them to repent: "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." If they would repent and put away the evil and do good, God would, indeed, be with them.

15. "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate." This is the only way to repent, for this is repentance. To repent is to hate evil and love the truth and justice. If Israel would do this and establish, indeed, a court of justice, God would be gracious to them yet. This is a solemn warning from God against all injustice in any courts, sensuality and high living, revelry and debauchery in any life, family, or nation. Without justice and mercy, temperance and righteousness, no offering is acceptable to God.

IV. That Which God Hates.

21-23. Why did God not accept these feasts and various offerings? Because he says: "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hos. 6: 6.) Jesus quotes this and says: "But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice;" and adds, "For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt. 9: 13; 12: 7.) With all the great sins enumerated among the children of Israel, their feasts, offerings, and all other worship of God were abominations in his sight. So to-day all worship that is not in spirit and truth is rejected by the Lord.

24. God requires justice and righteousness—justice at all times to all men and righteousness in all things between man and man. How beautiful the expression, "Let justice roll down as waters, and right-

eousness as a mighty stream!" How greatly does the world and many who claim to be Christians need to show justice and practice righteousness to-day! In the language of our Savior, we say, Go and learn what these mean, and practice them.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What shows the rich and outwardly flourishing condition of the kingdom?
Of what sins were its rulers and leaders guilty?
Against what nation did Amos begin his prophecy?
1-3 What was Israel charged to hear?
What as a virgin was Israel's condition?
4 What in this verse did Amos exhort Israel to do?
What is it to seek God?
What had God done to induce Israel to seek him?
What would he yet do if they would seek him?
5 What must they do in seeking God?
Where was Beersheba?
What would become of Gilgal and Bethel?
6 What other incentive to repentance is placed before them?
7-9 For what sins are they reproved in these verses?
In what way does Amos show God is able to punish them?
10 Of what other sins were they guilty?
11 Of what sins were they charged in this verse?
How did Israel oppress the poor?
What luxury did the rulers enjoy at the expense of the poor?
What punishment should they suffer for these sins?
12 What did God know about them?
13 Give the meaning of this verse.
14 What are they again exhorted to do?
15 What is essential to repentance?
Against what is this lesson a solemn warning from God?
21-23 What offerings and worship does God hate?
What worship is acceptable to him now?
Of what passage does Jesus say we should learn the meaning?
24 What should roll down as waters and as a mighty stream?

The builder lifted his old gray head.
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been as naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
My friend, I am building this bridge for him."
(Selected.)

TO BE RIGHTLY USED.

Not to be whiled away in aimless dreams,
But to improve ourselves and serve mankind,
Life and its choicest faculties were given.
Man should be ever better than he seems,
And shape his acts and discipline his mind
To walk adorning earth with hope of heaven.
(Selected.)

LESSON VII.—NOVEMBER 13.

HOSEA PREACHES GOD'S LOVE.

Hos. 11: 1-11; 14: 4-8.

- 1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.
 2 The more *the prophets* called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.
 3 Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them.
 4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before them.
 5 They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused to return to me.
 6 And the sword shall fall upon their cities, and shall consume their bars, and devour them, because of their own counsels.
 7 And my people are bent on backsliding from me: though they call them to him that is on high, none at all will exalt him.
 8 How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboiim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together.
 9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath.
 10 They shall walk after Jehovah, who will roar like a lion; for he will roar, and the children shall come trembling from the west.
 11 They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah.
 4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him.
 5 I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.
 6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon.
 7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.
 8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*” (Hos. 6: 6.)

TIME.—B.C. 780.

PLACE.—Kingdom of Israel.

PERSONS.—Hosea and the people to whom he prophesied.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 36: 5-10.

HOME READING.—

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| November 7. | M. | The Goodness of Jehovah. (Hos. 6: 1-6.) |
| November 8. | T. | Hosea's Warning. (Hos. 4: 1-9.) |
| November 9. | W. | Israel's Ingratitude. (Hos. 11: 1-12.) |
| November 10. | T. | Hosea's Prayer. (Hos. 14: 1-9.) |
| November 11. | F. | The Way to Live. (James 1: 19-27.) |
| November 12. | S. | The Constancy of God's Love. (1 John 2: 1-8.) |
| November 13. | S. | The Loving-kindness of Jehovah. (Ps. 36: 5-10.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Hosea followed Amos as a prophet, although contemporary with him, prophesying (Hos. 1: 1) “in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz,

and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel"—not through the entire reign of all these kings.

He was contemporary with Isaiah, Micah, Amos, and Jonah (see Isa. 1: 1; Mic. 1: 1; Amos 1: 1; 2 Kings 14: 25)—in the early part of his life with some, in the latter part with others.

Hosea's reference to "our king" (7: 5) shows that he belonged to the kingdom of Israel. He prophesied chiefly to the kingdom of Israel, but warned Judah also. (Hos. 1: 11; 6: 11.)

"Hosea" is the same as "Joshua" or "Jesus," and means "Savior." Joshua's name was "Hoshea" at first. (Num. 13: 8, 16; Deut. 32: 44.)

Hosea's wife and her children are made types of the infidelity of Israel, whose husband is God. (See chapters 1-3.)

Hosea is quoted frequently in the New Testament: Hos. 1: 10 and 2: 1, 23—Rom. 9: 25, 26, and 1 Pet. 2: 10; Hos. 11: 1—Matt. 2: 15; Hos. 13: 14—1 Cor. 15: 55. Compare Hos. 10: 8; Luke 23: 30; Rev. 6: 16; 9: 6.

This is a short book and can soon be read, and should be read by all in studying this lesson. It declares the wickedness of both the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel, and shows how God warned, pleaded with, and promised to forgive both before sending them into captivity if they would repent.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God's Tender Watch Care Over Israel.

1. As a mother watches over and protects her child in all particulars, so God cared for and loved Israel. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." When he was cruelly and sorely oppressed, when he was in hard bondage and deep distress, God showed his love in preserving him and delivering him. Hosea refers to this and to other blessings many times in this book. (See chapters 2: 15; 12: 9-13; 13: 4.) Many, many times did God remind the Israelites of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and as many times call upon them to serve him faithfully for this reason. (See Ps. 105; 106: 6-48; 78: 10-72.) So to-day God's goodness, mercy, and love are placed before us to lead us to repentance and to constrain us to obey him. (See Rom. 2: 4; 12: 1; Phil. 2: 1-11; 2 Cor. 5: 14; 1 John 4: 19.) Also, through the destruction of the Israelites, we are solemnly warned against disobedience to God and rebellion against him. It must be impressed here that "I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" is a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus when Joseph went into Egypt "with the young child and his mother" and remained until God told him to return to the land of Israel. (Matt. 2: 15.)

2. The more God sent prophets to call Israel away from sin, the more "they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images." The sins of Israel for which they were carried into captivity are summed up in 2 Kings 17: 7-23. Read verses 13, 14.

3. "Yet I taught Ephraim to walk." Ephraim, as a prominent tribe, is put for the whole of Israel. As a mother supports her child by its arms and shows it how to take one step after another, so God in tenderest care led Israel. (See Deut. 1: 31; 32: 10-12; Isa. 46: 3-5.)

But they did not acknowledge God's goodness or that he healed them. (See Ps. 107: 20; Jer. 30: 17.)

4. "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." As a child holds one end of a cord and the mother or nurse the other, and is led along and taught to walk, so God led Israel with bands of love. (See Jer. 31: 2, 3.) Again, as the yoke is lifted from the neck and shoulders of oxen and pulled forward to the jaws when strained and tired from pulling, that they may cool and rest, and as while thus resting a handful of hay or grass is given, so God had lifted the burdens from Israel and had given them food.

II. The Punishment.

5. "They shall not return into the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be their king, because they refused to return to me." After all God's reproof, forbearance, and mercy, Israel refused to return to him. This is made prominent and enforced through Hosea's entire prophecy. For this reason God would give them over—not this time to Egyptian bondage, but to Assyrian captivity.

6. "And the sword shall fall upon their cities," etc. Not only the sword from without, but internal strife, treachery, assassinations, and wars, disturbed them and hastened their destruction. Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam II, was slain by Shallum, who usurped the throne. Shallum, having reigned only one month, was slain by Menahem. Menahem reigned ten years and was succeeded by his son, Pekahiah, who, having reigned two years, was slain by Pekah. During Pekah's reign the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh were carried into captivity by the Assyrian king. Pekah was slain by Hosea, son of Elah, who usurped the kingdom and under whose reign Samaria was besieged three years by the king of Assyria, when the kingdom fell and was destroyed. (See 2 Kings, chapters 13-17.) Certainly the sword devoured them. "Consume their bars." No city could be so shut in by gates and bars that the enemy could not break through. (See Lam. 2: 9.) This destruction came because they followed their own counsel and not the wisdom of God. Israel was stubborn, and Ephraim was joined to idols. (See Hos. 4: 16, 17.)

7. They were "bent on backsliding" from God. Much is said about backsliding Israel. (Hos. 14: 4; Jer. 3: 12.) "Though they [the prophets—verse 2] call them [the backsliding people] to him that is on high [the Most High], none at all will exalt him [lift himself up to hear]."

III. God Extends Mercy.

8. God, in his mercy and love, asks how shall he give Ephraim up, how shall he cast off Israel, how shall he make them as Admah and Zeboiim. He then adds that his heart is turned within him and his compassions are kindled together. Admah and Zeboiim were cities overthrown with Sodom and Gomorrah. (See Deut. 29: 22-25; Gen. 14: 1-12; Gen. 10: 15-20.) This and other verses of this book and many other passages in the Bible show the justice and mercy, righteousness and compassion, forbearance and love of God. God's justice would destroy and his mercy would save. God is always ready to forgive and save when people repent. (See Ex. 34: 6, 7.)

