ELAM'S NOTES

ON

Bible School Lessons
1929

Eighth Annual Volume
(Improved Uniform International Series)

EDITED BY E. A. ELAM

AND H. LEO BOLES

PRICE

Single copy, postpaid, 95 cents
five or more copies to same address, 85 cents each, net

ORDER FROM
GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY
NASHVILLE, TENN.

NOTICE

As a foreword we cannot do better than to repeat that which was said in the beginning of other volumes.

The Bible text and quotations used in this volume are taken from the Standard American Edition of the Revised Version (copyrighted, 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons), and used by permission.

In preparing the lessons of this book the authors have drawn valuable information from all available commentaries, histories, dictionaries, chronological tables, etc., and have endeavored to give due credit in proper form for all direct quotations; but they wish further to acknowledge their indebtedness to all these for information they have expressed in their own language.

Above all, they are 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.

E. A. ELAM.
H. LEO BOLES.

Copyright, 1929, by

GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY

GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY, Publishers
NASHVILLE, TENN.

Printed in United States of America
November, 1928

FIRST QUARTER

SOME GREAT CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS

AIM: *To lead the pupil to an understanding and appreciation of the essential teachings of the Christian faith.*

Lesson I—January 6, 1929

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Matt. 6:24-34.

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?

26 Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them, Are not ye of much more value than they?

27 And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?

28 And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 Yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is east into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him." (*Ps. 103:13.)

TIME. A.D. 28.

PLACE.—Supposed to be Mount Hattin, seven miles southwest from Capernaum and about three miles west of the Sea of Galilee.

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

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 3:3-6; 4:20-24.

DAILY HOME READING.—

December	31.	M.	Our Heavenly Father. (Matt. 6:24-34.)
January	1.	T.	Our Father's Mercy. (Ps. 103:1-10.)
January	2.	W	.Our Father's Faithfulness. (1 Pet. 4:12-19.)
January	3.	T.	Our Father's Gift. (Eph. 1:3-14.)
January	4.	F.	Our Father's Love. (John 3:16-21.)
January	5.	S.	Sonship With God. (1 John 3:1-8.)
January	6.	S.	Our Approach to the Father. (John 4:20-26.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

All the lessons for this quarter are on important and fundamental lessons of the Bible. The first verse in the Bible introduces us to God. The word, power, wisdom, and love of God run throughout the Bible. God has revealed himself to us in the Old Testament as “God,” “Lord God,” “Jehovah God,” “God Almighty,” the “I Am,” “Creator,” and “Lord.” He is revealed to us in the New Testament as “Father,” “Our Heavenly Father.” He was a protector and a shield to his people under the law. He is all to us that he was to his people anciently, but he is much more to us than he was to them. His people were his servants under the old dispensation; his people are his children under grace. “Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters.” (2 Cor. 6:17, 18.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Two Masters

Jesus clearly and definitely states that “no man can serve two masters." (Verse 24.) The two masters mentioned here are “God and mammon.” These two masters cannot be served by any one at the same time. This is evident. They are so different in nature and Spirit and their demands are so contradictory that both cannot be served at the same time. One of the masters is God, our Father; the other master is “mammon.” The word “mammon” means wealth, riches. It is here personified and stands for Satan.

Jesus has settled the question of serving two masters, yet some people try to serve the two. There is no common ground between the two masters. Paul raised the question: “What fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols?” (2 Cor. 6:14-16.) Jesus further states that if we love the one, we will hate the other; or if we “hold to” one, we will “despise” the other. God will not accept a divided service. Satan will accept a part of our service. A servant must have but one master from which to take orders. There can be but one Father. All should choose to serve God and honor him as a Father. One serves God when one lays up “treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” (Matt. 6:20.) One serves mammon when one lays up “treasures ripen the earth.”

II. Anxiety for Earthly Things Forbidden

"Be not anxious for your life." (Verse 25.) Since God is our Father and we are to love and worship him, we should not be anxious for the necessary things of life. Consuming anxiety about the necessary things of life belongs to the worldly-minded and servants of mammon. The absolute necessities of life may be grouped under three classes—namely, (1) food, "what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink;" (2) clothing, which is care for the body, or "what ye shall put on;" (3) shelter, where one may live. These things are necessary, but they should not claim all of our attention. There are things which are of greater value than any of these three classes of things. Jesus raises the question: "Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?" "Life" often denotes "soul," but here it seems to mean simply the vital or the animating principle which continues our existence in the flesh. We are further instructed by Paul that "we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content." (1 Tim. 6: 7, 8.) This shows that the Lord does not mean that we are to exercise no forethought or put forth no effort for the material things which are needful. He simply means that when we have food, clothing, and shelter we should "be therewith content" and expend what energy of soul and body that we may possess in serving him.

A beautiful example is given to teach us to put our trust in God as our Father. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them." The birds do not "sow" nor "reap" nor "gather into barns," yet they are cared for. Sowing, reaping, and gathering into barns are the three leading processes of agriculture. The birds follow neither of these, yet they do put forth some effort in order to obtain their food. God does not feed them in idleness, but they find their food without any elaborate processes of man. Jesus instructs us that we are "of much more value than they." If God cares for the birds of the heavens, and we are "of much more value than they," he will also be a Father unto all those who put their trust in him.

Our Lord presses the question: "Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?" Our anxiety over food will not produce any more food; neither will it provide one any better conditions to produce food. Then why be anxious about these things? The Savior has given reasons why those who put their trust in God should not be anxious. The first reason is that life has more important aims than food and drink. The second reason that we should be free from anxiety is that the birds do not sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet they are fed by Jehovah; so we can work without anxiety. The third reason that is given is that anxiety is unavailing. We should learn the lesson.

III. Our Father, a Bountiful Giver

We are dependent upon God. The Savior gives two facts of nature which teach our compelled dependence on God for even the necessities of life—namely, (1) the way in which the birds of the air are fed; (2) the way in which the lilies grow. These are cared for and are yet dependent on God. In like manner we are not only dependent upon

God, but also he has promised to give us all good things. “If God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, 0 ye of little faith?” (Verse 30.) Paul, in writing of the bountiful gifts of God, says: “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32.) God gives the greater, and that is a pledge that he will give the less. He gives royally and liberally, logically and completely, lovingly and wisely. When he gives unto us life, we may be sure that he will give unto us the necessities of life. When he gives unto us spiritual life, we may be encouraged that he will give all the necessities of spiritual life. In Christ “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full.” (Col. 2:9, 10.) Again, Paul encourages the Roman Christians by saying that when he comes to them he will “come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.” (Rom. 15:29.) We should rejoice that we have a Heavenly Father upon whom we are dependent and who is able to supply us with all things that we need.

Our “Heavenly Father knoweth” that we have need of material blessings, as we have need of spiritual blessings. He is all-wise, and, therefore, knows what we need. He “knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.” (Matt. 6:8.) Our Father is omnipotent; he has all power, and, therefore, can supply our needs. Again, God is good. The Savior said upon one occasion: “Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God.” (Mark 10:18.) Our Father is good enough to give us all things that we need. Paul said: “My God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19.) We may be encouraged, thereby, since God knows our need, is able to supply them, and is good enough to do so.

IV. First Things First

In contrast with the worry and anxiety for material things, Jesus said: “Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness.” (Verse 33.) So there are some things which the Savior has put in a class that may be called “first things.” In this class comes the seeking of the kingdom of God and “his righteousness.” Jesus puts the highest value on the things of God. All should seek “first his kingdom;” and when they shall have found this kingdom and entered it, they are then to seek first the righteousness that belongs to this kingdom. He who puts this off does not follow God's order. “Righteousness” is right living between man and man, as “godliness” is right living between God and man. If our hearts are filled with a supreme and transcendent desire after one supreme object, and that seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then there will be no room for anxious care about the things of this life which perish with the using. Our souls should be stretching out toward that state of complete and joyful submission to God's loving will which leads us into the fullness of the righteousness which is in Christ Jesus.

If any one would make life a success, that one must have something that is always first in his life. The life will then be successful in that measure or to that degree that one keeps the things of God first in his life. It should be the chief concern of every heart to become a subject

of God's kingdom and enjoy the peace of righteousness which belongs to that kingdom. If one will do this, all necessary temporal things will be given to that one. “And all these things shall be added unto you.” All these worldly things are of minor importance; and as God will supply all needful things, we should not be “anxious for the mot-row.” Every day brings its own troubles and needs. We need not exercise ourselves over “the morrow.” We need not borrow any burdens or troubles from “the morrow,” for each day has sufficient evil for itself.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. A plain maxim of common experience is that we cannot serve two masters at the same time. Even if the two masters were not diametrically opposed to each other, it would be impossible to serve both of them. Much more is it impossible to serve two when they are so radically different in nature, Spirit, and ways.

2. Anxiety for worldly things is one form of mammon worship, and is, therefore, inconsistent with true devotion. An overanxious mind cannot cultivate piety and develop a spiritual life. There is no use in worrying about things which you cannot help; it does no good, but harm. Neither should we worry about things which can be helped; these things should be adjusted and the energies of our life given to useful service.

3. All petitions or prayers begin with the recognition of the Fatherhood of God. The Fatherhood of God implies his being the source of life, his tender care and divine relation. To address him as “Our Father who art in heaven” is to gather all the Lord's people into a family, and this recognizes the relationship of all the Lord's people.

4. We should never forget our complete dependence on God. It is in him that we live, move, and have our being. He loves his children and wants them to put implicit trust in him as a Father, and he will gently care for them, bountifully provide for their needs, and lovingly sustain them in all the trials of life.

5. If we seek the spiritual things first, we will not seek in vain. We will obtain all the spiritual blessings in Christ. We are to obtain temporal blessings, not without seeking or working for them, but without “anxious” seeking. If we seek temporal things first, we shall constantly be less inclined to seek, the spiritual things and still less prepared to find the spiritual things and enjoy them.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time. Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Upon what subjects do the lessons of this quarter teach?
Who is introduced in the first of the Bible?
By what names is God known in the Old Testament?
How is he known to us?
What relation do we sustain to him?

The Two Masters

What does Jesus say about the two masters?
Who are the two masters?
What is meant by “mammon?”
Who is represented by “mammon?”
Why cannot one serve God and mammon? What fellowship is there between righteousness and iniquity?
What harmony between the believer and the unbeliever?
Can we love one master without hating the other?
Can we hold to one and not despise the other?

Will God accept a divided service?
Will Satan accept it?
What is it to serve God?

Anxiety for Earthly Things Forbidden

For what should we not be anxious?
What will anxiety do for one?
Name the absolute necessities of life.
What is of more value than these temporal necessities?
What is meant by "life?"
What did we bring into this world?
What will we take out of it?
Does the Savior teach that we should take no thought for temporal things?
What are the three processes of agriculture?
Does God feed the birds in idleness?
Will he feed man in idleness?
Name the three reasons why God's people should not be anxious?

Our Father, a Bountiful Giver

What two facts of nature show our dependence on God?
What great gift has God given us?
What assurance do we have that he will give the smaller things?
From whom do we get life?
From .whom must we get the necessities of life?
What is meant by "the fullness of the blessing of Christ?"
Does God know the needs of his people?
What assurance do we have that he will supply these needs?

First Things First

What should we seek first?
Name something else that belongs in this class?
Upon what does Jesus place the highest value?
What is it to seek the kingdom of God?
What is it to seek his righteousness?
Can one seek his kingdom and not seek his righteousness?
Can one seek his righteousness and not seek his kingdom?
How can we make life a success?
Why should we not be anxious for the morrow?

Practical Suggestions

Are you trying to serve two masters?
What is a form of "mammon" worship?
Name two things which we should not worry about.
How should all prayers begin?
What does the Fatherhood of God imply?
What does our dependence on God cause us to do?
Can one seek temporal things first and obtain spiritual blessings?
What effect will seeking temporal things first have on us?

Father, whate'er of earth bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at the throne of grace,
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm, a thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessings of thy grace impart,
And make me live to thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou art mine
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end.
—*Steele.*

Lesson II—January 13, 1929

SIN

I John 1:5 to 2:6.

5 And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.

3 And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him:

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

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from alt unrighteousness." (*1 John 1:8, 9.)

TIME.—About A.D. 90.

PLACE.—Probably written at Ephesus.

PERSONS.—John and believers generally.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 51:1-10.

DAILY HOME READING.—

January 7. M. . . . . Sin as Transgression of Law. (Rom. 3:10-18.)
January 8. T. . . . . Sin as Unrighteousness. (1 John 5:13-21.)
January 9. W. . . . . The Wages of Sin. (Rom. 6:15-23.)
January 10. T. . . . . God Forgives Sin. (Ex. 34:1-9.)
January 11. F. . . . . Sin Should Be Confessed. (Prov. 28:5-14.)
January 12. S. . . . . Sin Should Be Abhorred. (Amos 5:10-15.)
January 13. S. . . . . Prayer for Pardon. (Ps. 51:1-10.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

After God had created the heavens and earth and all that therein is, he "saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31.) Among the things which God created was man, who was created in the likeness of God to honor and glorify him. Man was the only creature which God made in his own likeness; man alone bore the image of God. There was nothing in the earth to mar man's happiness or disturb his peace. In this state man had the companionship of Jehovah and communion with his God. (Gen. 3:8.)

Man soon disobeyed God; man sinned. Since that day sin has cursed the earth and man has felt and suffered sin's consequences. The wealth of heaven's love has been manifested in saving man from the guilt, power, and curse of sin. The Bible reveals to man his sufferings and struggles under the bondage of sin and God's plan of salvation from sin.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. What Is Sin?

No adequate definition of sin can be given; no complete description of it may be had. Sin is distinctively a Bible conception; the Bible alone sets forth the full meaning of sin. Sin is to be distinguished from "crime," which is an offense against civil law; sin is to be differentiated from "vice," which means an offense against social standards of behavior. "Crime" and "vice" are judged by human standards, while sin is behavior which incurs superhuman consequences. Sin is an offense against divine law, power, and wisdom. "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness." (1 John 3:4.) Sin is the violation of the will of God. David said: "My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight." (Ps. 51:3, 4.) All sin is lawbreaking; all sin is against the will and nature of God. Again: "All unrighteousness is sin." (1 John 5:17.)

There are several words which are almost synonymous with "sin." They are "disobedience," "iniquity," "transgression." "Transgression" may mean going beyond the law; "disobedience" has sometimes been restricted to mean a failure to come up to what is required; "iniquity" is inequality, or crookedness, injustice, deviation from the path of rectitude. All these words are included in the meaning of sin, and sometimes they are as broad as sin. Under the law we are told that God is merciful, gracious, and abundant in loving-kindness and truth; that he keeps "loving-kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." (Ex. 34:7.) We are also told that "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." (Heb. 2:2.)

II. Sin Is Universal

All have sinned. Any one who says that he has not sinned deceives himself. God has said: "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) We can look about us and see sin on every side. Darkness is a synonym of sin, as light is a synonym of truth. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (Verse 5.) "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:, 10.) "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." (Verse 6.) To have fellowship with God is to walk in the light, and to walk in the light is to walk according to the truth of God. To "walk in the darkness" is to walk in sin. One cannot walk in the light and walk in darkness at the same time. "If we walk in the light,. . . we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (Verse 7.) To walk in the light is to be in harmony with God, which is righteousness. Two things are stated here as a result of our walking in the light—-namely,

"we have fellowship one with another" and "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Again, the universality of sin is stated by the expression: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (Verse 8.) If all were not sinners, the blood of Jesus would not be needed; but since Jesus died for all, all need his cleansing blood. Truth here is the truth of the gospel. This truth reveals sin, as the sunlight does the dust. It is the guilt of sin, not the sinning nature, which the blood removes. God has said that we are all sinners and that we need a Savior. So if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and make God a liar. The truth is not in one who assumes such an attitude.

III. The Curse of Sin

As sin is universal, so its effects are universal. Its blighting curse is as deep and strong as its universality. When man sinned, the condemnation and curse of sin affected everything with which man had to do. The entire under creation was at man's disposal. God had given the under creation to man. "God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for good." (Gen. 1:29, 30.) When man sinned, the entire under creation was brought under the curse. "For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8: 20-22.) The earth was cursed by man's sin. The bareness and desolation of the earth is the result of sin. The earth has been filled with vileness, and the degeneracy of man in his spiritual, mental, moral, and physical nature has resulted from sin. The condemnation of Jehovah has come upon man for his-rebellion; hence, all are under the curse of sin. Man is hopeless and helpless under the condemnation of sin without God. Man needs a divine Savior. Sin has wrecked man's moral power and caused his spiritual nature to degenerate. Man's own consciousness of sin on every hand teaches him the need of a Savior. The universal provision of a Savior and Redeemer emphasizes the universal curse of sin. The guilt, power, and influence of sin are universal. There is only one hope for redemption from its curse, and that is through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

IV. Redemption from Sin

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins." (Verse 9.) If we confess, he forgives. We must acknowledge our sins to God and not attempt to conceal them from man. This confession of our sins grows out of a deep conviction of heart. This confession extends to definite and specific acts, and in every case of a frank confession as God directs there is a free forgiveness—forgive-

ness from the condemnation and a cleansing from the guilt of sin. John is here talking about the people of God who sinned, and the confession of sin on the part of God's people implies repentance. God abominates hypocrisy and hates sin. There must be genuine repentance of sin in confessing it to God. We must be sorry for sin. Even a godly sorrow must lead us to repentance that God may forgive us.

To the one who has never entered into covenant relation with God the law of pardon is expressed in the gospel as set forth clearly in the cases of conversion recorded in the Acts of Apostles. One must hear the gospel. "It shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." (ACTS 3:23.) Again, one must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." (Hob. 11:6.) "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) When the jailer asked Paul and Silas what he must "do to be saved," Paul answered: "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house." (ACTS 16:30, 31.) Again, when people on' the day of Pentecost who had heard the gospel and believed it asked, "What shall we do?" the answer was given: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." (ACTS 2:38.) The redemption from sin is through faith and obedience to the gospel. There has never been any forgiveness of sin until the sinner did what God required of him for forgiveness. The forgiveness is promptly and freely given to the one who submits in humility and penitence to divine authority.

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." (Verses 1, 2.) Jesus is here declared to be an "Advocate," which means that he will represent our cause to the Father—that he will plead for us. The least sin is an infinite evil and an offense against God. It separates God and man; it puts man in all attitude of enmity toward God. Hence, man needs an. "Advocate" to intercede with God for him. Jesus is ever ready to do this. He stands for us as his clients in the court of heaven. He is there with his atoning blood on our behalf. We have a living Savior and a daily Advocate. We would perish without him. Just as he makes intercession for the Lord's people when we comply with the divine will of our Father, so he will also plead for all, as he is a universal Savior. "He is the propitiation for our sins." "Propitiation" has the force of satisfaction of the sinner's penalty. Hence, the death of Christ paid the penalty for man's sin. Christ then satisfied God on behalf of the sinner. God's attitude toward the world is one of love, and he endeavors to save and bless. Christ comes in and pleads for man with his' death and shed blood. Man receives the benefit of this upon terms of the gospel. Christ is here declared to be a universal Savior, as he is the propitiation, not only for the sins of God's people, "but also for the whole world." We receive the benefits of his sacrifice "if we keep his commandments"—that is, if we do his will.

To know Christ as a Savior and an Advocate is to keep his commandments. When One claims to know him, but does not keep his com-

mandments, he “is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (Verse 4.) The only way to know Christ is by obedience to his command. The one who makes a profession, but does not follow Christ, is false. He makes a false claim and is branded as a hypocrite. “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.” (Verse 6.) If we are living in Christ, there will be a personal confession of it; if we claim to abide in him, then we must live as he lived. As he did the Father's will always, so must we; as Jesus obeyed God, so must we. Jesus said while on earth: “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” (John 4:34.) Again, he said: “My judgment is righteous; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 5:30.) So if we say that we abide in him, we ought “also to walk even as he walked.”PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. To have fellowship in the light is to have fellowship with God. Jesus is “the light of the world.” There is no spiritual light in the world except that which comes through Christ. There is now no spiritual light on the earth except that which shines through the truth of the gospel as lived by the faithful children of God.

2. To claim to be living “above sin,” or to be living “without sin,” means that one has no further need to confess sin. It means that one has received all that is possible for one to receive of the benefits of Christ's blood, and, therefore, has no further use for the blood.

3. To say that we have no sin is to nullify all the provisions that God has made for forgiveness of sins. It means to make God a liar. Such an attitude places one in a state of deception where the blood of Christ cannot reach him.

4. Christ as a “propitiation” completely satisfies God and makes it possible for God to forgive the sinner and still be just. As our Mediator, he ever makes intercession for us. He is our great High Priest. As an Advocate, he pleads with the Father for us.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place,
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

How did God make all things?
What was God's crowning work of creation?
Who were God's creatures that were made in his image?
What did man first enjoy?
What broke the fellowship between God and man?
What Is Sin?
Define “sin.”
Where do we find a true conception of “sin” given?
What is the difference between “sin” and “crime?”
What is the difference between “sin” and “vice?”
What does John declare “sin” to be?
Name three words which are sometimes used for “sin.”

Sin, Is Universal

What Scriptures show that sin is universal?
What is a synonym of sin?
How many are declared to be righteous?
What is a synonym of the truth of God?
What is it to have fellowship with darkness?
What is it to walk in the light?
Can one have fellowship with darkness and walk in the light?
What do we make ourselves when we say that we have no sin?
What truth is here spoken of?

The Curse of Sin

How broad is the curse of sin?
What has God given to man?
How did man's sin affect the undercreation?
How has man's sin cursed the earth?
Why could not man redeem himself from the curse of sin?
What is the only hope for man?

Redemption from Sin

As stated here, what is the condition of forgiveness?
To whom must we confess our sins?
What is the meaning of this confession?
Of whom is John here speaking?
What are the conditions of forgiveness to the child of God?
What are the conditions of forgiveness to the alien?
How is Christ an “Advocate?”
What does sin do for man?
When does Christ intercede for man?
How is Christ a “propitiation” for our sins?
Is he the “propitiation” for any one else?
When does man receive the benefits of the gospel?
What is it to know Christ?
What is it to abide in Christ?
What is it to walk as he walked?
How did he walk?
Whose will did he seek to do?

Practical Suggestions

How is Jesus the light of the world?
How are God's people the light of the world?
How much spiritual light radiates from you?
Does any one live “above sin?”
What does such a claim mean?
How do people make God a liar?
How can God forgive our sins and still be just?

O that my load of sin were gone!
O that I could at last submit
At Jesus' feet to lay it down,
To lay my soul at Jesus feet!

I would, but thou must give the power—
My heart from every sin release;
Bring near, bring near the joyful hour,
And fill me with thy perfect peace.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Lesson III.—January 20, 1929

CHRIST THE SAVIOR

Luke 15:3-7; Rom. 5:6-10.

3 And he spake unto them this parable, saying,
4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?
5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.
6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me. for I have found my sheep which was lost.
7 I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance.

6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.
7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.
8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.
10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Perea.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the publicans and sinners, the scribes and Pharisees. His disciples were with him all the while.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 53:4-9.

DAILY HOME READING.—

January 14. M. . . . . Christ the Savior. (Rom. 5:1-11.)
January 15. T. . . . . Christ's Reign. (Isa. 35:1-10.)
January 16. W. . . . . The Lamb of God. (John 1:35-42.)
January 17. T. . . . . An Exalted Savior. (Heb. 1:1-9.)
January 18. F. . . . . A Present Savior. (1 John 1:1-10.)
January 19. S. . . . . Salvation by Grace. (1 Pet. 1:3-12.)
January 20. S. . . . . The Suffering Savior. (Isa. 53:1-9.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

We have had lessons on "Our Heavenly Father" and "Sin," and now we are to study "Christ the Savior," who saves us from our sins and brings us into fellowship with God that we may call him, "Our Father who art in heaven." In the study of sin we saw the ruin and guilt which sin has brought to the human family; we have also learned the helplessness of man to save himself and the need of a Savior. Christ is the center of the Bible teaching. To him all of the prophets of the Old Testament pointed; to him all of the animal sacrifices under the law looked; to him the law of Moses, as a tutor, led. Christ is the

fulfillment of the Messianic hope and the one to whom the world must look for redemption. He is spoken of in the Bible under different names and titles. All these names designate his divinity and his humanity and work. He is designated as “God” (John 20:28); “Lord” (Matt. 22:43, 44); “Word” (John 1:1, 14); “image”, (2 Cor. 4:4); “Son of man” (Matt. 8:20; John 1:51); “son of David” (Matt. 9: 27); “Redeemer” (Isa. 59:20); “author and perfecter of our faith” (Heb. 12:2); “light of the world” (John 8:12); “Lamb of God” (John 1:29, 36); “mediator” (1 Tim. 2:5); “prophet” (Deut. 18: 15; Luke 24:19); “great high priest” (Heb. 4:14); “King” (Luke 1:33; Rev. 17:14; 19:16); “way,” “truth,” and “life” (John 14:6); “Alpha” and “Omega” (Rev. 1:8; 22:13). These and many others express the divinity, humanity, mission, and office of Jesus as our Savior.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. His Sonship With God.

Jesus is divine. We are told that “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (Col. 2:9.) The Bible reveals God, the Father; Christ, the Son; and the Holy Spirit. These three compose the “Godhead,” or Trinity. Christ is as divine as his Father. God announced at Jesus' baptism, from heaven: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17.) Again, the Holy Spirit announced to Mary that “the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke 1:35.) Again, Paul declares that we have been translated “into the kingdom of the Son of his love.” (Col. 1:13.) He further declares that Christ “is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation.” (Verse 15.) Truly, Jesus is “as divine as his Father and as human as his mother.” Peter made the good confession: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matt. 16:16.) Again, Paul wrote of him: “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped.” (Phil. 2:5, 6.) No other position can be given him. He is the Son of God, whose death is a sufficient atonement for the sins of the world.

Jesus was ever conscious of his divine origin and mission. Even at the age of twelve he expressed himself, “I must be in my Father's house” (Luke 2:49)—that is, he must be about his Father's business. He identified himself with God in teaching when he would utter, “I say unto you,” in contrast with the tradition of the elders and the authority of Moses. When standing before the open tomb, he commanded: “Lazarus, come forth.” This also shows his divine power. Every miracle that he wrought and every deed that he did, together with the teaching that be gave, emphasized that he was the Son of' God. The love and mercy which he extended to man, together with his willing sacrificial death and resurrection, declare him to be the Son of God.

II. The Savior of the Lost

Jesus had no mission on the earth but to save the lost. “For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke

19:10.) It is in close keeping with his work of saving the lost that Jesus gave the parable of our lesson. In this parable Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees for murmuring against his receiving sinners and eating with them. He also teaches his mission. He relates a condition which was common among the Jews at that time. He says: “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, cloth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?” (Verse 4.) The scribes and Pharisees complained at Jesus for receiving sinners. To their minds he could not be the Messiah or Son of God, because he was receiving sinners. Jesus teaches that such is his mission, and illustrates this fact by the shepherd who has a flock of a hundred sheep, who will leave the ninety-nine “and go after that which is lost, until he find it.” The good shepherd is grieved over the loss of even one which goes astray. The sheep are left in the care of undershepherds, and search is made for the lost one. The search is continued until the lost is found. “And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.” (Verse 5.) This shows his tender love and pity for the lost. Jesus, in substance, says that this is what one of the scribes and Pharisees would do for a lost sheep, and that that is what he was doing for the poor, lost publican and sinner. After the lost has been found, his friends and neighbors are invited to come together and rejoice over the finding of that which was lost. Jesus makes his own application of this parable and says: “So there shall be joy in heaven Over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance.” (Verse 7.) God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and angels are interested in the salvation of sinners. The “Pharisees and scribes” in one sense represent, in their own estimation at least, “righteous persons, who need no repentance.” Truly, they did need repentance; but they did not want it, did not know that they needed it. This parable sets forth the seeking love of God as manifested in Christ's mission. Our Savior came to earth to seek the lost and then to save the lost.

III. Christ as Prophet

Moses declared that Christ would be a prophet. He said: “Thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.” (Deut. 18:15.) Peter declares that Christ was this prophet. (ACTS 3:22, 23.) Christ's ministry illustrates the prophetic office in the most extensive and exalted sense of the term. He was designated and appointed by the Father to be a prophet. (Isa. 61:1, 2; Luke 4:16-21; Matt. 17:5.) One of the qualifications of a prophet was intimate knowledge of God and a special commission to reveal this unto man. (John 1:18; Matt. 11:27.) His authority also emphasizes him as a prophet from God. (John 1:9, 17, 18; Luke 4:18-21.) His knowledge of God fitted him to be the revealer of God. (Mark 12:29; John 4:24.) He taught as one having authority always. His divine service and his knowledge of the nature of sin and the power to make atonement for sin all help to emphasize his work as a prophet.

It is stated that “the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.” (Rev. 19:10.) The prophet reveals the wisdom and the will of God

to man. A prophet is God's mouthpiece to the people. The will of God in the redemption of man was spoken through Christ. God “hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son.” (Heb. 1:2.) Truly in Christ the prophetic ministry culminated.

IV. Christ as Priest

As a prophet is God's mouthpiece to the people, so the priest is the people's mouthpiece to God. Christ is declared to be “the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.” (Heb. 3:1.) A priest officiates at the altar. He makes sacrifices for others. Christ has offered his blood for all. “For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. 5:6.) While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He died to procure for us a glorious future inheritance. Since he died for us and since we have been redeemed by his blood and justified by faith in him, he has become all the world to us. He has done for us that which none other would or could do. “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die.” (Verse 7.) It would be difficult to find one who would die for a “righteous man.” Peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.” Among the children of men, no man can be found who is ready to die for the wicked. Hardly one m ready to die for the righteous; yet Christ died for the unrighteous. It is difficult to find a man who is bold enough to die for the good, but Christ died for the bad. He came into the world to offer his life a sacrifice for sinners. A “righteous man” is understood to be one who is just to others; a “good man” means one who is beneficent to others. He goes further than the “righteous man.” God has commended his love to us in giving Christ as a sacrifice for us. This was done “while we were enemies”—that is, while we were in our sins; but “we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son.” Since he has made Christ such a sacrifice for us and since we have been reconciled by his sacrificial death, much more “shall we be saved by his life.” Christ is a continual High Priest and forever makes intercession for the Lord's people.

V. Christ as King

Christ was not only to reveal God to man as a prophet and make sacrifices as a priest, but he was also to rule over his kingdom. He was to be a King. The prophet said that he should build the temple of Jehovah. “And he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.” (Zech. 6:13.) This connects his priestly function with his ruling function. He is a Priest that shall be King and the King that shall be priest. He shall sit and rule upon his throne and shall be Priest upon his throne. Nathanael said to him: “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel.” (John 1:49.) When Jesus was escorted into Jerusalem, the people cried out: “Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.. . Behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.” (John 12:13-15.)

The fact that Jesus has a kingdom now emphasizes the fact that he is King now. He said to his disciples: “I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at

my table in my kingdom." (Luke 22:29.) In describing his kingdom Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36.) Jesus' regal power is declared to be universal. He said: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." (Matt. 28:18.) We are to honor him as our Prophet, Priest, and King. We are taught to "sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord." (1 Pet. 3:15.) "Lord" means "master" or "ruler." We are to set Christ apart in our hearts as our Lord or King. We are further taught to "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." (Col. 3:15.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. In Christ we have the complete revelation of God to man. We need not look for anything else. All claims made by man to a fuller knowledge than that which' is given through Christ are false.

2. He is the light of the world. All the spiritual light that shines in the world comes from Christ. The light of Christians is a reflected light. Our lives are hid in Christ with God. Let us keep self in the background and Christ in the forefront. Hide behind the cross.

3. As Mediator, all of our prayers, service, sacrifices, and worship are to be offered "in his name." There is no approach to God except through Christ, our Savior. If we forget him or ignore him, we cannot come to God.

4. We should be loyal subjects of his kingdom. We cannot be loyal to him except by being submissive to his will. To respect and honor his will is to respect and honor our King.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What two lessons have we already studied in this quarter?
What have we learned about the ruin and guilt of sin?
Who is the center of all Bible teaching?
Give some names by which Christ is known.
What do these names signify?

His Sonship With God

Who constitute the Godhead?
How is Christ related to the Godhead?
What testimony from God do we have of the divinity of Christ?
What testimony have we from the Holy Spirit?
What confession did Peter make?
What testimony did Jesus bear of himself about his divinity?

The Savior of the Lost

What is the condition of the human family?
What was the mission of Jesus?
Relate the points of this parable.
What does this parable teach?
Did Jesus think more of sinners than of others?
How long will Jesus seek the lost?
After the lost are found, what will Jesus do for them?
Do those who are lost have anything to do for their own salvation?
Were the Pharisees and scribes in truth righteous?
How does Jesus seek the lost?