9. Upon Israel's repentance, God forgave them. Hence, he says here

he "will not execute the fierceness" of his "anger" for past sins, as justice without mercy in man would do; he "will not return to destroy Ephraim." He will not do this, for the reason he is "God, and not man," "the Holy One" in the midst of Israel, and he "will not come in wrath." So God deals with us, and we rejoice in his loving-kindness and tender mercies.

10, 11. Isaiah (31: 4), Amos (1: 2), and Joel (3: 16) speak of God as roaring as a lion. After the chastisement of captivity and repentance, God shall "roar like a lion." Adam Clarke says, "When he shall utter his majestic voice, Cyrus shall make his decree"—that is, to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem "and build the house of Jehovah." (See Ezra 1: 1-4.) Then the people shall tremble at God's word (Ezra 10: 3)—in humility and reverence obey him—and come trembling as a bird out of Egypt and as a dove out of the land of Assyria, and shall dwell in their land and have their temple and true worship once more.

IV. God's Forgiveness.

4-8. The first three verses of this chapter contain an exhortation from God to Israel to repent and to return to him, and a prayer which if they will offer God will accept and forgive. Read this prayer and note its declaration that they will put away all idols, the work of their hands, depend no longer upon human help, such as Assyria, and equipments of war, but will return to God and as the fatherless and helpless depend upon him and hope to obtain mercy.

The verses of this lesson present the answer of God to this prayer. He will heal their backsliding, turn his anger away from them, and love them freely.

"Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?" Since Ephraim thus turns away from his idols and turns in penitence to God, God says: "I have answered, and will regard him." God will be to him like a green fir tree; in God he would find sustenance and strength.

The lesson is that however far one may wander from God and however deep one may sink in sin, when one puts away his sins and turns to God, God will have mercy and abundantly pardon.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
- Repeat the Golden Text.
- Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
- Did you read the Devotional Reading?
- Did you read the Home Reading?
- With what prophets were Hosea contemporary?
- During the time of what kings did he prophesy?
- To what kingdom did he belong and prophesy?
- What did he do for Judah?
- What does his name mean?
- What was a type of Israel's infidelity to God?
- Where is Hosea frequently quoted?
- What does this book declare?
- 1 To what is Israel in Egypt compared?
- How did God treat Israel then?

- Why afterwards does God make so many references to his goodness in delivering Israel from Egypt?
- What now leads us to repentance, constrains us to love God and men and to serve God faithfully?
- Through what are we solemnly warned?
- What prophecy in this verse is fulfilled in Jesus?
- 2 What did the people do the more God sent prophets to teach and warn them?
- Where are Israel's sins summed up?
- 3 Like whom did God tenderly care for Ephraim?
- For whom is Ephraim here put?

- 4 What is meant by drawing them
"with cords of a man?"
What is meant by the figure of lifting
the yoke upon the jaws and laying
food before them?
 - 5 What nation should rule over Israel
for such persistent refusal to obey
God?
 - 6 Upon what should the sword fall?
Relate something of both the internal
and external strife, bloodshed, and
wars.
What is meant by consuming their
bars?
What is meant by following their own
counsel?
 - 7 On what were they bent?
 - 8 What question in mercy and love does
God ask?
- Give the language of Ex. 34: 6, 7, in
which God's justice and mercy,
righteousness and love—his charac-
ter—are expressed.
- 9 What would God not do to Israel?
Why not?
How does he deal with us?
 - 10, 11 What would take place when God
should "roar like a lion?"
When did this take place?
What does this show Israel to be?
What was Judah yet maintaining?
 - 4-8 What do the first three verses of this
chapter contain?
State in full what these verses of the
lesson present.
Give God's answer to this prayer.
What is the lesson here taught?

Three things the Master asks of us,
And we who serve him here below
And long to see his kingdom come
May pray or give or go.

He needs them all—the open hand,
The willing feet, the praying heart—
To work together and to weave
A threefold cord that shall not part.

Not all can go, not all can give
To speed the message on its way;
But, young or old, or rich or poor,
Or strong or weak, we all can pray. (Selected.)

My album is in heathen breasts,
Where passions reign and darkness rests,
Without one ray of light;
To write the name of Jesus there,
And point to worlds all bright and fair,
And see the heathen bow in prayer,
Is all my soul's delight. (Selected.)

LESSON VIII.—NOVEMBER 20.

MICAH CHAMPIONS THE OPPRESSED.

Mic. 2: 1-3; 6: 1-13.

1 Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.

2 And they covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away: and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

3 Therefore thus saith Jehovah: Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks, neither shall ye walk haughtily; for it is an evil time.

1 Hear ye now what Jehovah saith: Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

2 Hear, O ye mountains, Jehovah's controversy, and ye enduring foundations of the earth; for Jehovah hath a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel.

3 O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.

4 For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

5 O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him; remember from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteous acts of Jehovah.

6 Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old?

7 Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

8 He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?

9 The voice of Jehovah crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom will see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.

10 Are there yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and a scant measure that is abominable?

11 Shall I be pure with wicked balances, and with a bag of deceitful weights?

12 For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.

13 Therefore I also have smitten thee with a grievous wound; I have made thee desolate because of thy sins.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"* (Mic. 6: 8.)

TIME.—About B.C. 710.

PLACE.—The kingdom of Israel.

PERSONS.—Micah and the people of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—James 1: 23-27.

HOME READING.—

- November 14. M. Woe to the Oppressor. (Mic. 2: 1-5.)
- November 15. T. False Rulers and Prophets. (Mic. 3: 1-12.)
- November 16. W. Injustice Rebuked. (Mic. 6: 1-8.)
- November 17. T. Moral Corruption of Israel. (Mic. 7: 1-6.)
- November 18. F. The Year of Jubilee. (Deut. 15: 12-18.)
- November 19. S. The Mission of the Master. (Luke 4: 16-21.)
- November 20. S. The Acceptable Life. (James 1: 19-27.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The word "Micah" means "Who is like Jehovah?"

Micah lived at Moresheth, a village in the southwestern part of Judea. He is called "the Morasthite." He also was one of the minor prophets, and prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Summing up the time of the reigns of these kings, we see that Micah prophesied for a long time. He was contemporary with Isaiah.

He prophesied concerning both Samaria and Jerusalem. (Mic. 1: 1.)

A prophecy made by Micah in the reign of Hezekiah concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem, for which Hezekiah did not have Micah put to death, is quoted in Jer. 26: 18, 19 by some elders in defense of Jeremiah and which saved his life. (Read all of Jer. 26.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Woe to Plotters of Wickedness!

(Verses 1-3.)

1. This chapter begins with pronouncing "woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds!" They lie awake at night studying and planning for the execution of wickedness when daylight should come. "They practice it, because it is in the power of their hand"—that is, they do whatever wickedness they have the power to do.

2. "They covet fields," as Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard, "and seize them," scheming how to do it, as Jezebel schemed to have Naboth killed and to take his vineyard. (1 Kings 21: 1-16.) Likewise they coveted houses and took them away from their owners; they oppressed the poor man and robbed him of his heritage.

3. "Therefore"—for this wickedness—Jehovah declared he would devise against the family of Israel "an evil" from which they could not remove their necks. Their necks would be placed under the yoke of their conquerors. They would not be able to walk haughtily or in pride and arrogance, for it would be to them an evil time. They should receive from plunderers and oppression the evil which they had done others. As the following verses state, they should have to say "with a doleful lamentation:" "We are utterly ruined."

II. Jehovah's Controversy with His People.

(Chapter 6: 1-13.)

1. Jehovah invited his people to a controversy with himself, saying: "Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice."

2. Micah invites the mountains to hear this controversy. God had done everything possible in both justice and mercy for his covetous, drinking, licentious, and otherwise wicked people; and in their ingratitude and rebellion they would give no heed, which was enough to cause the mountains to give judgment against them.

3. God appeals to the people to testify against him if he had treated them unjustly or unkindly or had exacted any arduous service of them. He says: "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein

have I wearied thee?" He would condescend to hear their complaints, in order, it would seem, to put them to shame. At least, it should have put them to shame.

III. What God Had Done for Them.

4. He had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, where they were slaves in cruel, hard bondage. Much is said in the Bible of what the Israelites suffered in Egypt, and frequent mention is made of it in order to beget in them proper gratitude and to stimulate them to faithful service to God. From this bondage God had redeemed them. All this was an inestimable blessing and a type of redemption from the bondage of sin by Jesus Christ. God had sent before them Moses to teach and guide them and to be their lawgiver, Aaron to act as priest, and Miriam to serve them in her God-appointed way. For all this should they be ungrateful?

5. They were called upon to remember "what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him." An account of this is given in Num. 22-24. Balak, together with the elders of Midian, employed Balaam, "who loved the wages of wrongdoing," to attempt to curse the children of Israel. (See Deut. 23: 4, 5; Josh. 24: 9; Neh. 13: 1, 2; 2 Pet. 2: 15; Jude 11; Rev. 2: 14.) The Israelites were also called upon to remember "the righteous acts of Jehovah" "from Shittim unto Gilgal." The Shittim Valley, in which the children of Israel were encamped, lay east of the Jordan; and Gilgal, at which the children of Israel encamped after crossing the Jordan, was a few miles west of it. Hence, from Shittim to Gilgal embraced the miraculous passage through the Jordan.

IV. The People's Reply.

6, 7. In reply to these expressions of God's most wonderful goodness, manifested in the blessings enumerated, the people make no effort at vindicating themselves, but, as we say, plead "guilty." At least, speaking for them, or as they should speak, they are made by Jehovah to ask: "Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God?" What could they do to turn away God's wrath from them? How could they bow before him in prayer in an acceptable manner? Since God is putting these questions and these answers in their mouths, none of the offerings which they propose can stay God's wrath and avert the pending destruction. Burnt offerings, calves a year old, thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil could not do it. To give their "first-born" for their transgression and the fruit of their body for the sins of their soul would not only not appease God's wrath, but be an abominable sin in his sight. "And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded not, neither came it into my mind." (Jer. 7: 31; see verses 29-34; and also Lev. 18: 21; 20: 1-5.) Read 1 Sam. 15: 22, 23, and Ps. 51: 16, 17; read also Jer. 6: 20; 7: 23; Ps. 40: 5-9; Heb. 10: 5-7; Isa. 1: 10-13; 40: 12-17. By studying these passages we shall see why a multitude of offerings could not atone for the sins of Israel, and we shall also be impressed with the wonderful truth that nothing short of a broken and contrite heart—repentance and humility and

hearty obedience to him—will please God, and no sacrifice in the end short of that of the Lamb of God.

Through Jeremiah (6: 20), Jehovah says: "Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me." But the following is: "Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." (Jer. 7: 23.)

V. That Which Is Good.

8. In reply to this inquiry of the people, Jehovah virtually says he has taught already that which is good, and, therefore, what they should do. That which they should do is exactly the opposite of that which they had done and were still doing. "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" While the Pharisees were scrupulously exacting in little things, Jesus condemned them for leaving "undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith." (Matt. 23: 23.)

We should know what it is to deal justly with all. Paul states: "Render to all their dues. . . . Owe no man anything, save to love one another." (Rom. 13: 7-10.) The Israelites to whom Micah wrote knew what justice is. They had been taught to love their neighbor as themselves. (Lev. 19: 18.) "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in measures of length, of weight, or of quantity. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." (Lev. 19: 35, 36.) On just weights and measures and on false ones, read Deut. 25: 13; Prov. 11: 1; 16: 11; 20: 10, 23; Ezek. 45: 10; Hos. 12: 7.

Not only in weights and measures, but in all ways, people must deal justly to-day. Jesus sums this up as follows: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." This embraces not only all false dealing, but all evil reports, all impugning of motives, all misrepresentations—everything untrue, unfair, unjust, and every right thing that should be done to others.

"To love kindness" is far more than to be technically kind; it is to love to be kind. It is to do more than "to do justly;" it is to be merciful and to treat others better than their conduct in the eyes of the law deserves. "Love suffereth long, and is kind." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor."

"To walk humbly with thy God" is to obey him, is to walk in humility as he directs. Very much is taught in the Bible on humility. That spirit and way which are the opposite of humility are strongly condemned.

VI. The People Refused to Hear.

9. "The voice of Jehovah crieth unto the city." God called to the people and would teach them and plead with them to forsake their sins, to receive the chastening rod, and to hear him who appointed it; but the ones only who were wise would hear and fear him. "Wisdom will see thy name." "See" in the margin is "fear." "Behold, the fear

of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job 28: 28.)

10. "Are there yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and a scant measure that is abominable?" They were still unjust, still used scant measures, which were abominable to God, and in their houses there were still "treasures of wickedness." They were traffickers, the balances of deceit were in their hands, and they defrauded and oppressed others. (Hos. 12: 7.)

11. They could not "be pure with wicked balances, and with a bag of deceitful weights." No one can to-day.

12. The rich had become richer by violence; they were full of it. The inhabitants of the country spoke lies; they were not honest and truthful, and their tongues were trained to speak deceitfully.

13. It is no wonder that God in justice and righteousness smote them with a grievous wound and made them desolate.

Verses 14-16 show the consequences of their sins.

QUESTIONS.

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| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What does the word "Micah" mean?
Where did he live?
During the reigns of what kings did he prophesy?
Concerning what kingdoms did he prophesy?
How did Hezekiah treat him?
1 Against whom is this woe pronounced?
To what extent was wickedness practiced?
2 What did they covet and take from others?
3 What would God visit upon them for this wickedness?
What is meant by not being able to remove their necks?
What would become of their haughtiness?
What would they say?
1 What did God invite the people to do?
2 What was invited to hear this controversy?
3 What did God ask the people to testify against him?
4 What had he done for the people?
5 Relate in detail what Balak and Balaam attempted to do to the children of Israel—that is, relate this story in full.
6, 7 Give in full the people's reply to Je-</p> | <p>hovah—what would not suffice as an offering?
What does Jehovah say against the sacrifice of human beings?
In what does Jehovah delight, quoting 1 Sam. 15: 22, 23; Ps. 51: 16, 17; Jer. 7: 23?
Did you read Ps. 40: 5-9; Heb. 10: 5-7; Isa. 1: 10-13; 40: 12-17?
What do we learn from these passages?
8 To this inquiry what did Jehovah say they must do?
What is it "to do justly"?
What is said about just and false balances, weights, measures, etc.?
What one rule covers all cases of doing justly?
What is it to love kindness?
What is it to walk humbly with God?
What can you give of the teaching of the Bible on humility?
9 To whom and about what did God cry?
Who alone would hear?
10 With what were their houses still filled?
What did they still practice?
11 With what in their hands and homes could they not be pure?
12 What had the rich practiced?
What had the inhabitants of the country spoken?
13 What punishment would God visit upon them for their wickedness?</p> |
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LESSON IX.—NOVEMBER 27.

ISAIAH TEACHES TRUE WORSHIP.

Isa. 1: 10-20.

10 Hear the word of Jehovah, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

11 What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts?

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies,—I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them.

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

17 Learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.” (Ps. 24: 3, 4.)

TIME.—About B.C. 742—not certain.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Isaiah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 4: 21-24.

HOME READING.—

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| November 21. | M. | The Chosen People in Sin. (Isa. 1: 1-9.) |
| November 22. | T. | Acceptable Worship. (Isa. 1: 10-20.) |
| November 23. | W. | Corrupt Zion Redeemed. (Isa. 1: 21-31.) |
| November 24. | T. | Delight in Worship. (Ps. 84.) |
| November 25. | F. | Grace for Worship. (Zech. 12: 10-14.) |
| November 26. | S. | Reverence in Worship. (Neh. 8: 1-8.) |
| November 27. | S. | True Worshipers. (John 4: 21-24.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The original city of Jerusalem was built on Mount Zion, and “Zion” is frequently applied to the whole city.

“The daughter of Zion” is Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. (Isa. 1: 1.) He belongs to this period of the national history. Note the length of the reigns of the kings.

It is not stated at what time in Uzziah's reign Isaiah began his work. It must have been during the latter part. Isaiah must have been an old man at the close of Hezekiah's reign.

"Rabbinical tradition says that Isaiah was sawn asunder in the trunk of a tree by order of Manasseh, to which it is supposed that reference is made in Heb. 11: 37." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

"Isaiah" means "salvation of Jehovah." He says: "Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion." (Isa. 8: 18.) His wife is called "the prophetess." (Verse 3.) The name of his first son, "Shear-jashub" (Isa. 7: 3), means "a remnant shall return;" the name of his second son, "Maher-shalal-hash-baz" (Isa. 8: 3), means "the spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth."

Isaiah sustained to these kings of Judah the same relationship that Elijah and Elisha sustained to the kings of Israel.

The period of Isaiah's ministry was a critical one. Under Uzziah the kingdom of Judah flourished, and he extended it over the country of the Philistines to Elath, on the Red Sea. (2 Kings 14: 22; 2 Chron. 8: 17.)

In order to get an idea of Uzziah's prosperity, read 2 Chron. 26: 1-15. Under Jeroboam II the kingdom of Israel flourished, and he extended it to "the entrance of Hamath," on the north. (2 Kings 14: 25.) So that the two kingdoms together occupied almost as much territory as the united kingdom did under Solomon. (1 Kings 8: 65.) The kingdoms had never enjoyed so much wealth and worldly greatness since the time of Solomon.

With this prosperity, however, came luxury; ease; licentiousness, drunkenness, and immorality of all kinds; idolatry; oppression of the poor; vain confidence in man and a corresponding lack of confidence in God; and with all this was a perfunctory performance of religious ceremonies—a form of godliness without the power.

During this period Amos, Hosea, and Micah prophesied. Amos, who prophesied mostly against Israel, describes the wealth, luxury, ease, and the corruption, debauchery, and other sins of that kingdom, and exhorts all to repentance.

These sins rendered Judah, as well as Israel, weak and exposed it to the invasions of surrounding nations and other chastisement of God. "In those days [the reign of Jotham] Jehovah began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remeliah." (2 Kings 15: 37; 16: 5, 6.) In Ahaz's reign the Syrians "smote him, and carried . . . a great multitude of captives . . . to Damascus." The king of Israel, Pekah, also "slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all of them valiant men; because they had forsaken Jehovah, the God of their fathers." Pekah also "carried away captive . . . two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters," and took "much spoil;" but under the influence of Oded, "a prophet of Jehovah," these captives were clothed, fed, anointed, and brought (the weak and helpless on asses) to Jericho and sent home. (See 2 Chron. 28: 5-15.) The Philistines from the west invaded Judah. "For Jehovah brought Judah low because of Ahaz," etc. (Verses 18, 19.) The Syrians, too, invaded Judah. (Verses 20-24.)