Christ as Prophet

What did Moses declare about Christ?
Who appointed him a prophet?
What is the work of a prophet?
What fitted him to be a prophet?

Christ as Priest

What is the difference between a prophet and a priest?

Who is our High Priest?
What sacrifice has Christ made?
For whom did he die?
What is the difference between a “righteous man” and a “good man?”
How has God commended his love to us?
How are we reconciled to God?

Christ as King

What is a king?
Can there be a king without a kingdom?
What is the meaning of Christ's being “a priest upon his throne?”
What is the nature of Christ's kingdom?
How much authority has he now?
Where does he rule?
Who are the subjects of his kingdom?

Practical Suggestions

Why should we not look for another prophet?
Does our light shine?
How can we make our light more effective?
What is it to do anything “in his name?”
How can we be loyal to him as King?

Jesus, thou everlasting King,
Accept the tribute which we bring;
Accept thy well-deserved renown,
And wear our praises as thy crown.

Let every act of worship be,
Like our espousals, Lord, to thee;
Like the blest hour when from above
We first received the pledge of love.
—*Isaac Watts.*

Lesson IV—January 27, 1929

THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 16:7-11; Rom. 8:12-17, 26, 27.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.
8 And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
10 Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more;
11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged.

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh:
13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
15 For ye received not the Spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
16 The Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God:
17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.

26 And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered;
27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (*Rom. 8:14.)

TIME.—April 6, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Upper room in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples, Paul and the church at Rome.

DEVOTIONAL READING.——John 14:25-31.

DAILY HOME READING.—

January 21. M. . . . . The Holy Spirit Promised. (Joel 2:28-32.)
January 22. T. . . . . The Coming of the Holy Spirit. (ACTS 2:1-5.)
January 23. W. . . . . Receiving the Holy Spirit. (ACTS 19:1-7.)
January 24. T . . . . . .The Holy Spirit Our Helper. (John 16:7-15.)
January 25. F . . . . . .The Holy Spirit Interceding. (Rom. 8:26-30.)
January 26. S . . . . . .Spiritual Gifts. (1 Cor. 12:1-11.)
January 27. S . . . . . .The Holy Spirit Our Comforter. (John 14:25-31.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The three great themes in the Bible are God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. These three constitute the Godhead, or Trinity. We have had lessons on "Our Heavenly Father" and "Christ the Savior;" we are now to have a lesson on "The Holy Spirit." We find in the Bible the terms "Spirit," "Spirit of God," "Spirit of the Lord," "Spirit of the-Father," "Spirit of Jesus," and "Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Bible before Christ is mentioned. "In the begin-

ning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gem 1:1, 2.) Many have thought that the "Spirit of God" means the energy or power of God. God was the Creator, and Christ, or the Word, was the agent through whom all things were created (John 1:2, 3), and the Holy Spirit organized and gave form to the material universe and functions in the same way in the spiritual creation.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Holy Spirit's Advent to Earth

During the early history of man, God, through his representatives, visited man upon the earth. "And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden." (Gen. 3:8.) God talked with Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. He is represented on earth by angels and chosen men. Christ came to earth and dwelt among men on earth for about a third of a century. He went back to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit to earth. The Holy Spirit came first to earth in a baptismal form upon man on the first Pentecost after the ascension of Christ. Christ had promised his apostles that the Holy Spirit would come, and at the appointed time "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4.) This marks the beginning of the Holy Spirit in his mission on earth. There had been manifestations of the Spirit all along, for "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21); but such a miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit as was received on Pentecost had never been known. The prophets had told of this day. John the Baptist had declared that the Holy Spirit would come, and Jesus had promised that he would send the Holy Spirit at this time. Pentecost was the right time; the right persons were there prepared; and the right place, Jerusalem, witnessed his first advent. Jesus had said to his apostles: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." (John 14:16, 17.) When Jesus had prepared "living stones" (1 Pet. 2:5) for his spiritual temple and had finished his work, God sent his Spirit at the right time and place and accepted the work of Jesus and filled his "spiritual house" with the Holy Spirit.

II. The Holy Spirit a Comforter

Jesus said to his apostles when they were grieved because of his departure and when sorrow had filled their hearts: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." (Verse 7.) Jesus had told them of the absolute necessity of his death for the salvation of men. (Matt. 20:19; 26:2; Mark 9:31; 10: 33; Luke 9:44; 18: 32.) He shows them that the Holy Spirit cannot come to them unless he first die. Man cannot be saved without his death; neither will the

Holy Spirit come unless he "go away." The apostles deemed it a great calamity for him to go away, and sorrow had filled their hearts; so Jesus comforts them by telling them that "another Comforter" would come. The disciples were looking only at their own welfare and their temporal convenience of mind and heart. They were to learn that they had more to gain than to lose by his departure. They were to learn that thenceforth his presence was not the highest blessing they could have. Truly, his presence was gracious, uplifting, and sanctifying; but his going away would bring to them light and help more powerful, more spiritual, and better adapted to their conditions in days to come. The Holy Spirit does much work upon earth, but his comforting influence is important. Here the Holy Spirit is represented as coming after the departure of Jesus and is described as his coming from the Father, sent by the Son.

The Holy Spirit not only comforted the apostles, but he comforts all of God's people. He comforts God's people to-day just as he makes believers and leads sinners to repentance and causes people to obey God—that is, through the truth of God. God's people may have the Spirit dwelling in them and comforting them by following the truth of God. Paul says: "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18.) Again, the admonition given to God's people is to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Col. 3:16.) Jesus says: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." (John 14:21.) This shows that the man who keeps the commandments of Christ is the one to whom Christ will manifest himself. He will manifest himself to them through the promised blessings which all his faithful children are to receive.

III. The Work of the Holy Spirit

Jesus sums up the work of the Holy Spirit when he comes as follows: "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (Verse 8.) Three things are here told that the Holy Spirit would do—namely, (1) convict the world "in respect of sin," (2) convict it "of righteousness," (3) and convict it "of judgment." Here the Holy Spirit is said to have convicting power, and that the conviction of the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment would all be effected by the same means. We have only to refer to the day of Pentecost and there see how the Holy Spirit, through Peter and the others, convicted the people of sin, righteousness, and judgment. On this occasion the Holy Spirit convicted of sin in that those who heard Peter realized that they had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ; he convicted them of righteousness in that it was shown that God had exalted Him whom they had crucified to his own right hand; he convicted them of judgment in that they were assured of the "wrath to come" and warned to "save yourselves from this crooked generation." They were convicted "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." Sin springs from unbelief. To destroy sin, the heart of man must be pierced with the sword of the Spirit. Man had con-

demned Christ and crucified him, but God had exalted him to a throne and thereby showed that the condemnation of man was wrong and that Christ was righteous. When Christ arose from the dead and received all authority, this was a judgment in the court of the universe against the prince of this world.

IV. Being Led by the Holy Spirit

Another work of the Holy Spirit is to guide the children of men in the good and right way. No one can become a Christian without being led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches sinners what to do to become children of God; and when they do this, they are led by the Spirit. Again, on the day of Pentecost the Spirit spoke through Peter and gave testimony that Jesus was the Son of God and the Redeemer of man. They believed this. "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) They were led to this belief by the Spirit speaking through Peter. Under this conviction the people asked: "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37.) The Holy Spirit, through 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." (Verse 38.) When they repented and were baptized, they were led by the Holy Spirit, because they did what the Holy Spirit told them to do, and in doing this they became Christians.

Paul instructs the Christians at Rome that they are under no obligation "to the flesh, to live after the flesh." (Rom. 8:12.) They have been bought with the blood of Christ (1 Cor., 6:20) and belong to God, and, hence, must follow the Spirit. He warns them that "if ye live after the flesh"—that is, follow the flesh instead of the Spirit-"ye must die;" but if they "put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." They can live Christian lives only by following the Spirit and not the flesh. Paul further instructs them that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Verse 14.) This divides all into two classes—namely, (1) those who "are led by the Spirit," and (2) those who "live after the flesh," or follow the flesh. He shows them further that to follow the flesh is to be brought under "the Spirit of bondage again unto fear;" but those who are "led by the Spirit" have "received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The people of God have the "witness" of the Spirit, since "the Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God." (Verse 16.) Since we are "children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him." (Verse 17.) These are exceedingly great and precious promises, but in order to enjoy them we must "suffer with him."

V. The Holy Spirit Our Helper

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity." (Verse 26.) The Holy Spirit helps us as the children of God. We are ignorant, and the Holy Spirit instructs us; we are weak, and the Holy Spirit strengthens us. We do not know "how to pray as we ought," but the Holy Spirit, through the word of God, teaches us and makes intercession for us. We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Holy Spirit

knows. The "groanings which cannot be uttered" are not the groanings of the Holy Spirit, but are our groanings. In order that our deep needs may be made known unto our Father, the Holy Spirit instructs us how to pray. God knows the hearts of men; he knows the inner needs of our souls; and "he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Verse 27.) This means that God, who searches the heart, knows both what is in the heart and what is in the Spirit's mind that dwells in it. God knows the mind of the Spirit, and he knows the heart, and he knows that the Spirit pleads for the needs of the heart. It is to be noted that all of this is done "for the saints according to the will of God." All things are done, both by man and the Spirit, according to the will of God. We have revealed to us in the Bible the will of God, and, hence, can know what the pleadings of the Holy Spirit will be, as well as know what the legitimate needs of the heart are. The word of God reveals these, and we follow his will in our prayers.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost introduced a new dispensation, which shall last until Christ shall come again. The Holy Spirit came and marked an initial event as well as a typical work of the Spirit. His work to-day in conversion is after the same manner that he worked in conversion on this first Pentecost.

2. We receive the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit now as we receive all other blessings of the Spirit—through the word of truth.

3. The essence of sin is living for self. Belief in Christ is the surrender of self. Few have completely surrendered to Christ; hence, very few have the faith that they should have.

4. The kingdom of darkness has its king; the world has a prince. This is Satan. The cross is the judgment of the prince of this world. The power of evil is broken by the gospel, and people are translated from darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son by obedience to the gospel.

5. The Holy Spirit leads all the same way; the Spirit leads all into the same church. He does not lead one into one church and another into another church. The Holy Spirit leads God's people to forgive each other and to live in peace.

6. The Holy Spirit, Christ, and God all lead the same way; they lead all by the word of truth. When one follows the Bible, one is led by the Spirit and follows Christ.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What are the three great themes of the Bible?
By what other names is the Holy Spirit designated in the Bible?
Which member of the Godhead is mentioned first in the Bible?
Which member is mentioned second?

The Holy Spirit's Advent to Earth

How was God first represented on earth?
How did Christ dwell among men?
When did the Holy Spirit come to earth?
To whom did he come?
Who had spoken of his advent to earth?
Where does he dwell on earth now?

The Holy Spirit a Comforter

What did Jesus tell his disciples about leaving them?
How did this affect them?
What did Jesus say he would do when he went away?
How would the Holy Spirit be a Comforter to them?
Would the Holy Spirit be a greater Comforter to them than was Jesus?
How does the Holy Spirit comfort God's people to-day?
Does the Holy Spirit comfort any one in disobedience?

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Of what three things would the Holy Spirit convict the world?
How did he convict the world with respect of sin?
How did he convict it with respect of righteousness?
How did he convict it with respect of judgment?
How were the people on the day of Pentecost convicted with respect of these three things?

Being Led by the Holy Spirit

What is another work of the Holy Spirit?
How does one become a Christian?
What steps did the Holy Spirit lead the people on the day of Pentecost to take?
How are Christians led by the Holy Spirit?
Into what two classes are people divided?

The Holy Spirit Our Helper

How does the Holy Spirit help the Lord's people?
Do we know for what we should pray?
How does the Holy Spirit help us in this respect?
What does God know?
How does the Spirit do all of his work?

Practical Suggestions

What does the day of Pentecost introduce?
In conversion, does the Spirit work in a different way to-day from the way he worked then?
How do we receive the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit? What is it to surrender to Christ?
Who is the “prince of this world?”
What breaks his power?
Why will the Holy Spirit not lead people into different churches?
How do the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God lead people?

Holy Spirit, faithful guide,
Ever near the Christian's side;
Gently lead us by the hand,
Pilgrims in a desert land.
Weary souls fore'er rejoice,
While they hear that sweetest voice
Whispering softly: “Wanderer, come!
Follow me; I'll guide thee home.”

—*M. M. Wells.*

Lesson V—February 3, 1929

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Ps. 19:7-14; 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

7 The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul:
The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple.
8 The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart:
The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes.
9 The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever:
The ordinances of Jehovah are true, and righteous altogether,
10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb.
11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
In keeping them there is great reward.
12 Who can discern his errors?
Clear thou me from hidden faults.
13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins;
Let them not have dominion over me:
Then shall I be upright,
And I shall be dear from great transgression,
14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in thy sight,
O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer.

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.—"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (*Ps. 119:18.)

TIME.—Some suppose that David wrote Ps. 119 at the time that he was being persecuted by Saul. No one can determine the exact date it was written. Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy from Rome during his last imprisonment. Timothy was at Ephesus.

PLACES.—Palestine, Rome, and Ephesus.

PERSONS.—David, Paul, and Timothy.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 119:105-112.

DAILY HOME READING.—

January	28.	M.	The Word of God. (Ps. 19:7-14.)
January	29.	T.	The Inspired Word. (2 Tim. 3:14-17.)
January	30.	W	Jesus and the Scriptures. (Matt. 4:1-11.)
January	31.	T.	A Divine Guide. (2 Pet. 1:12-21.)
February	1.	F.	Delight in the Scriptures.(Ps. 1.)
February	2.	S.	Teaching the Scriptures.(Neh. 8:1-8.)
February	3.	S.	Light for Life's Pathway.(Ps. 119:105-112.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

We are now to have a lesson on "The Holy Scriptures." It is appropriate to study this lesson. We have had lessons on "Our Heavenly

Father," "Sin," "Christ Our Savior," and "The Holy Spirit;" now we have a lesson on "The Holy Scriptures." We do not know much about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, or sin, except what we learn from the Scriptures.

Many truthful and important things may be said about the Bible. I know of no brief quotation that expresses more beautifully and fully in terse words much of the Bible than the following: "This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it t) be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Herein Paradise is restored, heaven is opened, and hell is disclosed. Christ is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened in judgment, and remembered forever. It involves the greatest responsibility, will reward the highest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. It offers protection for infancy, happiness for childhood, inspiration for youth, strength for maturity, assurance for old age, comfort for death, and salvation and riches and glory and reward for eternity."

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. What God Teaches Through Nature

Paul declares that "every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God." (Heb. 3:4.) It is self-evident that every structure, from a pig pen to a palace, has been erected by some builder with some intelligence. The manner of building shows the intelligence and wisdom of the builder. God declares that he "created the heavens and the earth." He set all worlds in order. In their orbits and perpetual motion; in the power of attraction which they exert over each other, holding in their spheres; in their magnitude and beauty, they declare the incomprehensible wisdom and omnipotence, the unbounded mercy and goodness, and in all things the glory of God. Through all time they proclaim that they have been framed and set in order by the all-powerful and infinitely wise One—that their maker and builder is God. They continue in their course, Forever singing as they shine, "The hand that made us is divine."

This earth, only one small planet, in its day and night, its circuit around the sun, its dew and rain, its heat and cold, its seedtime and harvest and "fruitful seasons," filling the hearts of all the inhabitants through all the rolling years "with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17), shows the mercy and goodness, power and wisdom of God. Many are the wonderful, beautiful, awe-filling, and sublime passages expressing the greatness and goodness of God in the creation and control of the universe. Nature has been called "God's elder Scriptures."

II What God Teaches Through Revelation

While “the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge” (Ps. 19:1, 2), they do not reveal one sentence of God's will to man. Man's duty to God and to his fellow men must be learned from the word of God, the revealed will of God, which is “the Holy Scriptures.” Men cannot by searching find out God. (Read Job 5:9; 11:7; 36:26; 37:5, 23; Eccles. 3:11; 8:17; Isa. 40:28; Rom. 11:33-36.) Paul sums this matter up as follows: “For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. 1:21.) The Psalmist makes this difference plain. The heavens declare the power and glory of God in his wisdom to frame and control them, but “the law of Jehovah" is necessary to reveal God's will and “restore the soul.” Science, complete and perfect as it may be, cannot do this. Men cannot learn from all the works of God in all the natural worlds that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin and that without the shedding of this blood there is no remission. (1 John 1:7; Hob. 9:22.) Christ crucified is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” He is “unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:24-30.) “All things that pertain unto life and godliness" have come through the knowledge of Christ (2 Pet. 1:2-4), through revelation (1 Cor. 2' 10), and have been preached through the apostles “by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven” (1 Pet. 1: 12). The gospel of Christ is “the power of God unto salvation” to all who believe it. (Rom. 1:16.) Faith comes through hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10:17.) We must learn of God—his plan of salvation through Christ and how to live the Christian life—through “the Holy Scriptures.”