Isaiah was a great prophet. He touched on the destiny of the kingdoms surrounding Judah and Israel, and he foresaw, beyond the revo-

lutions of kingdoms and the downfall of empires, the coming Savior, whose work and kingdom should surpass all others. In chapter 5 he gives the reasons for the woes pronounced upon Judah and God's vengeance against it.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Introduction to the Lesson.

(Verses 1-9.)

"The vision of Isaiah," mentioned in verse 1, is that which God revealed to him "concerning Judah and Jerusalem" in the time of the kings during whose reigns he prophesied.

God gave Isaiah a true insight into the condition of affairs, the cause and the remedy. He saw it all clearly and felt it keenly. All that is in the book of Isaiah was not revealed to him at the same time. (Isa. 2: 1; 6; 8: 1; 13: 1.) Besides prophesying, he wrote "of the acts of Uzziah" (2 Chron. 26: 22) and "of the acts of Hezekiah" (2 Chron. 32: 32).

Heaven and earth are called upon to give attention, "for Jehovah hath spoken." He is worthy to be heard by earth and heaven. (Deut. 32: 1.) Heaven and earth are frequently called upon to witness the righteousness of God's deeds in dealing with men. (Deut. 4: 26; 30: 19; 31: 28.) God spoke through Isaiah. "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1: 21.) God had been a Father to Judah from the beginning; had nourished it, exalted it, and made it great. (See Hos. 11: 1-4; Ps. 105.) Thus God had always dealt with his people.

Isaiah frequently refers to Judah as rebellious, lying children, taking refuge in lies and refusing to hear the law of God. (Isa. 1: 23; 28: 14, 15; 30: 1, 9; 59: 2, 3.)

The ox and the ass are the most stupid beasts; but, brutes as they are, they have more gratitude and appreciation than God's children, for they know who feeds them and are submissive to their masters. God's people, for whom he had done so much, were more stupid and less appreciative than these brutes and did "not consider" their dependence upon God and what in so many ways he had done for them. Jeremiah (8: 7) makes a similar comparison.

This was a "sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that deal corruptly." They were children of bad parents and were worse than their parents. They "draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, and sin as it were with a cart rope." (Isa. 5: 18.) Sin, and not righteousness, is that which they haul about. John the Baptist said to the Pharisees and Sadducees: "Ye offspring of vipers." (Matt. 3: 7.) They were "children that deal corruptly" against God in not keeping his commandments and who had corrupted themselves with idols. (Deut. 4: 16, 25; 9: 12; 31: 29; Neh. 1: 7.) "They have forsaken Jehovah." In their disobedience and transgressions they had turned away from God. "They have despised the Holy One of Israel." God is just, righteous, and holy; and in the highest sense of these terms he had dealt with his people, but they had despised him. "They are estranged and gone backward." Not only had they disobeyed and forsaken God, but they had become alienated and had gone backward from him.

They had been "stricken" (chastised) for their sins, and like a criminal had been whipped on every part of the body until the whole head was sick and the whole heart was faint. Were they still revolting because they desired to be still further stricken? Greater chastisement would come upon them if they continued to sin.

The country was "desolate;" the cities had been burned; and strangers had "overthrown" and "devoured" the land.

Isaiah saw the city besieged and left desolate, "as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." "A booth in a vineyard" is a shelter of boughs, or straw, or something similar, used for a short time, while the fruit is ripening, by watchmen, who protect and gather it. (See Job 27: 18.) "A lodge in a garden of cucumbers" is a similar construction of rude material for the same purpose, soon to fall into decay. This was a figure of the ruined condition of Jerusalem.

II. Like Sodom and Gomorrah.

10. Sodom and Gomorrah were totally destroyed; only Lot and his two daughters escaped from Sodom. Judah would have been as totally destroyed had not God left a "remnant." This "remnant" is frequently mentioned by Isaiah. Paul quotes this verse in Rom. 9: 29. In Paul's day the "remnant" was still left. This "remnant" is "the faithful few" who have clung to God and obeyed him in the midst of idolatry, sin, and corruption. Isaiah then addresses the rulers of Judah and the people as the "rulers of Sodom" and the "people of Gomorrah." "The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not." (Isa. 3: 9.) Later on Jerusalem was called the sister of Sodom, Samaria, and other evil ones. (See Ezek. 18: 44-52.)

11-15. In these verses God declares that all their sacrifices, public feasts, incense, and prayers were an abomination unto him, because they oppressed the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, and their hands were full of blood. These sacrifices and prayers were offered in a perfunctory and heartless manner. God required sacrifices, incense, prayers, and the observance of the annual feasts; but all must be done in the right spirit and in submission to God. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah; but the prayer of the upright is his delight." (Prov. 15: 8.) "For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it: thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. 51: 16, 17.) "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." (Isa. 66: 2; see also verses 3-6.)

16, 17. With all the foregoing solemn reproof and warning before the people, Isaiah then exhorted them to repent. He, doubtless, preached to the people on the days of their public assemblies.

"Wash you" and "make you clean" are figurative expressions. Jeremiah (4: 14) says: "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved." David (Ps. 26: 6) says: "I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Jehovah." This figure may have been drawn from the legal washings demanded on different occasions. (See Lev. 14: 8, 9, 47.) They had some part to perform in making themselves clean. Their part, as the prophet

declares without the use of figurative language, was to repent of their sins. They were not only to "cease to do evil," but were to obey God and, as far as possible, right the wrongs they had done others. Paul, in penitence and prayer, washed away his sins when he arose and was baptized in obedience to God. (Acts 22: 16.) To wash away their sins and to cleanse themselves meant to do what God required to be done in order to be pardoned, or saved, from sins.

They were to "put away" their sins—repent and turn away from sin and "cease to do evil." But they were to do more—they were to "learn to do well." They had done evil so long that they would again have to "learn to do well." The things they were to do are as follows: "Seek justice"—deal justly and righteously with all; no longer oppress any, but, on the other hand, "relieve the oppressed"—redress the wrongs they had done others. "Judge the fatherless." From Isa. 1: 23 we see the judges had taken bribes, had not judged the fatherless and heard the cause of the widow, and were called "companions of thieves." They must see that the fatherless have justice and must "plead for the widow." (See Ps. 10: 17, 18; 72: 4.) "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation." (Ps. 68: 5.) He has always made provision for the fatherless and widows and made the proper treatment of them a test of religion. (Ex. 22: 22-24; Deut. 10: 18; 24: 17, 22; James 1: 27.)

Before one repents he must see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, feel its terribleness, realize its awfulness, and loathe and abominate it. So long as sin seems a light matter with people they will not put it away and "cease to do evil." We repent of our sins, turn from them, put them away, and obey God from the heart; and he forgives, pardons, saves. It is also true that every one who repents desires and strives to right all the wrongs that he has ever done. God exhorts all to bear fruit worthy of repentance by learning to do well. (See Isa. 55: 6, 7.)

18. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah." They are exhorted in their sinful course to stop and think, consider. God would show them that it is reasonable, right, and wise to repent. He would induce them to repent and serve him not only because of the consequences of their sins, but also by the incentive of pardon and a better life. "Scarlet" and "crimson"—deep, bright colors and hardest to remove—represent sin, as "white" represents purity. (See Ps. 51: 7; Rev. 7: 14.) To make sins "white as snow" and "as wool" means to forgive them.

19. God could not forgive them and bless them against their own desires and in their disobedience; but if they were "willing and obedient," God would forgive them freely and fully and they should "eat the good of the land." Prosperity would again smile on them. The grace, mercy, and love of God cannot save people in disobedience and sin.

20. If they refused and rebelled still, the sword would devour them. There could be no escape except through their own repentance and righteousness. "For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." God had foreseen and foretold the consequences of their sinful course, and it would surely come. (See also Isa. 1: 24-30.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

During the time of what kings did he prophesy?

Give the length of the reign of each one.

How long, then, must Isaiah have prophesied, and what must have been his age?

What does his name mean?

What were the names of his sons, and what did these names signify?

What kings of Israel were contemporary with these kings of Judah, and what was the length of the reign of each?

What was the condition of both kingdoms, financially and morally, when Isaiah began to prophesy?

What prophets were contemporary with Isaiah?

Whom did God begin to send against Judah on every side and at different times, and why?

Why did Pekah return the captives that he had taken?

What facts and reasons does Isa. 5 give?

What was this "vision of Isaiah?"

Why did the sins of Judah appear so heinous and the punishment so inevitable to Isaiah?

Upon what did he call to hear?

Why should heaven and earth give attention?

What had God done for Judah?

What had Judah done?

What had their sins done for them?

What different sins had they committed?

What do the ox and the ass know?

What did God's people not know and do?

State the force of this comparison.

(Let the teacher call upon some one to read Jer. 8: 7.)

What different things in this verse had they done?

What is meant by being "laden with iniquity?"

What is meant by "a seed of evil-doers?"

How had they dealt corruptly?

What is it to despise God?

What is it to love God?

Into what condition as relates to God had their sins led them?

What is meant by the question, "Why will ye be still stricken, that ye revolt more and more?"

What is meant by "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint?"

What does this verse mean?

What afflictions and consequences of sin does this verse state?

Had all that Isaiah mentions transpired? If not, why did he so speak of it?

What was "Zion?"

What was "the daughter of Zion?"