III. The Power of the Word of God

The revealed will of God embraces “the law of Jehovah,” “the testimony of Jehovah,” “the precepts of Jehovah,” “the ordinances of Jehovah.” “The law of Jehovah is perfect.” (Verse 7.) Paul says: “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good.” (Rom. 7:12.) The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Matt. 13:19; Mark 4:14; Luke 8:11); the word of God is “the sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17), and is “sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12); it is fire and a hammer upon the hearth (Jer. 23:28-29); it is a lamp and light (Ps. 119:105); it is the incorruptible seed by which one is born again into the kingdom of God; it begets (1 Cor. 4:15; I Pet. 1:23); it quickens (Ps. 119:50-93); it brings forth (James 1:2, 3); it is preventive of sin (Ps. 119:11); it builds up and gives “the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). The wisdom and power of God are in his word The gospel is the power of God to save. (Rom. 1:16.) Obedience to the will of God is necessary to salvation. (Matt. 7:21, 24-27.) “The law of Jehovah is perfect” in that it is sufficient to accomplish God's will. It is God's power for converting or restoring the soul. It is his spiritual power. (Rom. 7:17.) The word of God is spiritual seed.

The fruit it produces is spiritual; the kingdom into which it leads is spiritual; the birth it produces is spiritual; the food it furnishes is spiritual; the life and service in which it builds one up is spiritual. The word of God is sufficient to accomplish all that for which God has sent it forth. (Isa. 55:10, 11.) No other power is needed to turn the soul from sin and to restore it to right thinking, to sound judgment, and to fellowship with God. "The law of Jehovah is perfect," therefore, in that it makes all perfect who will live according to it. "The testimony of Jehovah" which God bears to the law and its blessing is "sure," or infallible. It makes the simple wise. Any one who will study and follow the word of God in all business matters and in all relationships to men and to God will become wise.

God's "precepts"—that which he charges all to do—are right in the true meaning of right. They are the only correct standard of right. When they are accepted in submission to God, they "rejoice the heart." They satisfy the heart by freeing it from anxiety and dread and filling it with contentment, satisfaction, and that peace "which passeth all understanding." (Phil. 4:4-7.) "The commandment of Jehovah" is what he commands to be done or forbids to be done. His commandment is "pure"—pure from all admixture of human wisdom and doctrines and renders the hearts that obey it pure. It enlightens the eyes. This is the source of true enlightenment. Without knowledge of the Bible, no one is truly enlightened. (Ps. 119:130.)

To fear God is to venerate him, is to manifest due reverence and respect for him. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9' 10.) Many are the blessings pronounced upon all who fear God. There is now great lack of reverence for God and, therefore, for the worship of God. "The fear of Jehovah" cleanses and purifies all who have it in heart and manifest it in life. The heart cannot be pure without it. There is no reverence or fear of God with those who ignore "the Holy Scriptures." There is no regard for the will of God with many religious people. One must have and manifest the fear of God through life and in all things, for it endures forever.

IV. The Value of the Word of God

The law, testimony, precepts, commandments, fear, and ordinances of Jehovah are more valuable and more to be desired than the finest gold, and, as food, sweeter to the soul than honey fresh from the honeycomb. They warn against sin in all forms and deceptions, and all who keep them are greatly rewarded. "Who can discern his errors?" No one, except by the light and guidance of the word of God. (2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 4:12.) The Psalmist prayed to be made free from sin and to be pure and clean in God's eyes. The word of God is valuable for this. Nothing else can do this for one.

The Psalmist also prayed to be kept back from "presumptuous sin s"—not sins of frailty and weakness, but sins of thought and purpose. Also one can presume to change and to set aside God's law.. This is the greatest sin, Saul did this. In this respect David was a man after God's own heart. (1 Kings 14:7, 8; 15:5, 6.) Kept back from "presumptuous sins," the Psalmist would be upright and clear from "great transgression." "Transgression" is going across, or beyond, God's law. (2 John 9.) The secret of a pure, clean, up-

right, and holy life is in keeping the heart right. Out of the heart proceeds evil (Matt. 15:19, 20) or good (Matt. 12:34-36). One cannot think evil, love money, cherish sinful desires, and have a pure and good life. Lay the ax at the root of the evil tree—the heart. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.) Let us pray to God that the words of the mouth and the meditations of the heart may be acceptable in his sight; let us look to him as the only refuge and strength. God alone can save; he saves through the truth of the gospel.

V. The All-Sufficiency of the Scriptures

Timothy is exhorted to abide in the things which he learned and had been assured of, for he had learned these things from the inspired apostle. This exhortation applies to all Christians to-day. We should continue to practice in the work and worship of God only the principles and commandments received from the word of God. We must be as careful as to the origin of the teaching we practice as Timothy was exhorted to be. Nothing must be added to or taken from the word of God. (Gal. 1:6-10; Rev. 22:18, 19.)

Timothy had known "the sacred writings" from his youth up. Jesus, while on earth, established his claims to be the Son of God and the Christ by "the Holy Scriptures," or the 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). These Scriptures were able to make Timothy or any one else "wise unto salvation," because they established the claims of Jesus, proving that he is the Christ and Savior; therefore, they lead to "faith which is in Christ Jesus." Again we see the truthfulness of the Statement that faith comes through hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10:17.)

We are taught that "every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable." Two things are stated here. They are: the Scriptures are inspired of God, and they are profitable. Since they are inspired of God, we should Accept them; and since they are profitable, we should be blessed by them. They are profitable for the four universal needs of man, which are: (1) "teaching," (2) "reproof," (3) "correction," and (4) "instruction which is in righteousness." They enable "the man of God" to "be complete;" they furnish him "completely unto every good work." We should thank God for such a book as the Bible.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The Scriptures are to be studied; they cannot be learned any other way. No one can receive the fullest blessings from "the Holy Scriptures" without meditating upon them.

2. The more one knows of the Bible and the truths therein revealed, the more one appreciates the Bible. Our appreciation for it will increase as our knowledge of it increases.

3. It teaches man's full duties and responsibilities to God. No one can know his obligations to God without studying the Bible; no one

can know his duties to his fellow man except as they are revealed in the Bible.

4. The wisdom of man, together with all of the arts and sciences of this age, pertain to things that perish. All nature and all that nature teaches belong to the physical realm. A revelation from God to man was needed, and man should be blessed by it.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What great themes have we studied?
From what do we learn of these?
Give the scope of the teachings of the Bible.

What God Teaches Through Nature

What do the heavens declare?
How do they declare it?
What can we learn from the study of nature?
What has nature been called?
Do we learn of the love and goodness of God from nature?
How can the existence of God be proved through nature?

What God Teaches Through Revelation

Where do we learn man's duty to God?
What are "the holy Scriptures?"
Why are the Scriptures necessary?
Where must we learn of the blood of Christ?
Where. must we learn how to reach that blood?
Where must we learn what is God's power to save?
Where must we learn how to live the Christian life?

The Power of the Word of God

How is the law of Jehovah perfect?
How is it the seed of the kingdom?
How is it the "sword of the Spirit?"
Is any other power needed than that which is in the word of God?
What are the precepts of Jehovah?
What is it to fear Jehovah?
How can people reverence God to-day?

The Value of the Word of God

How can the value of the word of God be estimated?
For what did the Psalmist pray?
How can one be kept from presumptuous sins?
What is transgression?
What comes from the heart?
What prayer should all Pray?

The All-Sufficiency of the Scriptures

What was Timothy exhorted to do?
How long had Timothy known the Scriptures?
What did Jesus prove from the Scriptures?
What did Paul, Peter, and Apollos prove?
What are the Scriptures able to do?
What are the four universal needs of man?

Practical Suggestions

Why should the Scriptures be studied?
How may we increase our love for the Bible?
Where may we learn our full responsibilities?
Why was a revelation from God needed?

The heavens declare thy glory, Lord;
In every star thy wisdom shines;
But when our eyes behold thy word,
We read thy name in fairer lines.

Thy noblest wonders here we use,
In souls renewed and sins forgiven;
Lord, cleanse my sins, my soul renew,
And make thy word my guide to heaven.
—*Isaac Watts.*

Lesson VI—February 10, 1929

FAITH AND REPENTANCE

Acts 2:32-39; Luke 15:11-24.

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 said 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.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:
12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.
13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living.
14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want.
15 And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.
16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.
17 But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger!
18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight:
19 I am no more worthy to be sailed thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.
20 And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son.
22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:
23 And bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry:
24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Repent ye, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Perea.

PERSONS.—Apostles and their audience, Jesus, publicans and sinners, scribes and Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 27:1-5.

DAILY HOME READING.—

February	4.	M.	The Nature of Faith. (Heb. 11:1-5.)
February	5.	T.	The Necessity for Faith. (Heb. 11:6-12.)
February	6.	W	.Heroes of Faith. (Heb. 11:32-40.)
February	7,	T.	The Security of the Believer. (Ps. 27:1-5.)
February	8.	F.	The Nature of Repentance. (Jonah 3:1-10.)
February	9.	S.	The Necessity for Repentance, (Isa. 1:10-17.)
February	10.	S.	The Prodigal's Repentance. (Luke 15:11-24.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

So far this quarter we have had lessons on God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, and sin; we are now to have a lesson on man's duties and responsibilities to God and all spiritual agencies. God, with all of the rich provisions of grace, cannot save and bless man without man's doing something. Faith and repentance are Acts which man must do. God cannot believe for man; neither can angels repent for him. Furthermore, God will not coerce man into believing in him; neither will the Holy Spirit force man to repentance. These are voluntary Acts on the part of man. God furnishes in the Bible abundant evidence for man to believe, and the goodness of God is sufficient to lead man to repentance; but man must believe himself and he must repent himself.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. What Is Faith?

The Bible does not give technical definitions; it rather describes principles and gives examples of them. Of love it says: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” (1 John 5:3.) It shows what love does and gives examples. The Bible describes grace, liberality, and religion, and gives examples. (2 Cor., 8:9; James 1: 27.) So with faith. We are told that “faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1.) Without faith there could be no hope. Faith sees from afar the things hoped for, brings them near, gives substance to them, makes them real, endures in order to obtain them, and patiently waits for them. Christianity is a system of faith. We know there is a God through faith. We know that the Christ came to earth, suffered, died for the sins of the world, was buried, raised from the dead, and made his ascension back to heaven by faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7.) Faith may be defined as a firm, unshaken confidence or belief in the truth of the proposition. Facts must exist and testimony must be revealed and be sufficiently clear to establish a truth before there can be faith. 'Faith is the medium or channel through which divine influences are conveyed from God to the Spirit or heart of man.” (Lipscomb.) The Bible clearly illustrates this. (Heb. 11.)

Faith is presented to us in the New Testament from many angles. The Bible speaks of “great faith” (Matt. 8:10); “measure of faith” (Rom. 12:3); “faith unfeigned” (2 Tim. 1:5); “common faith” (Tit. 1:4); “precious faith” (2 Pet. 1:1); “increase our faith” (Luke 17: 5); “word of faith” (Rom. 10:8); “obedience of faith” (Rom. 16: 26); “Spirit of faith” (2 Cor. 4:13); “hearing of faith” (Gal. 3:2); “unity of the faith” (Eph. 4:13); work of faith (1 Thess. 1:3);

"fullness of faith" (Heb. 10:22); "prayer of faith" (James 5:15); "righteousness of the faith" (Rom. 4:11); "faith apart from works is barren" (James 2:20); "faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26); "one faith": (Eph. 4:5); and "a man full of faith" (Acts 6: 5). All of these help to describe and illustrate faith in the plan of salvation. Faith is sometimes used synonymously with trust, belief, and even obedience.

II. How Faith Comes

Paul, in arguing the matter of justification, asks: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in hint whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14.) This suggests that the gospel order is preaching, hearing, and believing. Paul continues and concludes: "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) With these facts clearly before us, we now see why Peter on the day of Pentecost, guided by the Holy Spirit, preached and gave the evidence that the Christ whom they had crucified "did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses." The Holy Spirit on this day did for the apostles and for the world all that was promised. No sinners were present when the Spirit came and none were baptized with the Spirit. Through the apostles the Spirit bore witness of the life, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and Messiahship of Jesus. He pointed out different prophecies of which Jesus was the fulfiller. The Holy Spirit bore witness through Peter that God had fulfilled all of the promises which the prophets had made concerning him at this time. He then concludes with an exhortation to believe the testimony, and said: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." (Verse 36.) This was equivalent to calling upon them to believe in Christ.

"Now when they heard this"—that is, heard the testimony given by the Holy Spirit through the apostles that Jesus was the Son of God-"they were pricked in their heart." They had been convinced that he was the Christ, and they were now convicted of their sin. They trembled in their guilt and asked: "Brethren, what shall we do?" They now want to know how to escape from the condemnation of their crime in the crucifixion of Jesus. This question shows that they believed what Peter preached; hence, they believed that Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of men. This shows also that "belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.)

III. Repentance

The answer of the Holy Spirit through Peter to this important question is simple and definite. It is: "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 and the Savior of men and convicted of their sins against him, they could now repent of such sins. Their faith in Jesus led to their repentance. Those who repented did not cease to believe in Jesus or trust God, but their faith was strength-

ened by their repentance and by obedience, for faith, is made perfect by obedience.

Repentance is turning away in godly sorrow from all sin (2 Cor. 7: 10); it is a turning away from sins of thought, word, and deed; turning from 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 immediately did what Peter told them to do; hence, they repented immediately. Godly sorrow precedes and works repentance. (2 Cor. 11: 10.) Repentance is turning away from all sin, with a changed purpose and with a 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 15:1 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. 2:7-9; Acts 26: 20.) God commands all to repent. (Acts 13:30, 31.) The people heard the evidence, they believed it, they repented of their sins, and they were baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your [their] sins."

IV. The Prodigal Son an Example of Repentance

Jesus takes this parable and among other things teaches the lesson of repentance. "A certain man had two sons." "The younger of them" asked that his father give him his portion of the estate. The father complied with the request and "divided unto them his living." "The younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living." After he had spent everything and a famine afflicted the country, "he began to be in want." He hired to one of the citizens "of that country," who sent him "into his fields to feed swine." He had no friends after his money was spent; neither did he have anything to eat but that which he was feeding the swine. When he was reduced to such a dire condition, "he came to himself."- His senses returned. Starvation stared him in the face. To continue in such condition meant death to him. This cooled his passion and brought him to his right mind. His reason again asserted itself. All who are in sin must come to themselves sooner or later or they will not amount to anything in this life or be saved in the life to come.

In his sober, better judgment, the son repented and determined to return to his father. Since repentance is a change of purpose, a change of heart, which leads to a changed life, this prodigal furnishes a fine illustration of repentance. He was honest with himself and his father. He did not conceal the fact that he had done wrong. He determined to confess his sin frankly and freely. Any one who conceals his sins or refuses to confess them has not repented. A penitent is ashamed of his sins, but he is not ashamed to confess them. This prodigal confessed that he had sinned first "against heaven" and then against his father. All sin is a violation of God's commandments and is sin against him. David said: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight." (Ps. 51:4.) The prodigal never blamed another for his sins; he did not even lay

them to his own “weakness.” He frankly said: “I have sinned.” He made no excuse. Another element of repentance is a feeling and an acknowledgment of unworthiness. He said to his father: “I am no more worthy to be called thy son.” This is also brought out in the prayer of the publican, who, “standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:13, 14.) “Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite Spirit.” (Ps. 34:18.) The prodigal put his resolution into action and turned away from his disobedience and sin and returned to his father. He went away trusting in himself; he returned distrusting himself, but trusting in the love of his father. The father longed and hoped for his return, prayed for his return, watched for his return that he might forgive him and bless him. So when, he saw him coming “yet afar off,” he “ran” to meet him, to welcome him, and to receive him. In his gladness he “fell on his neck, and kissed him.” He commanded his servants to “bring forth quickly the best robe,” to strip the boy of his travel-stained and ragged garments, and to put the robe on him, a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. The ring and the shoes showed that he was a free man, not a hired servant. Slaves went barefooted.

Every penitent sinner who returns in loving and humble obedience to God is so received. There is for every one who turns away from sin and comes to God a rebel of righteousness. Penitent sinners who are thus received can truly say in their hearts: “He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities.” (Ps. 103:10.) The glad, happy feast of welcome represents the joy in heaven over a sinner who repents. “Even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” (Luke 15:7, 10.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Faith is needed in all the affairs of life. Most business affairs and the entire credit system is based upon faith. So with the Christian, faith in God through the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of all work and worship to God.

2. Every fact in the realm of our knowledge is touched by a mystery. We go beyond the boundary of knowledge by faith.

3. It is sometimes said that science is opposed to Christianity. “Science," falsely so called, is; but the man who is an honest follower of Jesus Christ, with the supreme desire to possess a character like Christ's, is the most scientific of men.

4. Faith is not credulity; it is a reasonable inference from accepted facts. In the realm of personal relations faith takes on the form of trust.

5. When the Christian ceases to make progress in the Christian life, it is because his faith is dead. This is a dangerous condition.

6. Genuine repentance means a great deal more than sorrow for sin; it means a changed mind and an altered life.

7. Repentance in conversion as recorded in the Bible is always ac-

companied by baptism. As faith is followed by repentance, so repentance is followed by baptism.

8. Restoration and a reformed life are the fruits of repentance. The genuine fruit is not borne by any one except a truly penitent one.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Name the subjects of the lessons so far in this quarter.
What provision has God made for man's faith?
What for his repentance?

What Is Faith?

Does the Bible define words?
How does the Bible teach?
What is faith?
What do we know through faith?
What different kinds of faith are mentioned in the Bible?

How Faith Comes

What precedes faith?
What precedes hearing?
How does belief come?
Does it come any other way?
What did the Holy Spirit do through the apostles on the day of Pentecost?
By what authority did Peter preach?
After the testimony of Jesus had been given, what did Peter exhort the people to do?
Did they believe his testimony?
How were their hearts affected when they believed?
What important question did they ask when they believed?
Who answered their questions?
What answer was given?

Repentance

What were the people who repented commanded to do?
Of what were they convinced?
Of what were they convicted?
What had led them to repent?
What is repentance?
Which came first, their faith or their repentance?
After their repentance, what were they commanded to do?

The Prodigal Son an Example of Repentance

Relate the parable of the prodigal son.
What did the younger son request?
What did he do when his request was granted?
How did he spend his substance?
When did he come to himself?
What is the meaning of coming to himself?
What did he resolve to do?
What did he confess to the father?
Did he make any excuse for his sins?
Did he blame any one for it?
How does God receive the one who comes to him in penitence?
What did his father do for him?
How will God treat every one who comes to him in penitence?
Where is there joy over a penitent sinner?

Practical Suggestions

Where is faith needed?
What is the basis of Christianity?
How can we go beyond the realm of knowledge?
Is true science opposed to Christianity?
Who is the most scientific man?
What is the result when a Christian fails to make progress?
How is repentance more than sorrow for sin?
What precedes repentance in conversion?
What are the fruits of repentance?

O, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.
A faith that keeps the narrow way
Till life's last hour is fled,
And with a pure and heavenly ray
Lights up a dying bed.
—*Bathurst.*

Lesson VII—February 17, 1929

PRAYER

Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 18:9-14; 1 John 5:14, 15.

5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

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.

9 And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get.

13 But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.

14 I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

14 And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"If ye abide in me, and my words; abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (*John 15:7.)

TIME.—A.D. 28 for Matthew reading and A.D. 30 for Luke reading.

PLACES.—Mount Hattin, Jerusalem, Perea, and Ephesus.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, Pharisees, multitudes, and John.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 121:1-8.

DAILY HOME READING.—

February	11. M.	Encouragement to Pray. (Luke 11:9-13.)
February	12. T.	The Model Prayer. (Matt. 6:9-15.)
February	13. W	Persistency in Prayer. (Luke 18:1-8.)
February	14. T.	Humility in Prayer. (Luke 18:9-14.)
February	15. F.	A Prayer of Abraham. (Gem 18:23-33.)
February	16. S.	A Prayer of Jesus. (Luke 22:39-46.)
February	17. S.	The Divine Guardian. (Ps. 121.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The subject of this lesson is "Prayer." It is very essential to know what God teaches on this subject, as well as to know the conditions of

acceptable prayer and to have the Spirit of prayer; it is important to live in the atmosphere of prayer and to appreciate the privilege of prayer. Since all people pray sometime in their life, it is the more important that they know how to pray. We learn from the study of prayer that there are many conditions of acceptable prayer. Prayer must be offered in faith (Heb. 1:6; James 1:5), in penitence (Acts 8:22), in humility (Luke 18:9-14), in reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28); in the Spirit of forgiveness (Matt. 6:12-14), in obedience and submission to God (1 Pet. 3:12; I John 3:22; 5:14, 15), in resignation to God's will (Luke 22:42), and in accordance with God's will (1 John 5:14, 15). "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." (Ps. 66:18.) Again: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28:9.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Jesus Prayed

Jesus prayed much. It was necessary for him to pray. He is an example for us in prayer. His prayers were not empty forms and Ceremonies. He usually prayed alone (Mark 1:35, 36; 6:46; Luke 6: 12); sometimes he took Peter, James, and John with him (Mark 14: 32-35; Luke 9:28, 29); sometimes he prayed in the presence of all the apostles (Luke 10:21-22; John 17); and sometimes he prayed in the presence of the multitude (John 12:27-30). A number of examples are recorded where he gave thanks—in the presence of the multitude (Matt. 15:36); gave thanks for food (Mark 8:6); in giving the Lord's Supper, he gave thanks for the bread and the cup (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-19.) At all important crises in his life Jesus prayed much. Sometimes he spent whole nights in prayer. (See Heb. 5:7.) If Jesus prayed so much, how much more do we need to pray! We should pray for all things for which the Bible directs and encourage others to pray. There are fourteen prayers of our Savior recorded in the New Testament and a number of prayers which he taught his disciples to pray. (Matt. 5:44, 45; 6:5-13; Luke 11:1-4; Matt. 26:41; Mark 13:33.)

II. A Model Prayer

This has frequently been called "the Lord's prayer." It is better to call it "the prayer which he taught his disciples to pray"—a model prayer. This prayer begins with a recognition of God and our relationship to him. "Our Father who art in heaven"—this recognizes the Fatherhood of God and implies his tenderness, love, and interest in us. The structure of the prayer has a perfect sevenfold petition and breaks into two parts, somewhat similar to the two tables of stone on which was written the Decalogue. The first half consists of three petitions, which refer to God and his kingdom. They are: "Hallowed be thy name," "Thy kingdom come," and "Thy will be done." The second part of this prayer is composed of four petitions, which deal with our needs. They are: "Give us this day our daily bread," "Forgive us our debts," "Bring us not into temptation," and "Deliver us from the evil one." This list of petitions starts with a cry for bread and climbs up slowly through the ills of life, from bodily hunger to trespasses and human unkindness and personal weakness.

The first group of petitions of this prayer is summed up in: “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.” Obedience to the will of God is the ultimate end of God's revelation to man. In the second half there is a need of daily food for the temporal body, but there is a greater need of forgiveness of our sins. This model prayer covers all the essential points of human need. We can do no better than follow this model. Some of the phraseology needs to be changed to suit the conditions as they exist to-day. Jesus outlined this prayer while he was here upon earth with his disciples and before he had established his kingdom; hence, they could pray: “Thy kingdom come.” We pray for the kingdom to spread, as the kingdom is already here.

III. Self-Righteousness Condemned in Prayer

The parable of this lesson was spoken against the Pharisees, “who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at naught.” (Luke 18:9.) We have learned that the Pharisees were a self-righteous, religious sect. The Savior denounced their sins and called them “hypocrites.” They “trusted in themselves;” they were filled with pride and contempt for others. To trust in self is to rely upon one's own wisdom, strength, and righteousness, and not upon the wisdom, guidance, and righteousness of God. Self-trust leads to distrust in God, and there can be no greater sin, and, hence, nothing more displeasing to God. Trusting in self is the opposite of being “poor in Spirit.” (Matt. 5:3.) God condemns will worship, or worshiping according to one's own will. Paul says: “Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.” (Col. 2:23.)

Self-trust leads to two sins—namely, (1) setting aside God's will for one's own will, and (2) despising all who do not Accept one's own will as the standard of right in worship. Those who to-day establish “will worship” speak in contemptuous terms of all who cannot engage with them in such worship. “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself.” This does not necessarily mean that he stood upon his feet, for when Solomon dedicated the temple, he “stood;” but we learn that he “stood” in prayer on his knees. (1 Kings 8:22, 54.) The Pharisee “prayed thus with himself.” His prayer was about himself and in self-confidence and self-exultation. Jesus gives this as an example of those “who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at naught.” He thanked God for his own virtues and that he was “not as the rest of men.” He felt no humility and acknowledged no dependence upon God. He may not have been an extortioner, unjust as respects his financial dealings with men, or an adulterer; but he was in his self-righteousness the greater sinner against God. His fasting and his giving tithes were not wrong; but when done in self-righteousness, they did not commend him to God. There can be no greater sin and no higher crime against God than to set aside God's will and exalt one's own self-righteousness.

IV. Humility and Contrition in Prayer

In the parable the publican is a self-acknowledged sinner. In humility and contrition he prayed in a very different Spirit from that

which possessed the Pharisee. We are told that in their penitence, humility, and obedience the publican and harlot went into the kingdom of God before the Pharisee. (Matt. 21:31, 32; Luke 7:29, 30.) “Standing afar off” shows that the publican felt his unworthiness to come into the presence of God in the temple. He manifested humility and reverence and trusted in the mercy of God and not in his own righteousness. His reverence and awe for God are seen in that he “would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.” With his face bowed toward the ground, he “smote his breast” as an act showing his grief over his sins, “saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.” He realized his only hope of salvation was in the mercy and forgiveness of God. This was very different from the feeling and condition of the Pharisee's heart. This was humility, distrust in self, and trust in God. Humility, contrition, a feeling of entire dependence on God for pardon and peace, and reverence and fear for him are necessary for acceptance with God and a pure and holy life. He who never reaches this point never repents and never obtains salvation by the grace of God.

“This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.” The publican, in the contrition of his heart, prayed and was forgiven; the Pharisee was not heard, and, therefore, was not forgiven. This shows that all prayers are not answered. There are certain conditions or elements of acceptable prayer. These conditions must be met before the prayer is heard and answered. “For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Humility is one of the conditions of acceptable prayer.

V. Pray According to God's Will

All who are truly penitent and clothed in humility have “boldness” toward God and are encouraged to pray unto him. If one is penitent and humble and sincere, one wants to do everything that will please God; one wants to pray according to his will. “If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.” If one is full of the Spirit, his prayer will likely be according to God's will. He will not ask for anything but that for which he is instructed to ask. When one prays in full union with Christ, it is also Christ praying. It is praying in his name, and the prayer is accepted. (John 5:7-16.) Again, we have the assurance “that he heareth us whatsoever we ask.” We also have the assurance “that we have the petitions which we have asked of him.” To pray in the name of Christ and pray in faith and pray in humility may be summed up in the phrase to pray “according to his will.”

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Christianity brings man into fellowship with God. The highest realization of Christian experience is to grow into an increasing fellowship with God. There is no fairer test of one's Christianity than one's actual prayer life.

2. The Father is not pleased with “vain repetition” in prayer. We are not merely to say prayers, but we are to pray. Neither are we to listen merely to others “saying” prayers, but we are to join those who are praying and pray with them.

3. Prayer is not intended to give our Father information or to acquaint him merely with our needs; he knows these. Neither is prayer uttered to be heard of men; hence, no one need be eloquent in speech in order to pray acceptably.

4. Our spiritual life needs to be in constant communion with God. This is done through earnest prayer. Our dependence upon God and his bountiful blessings to us should deepen our gratitude and make us always thankful. Thanksgiving should accompany our petitions.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT, Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons,

Introductory Thoughts

How important is prayer?
What should we know about prayer?
Name the conditions of acceptable prayer.
Whom will God not hear in prayer?

Jesus Prayed

In what is Jesus an example for us?
What kind of prayers did Jesus pray?
Where did he usually pray?
Can you name a place or condition that Jesus was ever in that he did not pray?
Name others who heard him pray.
How long did Jesus sometimes pray?
For what did he thank God?
How many recorded prayers of Jesus have we?

A Model Prayer

What has this prayer sometimes been called?
What are the objections to calling it this?
What would be a better name for it?
How does the prayer begin?
How many petitions are there in this prayer?
How are they divided?
How many in the first group?
How many in the second group?
Name the petitions in the first group.
Name those in the second group.
Do we pray for the kingdom to come today?

Self-Righteousness Condemned in Prayer

In the parable, who is an example of self-righteousness?
What did the Savior call the Pharisees?
In whom did they trust?
What is it to trust in self?
What is will worship?
What two sins grow out of self-trust?
How did the Pharisee pray?
In what was his sin?
For what did the Pharisee thank God?
What is the greatest sin?

Humility and Contrition in Prayer

Who is the publican?
What does his prayer represent?
What shows his reverence?
What shows his humility?
Contrast, his prayer with the Pharisee's prayer.
Which one was rather justified?

Pray According to God's Will

How should we pray?
What assurance have we that God will answer prayer?
What is it to pray according to God's will?
What is it to pray in faith?

Practical Suggestions

What is a fair test of one's Christianity?
What are vain repetitions in prayer?
What is the difference between “saying prayers” and praying?
Is eloquent language essential in prayer?
How may we remain in communion with God?
What should accompany our petition?

Lesson VIII—February 24, 1929

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

John 1:40-42; Matt. 16:15-18; John 21:15-19; 2 Pet. 3:18.

40 One of the two that heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
41 He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, Christ).
42 He brought him unto Jesus. Jesus looked upon him, and said, Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter).

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.

15 So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, forest 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.
18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 Now this he spake, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (*2 Pet. 3:18.)

TIME.—A.D. 27 and 29—during the earthly life of Christ.
PLACES.—Jerusalem and Caesarea Philippi.
PERSONS.—Jesus, Peter, and the disciples.
DEVOTIONAL READING,—John 15:1-8.
DAILY HOME READING.—-

February	18. M.	Peter's Growth Foretold. (John 1:35-42.)
February	19. T.	Peter's Growth Realized. (Matt. 16:13-20.)
February	20. W	Peter's Exhortation to Grow, (2 Pet. 3:14-18.)
February	21. T.	Growing in Knowledge. (Col. 1:9-18.)
February	22. F.	Growing in Love. (Phil. 1:1-11.)
February	23. S.	How Jesus Grew. (Luke 2:40-52.)
February	24. S.	Growing in Faithfulness. (John 15:1-10.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Growth is one of the very serious and important lessons to learn. Its seriousness and importance are measured by the blessings which

attend growth in the Christian life. It is a lesson sadly neglected by many church members. Many fail in the Christian life because they do not grow. Christians cannot grow without desiring to grow. They must hunger and thirst after righteousness that they may grow; they must eat of the spiritual food, drink of the spiritual drink, and take spiritual exercise in order to grow. The following Scriptures instruct us on this subject: Ps. 18:35, 36; Mark 4:26-28; Acts 20:32; I Cor. 9:26, 27; I Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 6:10-18; Col. 1:9-11; 3: 16, 17.

Jesus grew. "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52.) Jesus grew in four things—namely, (1) in stature, (2) in wisdom, (3) in favor with God, and (4) in favor with men. He was first a babe, and grew in stature, "waxed strong" physically, was "filled with wisdom," "and the grace of God was upon him." God's favor was upon him to protect him, as from Herod and other dangers, and to furnish him with such means of physical and mental development as were necessary. Jesus had to grow in every way. He was not a man in a child's body. He grew larger and stronger in stature, in intellect, in wisdom, in heart, and "in favor with God and men." He grew by application and the use of .means—grew physically by taking proper exercise, wholesome food, and restful sleep; grew in wisdom and grace by asking questions, studying the Scriptures, and the exercise of mind and soul. The quiet years at Nazareth were spent in physical, mental, and spiritual development and preparation for his great public work. He resisted temptation, prayed, attended the holy feasts and public worship, and kept God's laws. Thus he grew in grace (in favor) with God; and his sincerity, purity, generosity, humility, and kindness brought him into favor with men. In all things, even unto death, Jesus was obedient to God. Thus Christians should grow and do grow. They must so live "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." (Tit. 2:10.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. We Begin Spiritual Life as Babes

Man is at least a twofold being. The Bible recognizes an "outward man" and an "inward man." "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." (Rom. 7:22.) And, again: "But though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16.) The "outward man" is the physical body; the "inward man" is the spiritual part of our being. When we come into Christ, we are babes spiritually. "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (1 Pet. 2:2.) And, again: "Wherefore if any man is m Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Cor. 5:17.) We begin the Christian life, then, as babes, for we are "born anew," or "born of water and the Spirit." (John 3:3, 5.) We are to grow from this state of infancy in the spiritual life to "full-grown men." (Heb. 5:14.) God did not intend that the babes spiritually continue as babes; his purpose and will is that all grow. A fundamental law of God and of our spiritual nature is violated if we do not grow. There is no way to pass

from a state of infancy or “a babe” in Christ to “full-grown men”, in the Lord except by growing, and no one can grow without observing the law of growth. God has rebuked and condemned those who fail to grow in the Christian life. He has said of some who were “dull of hearing” that they “are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for full-grown men.” (Heb. 5:12-14.) God's purpose with us, and therefore his will with us, as babes, is for us to grow and become “strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.” (Eph. 6:10.) This we can do, and this we must do if we enjoy the spiritual blessings. We should see to it that we are growing spiritually.