Like what was the city of Jerusalem left?

What do "booth" and "lodge" express?

What is said of "cucumbers?"

10 What had befallen Sodom and Gomorrah?

What was the only difference between them and Jerusalem?

Who were this "remnant?"

Was there always a remnant?

Why was there?

As what does Isaiah address these rulers?

11-15 Why were their sacrifices, feasts, and prayers abominations to God?

Whose sacrifices does God accept?

To what man does God look?

16, 17 What then did Isaiah exhort them to do?

What does "wash you, make you clean," mean?

What part have sinners to perform in being saved?

How did Paul wash away his sins?

What does putting away sin mean?

What were they to learn to do?

What were the things they were to do?

Of what is our treatment of the fatherless and the widows a test?

What is necessary in order to repent?

What does every one who repents desire to do?

18 What does God invite them to do?

What would he show them?

Why is sin compared to "scarlet" and "crimson?"

To what are purity and righteousness compared?

19 When would God forgive and bless them?

How would he bless them if they would repent and obey him?

20 But what would surely come upon them if they continued to rebel?

LESSON X.—DECEMBER 4.

ISAIAH TEACHES RIGHT LIVING.

Isa. 5: 1-12.

1 Let me sing for my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

2 And he digged it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also hewed out a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

6 And I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor hoed; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for justice, but, behold, oppression; for righteousness, but, behold, a cry.

8 Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!

9 In mine ears saith Jehovah of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.

10 For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and a homer of seed shall yield but an ephah.

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them!

12 And the harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of Jehovah, neither have they considered the operation of his hands.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."* (James 1: 27.)

TIME.—About B.C. 760.

PLACE.—Probably Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Isaiah and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 6-13.

HOME READING.—

November 28. M. Judah Condemned. (Isa. 3: 1-15.)

November 29. T. A Remnant Saved. (Isa. 4: 2-6.)

November 30. W. Lessons from the Vineyard. (Isa. 5: 1-12.)

December 1. T. Formal Righteousness Unavailing. (Phil. 3: 1-11.)

December 2. F. The Standard of Living. (Matt. 5: 33-48.)

December 3. S. Freedom Through Christ. (Rom. 8: 1-11.)

December 4. S. Mercy to All. (Isa. 55: 6-13.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

As we have learned, Isaiah was contemporary with Hosea, Amos, and Micah.

The prophecies of all these men show that both kingdoms, Judah and Israel, had turned from God to idolatry and were sunk in the depths of

sin. As another has said: "Luxury, oppression, idolatry, immorality, vain confidence in man, lack of confidence in God, together with perfunctory attendance on the ceremonials of religious worship, were the characteristics alike of Israel and Judah."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God's Vineyard Brought to Desolation.

1, 2. Smith's Bible Dictionary says: "Chapter 5 forms a distinct discourse, whose main purpose is that Israel, God's vineyard, shall be brought to desolation. At first he invites attention by reciting a parable (of a vineyard) in calm and composed accents (verses 1-7); but as he interprets the parable, his note changes, and a sixfold 'woe' is poured forth with terrible invective. It is leveled against the covetous amassers of land, against luxurious revelers, against bold sinners who defied God's work of judgment, against those who confounded moral distinctions, against self-conceited skeptics, and against profligate perverters of judicial justice. In fury of wrath, Jehovah stretches forth his hand."

II. What God Had Done for His Vineyard.

3-6. Calling upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Judah to judge between Jehovah and his vineyard is similar to Lesson VIII, in which it is declared that Jehovah had a controversy with his people. Here God asks what more could he have done for his vineyard than he had done.

"Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt: thou didst drive out the nations, and plantedst it. Thou preparedst room before it, and it took deep root, and filled the land. The mountains were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like cedars of God. It sent out its branches unto the sea and its shoots unto the River." (Ps. 80: 8-11.)

This vine God planted in "a very fruitful hill;" he cultivated the soil, digging it well; he threw out the stones, hewed out a wine press, and built in it a tower, giving it every protection. But, as the previous verses state, when he looked for it to bring forth the luscious fruit, it brought forth only wild grapes. He planted it "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," but it turned into a foreign and degenerate vine. (Jer. 2: 21.) Ezek. 5, 6 makes a similar comparison. This reminds us of the parable of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen uttered by our Savior. (Matt. 21: 33-41.) In this case the wickedness of the Jews is seen in their rejection of the Savior as the Son of God, who planted a vineyard.

This comparison of God's people to a vine and to a vineyard is interesting, instructive, beautiful, and impressive.

But when Jehovah looked for the fruit and found only wild grapes, he said he would take away the hedge of the vineyard that it might be eaten, and the stone wall that it might be trodden down and lie waste; that it should not be cultivated, but should be filled with briars and thorns; and that he would withhold the rain from it that it should become desolate.

III. The Application.

7. The vineyard was God's people. "For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for justice, but, behold, oppression; for righteousness, but, behold, a cry." This is the same complaint of covetousness, greed, injustice, lack of mercy, violence, bloodshed, and continual wickedness which we have heard from Hosea, Amos, and Micah.

IV. The First Woe.

8. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!" This has reference to covetousness and crowding out the poor, so it seems. (See Jer. 22: 13, 17; Mic. 2: 2; Hag. 2: 9-12.)

9, 10. This woe is that many "great and fair" houses shall be desolate and without inhabitants, and "ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath," or not more than seven gallons; "and a homer [thirty-two pecks] of seed shall yield but an ephah [only three pecks]." Lev. 26: 23-26 foretells the destruction, poverty, and desolation which would come upon the children of Israel when they should continually refuse to obey God. Hag. 1: 6 and 2: 16 show that the time came when the people sowed much and reaped but little, etc.

V. The Second Woe.

11. The second "woe" begins with this verse and ends with verse 17. "Strong drink" leads to this woe, which is terrible. "Strong drink" was one of the sins of both the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel at that time, for which the Lord condemned them. See Lessons V., VI., VII. These lessons show the covetous, drunken, licentious condition of the people.

This verse represents the people as rising "early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink." This was their business, as it is the sole business of many to-day, and they must be up and at it early. They neglected duty for strong drink. Neither did they stop with the day—"that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them."

This is literally carried out to-day in almost every place in our country. We know what it is for some people to drink early, to drink all day, to revel and banquet at wine suppers until late in the night, and to be inflamed with wine. Their faces are bloated, their eyes reddened, and their brain on fire—"set on fire of hell." It is a day of woe now to any nation whose rulers indulge in wine and are corrupted by strong drink.

Covetousness, licentiousness, injustice, revelry, dissipation, and oppression of the poor mark the beginning of the downfall of any nation. These things will destroy also any man or family. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," but these things undermine and destroy it.

12. To their wine feasts they added the charm of music, as Amos also declares. Such was once the practice in our country. Not long ago many a gilded saloon, with its ornamentations, had also its most charming voluptuous music. Now drinking is done in dives and dens and under cover of night, but it is done. The feasting, the social life,

and the power of music, all enhance the temptation to strong drink. The Bible speaks of the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb. 3: 13.) We see it here manifested in its most subtle power. To all this revelry, feasting, and music, beautiful and fascinating women frequently add their beguiling charms. What more subtle and powerful influence in the hand of Satan can there be than a bewitching lady offering a glass of wine to some unsuspecting youth? Men must forget God in order to engage in sin. They must despise his goodness (Rom. 2: 4) and forget all his mercy. Thus those of this verse regarded not "the work of Jehovah" and considered not "the operation of his hands."

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
With what prophets was Isaiah contemporary?
Of what sins were both the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah guilty?
- 1, 2 What is the purport of Isa. 5?
Give the facts of the parable with which it begins.
How many woes does this chapter contain?
 - 3-6 What question does God ask concerning his vineyard?
Of what contention in Lesson VIII does this remind us?
From what country had God brought Israel as a vine?
Where had he planted it, how had he cultivated it, and what had he done for it?
What fruit did it bring forth?
Of what parable does this remind us?
Because it brought forth only wild grapes, what did God say should be done with it?
 - 7 What was this vineyard?
 - What did God expect from the people?
What did he find?
 - 8 What is meant by joining house to house and laying field to field?
 - 9, 10 What is the first woe?
What is meant by ten acres of vineyard yielding one bath?
What is meant by a homer of seed yielding an ephah?
How does Haggai show that this has come to pass?
 - 11 Against what characters is the "woe" of this verse pronounced?
State the sins of Israel.
Why should Israel be the first to go into captivity?
In what manner did the people of Judah "follow strong drink?"
What examples are there of this sin now?
What does strong drink do for nations, families, and individuals?
 - 12 What gave charm to their feasts?
Repeat what Amos (6: 1-6) says about such sins and the invention of instruments of music.
Who added the charm of beauty to the feasts?
What have all such people forgotten, and what do they not regard?

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds;
You can't do that when you're flying words.
"Careful with fire" is good advice, we know;
"Careful with words" is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said.
(Selected.)

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 11.

ISAIAH COUNSELS RULERS.

Isa. 37: 5-11, 14-20.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith Jehovah, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear tidings, and shall return unto his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah; for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come out to fight against thee. And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?

14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up unto the house of Jehovah, and spread it before Jehovah.

15 And Hezekiah prayed unto Jehovah, saying,

16 O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, that sitteth above the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

17 Incline thine ear, O Jehovah, and hear; open thine eyes, O Jehovah, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent to defy the living God.

18 Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the countries, and their land,

19 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them.

20 Now therefore, O Jehovah our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art Jehovah, even thou only.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."* (Isa. 26: 3.)

TIME.—About B.C. 710; some think later than this.

PLACES.—Lachish and Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Hezekiah, Isaiah, Sennacherib, and others.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 21: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

December 5. M. Isaiah and Ahaz. (Isa. 7: 1-9.)

December 6. T. Help Against Assyria Promised. (Isa. 31: 1-9.)

December 7. W. Isaiah and Hezekiah. (Isa. 37: 21-29.)

December 8. T. Jehovah the Strength of His People. (Ps. 46.)

December 9. F. Rejoicing in Victory. (Ps. 47.)

December 10. S. The Conquering One. (Rom. 8: 31-39.)

December 11. S. Strong in Jehovah's Strength. (Ps. 21: 1-7.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

For a fuller description of Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Nineveh, Libnah, and Jerusalem, consult some Bible dictionary. Then locate these places on the map.

Lachish was an important, fortified town of Judah (2 Chron. 11:

9), and was besieged by Sennacherib. It was in the southwestern part of Judea, about sixteen miles east of Gaza.

Libna was another town in the southern part of Judea and not far from Lachish.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

While we cannot learn all about such a busy king and so good a man as was Hezekiah in one lesson, let us learn all we can. He was the son of Ahaz—a godly son of a most ungodly father. He succeeded his father to the throne. He began to reign at the age of twenty-five years and reigned twenty-nine years. His name means “strength of Jehovah.”

“His mother’s name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.” (2 Chron. 29: 1.) “Abijah” means “my father is Jehovah.” Doubtless, Abijah was a good woman, from whom Hezekiah received righteous impressions and impulses; he also gave heed to the instruction and warnings of Isaiah, who had then been a prophet for more than thirty-two years.

Hezekiah’s wife’s name was “Hephzibah” (2 Kings 21: 1), which means “my delight is in her.” (Isa. 62: 4.)

Hezekiah’s reformation of Judah was five or six years before the downfall of Israel.

“And he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that David his father had done. . . . He trusted in Jehovah, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him. For he clave to Jehovah; he departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses.” (See 2 Kings 18: 3-8.)

Sennacherib was king of Assyria. He was the son of Sargon. Isaiah (20: 1) mentions Sargon.

Study the Preceding Facts.

The facts of this lesson occurred in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah’s reign. (2 Kings 28: 13.) He had “rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not” (2 Kings 18: 7), to whom Ahaz had submitted (2 Kings 16: 7; 2 Chron. 28: 20, 21), and Sennacherib was seeking to reduce him to submission. Sennacherib came “up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them.”

Alarmed at this, Hezekiah sent to Sennacherib at Lachish, confessed he had offended, and offered to pay whatever tribute Sennacherib should lay upon him, if Sennacherib would only return from him. Sennacherib appointed “three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.” In order to raise this enormous sum, Hezekiah emptied his own treasures and spoiled the temple of God. (2 Kings 18: 13-16.)

If Sennacherib withdrew at all, he soon returned and determined to subdue the kingdom and remove its people into another country. (2 Kings 18: 32.) Hezekiah then prepared for the siege and to encourage the people. (See 2 Kings 20: 20; 2 Chron. 32: 1-8.)

Sennacherib's Cruel, Bloody, and Blasphemous Message.

At the time of this lesson Sennacherib and his army were at Lachish. From Lachish, Sennacherib sent officers, "with a great army," to Jerusalem with a cruel and bloody message, demanding of Hezekiah a complete surrender and the removal of the people as captives into another country. With this manifesto were coupled the vilest insults and greatest blasphemy.

The army took its stand "by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field." This, it is thought, was on the north side of Jerusalem. It was close enough for the people on the wall to hear the Assyrians speak. Hezekiah sent out Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah to talk with the Assyrians. Rabshakeh was the chief speaker for the Assyrians. He asked, virtually, upon what ground Hezekiah hoped to succeed.

He said if Hezekiah trusted in Pharaoh, the king of Egypt and rival and enemy of Sennacherib, he was leaning on a broken reed, which would only pierce his hand. (Isa. 36: 4-6; 2 Kings 18: 17-21.) To trust in themselves, they were told tauntingly, was to fail, because they were so few; they could not set riders on two thousand horses if they had them. Rabshakeh offered the horses if they could furnish even two thousand soldiers. They were so poor and weak, he said, they could not withstand one captain of the least of Sennacherib's servants. (Isa. 36: 8, 9; 2 Kings 18: 23, 24.) To trust in God was to fail also.

Their trust in God was mocked, and God himself was blasphemed. If they were persuaded by Hezekiah to trust in Jehovah for deliverance, they would be enticed into death by famine and thirst. Rabshakeh undertook to convince them that in destroying the many altars and high places of idols (2 Chron. 31: 1) and in confining the worship to the one altar of God in Jerusalem, Hezekiah had deprived them of their religious rights and had offended God; hence, they could not expect God to help them. The reason the ignorant and malicious Rabshakeh gave for their failure was the reason for their success.

In blasphemy and contempt, Jehovah was placed on an equality with, and even beneath, the idols of other nations. The idea that Jehovah could save by a few was ridiculed.

All this was enlarged upon and spoken in the Jews' language to stir up sedition among them. But they very wisely, according to Hezekiah's instruction, held their peace. (Isa. 36: 11-22; 2 Kings 18: 26-36.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Isaiah's Message to Hezekiah.

5-7. Hezekiah's officers went to him "with their clothes rent" and reported what had been said. He also, in distress, "rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Jehovah." He then reported to Isaiah what had been said. Hezekiah

trusted that God would hear and punish the blasphemy of the Assyrians, and his trust was not in vain. Through Isaiah, God answered Hezekiah and told him to be not afraid; that he had heard this blasphemy; that the king of Assyria should hear tidings, should return to his own land, and should there fall by the sword. (See 2 Kings 19: 2-7.)

8, 9. When Rabshakeh returned to Sennacherib, he found that Sennacherib had left Lachish and was warring against Libnah. Sennacherib had heard that the king of Ethiopia was advancing to fight against him, and this made him more urgent for the surrender of Jerusalem.

II. Sennacherib's Letter.

10, 11. Sennacherib sent messengers, therefore, again to Hezekiah, endeavoring to induce him to surrender. This time he wrote a letter to Hezekiah, railing on "Jehovah the God of Israel" and speaking against him. 2 Chron. 32: 17; 2 Kings 19: 10-13 contain this railing. Again the messengers spoke in the Jews' language and rehearsed what had been said in order to frighten them. Hezekiah read the letter and treated it as he should have done, because it was an attack upon God. (See verses 12, 13.)

III. Hezekiah's Prayer.

14-20. Having read this letter, Hezekiah took it into the temple, spread it before God, and offered the prayer contained in these verses. (See also 2 Kings 19: 14-19.)

Of a truth the king of Assyria had laid waste other nations and cast their gods into the fire, because they were wood and stone and were no gods. As Sennacherib had reproached and defied God, Hezekiah trusted that God would answer; and he desired relief and salvation for God's honor. To rely upon Egypt or any other arm of flesh was sure destruction, and Isaiah warned against that (see Isa. 30: 1-5) in this present distress, and to hire the king of Assyria to leave was a mistake and a failure; but to go to God in humility and trust was salvation—the only salvation.

All this has been written for our instruction and admonition, that we may learn not to turn away from the will and appointments of God, through which alone his blessings come, and rely upon the wisdom and appointments of men, which can bring only shame and destruction in the end.

IV. The Victorious Conclusion.

(Verses 21-38.)

This lesson would be incomplete without this conclusion, which let us study.

V. God's Answer to Hezekiah.

(21, 22) Isaiah also "prayed because of this, and cried to heaven" (2 Chron. 32: 20); but he was not with Hezekiah in the temple, and his prayer is not recorded.

God answered Hezekiah through Isaiah. The answer is given in these verses and in 2 Kings 19: 20-34. God said the virgin daughter of Zion would laugh the boastful enemy to scorn and shake her head at him, and the haughty Assyrian should be brought low.

(23-25) The message which God sent to Sennacherib is contained in verses 22-29.

God told Sennacherib that he had blasphemed, defiled, and lifted up his voice against "the Holy One of Israel;" that he had attributed his victories over all the nations he had mentioned to the multitude of his chariots and military skill; and that he had threatened to dry up all the waters of Egypt; but that he could do nothing only as God willed it.

VI. God's Message to Sennacherib.

(26, 27) Sennacherib was informed that he was only a means in God's hand to chastise and destroy these nations. Howbeit he did not mean it so, or intend it as service to God, but thought he had accomplished all this by his own wisdom and power. Little did he know that he was, indeed, a battle-ax and chastening rod in God's hand to destroy these nations and to chastise the Jews. So God said when he had "performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and Jerusalem," he would "punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." (Isa. 10: 5-16.)

(28, 29) Sennacherib was further informed that God knew his sitting down, going out, and coming in—his every movement. Because of his raging and arrogance, God would put a hook in his nose and a bridle in his lips and lead him back the way he came.

If we cannot learn from these facts that God uses one wicked nation to chastise and even destroy other more wicked nations, and protects and saves his own people when they trust him and rely upon him, then we cannot learn the simplest truths or plainest facts.

VII. God's Further Answer to Hezekiah.

(30) While Sennacherib's army had destroyed the growing crops in order to reduce the people to famine, God encouraged Hezekiah by promising that the people should live the remainder of that year and through the next year, which is supposed to have been a Sabbatic year, on the volunteer products of the earth. This was both a sign to Hezekiah and a manifestation of God's great goodness.