II. Peter as an Example of Growth

Early in the public ministry of Christ he began to call disciples unto him. Among the first was Andrew. When he learned of the Savior, “he findeth first his own brother, Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, Christ).” (John 1:41.) Andrew furnishes us an instructive example. When he found Christ, the “first” thing that he did was to bring his brother Simon to know him. He said to his brother: “We have found the Messiah.” All who have learned of Christ ought to declare him to others. Many would listen to a word from a friend who would not sit and listen to a sermon.

When Simon was brought to Christ, he “looked upon him, and said, Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter).” (John 1:42.) When Jesus looked upon him, he saw the great possibilities in him for growth and development in his service. “Simon” means “a hearing,” and he heard at once. Jesus at once announced that he should “be called Cephas,” which means “a stone,” and the Greek word for “stone” is “Peter.” Jesus said, “Thou shalt be called Cephas”—that is, your name some day shall be “Cephas” (“Peter”). He tells him what he will make of him. From this time Peter hears and begins to grow just as all of God's people when they learn of Christ should begin to grow. Peter is a beautiful example of Christian growth.

III. Peter's Confession

When Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples what people thought of him. They gave him different reports. He then asked for an expression from the apostles themselves. He asked them all: “Who say ye that I am?” Peter—impulsive, bold, and decisive—answered at once. There was no hesitancy or delay. He spoke his sincere and deep conviction and answered for all the rest. He said: “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, the Christ. Other men were named “Jesus” (Acts 13: 6; 4:11), but there is only one Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. Paul said: “This Jesus, whom . . . I proclaim unto you, is the Christ.” (Acts 17:3.) There are two things concerning Jesus of Nazareth that are true and must be believed—namely, (1) that he is

the Christ; (2) that he is “the Son of the living God.” This shows that Peter had grown in faith and in favor with Christ. His confession also shows the relationship of Jesus to God, and, therefore, it shows his divinity. One thing people must believe about Jesus—-they must believe in him as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” in order to be saved by him. (Rom. 3:26; 10:6-10.) They must receive his teaching as a prophet (Matt. 7:24-29); they must 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 sin (Heb. 9:22); they must trust in him as Advocate, Mediator, and Priest (1 John 2:1, 2; I Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 8:6; 7:25; 9:24; Rom. 9:34); and they 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 confirmed conviction of the confession made by Peter. As the nature of Christ was revealed to him and as he received the teachings of Christ, his faith grew. So as people to-day are led into a fuller knowledge of the truth of God and receive it into their hearts, they grow in the Christian life.

Jesus blessed Peter for this confession, as he blesses every one who confesses him as did Peter. The glorious fact that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” is the central truth of the Bible. 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. No one during New Testament times ever thought that Jesus meant that Peter was the foundation of the church, and nowhere do we find that Peter ever once claimed to be the foundation of the church. Peter never preached it, and no New Testament writer ever wrote it. This grand central truth that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” is the basis of all Christian growth. Every one who grows spiritually must be nurtured by this central truth.

IV. Growth in Love

“Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?” (John 21:15.) Just before Christ's crucifixion Peter had denied him three times. (Matt. 26:34; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:61; John 13:38.) This incident came after the resurrection and before Christ's ascension back to the Father. It occurred while Christ was still with his disciples. He asked Peter: “Lovest thou me more than these?” Three times had Peter denied him; he now declares three times his love for Jesus. There seems to be the idea of gradual unfolding to Peter of Christ's love to him, and also a gradual development or growth of Peter's love for Christ and his disciples. Jesus replied to Peter's answer each time: “Feed my lambs,” “Tend my sheep,” and “Feed my sheep.” All these statements imply spiritual food and growth. Jesus finally said to him: “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” Jesus explains what he means by this statement. It was spoken “signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God.” Jesus then added: “Follow

me." Jesus here teaches that Peter would glorify God by suffering martyrdom. Peter, while young and vigorous, went where he chose; he even denied Jesus in order to save his life; but now the time had come when he would die for Jesus. Peter's spiritual growth would continue, and he would glorify God in his life and even in his death. He could not have glorified God in his death if he had not grown and become strong in his Christian life. Jesus said to him, and he says to all: "Follow me." No one can follow Christ without growing as a Christian.

V. Peter Teaches Others How to Grow

Near the close of Peter's life he wrote two letters to Christians—First and Second Peter. In these letters, among other things which he teaches, is the lesson of Christian growth. He says: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18.) To grow in grace is to grow more in favor with God; it is to grow more into the likeness of Christ; it is to "become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4); it is to surrender our all to our King. To grow in knowledge is to increase our knowledge of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, and all things which God has revealed to us; it is to grow into a fuller knowledge of things divine. We cannot grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ without studying his word. There is no stopping place for a Christian in his growing; there is no place that we can rest content with past attainments and give ourselves up to idle ease in the kingdom of God.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The apostles remained three years with Christ. They were daily companions of his during this time. This was needed that they might be trained to be his disciples. We must abide with him continually if we grow as his disciples.
2. No argument can stand before God to justify our neglect of the great law of Christian growth. Our growth will be in proportion to our earnest desire to grow. We will never grow more rapidly than we desire to grow.
3. No one can grow spiritually without prayer; no one can grow into the likeness of Christ without knowing him and keeping him in heart as a daily companion.
4. Not only should individuals grow, but churches should grow. There are two ways for a church to grow. One is from without, by additions; the other is from within, by each Christian growing up in holiness,
5. As soon as we are born into the family of God we should begin growing, and this growth should continue until death. We should let nothing interfere with our spiritual growth.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

How important is this subject?
Have you neglected it?
What was necessary to growth?

In what four things did Jesus grow?
In what things should we grow?

We Begin Spiritual Life as Babes

What two natures have we?
What is the "outward man?"
How does the "outward man" grow?
What is the "inward man?"
How does the "inward man" grow?
As what do we begin the Christian life?
What is God's purpose with us as babes?
How only can we pass from infancy to full-grown men?

Peter as an Example of Growth

Who was Andrew?
When he found Jesus, what did he first do?
How is he an example to us?
When Simon was brought to Christ, what did Christ say to him?
What does "Cephas" mean?
What does the word "Peter" mean?
What possibilities of growth did Christ see in Peter?

Peter's Confession

What did different people think of Christ?
What did Christ ask his disciples?
Who answered him? What was his answer?
What two things must be believed of Jesus?
How does this answer show Peter's growth in faith?
What one thing must people believe about Jesus to be saved?
As what must they receive him?
What blessing did Jesus pronounce upon Peter?
What is the simple truth of the Bible?
Did Peter or any writer of the New Testament ever claim that Peter was the foundation of the church?
What is the basis of all Christian growth?

Growth in Love

When did Peter deny his Lord?
How many times did he deny him?
How many times was he required to express his love for Jesus?
How does Peter answer?
What did Jesus reply to Peter's answers?
What do these statements imply?
What kind of death would Peter die?
How would he be able to glorify God in his death?
Can one follow Christ and not grow spiritually?

Peter Teaches Others How to Grow

How many letters did Peter write?
In what two things does he teach us to grow?
How can we grow in grace?
How can we grow in knowledge?
Where is the stopping place for Christian growth?

Practical Suggestions

Can we grow spiritually without abiding in Christ?
How rapidly do we grow?
Can we determine the rapidity of our own growth?
How does prayer help the Christian growth?
In what two ways can a church grow?
When should we begin growing?
When should we cease growing?

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast;
Let every soul be Jesus' guest.
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all mankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
The invitation is to all:
Come, all the world! Come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.

—Charles Wesley.

Lesson IX—March 3, 1929

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Mark 4:26-32; Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4-6, 11-16.

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth;
27 And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how.
28 The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.
29 But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.
30 And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God, or in what parable shall we set it forth?
31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth,
32 Yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.
22 And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church,
23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.
4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling;
5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
6 One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

11 And he gave some to be apostles; and some. prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
12 For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:
13 Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
14 That we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error;
15 But speaking truth in love, may grow up m all things into him, who is the head, even Christ;
16 From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"So we, who are many, are one body in C*hrist." (Rom. 12:5.)

TIME. A.D. 28 for the parables in Mark, A.D. 63 for the Scriptures in Ephesians.

PLACES.—Jesus gave these parables by the Sea of Galilee; Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus while in prison at Rome.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitude; Paul and the church at Ephesus.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Eph. 4:11-16.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

February	25.	M.	The Church's One Foundation. (Matt. 16:13-20.)
February	26.	T.	The Brotherhood of Believers. (Acts 2:37-47.)
February	27.	W	.The Daily Ministration. (Acts 6:1-7.)
February	28.	T.	The Church at Worship. (Ps. 122.)
March	1.	F.	Diversity of Gifts. (1 Cor. 12:1-11.)
March	2.	S.	The Church Among the Gentiles. (Acts 11:19-26.)
March	3.	S.	Building the Body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-16.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The church was established at the wonderful cost of the blood of Christ. (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28.) God's estimate upon the church can be measured only by its price the"precious blood" of the Lamb. God did not pay this great price for something which is worth nothing and without which people can be saved. If people can be saved without the church, they can be saved without the blood of Christ, without Christ, and without becoming Christians. The foundation of the church is the great truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:19-22.) "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11.)

"Church" is used in two distinct senses in the New Testament . namely, a general sense and a local sense. The general sense is seen in the fact that Christ is "head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22); and, again, "the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. 12:23). "Church" in these Scriptures is used in the broadest sense, and includes all the redeemed in earth and heaven and in all ages. (Eph. 3:10; 5:2227; Col. 1:24.) The Scriptures are numerous which use the word "church" in a local sense. In some instances the word is used in the singular and in others it is used in the plural. In some cases it is used with reference to a particular church and in others without such specification, but in all these cases its meaning is local. The local use of the word may be found in Acts 11:26; 14:23; 16:5; 20:17; Rom. 16:4; I Cor. 1:2; 6:4; 11:16; Gal. 1:2, 22; and many other places.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Church Began on Pentecost

Pentecost has been called "the birthday of the church." John the Baptist had prepared the way for Christ. Jesus' first disciples were from John's disciples. Jesus prepared material for the church and had all things ready in Jerusalem for the complete organization of the church before he made his ascension back to heaven. The Holy Spirit came to earth and organized the prepared material, which Jesus had left, into the first church. There were three thousand believers added on the first day of its organization, and this number was increased daily. The church at Jerusalem, then, was the first church of God on earth which had Christ as its head.

Peter, by the Holy Spirit, preached the first gospel sermon in its completeness on this Pentecost, and the people heard, believed, repented of their sins, and were baptized into Christ; and "the Lord

added to them day by day those that were saved." (Acts 2:47.) They did what they were instructed to do, and the Lord added them to his church; and that is the way the Lord adds people to the church to-day. He does not have a different way of adding people to the church from the way in which he added them on the day of Pentecost.

II. Growth of the Church

The two parables given in our lesson illustrate the growth of the church. In each one of these parables the church is spoken of as "the kingdom of God." "So is the kingdom of God," and, "How shall we liken the kingdom of God?" Both these expressions lead us to understand that "the kingdom of God" here refers to the church. The point in the first parable is that as a man sows such grain as wheat, barley, or oats, and waits, sleeping and rising night and day, until the time of harvest, and as the seed grows, he knows not how, "so is the kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God" grows in gradual development from the seed, which is the word of God. (Luke 8:11.) We sow the good . seed in the ground and go about other duties, not watching to see it germinate and grow; and the earth then does the rest, bearing "fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

The earth does not bear "fruit of herself" without the seed and without the seed having been sown. These are the processes of germination, growth, and development of seed planted in the earth. Then when the harvest comes he must reap it. So one sows the word of God, the seed of the kingdom. He does all he can and passes on to other duties. In due time the seed germinates, grows, develops, and produces a harvest. It requires time to produce a harvest. In like manner it takes time to sow the seed of the word of God and let it develop and bear fruit in the Christian life. As the number of Christians is multiplied, the church grows.

The parable of the "mustard seed" also illustrates the growth of the church. The mustard seed is a very small seed, "which a man took, and sowed in his field." It is the smallest or least of all seed which were sowed in the field or garden in that country. It was not necessarily the least of all seeds known to botanists, but just the least of seeds planted in that country. From this very small seed grows a very large herb, "greater than all the herbs" grown in that country, "and becometh a tree"—not like the cedar or oak, but so large that birds lodge upon its branches. So the kingdom of heaven, or the church, from an insignificant beginning, has grown to a huge magnitude. From a Babe in a manger has grown this mighty kingdom. The despised Nazarene, with a few unlearned Galileans about him, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, poverty, without political or military power, set in operation a kingdom that is destined to fill the world. (Dan. 2:25-49.) The church, or kingdom of God, is the most powerful and greatest kingdom in the world to-day, and it is destined to fill the whole earth.

III. Christ the Head of the Church

God put "all things in subjection under" the feet of Christ, 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. 1:22, 23.) Christ is the head of the church (Col. 1:18); he is "head over all things to the church;" he is its sole lawgiver, with "all authority . . . in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18, 19). The word of which "church" is a translation means "called out." The church is Christ's "called-out" ones—called out of darkness into light (1 Pet. 2:9; Col. 1:13), called out of the world (2 Cor. 6; 14), and called out to remain out and to keep unspotted from the world (James 1:27). They have been called by the gospel of Christ. "Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14.) As they are called out by the gospel of Christ, they are constituted into his body, the church, over which Christ is the head.

This church over which Christ is the head is called the "house" of God (Itch. 3:6); "the temple of God" (1 Cor. 3:16); "a spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5); "a habitation of God" (Eph. 2:20-22); "God's husbandry" (1 Cor. 3:9); "the flock of God" (1 Pet. 5:2; Acts 20: 28); "the body of Christ," and Christians are "severally members thereof" (Col. 1:18, 24; I Cor. 13:12-14, 27); "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15); "the church of God" (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 2:1); "the church," and the churches at different places make up "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). All of these names and titles show divine wisdom, divine origin, and divine relationship. They emphasize the fact that Christ is head of the church. When one becomes a Christian, he acknowledges Christ as the head of the church.

IV. The Unity of the Church

Nothing is so plainly taught in the New Testament as the unity of the body of Christ and the oneness of the church. Paul uses seven "ones" to emphasize this unity. There is "one body," "one Spirit," "one hope," "one Lord," "one faith," "one baptism," and "one God." As there is but one God and one Lord and one Spirit and one faith and one baptism and one hope, so there is but "one body," and that "one body" is the church, or kingdom, of God on earth. Jesus said: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd." (John 10:16.) So Jesus teaches that as God's people are to have but "one shepherd," so his people are to be but "one flock." Christ is that "one Shepherd" and his church the "one flock." This is also in harmony with his prayer that all who believe on him through the word of the apostles may be one. "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; . . . that they may be one, even as we are one; . . . that they may be perfected into one. (John 17:21-23.)

"There is one body." "All the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." (1 Cor. 12:12-14, 20.) Hence, there can be but one church of Christ, and that is the same in all places and in all centuries. Its head, its constitution, its laws, its worship, and its work cannot be changed to suit the civilization or barbarism of any age. It transforms all into the divine nature and image of Christ. All religious denominations have sprung up since Christ built his church. Christ is the true vine, and every child of God (not every denomination) is a branch. (John 15:1-10.) When one be-

comes a Christian, one becomes at the same time and in the same way a member of the church, a child of God, a citizen in Christ's kingdom, a lamb of God's flock, a soldier of the cross, and a member of the household of faith. There is nothing of divine origin for people to join. They obey the gospel, become Christians, and the Lord adds them to his church.

V. The Work of the Church

In the Early church were placed “apostles,” “prophets,” “evangelists,” “pastors,” and “teachers.” These are all in the church to-day in their teachings. The apostles are still in the church, the prophets are still in the church, so are evangelists, pastors (or elders), and teachers. They are all working “for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.” The purpose of all this work is the edification and development of the church and to attain “unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man.” All are to speak the truth in love and “grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ.” Each member is to sustain such relationship to Christ, the head, and to every other member, so that the church may become a body, “fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part,” making “the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.” This is a beautiful picture of the close relation that each Christian sustains to each other and the cooperation in worship and service in the church of our Lord.

The life of the church and work of the church are the same, being the life all Christians must live and the work all Christians must do. “Church work” is nothing more or less than the work God commands Christians to do, whether private or public. Making an honest living in obedience to God, paying one's debts, building a Christian home, rearing children in the fear of the Lord, visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, keeping unspotted from the world, helping the poor, sympathizing with the sorrowful, cultivating a meek and quiet Spirit, adorning oneself in modest apparel, worshiping God on the first day of the week as he directs, preaching the gospel in the love of truth, winning souls to Christ by private influence or public speech, etc., are all “church work.” No one can say that any one of the above is more important than another. All of them belong to the will of God and the duties and responsibilities of man; all should be done in the name of Christ and to the glory of God. “Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever.” (Eph. 3:21.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. God has made it possible for all who need salvation to enter the church and receive remission of sins. He has taught how to enter the church, and one must enter according to God's will. There is no such thing as getting into the church of God except through Christ.

2. No one can be loyal to Christ without being loyal to his church. No one can be unfaithful to the church and at the same time be faithful to Christ.

3. Since the church is the body of Christ, the house of God, the family of God, and the kingdom of God, to be in the church is to be in his body, in his house, in his family, and in his kingdom. If people could be saved out of the church, then they could be saved without being members of his body, members of his household, members of his family, or citizens of his kingdom.

4. All glory should be given unto God and Christ through the church. We are unfaithful as his children if we do not so give it. There is room in the church for every one who will enter; there is work for every one who enters. There is no need of Christians' going into any other institution to do any good work. They can do all that they should do in the church of our Lord.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What was the cost of the church?
How can God's estimate of it be made?
What was the foundation of the church?
In what two senses is the word "church" used?
Give Scriptures showing its general sense.
Give Scriptures showing its local sense.

The Church Began on Pentecost

What is called "the birthday of the church?"
Who prepared the first material for the church?
How was this material organized into a church?
Where was the first church organized?
How did others get into the church?
How do people get into the church today?

Growth of the Church

What two parables are in the lesson that show the growth of the church?
What is the chief point in the first parable?
What is the seed of the kingdom?
How does it grow?
What is the chief point in the second parable?
How did the church begin?
What is it destined to do?
What is now the most powerful kingdom in the world?

Christ the Head of the Church

Who has been made the head of the Church?
Who gave him this position?
What is the church?
How are they "called out?"
What other names and titles belong to the church?
What do these show?

The Unity of the Church

How is the unity of the church taught?
Mention the seven "ones."
How many shepherds did Jesus say God's people would have?
How many flocks?
How many bodies has Christ?
How many churches?
When did religious denominations begin?
How does one become a Christian?
How does one become a member of the church?

The Work of the Church

Who were placed in the early church?
Is the work of these still in the church?
What was the purpose of this work?
What is the relation of Christians to each other?
How are they all related to Christ?
What is church work?
Mention some church work.
Which is the most important?
How should all church work be done?

Practical Suggestions

Who may enter the church?
How may they enter the church?
Is there any other way?
Why cannot one be unfaithful to the church and faithful to Christ at the same time?
If people can be saved out of the church, what will they not have to enter?
How should all glory he given to God?
Is there need for a Christian to enter any other institution to do good?
Can a Christian enter any other institution to do good and be faithful to God?

Lesson X—March 10, 1929

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Matt. 28:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-29.

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.

23 For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread;
24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.
25 In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.
26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.
27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.
28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.
29 For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"This do is remembrance of m*e." (1 Cor. 11:24.)
TIME.—Thursday night, April 6, A.D. 30; A.D. 30, after the resurrection of Christ, just before his ascension.
PLACES.—Jerusalem, in an upper room; mountain in Galilee.
PERSONS. Jesus and his apostles, Paul and the church at Corinth.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Rev. 7:9-17.
DAILY HOME READING.—

March	4.	M	.The Baptism of Jesus. (Matt. 3:13-17.)
March	5.	T.	Baptized Believers. (Acts 10:44-48.)
March	6.	W	.One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism. (Eph. 4:1-6.)
March	7.	T.	The Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. 11:23-29.)
March	8.	F.	The Bread from Heaven. (John 6:41-51.)
March	9.	S.	Communion With Christ. (1 Cor. 10:14-22.)
March	10.	S.	Rewarded With Christ. (Rev. 7:9-17.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This is a twofold subject. Baptism itself is sufficient to take the whole time of the lesson. The Lord's Supper is also an important theme and should require the time of a full lesson. The historical order of these two subjects is the Lord'S Supper and baptism, but the practical order is baptism and the Lord's Supper. No one has a right to the Lord's table who has not been baptized.

These two have been called "church ordinances," but the New Testament nowhere so designates them. It is better to speak of the things of God as they are spoken of in the book of God. We should learn to call Bible things by Bible names. This will save confusion and will teach our hearers. For instance, the New Testament does not call the Lord's Supper "the sacrament" or "the Eucharist;" neither does it

call the Supper "the emblems." All these names probably convey some ideas which may be found in the Lord's Supper. However, it is better to speak of it as the Holy Spirit does in the New Testament.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

BAPTISM

I. The Subject of Baptism

Much confusion exists in the religious world on the question as to who should be baptized. Jesus spoke by authority. He said: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." All authority pertaining to the church, the redemption of man, and the training of God's children had been given unto him. He is the Head of the church and the King of the kingdom. "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." Disciples, or learners, were to be made, and then they were to be baptized. In this commission Jesus clearly teaches the baptism of believers. Again, the commission is stated by Mark: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:15, 16.) The order as mentioned by Jesus here is that "he that believeth" is to be baptized. No one is included in this teaching except "the believer." Faith is prerequisite to baptism. That which is not of faith is sin. (Rom. 14:23.) Without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6.) On the day of Pentecost, Peter, by the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel to the people; and when they had heard it and believed it, they asked what they must do. Peter answered: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2: 38.) Again, Philip went to Samaria and preached Jesus unto the people; and "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." (Acts 8:12.) After Philip had preached Jesus unto the eunuch, they came to "a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36.) When Saul, who later became the apostle Paul, had believed in Jesus as the Son of God, he was told to "arise, and be baptized." (Acts 22:16.) Many other cases can be cited, but these are sufficient to get before us the New Testament order. It is hearing, believing, repenting, and being baptized. "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18:8.)

II. The Design of Baptism

This is usually expressed in the purpose of baptism. It ought to be sufficient for people to know that God requires baptism. When it is learned that God requires it, the highest motive that any one can have in being baptized is to please God—to obey his will. Usually it is stated that baptism is "unto remission of sins;" that baptism precedes remission of sins; that remission of sins, or salvation, is the design of

baptism. Jesus said: “Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5.) Peter told the anxious believers on the day of Pentecost to “repent” and “be baptized” every one of them “in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of” their “sins.” (Acts 2:38.) The believing, penitent Saul was told to “arise, and be baptized, and wash away” his “sins.” (Acts 22: 16.) In stating the commission, Mark stated that “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16.) Peter, in speaking of the salvation of Noah and his family, says that eight souls “were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism.” (1 Pet. 3:20, 21.) It is clear that the Savior put the promise of remission of sins, salvation from sin, or pardon, after baptism. The Holy Spirit, in answering the question of believing penitents as to what they must do, told them to “be baptized,” which shows that the blessings of salvation from past sins come after baptism.

III. The “Mode” of Baptism

The New Testament says nothing about the “mode” of baptism. In fact, there is no “mode” of baptism; it is just baptism. However, as confusion exists in the minds of many, it is well to give some thought to this. It is clear from the teachings of the New Testament that baptism is a burial; that the baptism commanded in the Scriptures of our lesson is a burial in water. We learn from the New Testament that the Scriptural requirements for baptism are: A going to the water (Matt. 3:5, 6, 13); a going to “much water” (John 3:23); a going down into the water (Acts 8:38); that the baptizing is to be done while in the water (Acts 8:38); there is a burial in baptism (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12); there is a raising up, or resurrection, from the water (Col. 2:12); the body is to be washed (Heb. 10:22; Tit. 3:5); there must be a birth of water, or a coming forth from the water (John 3:5). All these Scriptures emphasize the fact that baptism, as taught in the New Testament and practiced by those who were guided by the Holy Spirit, is a burial, or immersion. Those who were baptized were to be taught the way of the Lord in living the Christian life. “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.”

THE LORD'S SUPPER

I. The Giving of the Supper

“As they were eating [that is, before they had risen from the table], Jesus took bread [a loaf], and blessed, and brake it.” (Matt. 26:26.) Paul says “when he had given thanks,” which is the same thing. (1 Cor. 11:24.) The bread was the unleavened bread of the passover, of which they had just been eating. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul say he gave thanks, or “blessed,” and “brake it.” He said to his disciples: “Take, eat; this is my body.” The bread represents his body, or is symbolic of his body. With his literal body of flesh and blood whole in all its parts before them, they knew they were not eating his literal body and drinking his literal blood. This bread, then, repre-

sents his body. It was to be a memorial of his body that was so soon to be torn by the nails and pierced by the spear.

God instituted the passover before that which it commemorated took place, and Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper before his death. Man erects monuments to deeds already passed, but he cannot erect monuments to deeds which have not yet transpired. God alone can do that, for he alone knows what will be in the future.

"In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (1 Cor. 11:25.) He gave thanks for the cup, as he had given thanks for the bread. He did not give thanks for the bread at the same time, as some do now. He said: "Drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26:27.) "And they all drank of it." (Mark 14: 23.) One man was not to drink for another, but every one for himself and in his own love for Jesus. As each must believe for himself and repent for himself and be baptized for himself, so each must eat the Lord's Supper for himself. "But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup." (1 Cor. 11:28.)

II. The New Covenant

"This is my blood of the covenant," Jesus said, "which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." (Matt. 26:28.) As the bread represents his body, so the cup represents his blood. There was, then, an old covenant, or will. "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old." (Heb. 8:13.) "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:9, 10.) The first covenant was the law of Moses, which God made with the children of Israel when he "took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt." (Heb. 8:9.) This law, or covenant, was dedicated with the blood of animals; but the new covenant was dedicated with Christ's blood—better blood than that of animals. (Heb. 9:11-28.) Jesus, as the Lamb of God, must offer himself, must be slain, and his blood must be shed in order to seal unto men this new covenant, or new testament, of God.

It was necessary for Jesus to suffer and die for the world. The grain of wheat must die that it may live (John 12:24); trees must be felled and ripped to pieces before they are useful for lumber; the face of the earth must be torn by the plow before it will yield to man its increase. "And apart from shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) Jesus must give his life "a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:6; Matt. 20:28.) "For the life of the flesh is the blood." (Lev. 17:11.) For Jesus to give his life "a ransom for all" was to shed his blood for all—"for many unto remission of sins." He puts "away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26.) All Christians have been redeemed by Christ's blood. (1 Pet. 1:18-21.) He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us," etc. (Tit. 2:14.) The church has been purchased with his blood. (Acts 20:28.) His blood "cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), and "he is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." (Eph. 1:7.) Only those who Accept and obey the blood-sealed covenant will be saved by the blood of Jesus.

III. The Purpose of the Lord's Supper

The crumbling, perishing bread and flowing "fruit of the vine," in the goodness and wisdom of God, commemorate this most wonderful and greatest of events, which rescues the earth from the bondage of Satan and the human race from sin. Man chooses such enduring substances as marble, granite, iron, and bronze to erect monuments to commemorate great human events; but God has selected and ordained this simple but divine institution, and it will live fresh and glorious when all the works of man shall have been destroyed.

Jesus left this monument of his sufferings and death that all coming generations might look upon it and imbibe the Spirit of Him who died for the race. "This do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cop. 11:25, 26.) In eating the Lord's Supper we look back by faith to his death, and we look forward with hope to Christ's triumphant return.

After all this was made clear to the apostles through the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, they taught, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all Christians to meet on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7), to come together to eat the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20-23), to continue "steadfastly" "in the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42), and not to forsake their own assembling together, as some did then (Hob. 10:25) and as some do now. This institution is to last until Christ comes again, and all who believe his promises should be careful to observe it.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The teachings of the New Testament are plain and simple in regard to baptism. The doctrines and commandments of men have confused the minds of people on this subject. The only way to clear away this confusion is to disregard the teachings of man and read the New Testament on this subject.

2. No one need "theorize" about the subject of baptism. God forgives sin. He does this when man submits to his will. The New Testament says nothing about "infant baptism" or "sprinkling for baptism," and man should not teach these.

3. In eating the Lord's Supper we do net commune with man or so much with each other. We should not let the mistakes and sins of others keep us from communing with God.

4. To neglect eating the Lord's Supper is to show disrespect for Christ. To eat it in an unworthy manner is to rob our souls of blessings which God has for us.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Why should these two be taken together?
What is the historical order?
What is the practical order?
What has man sometimes called these?
How should we always speak of New Testament things?

BAPTISM
The Subject of Baptism

Whom did Jesus commission his apostles to baptize?

What are the prerequisites of baptism?
What was the order on the day of Pentecost?
What was the order with the eunuch?
What was the order with the Corinthians?

The Design of Baptism

Why speak of the design of baptism?
Why should one be baptized?
What are the prerequisites of the remission of sins?
How does baptism now save us?

The "Mode" of Baptism

What does the Bible teach about the mode of baptism?
What are the Scriptural requirements of baptism?
How is baptism a burial?
How is it a birth?

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Giving of the Supper

When did Jesus give the Supper?
What two elements are included in the Supper?
What does the bread represent?
What does the "fruit of the vine" represent?
How is the Lord's Supper like the passover?
What did Jesus do before breaking the bread?
What did he do before giving the cup to his disciples?

The New Covenant

What is the new covenant?
How is it sealed?
What was the old covenant?
How was it sanctified?
How do people get the benefits of the blood of Christ now?

The Purpose of the Lord's Supper

What does the Lord's Supper represent?
What is the difference between man's monuments and God's monuments?
To what do we look back when eating the Lord's Supper?
To what do we look forward when eating it?

Practical Suggestions

What has confused the minds of people on baptism?
How may this confusion be removed?
When does God forgive sins?
With whom do we commune when eating the Lord's Supper?
What is it to eat the Supper in an unworthy manner?

Bread of the world, in mercy broken;
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed;
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead.

Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed,
And be thy feast to us the token
That by thy grace our souls are fed.

—*R. Heber.*

Lesson XI—March 17, 1929

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 12:1-8; John 20:19; Rev. 1:10.

8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;
10 But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

1 At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears and to eat.
2 But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath.
3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was hungry, and they that were with him;
4 How he entered into the house of God, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?
5 Or have ye not read in the law, that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless?
6 But I say unto you, that one greater than the temple is here.
7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.
8 For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath.
9 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath." (Matt. 12:8.)
TIME.—A.D. 28.
PLACES. Grain fields in Galilee, and the city of Capernaum.
PERSONS.—-Jesus, his disciples, and the Pharisees.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 92:1-5, 12, 13.

DAILY HOME READING.—

March	11. M.	The Sabbath Law. (Ex. 20:8-11.)
March	12. T.	The Sabbath Observed. (Jer. 17:21-27.)
March	13. W	.The Spirit of Sabbath Observance. (Isa. 58; 8-14.)
March	14. T.	Enforcing the Law of the Sabbath.(Neh. 13:15-22.)
March	15. F.	Sabbath Blessings. (Isa. 56:1-8.)
March	16. S.	Jesus; Lord of the Sabbath. (Matt. 12:1-8.)
March	17. S.	A Sabbath Song of Praise. (Ps. 92:1-8.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The New Testament does not teach anything about "the Christian Sabbath." The Sabbath day belonged to the law of Moses, or the old

dispensation. It belonged to the Jews, or Israelites. It does not belong to the Christian dispensation, and it should not be called "the Christian Sabbath." The law regulating the Sabbath and the observance Of the Sabbath does not belong to Christians. The only Sabbath which belongs to the Christian is the rest, or heaven, which the faithful will enjoy after death. "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God." (Heb. 4:9.) This "sabbath rest" is for the Lord's people after the toils, trials, tribulations, and cares of this life shall have ceased.