(31, 32) God would save Jerusalem, and "the remnant" that had "escaped of the house of Judah" should "again take root downward, and bear fruit upward." God's zeal would perform this.

(33, 35) Therefore, God said that Sennacherib should not come into the city, or cast up a mound against it, or even shoot an arrow against it; but, as stated above, he should return by the way he came. God would do this for his own sake and for his servant David's sake. (See 2 Kings 19: 30-34.)

VIII. The Destruction of Sennacherib's Army.

(36-38) "And Jehovah sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty men of valor, and the leaders and captains, in the camp of the king of Assyria." (2 Chron. 32: 21.) That night, after Hezekiah's reception of that blasphemous letter, "the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies." The Assyrian camp was at once broken up, and Sennacherib in haste "returned with shame of face to his own land." God did this to dishonor Sennacherib.

While God did this suddenly, it does not follow that he used no means; yet we know not what means he used, if any.

Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, and, according to history, lived after this about seventeen years (see Smith's Bible Dictionary), and was slain by his sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, with the sword, while "worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god."

This lesson shows the efficacy and power of prayer.

Faith, humility, reverence, and submission to God's will are essential elements of acceptable prayer. (See 1 John 3: 22; 5: 14.)

Thus God saved Hezekiah and Jerusalem "and guided them on every side."

Hezekiah was greatly honored, and the land again bloomed with prosperity. (See 2 Chron. 32: 22, 23.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Places, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What and where were Lachish and Libnah?

Give Hezekiah's parents and life up to this lesson.

What had Hezekiah done for the people before this?

What was the occasion of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah?

Who was Sennacherib?

What cities of Judah had he taken?

What message did Hezekiah send him?

What tribute did he lay upon Hezekiah?

Where did Hezekiah get the money?

What next did Sennacherib determine to do?

What preparation did Hezekiah make?

Where were Sennacherib and his army?

Whom did Sennacherib send with a message to Hezekiah?

What were the demands of his message?

From what place did these officers speak of Hezekiah's officers and the Jews?

Whom did Hezekiah send to hear this message?

What question did Rabshakeh ask the Jews?

Give the substance of Rabshakeh's speech.

Why did Rabshakeh speak in the Jews' language?

What did the people do when they heard this speech?

5-7 What did Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah do?

What did Hezekiah do?

Whom did he inform of this?

What answer did God make through Isaiah?

8, 9 Where did Rabshakeh find Sennacherib?

10, 11 How did Sennacherib address Hezekiah the second time?

14-20 What did Hezekiah do with this letter?

Give the substance of this letter.

Give Isaiah's prayer.

- Against what had Isaiah warned?
 (See Isa. 30: 1-5.)
 (21, 22) Who else prayed?
 State in full God's answer to these prayers.
 (23-25) Give the message which God sent to Sennacherib.
 Why were God's people called "a virgin daughter?"
 (26, 27) Of what facts did God inform Sennacherib?
 (28, 29) What did God know of Sennacherib?

- What would God do with him?
 (30) What promise and sign did God give Hezekiah?
 (31, 32) What should the "remnant" do?
 (33-35) What should Sennacherib not do?
 (36-38) How was the Syrian army destroyed?
 How many were slain?
 What did Sennacherib do?
 How long did he live afterwards?
 How did he die?
 What came to Hezekiah?

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY.

In speaking of a person's faults,
 Pray don't forget your own;
 Remember those with homes of glass
 Should seldom throw a stone.
 If we have nothing else to do
 Than talk of those who sin,
 'Tis better we commence at home,
 And from that point begin.

We have no right to judge a man
 Until he's fairly tried.
 Should we not like his company,
 We know the world is wide.
 Some may have faults, and who has not,
 The old as well as young?
 Perhaps we may, for aught we know,
 Have fifty to their one.

Then let us all, when we begin
 To slander friend or foe,
 Think of the harm one word may do
 To those we little know.
 Remember, curses sometimes, like
 Our chickens, "roost at home."
 Don't speak of others' faults until
 We have none of our own.

(John W. Travis.)

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 18.

REVIEW—THE EARLY PROPHETS OF ISRAEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son.” (Heb. 1: 1, 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 67.

HOME READING.—

- December 12. M. Elijah on Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18: 30-39.)
- December 13. T. Amos Pleads for Justice. (Amos 5: 1-15.)
- December 14. W. Hosea Proclaims God's Love. (Hos. 11: 1-9.)
- December 15. T. Micah Champions the Oppressed. (Mic. 6: 1-13.)
- December 16. F. Isaiah's Call. (Isa. 6: 1-8.)
- December 17. S. Isaiah Preaches Repentance. (Isa. 1: 10-20.)
- December 18. S. The World for Christ. (Ps. 67.)

Next Lord's day will bring us to the end of another year's lessons. The author of these lessons trusts the ones who have studied them have derived as much pleasure and profit from them as he has in preparing them. He most heartily appreciates the many expressions of appreciation of his lessons which have come to him in different ways.

The passing year reminds us of the fact that as “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” we are one year's journey nearer home; but if we are unrighteous, factious, and disobedient to the truth, we are that much nearer outer darkness and “eternal punishment.” “For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Cor. 5: 10.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What do we have to say about the progress we have made in the knowledge of the Bible at the end of this year's study?
What is meant by Christians' being “strangers and pilgrims on the earth?”
What will become of those who are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness?
Before what must all be made manifest?
According to what must all be judged?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Relate what you know of Elijah up to the time of this lesson.
State the facts of the test between Elijah and the false prophets.

LESSON II.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Why did Elijah flee from Jezreel to Horeb?

What was the distance between these two places?
What request did Elijah make for himself?
Why did he make this request?
How did God answer this request?
What is shown by the strong wind and the earthquake and the still small voice?
What directions did God give Elijah?

LESSON III.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Repeat in detail the bloody story of Ahab, Jezebel, and Naboth.

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Whom was Elijah commanded to anoint?
Where was Elisha found, and what doing?
What did he become?
Who was Amos?
Why did he prophesy?
Relate the facts of Isaiah's vision.

LESSON V.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Of what outstanding sins was Israel guilty?
What had God done for Israel?

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What was the outward condition of Israel at the time of this lesson?
What was its inward or moral condition?
Name their most prominent sins.
Who were the leading sinners?
What were they exhorted to do?
What is it to seek God?

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was Hosea?
When did he prophesy?
How does he say God showed his tender love for Israel?
The more God loved him, what more did Israel do?
What punishment did God send upon Israel?
Give some quotations in the New Testament from Hosea.

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was Micah?
Where did he live?
Of whom did he prophesy?
What outstanding sins does he mention and condemn?
State in detail a controversy as stated by

Micah between Jehovah and Israel.
What could not appease God's wrath?
What good thing did God say Israel must do?
What is it to do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with God?

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
During the reigns of what kings did Isaiah prophesy?
Who was contemporary with him?
What represents the sinful condition of the national body at that time?
What wicked cities were called "sisters" of Jerusalem?
What constitutes true worship?

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What were the characteristics of Judah and Israel at the time of this lesson?
What is the main purpose of Isa. 5?
Give the parable in facts and conclusion of Israel as a vine.

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
In this lesson what rulers does Isaiah counsel?
What kind of a king was Hezekiah?
Who was attacking Judah and Jerusalem at this time?
What arrogant and blasphemous message did Sennacherib send Hezekiah?
What effect did this have on Hezekiah, and what did he do?
Give Hezekiah's prayer.
Give the termination of all this.

How many days might lose their gloom,
How many nights their sorrow,
If we should wait to criticize
Until a kindlier morrow!
A night oft changes hate to love;
A taunt, if left unspoken,
May change to sympathy and cheer,
And keep a heart unbroken.

How many tears we might be spared,
How many hours of sadness,
If men should utter only good,
And speak but cheer and gladness!
A word may break a lonely heart,
Or save a life that's broken;
Then let all evil words be stilled,
And only good be spoken.

(Selected.)

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 25.

CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Luke 2: 8-20.

8 And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.

9 And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people:

11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

17 And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

18 And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins."* (Matt. 1: 21.)

TIME.—B.C. 4.

PLACE.—Bethlehem of Judea.

PERSONS.—Augustus Cæsar, Cyrenius, Joseph, Mary, the babe, the shepherds, and the angels.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 2: 8-20.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|--------------|----|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| December 19. | M. | The Prince of Peace. | (Isa. 11: 1-10.) |
| December 20. | T. | The Name "Jesus." | (Matt. 1: 18-25.) |
| December 21. | W. | The Birth of Jesus. | (Luke 1: 1-7.) |
| December 22. | T. | The Heavenly Chorus. | (Luke 2: 8-20.) |
| December 23. | F. | The Visit of the Wise Men. | (Matt. 2: 1-12.) |
| December 24. | S. | The Song of Zacharias. | (Luke 1: 68-79.) |
| December 25. | S. | The Glorious Rule of the Prince. | (Isa. 9: 1-7.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

BETHLEHEM.—Joseph went from Nazareth, in Galilee, a distance of about eighty miles, to the south, "because he was of the house and family of David" and Bethlehem was "the city of David." "Bethlehem" means "house of bread." It was an old city, six miles south of Jerusalem. Its early name was "Ephrath" or "Ephrathah." Here Jacob buried his beloved Rachel. (Gen. 35: 16-19; 48: 7.) Here Ruth lived after her famous decision to cling to Naomi, and here she

gleaned from the grain fields of Boaz. Here David was born and reared; here he learned to sing psalms; and here, as a shepherd lad, he fed his father's flocks more than a thousand years before the birth of the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." (Mic. 5: 2; see also Matt. 2: 6.) This time has come in our lesson.

There was a Bethlehem of Zebulun. It is mentioned but once. (Josh. 19: 15.)

JERUSALEM.—After David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites, it was called "the city of David." There he reigned as king over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years, and there he was buried. He reigned over Judah at Hebron seven years and six months. (See 2 Sam. 5: 5-10; 6: 12, 16; 1 Kings 2: 10; 9: 24.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Call attention to what a wonderful event the coming of the Son of God into the world was—the very greatest in the history of the world—"God manifest in the flesh."

Reckoning time from the birth of Jesus did not begin until several hundred years after his birth, and it has been agreed by those who have studied the question that a mistake of four years was made, which places his birth in the year B.C. 4, as has been stated in the beginning of this book.

HEROD THE GREAT.—There are seven Herods mentioned in the New Testament: "Herod the king" (Matt. 2: 1); Archelaus, his son and successor (Matt. 2: 22); Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee (Matt. 14: 1; Mark 6: 16, 17; Luke 3: 1), son of Herod the Great; Herod Philip I, another son of Herod the Great, lawful husband of Herodias, who was his half niece (Luke 3: 19); Herod Philip II. (Luke 3: 1), son of Herod the Great, built Cesarea Philippi, married Salome, his brother Philip's daughter, the girl who danced before Herod Antipas; Herod Agrippa I, son of Aritobulus and grandson of Herod the Great, who beheaded James, who seized Peter with the purpose of killing him also, and who was eaten of worms (Acts 12: 1-3, 23); Herod Agrippa II, before whom Paul made his famous defense (Acts 25: 13, 23; 26: 2, 27.)

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.—(See Luke 2: 1-6.) Augustus was the second of the twelve Cæsars and the first emperor of Rome. He was grand-nephew and successor of Julius Cæsar, and was Cæsar Octavius until Rome conferred upon him the title of "Augustus" in B.C. 27. On his victory over Antony at Actium he entered into supreme power, and from that time was master of the Roman world. Rejoiced at his victory over his enemies, he closed the temple of Janus, which stood open in time of war, for the third time in seven hundred years, and declared universal peace. During his reign Rome enjoyed "the golden age." This, then, was a fit time for the birth of "the Prince of Peace."

"In those days," perhaps just after the birth of John the Baptist, Augustus declared that "all the world should be enrolled," preliminary to taxation. Some think "all the world" here means the Roman Empire. It more probably means the Jewish nation. (See Luke 21: 26.)

QUIRINIUS.—Quirinius "was consul B.C. 12, and was governor of Syria after the banishment of Archelaus in A.D. 6. He was probably twice governor of Syria, his first governorship extending from B.C. 4 (the year of Christ's birth) to B.C. 1. It was during this time that he was sent to make enrollment, which caused Joseph and Mary to visit Bethlehem." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) This "was the first enrollment." The second is mentioned in Acts 5: 37.

While the Romans required registration in the place of residence, the Jews were permitted to follow their own customs. "And all went to enroll themselves, every one to his own city."

In the providence of God, Joseph and Mary were called to Bethlehem just in time for Jesus to be born there.

Betrothal is a virtual marriage, although the betrothed did not go at once to the husband's home.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name JESUS." (Matt. 1: 18-25.)

Mary knew not a man (Luke 1: 34), and Joseph "knew her not," until after Jesus was born. After this there were born unto Joseph and Mary both sons and daughters. (Matt. 12: 46-48; 13: 54-55; Acts 1: 14.) This forever destroys the dogma of Mary's "perpetual virginity."

WHY JESUS MUST BE BORN OF WOMAN.—We do not know just why Jesus did not appear immediately after the fall of man, but it seems that the race must be prepared for his coming. The law of Moses was "added because of transgressions, till the seed [Jesus] should come." (Gal. 3: 19.) It prepared the Jews for the reception of Christ. (Verse 24.) The law was full of types which pointed to Christ. (Heb. 10: 1.) Then, according to his own purpose and after the counsel of his own will, "when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4: 4, 5; see also Eph. 1: 9-14.)

Before his birth on earth Jesus existed with God as "the Word." "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." (See John 1: 1-14; 1 Tim. 3: 16.) After his manifestation in the flesh, his name is "Jesus," and he is called "the Son of man."

He must be born of woman in order to become flesh, and he must become flesh in order to suffer and die for the race; he must suffer and weep and be tempted in order to "become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." (See Heb. 2: 14-17; 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9.) God prepared for him a body. (Heb. 10: 4-10.) He bore "our sins in his body upon the tree," and by his "stripes ye were [we are] healed." (1 Pet. 2: 24.)

"When the fullness of the time came" for Jesus to be born, Gabriel, as we know, appeared to Mary at Nazareth and declared to her that she should become the mother of the Son of God. While these declarations of Gabriel were astonishing to Mary, and wonderful, she never doubted them. Gabriel assured her that "no word from God shall be void of power." To this Mary replied: "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1: 26-38.) This is great faith indeed—faith sublime.

There is no proof whatever that Jesus was born on December 25. On the contrary, it seems altogether probable that he was not born on that day.

Human nature is prone to celebrate noted events, and men have been disposed to celebrate the birth of Christ. The Bible says not a word about the celebration of the birth of Christ on any day. Had God wanted the birth of Christ celebrated, he would have told the world on what day he was born and how to celebrate it. He has given the church the first day of the week on which to meet "to break bread" and to otherwise worship him according to his direction. (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11: 17-34; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; Heb. 10: 25.) The Lord's Supper is to be eaten on the first day of the week in memory of Jesus, to proclaim his death till he come, and to have "a communion" with his body and blood. (1 Cor. 10: 16, 17.) Thousands who are so concerned about celebrating Christmas, which thing God does not command to be done, neglect or ignore the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, which God teaches should be observed by his people.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Inn and the Manger.

8. While Joseph and Mary were at Bethlehem, Jesus was born. It was not so designed by them, but it was so arranged in the plan and prophecies of God.

"Swaddling clothes" were unmade bands, in which the newborn child was wrapped. This was the customary dress for infants. (Ezek. 16: 4.) Jesus, as a babe and as a man, was clothed as ordinary babes and men.

He was laid "in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." The inn and the manger were different apartments. Inns were respectable and useful lodging places for travelers, but not in the modern use of the word. They were rude, unfurnished, square buildings surrounding an open space or court. On the inside of the square walls were separate rooms fronting the court; hence, each party could have a room to itself. The beasts of burden fed and rested in the court, or in sheds abutting the outside wall, or in caves around it.

Each party carried its own bedding and provisions. There seems to have been but one inn in Bethlehem, and it was full when Joseph and Mary reached there. So in one of the stables adjoining, perhaps a cave, they found a lodging place; and there Jesus was born and laid in a manger—a feeding trough, not a jeweled cradle in some royal palace. It is impossible to conceive of a humbler birthplace for the Son of God.

II. The Shepherds and the Angels.

"There were shepherds in the same country," and, therefore, near by, "keeping night watches [see margin] over their flock"—that is, watching in turn over their sheep to protect them from wild beasts and robbers and to prevent their straying away.

This is an argument against the supposition that Jesus was born on December 25. Some say it was possible for the shepherds to be out at night in that mild climate in December; yet it is no more probable that Jesus was born then than in June. Religious sects have placed the birth of Jesus in every month in the year.

Had God desired us to celebrate the birth of his Son, he would have preserved the date and taught us how to celebrate it. He does desire us to remember the body and blood of his Son, and has taught us how to do it. (1 Cor. 11: 20-34; Acts 20: 7; Heb. 10: 25; Acts 2: 42.)

9. The angel and the multitude of the heavenly host did not appear to the shepherds by accident. The shepherds were prepared in heart and character for this visitation. The Lord comes to those who are ready for him, and blesses those who are prepared to receive and use his blessings. These shepherds were not in the synagogues on the Sabbath day or at the temple on some feast day, but they were at the post of duty.

This beautiful angelic hymn was not sung in the palace of the Cæsars or to the learned Athenians or to the Pharisees in Jerusalem, but to humble shepherds waiting and praying in the daily routine of life's duty for the Messiah. Here, too, "the glory of the Lord shone round about them." This was the bright light or dazzling cloud from the presence of God which accompanied the angel. It shone from the face of Moses (Ex. 34: 29-35); it shone from the face and raiment of Jesus (Matt. 17: 2-5); it shone round Saul of Tarsus, and smote him blind on his way to Damascus (Acts 22: 6, 7); and it shone about John on the isle of Patmos. "And they were sore afraid." This light has never been seen without fear and trembling.

10, 11. "Be not afraid," the angel said to remove the fear of the shepherds. "Fear not" and "be not afraid" were expressions frequently used to allay fear aroused by the miraculous appearances of angels and Jesus. (See Luke 1: 13, 30; Matt. 17: 7; 28: 5, 10; Mark 6: 50; Luke 5: 10; 12: 32; John 6: 20; Rev. 1: 17.)

The angel came to inform the shepherds of the birth of Jesus. This was not only good news to them, but to "all the people." Jesus came to save both Jews and Gentiles.

"Jesus" means "Savior." Others were named "Jesus" (Col. 4: 11); but there is only one Jesus Christ, the Lord. "This Jesus" was made "both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2: 36.)

"Christ" means "anointed," and God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power. (Acts 10: 38.) Prophets, priests, and kings were