Jesus was born under the law and kept the law; he fulfilled it. As the Sabbath belonged to the law, Jesus observed the Sabbath. His example of observing the Sabbath is not to be taken as an example for us to observe the seventh day of the week as a special day of rest and worship. Just so with the apostles. They often went to the synagogues on the Sabbath day. This was done because people had assembled on that day for worship and the apostles could get a hearing at that time.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. History of the Sabbath

The first mention of the Sabbath is in Gen. 2:2, 3: "And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made." "For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Ex. 20:11.) These Scriptures give the origin of the seventh day, or Sabbath, and why God "blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it'—because in six days he created all things and rested on the seventh day. From this fact, it seems, the period of the seven-day week has been observed from Adam unto the present time. Mention is made of "the week" in Gen. 29:27, 28. Historians tell us that the observance of this period was common among all the ancient nations of the East.

II. The First Observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites

While God blessed and hallowed the seventh day, there is no evidence in the Bible that the Sabbath was in any way observed until after the children of Israel were freed from Egyptian bondage. There is no reference made to the Sabbath from Gen. 2:3 until it is mentioned in Ex. 16:22-30, where the Israelites were forbidden to go out of their places on that day or to prepare the manna for eating, because it was "a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath." On the sixth day they were to gather twice as much manna as on one of the previous days. This was done that they might have enough to last them on the seventh day, as no manna fell on the seventh day. The Bible makes no mention before this of any command of God to man to keep the Sabbath; neither is there any reference to its observance by any of the patriarchs. When they came out of Egypt, the children of Israel knew nothing

of the Sabbath. God made it known unto them and commanded them to observe it. “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and madest known* unto them thy holy Sabbath.” (Neh. 9:13, 14.) This was done through Moses.

III. The Sabbath a Sign Between God and the Israelites

The Sabbath was a sign and a covenant between God and the Israelites. “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” (Ex. 31:16, 17.) “Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth them.. . . I am Jehovah your God: walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God.” (Ezek. 20:12-20.) So the Sabbath was the covenant and the sign that they were a people for God's own possession and that he was their God. -The Sabbath was not given to any other nation; no other nation was ever commanded to keep the Sabbath; neither was any other nation blessed in keeping it. The Sabbath has served its purpose with Jehovah's people and he has removed it. At first the Sabbath was only a day of rest. God gave no orders of worship to be observed on that day. Later, under the guidance of the prophets, and especially after the captivity from Babylon, it became a day of worship, and synagogues were built for this purpose. “For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.” (Acts 15:21; see also Luke 4:16-21; Acts 13:15.)

IV. Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

When the Pharisees saw that the disciples of Jesus “went on the Sabbath day through the grain fields; and began to pluck ears and to eat” (Matt. 12:1), they complained and said to him: “Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath.” (Matt. 12:2.) The Jews went to extremes in theist traditions about keeping the Sabbath, and were quite inconsistent in their practice, as Jesus shows; but he sought not simply to correct these extremes, but to demonstrate that he “is lord of the Sabbath” and to show his authority over it.

Jesus refers the Pharisees to the case of David, who, “when he was hungry, and they that were with him,” went “into the house of God, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat.” It was lawful for the priests only to eat the showbread; but upon this occasion, when David was fleeing from Saul, he ate the showbread. The Pharisees did not condemn David for this act. Again, Jesus cites another case: “That on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless.” The priests prepared the show-

bread on the Sabbath. This, according to the traditions of the Pharisees, was lawful. Jesus shows their inconsistency in not condemning David and the priests when they condemn him and his apostles.

Jesus says: "The Son of man is lord of the Sabbath." And, again: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27, 28.) Since he was "lord of the Sabbath" and "the Sabbath was made for man," he could set it aside when the good of man demanded it or when he, as "lord of the Sabbath," wished to take it out of the way. Neither Moses nor any other mortal is called "lord of the. Sabbath;" hence, no one but Christ could remove it. If the priests, in the preparation of the showbread and the sacrifices, by divine authority could "profane the Sabbath" and be "guiltless," how much could Jesus, who is "greater than the temple" and "lord of the Sabbath," set it aside! In this way Jesus showed his authority over the Sabbath.

The Sabbath, as a sign and a covenant between God and the children of Israel, belonged to the first covenant, or the old covenant. It was one of the commandments or ordinances of the first covenant, one of the Ten Commandments, "written, and engraven on, stones," which "came with glory," but "which glory was passing away" in Christ. "For if that which passeth away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory." (2 Cor. 3:11.) Jesus fulfilled the law of Moses and took it out of the way when he died. (Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 2:14, 15; Heb. 10:8-10.) So, as the Sabbath was a part of the law, it was taken out of the way.

Through Christ, God made "a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." This was not according to "the covenant" which he made when he led "them forth out of the land of Egypt" or gave them the Ten Commandments. "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away." (Heb. 8:8-13.) In this "new covenant" God gave the world a new day with new purposes. Nine of the Ten Commandments, in substance or principle, are incorporated into this "new covenant." Only the one to observe the Sabbath is left out. Its observance depended wholly upon the authority of God; and when this authority was withdrawn, there was no authority for man to keep the Sabbath. God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ordained the first day of the week as the day of worship for all his children. The Sabbath was never changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week; the Sabbath was taken away with the law and a new day was given for worship.

V. The First Day of the Week

The first day of the week is not the Jewish Sabbath; it is another day with a very different purpose. In the New Testament the first day of the week is never called "the Sabbath" or "the Christian Sabbath;" it is never observed as was the Sabbath. Jesus was raised from the dead on "the first day of the week." (Matt. 28:1.) "Now when he was risen Early on the first day of the week." (Mark 16:9.) "On the first day of the week, at Early dawn" (Luke 24:1), "they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." (Verse 3.) "Now on the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early,

. . . and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb." (John 20:1.) Jesus also made appearances to his disciples after his resurrection on the first day of the week. "When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut, . . .Jesus came and stood in the midst." (Verse 19.)

By divine guidance the apostles taught the churches to meet "upon the first day of the week . . . to break bread" (Acts 20:7) and to otherwise worship God as he directs. (1 Cor. 11:17-34; 16:1, 2.) The apostles met with the Jews in their synagogues on the Sabbath as opportunities to teach the people, but the apostles and church of God observed no day of worship except the first day of the week. From the very first the church observed the first day of the week as a day of worship. This "first day of the week" is called "the Lord's day." John says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." (Rev. 1:10.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. No people except the nation of Israel was in Egyptian bondage; hence, no people could have the Sabbath day as a sign or covenant of deliverance. The Sabbath day was a positive command—the first positive command of the Decalogue.

2. God incorporated the seventh day, or Sabbath, in the law of Moses. This law continued in force for about fifteen hundred years. When Christ took the law out of the way, "nailing it to the cross," he also took the Sabbath out of the way. The Pope of Rome did not change the Sabbath day from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week, as some claim.

3. "The first day of the week" is a new day with new purposes and a new law, the law of the Spirit of Christ, regulating it; it is a new day in a new covenant.

4. No blessing is promised in the New Testament to any one for keeping the Jewish Sabbath; no condemnation is pronounced upon any one for violating the Jewish Sabbath.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What does the New Testament teach about "the Christian Sabbath?"
The Sabbath belonged to what law?
All the regulations of the Sabbath belong to what law?
What "sabbath rest" is promised to God's people now?
Why did Jesus observe the Sabbath?

History of the Sabbath

Where is the Sabbath first mentioned?
Where is it next mentioned?
What did God do for the seventh day?
What do we learn from these facts?
The First Observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites
Is there evidence that man observed the Sabbath day before Israel came out of Egypt?
What is the first mention we have of the Sabbath in the law of Moses?
Why were the children of Israel to gather a double portion of manna on the sixth day?
Did Israel know anything about the Subbath before the law was given?

The Sabbath a Sign Between God and the Israelites

What did God do for Israel?
What did he give as a sign between him and the Israelites?

Was the Sabbath given to any other people?
Could any other people observe it as did Israel?

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

What did the Pharisees observe?
What did they say to Jesus?
How did Jesus answer them?
How were they inconsistent?
How is Jesus Lord of the Sabbath?
For whom was the Sabbath made?
The Sabbath belonged to what covenant?
What has become of that old covenant?
Through whom did God make a new covenant?
Was the Sabbath included in the new covenant?
Upon what did the observance of the Sabbath depend?
Was the Sabbath changed from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week?

The First Day of the Week

Is the first day of the week a Jewish Sabbath?
What new purpose has the first day of the week?
Is it ever called "the Christian Sabbath?"
Upon what day was Jesus raised from the dead?
Upon what day did the Early Christians meet to worship?
What other name has the first day of the week?

Practical Suggestions

Could any other nation have the Sabbath day as a sign?
What is a positive command?
The Sabbath day was a part of what law?
Could the Sabbath day continue longer than the law of which it was a part?
Did the Pope of Rome change the Sabbath day from the seventh to the first day of the week?
What is there new about the first day of the week?
Has God ever promised to bless any one under the Christian dispensation for keeping the Sabbath day?
Has he ever pronounced condemnation under the Christian dispensation upon any one for violating the Sabbath day?

Safely through another week
God has brought us on our way;
Let us now a blessing seek,
Waiting in his courts to-day.
Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.

May the gospel's joyful sound
Conquer sinners, comfort saints;
Make the fruit of grace abound,
Bring relief for all complaints.
Thus may all our worship prove,
Till we join the church above.

—*John Newton*

Lesson XII—March 24, 1929

STEWARDSHIP AND MISSIONS

Acts 1:6-8; 2 Cor. 8:1-9.

6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?
7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.
8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of 'God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia;
2 How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
3 For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord,
4 Beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints:
5 And this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.
6 Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.
7 But as ye abound in everything, is faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.
8 I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love.
9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that yo through his poverty might become rich.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2.)
TIME.—A.D. 30 and probably A.D. 53.
PLACES.—Jerusalem and Corinth.
PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, Paul, and the church at Corinth.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 96:1-8.
DAILY HOME READING.—

March	18.	M.	Stewardship of Self. (1 Cor. 9:16-26.)
March	19.	T.	Stewardship of Substance. (2 Cor. 9:6-15.)
March	20.	W.	Stewardship of Service. (Luke 10:25-37.)
March	21.	T.	The Right Use of Wealth. (1 Tim. 6:11-19.)
March	22.	F.	The Great Commission. (Matt. 28:16-20.)
March	23.	S.	Christian Missions in Action. (Acts 14:3-18.)
March	24.	S.	A Universal Call to Worship. (Ps. 96:1-7.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This is another twofold lesson, yet both parts are very closely connected. No one can be a steward in the service of God without at the same time being a missionary—that is, filling a mission. No one can fill a mission, or be a missionary, without having the responsibilities of stewardship.
A steward is one who has charge of another's affairs, one who looks

after the property of another, who has had certain responsibilities intrusted to him. The steward must be faithful. If he was unfaithful, he was usually discharged at once. (Luke 16:1-13.) The parable of the pounds (Luke 19:12-27), the talents (Matt. 25:14-30), and the wicked husbandmen (Matt. 21:33-46) teach similar truths. Jesus, in teaching his disciples, implied that they were to act as stewards in his absence. (Luke 12:42.) According to this Scripture, a steward's task was to manage all the affairs of his master, attend to receipts and expenditures, and to apportion out to each one of the household what should come to him. The disciples were left thus in charge of his gospel, and were to use this gift to the best advantage in behalf of others until Christ should return.

Stewardship in the New Testament is largely confined to the ministry of the gospel. Paul and his fellow laborers regarded themselves as stewards of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. 4:1, 2.) The steward was to take good care of that which was intrusted to him and give it out to others faithfully, as directed by Christ. An elder, or bishop, is to be as God's steward. (Tit. 1:7,) Peter considered himself and all other Christians as “stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Pet. 4:10.) So all of God's children are stewards and have a mission to fill; they have a stewardship and a mission.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Restoration of the Kingdom to Israel

“When they were come together”—that is, Jesus and the apostles—at this time for the last interview which took place between them. Jesus had appeared to them a number of times since his resurrection, but this is the last time before his ascension. He spoke to them “the things concerning the kingdom of God” on “the day in which he was received up,” which was the day of the meeting at this time; he gave “commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen.” (Acts 1:2.) This embraced the commission, which had been given before, but which was repeated on this important and memorable occasion. (Luke 24:44-53.) Jesus met with the apostles in Jerusalem (Luke 24:45) and led them out as far as Bethany. Some of these things were doubtless said in Jerusalem and others possibly on the Mount of Olives.

At this meeting the apostles asked: “Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” The apostles still later were under the delusion that Jesus would deliver the Jews from Roman bondage and establish again the temporal, earthly kingdom of David. This question shows that Christ's kingdom had not yet been inaugurated, for surely the apostles would certainly have known it if it had been set up. If it hid been inaugurated and the apostles did not know it, Jesus certainly would have informed them of the fact instead of pointing them to the future. Christ, the King, had not been crowned in heaven at that time; hence, his kingdom was not fully in operation.

The kingdom has been restored to Israel, and Jesus is the King. Christians are “the Israel of God.” (Gal. 6:16.) Fleshly Israel is not to-day true Israel. “The Israel of God” embraces all Gentiles as well as all Jews who are Christians. (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 3:7, 28, 29;85

Phil. 3:3.) Christians to-day have their “citizenship” in heaven and constitute the kingdom of Israel. (Phil.. 3:20.) So Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, are now “the Israel of God,” and the kingdom has been restored to the Israel of God.

II. The Father's Time and Authority

Jesus told them that “it is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.” (Acts 1:7.) This means that God would bring in the reign of Jesus when it pleased him and when men were ready for it. It was not necessary for the apostles to know “times” and “seasons;” it was necessary for them to “receive power” to perform the works committed to them in the beginning and progress of this kingdom. They would receive this power when the Holy Spirit should come upon them and should clothe them “with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49.) Their present duty was to obey him and tarry in Jerusalem. It was as necessary to “wait” in obedience to God then as it was to “go” later. When the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, they knew the kingdom had been “restored,” and ever afterwards they understood its nature and power. The Holy Spirit brought to their remembrance and guided them “into all the truth,” taught them, revealed the things of God to them, and enabled them to speak with tongues the wonderful works of God. It qualified them as witnesses of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; it fully equipped them as stewards and directed them in their mission.

III. The Lord's Program for Missionary Work

When the Holy Spirit came upon them, they were to be witnesses for Christ. As stewards, they were intrusted with the truths of the gospel and were to enter at once upon their mission. Jesus had said: “Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8.) Jerusalem was the place to begin this work, and the time for them to begin was when the Holy Spirit came. They were in Jerusalem and received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Observe the order of the worship as outlined by Christ. They are to be his witnesses “both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” This order was significant. Jerusalem was the capital and center of the Jewish nation; also Jesus was crucified there. Jerusalem was the place foretold by the prophets. “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.” (See Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1, 2.) They were not to remain always at Jerusalem, but they were to begin there; they were then to advance into Judea, which was the surrounding country; next they were to go into Samaria, which was an adjoining country to Judea; and last they were to go “unto the uttermost part of the earth,” “into all the world,” and preach the gospel. Every church should work out from itself as did the church at Jerusalem. If each church would do this, the world would soon be evangelized in an ever-widening circle from each church as a center.

IV. Liberality in Giving

Paul had gloried on behalf of the Corinthians to the Macedonians. He wanted their contributions ready when the brethren from Macedonia should reach Corinth, lest what he said should seem false. The following facts are noted concerning the liberality of the Macedonians: (1 They rejoiced in an opportunity to help those in distress; (2) they wore afflicted and in "deep poverty;" (3) yet the riches of their liberality abounded; (4) they gave according "to their power," or ability; (5) they went even beyond the rule of giving according to their ability and denied themselves for the time of comforts of life in order to give more "beyond their power" they gave; (6) "they gave of their own accord;" (7) they did not have to be entreated by Paul to give, but they besought him "with much entreaty" to allow them to participate in "the fellowship in the ministering to the saints;" (8) they went beyond Paul's desire and expectation in this matter—not as he "had hoped;" (9) and the reason of all this is that "first they gave their own selves to the Lord" and to Paul to assist him in relieving the poor "through the will of God." The Macedonians had given out of their deep poverty so cheerfully and freely as to be "rich" in liberality. We are commanded to "be rich in good works" (1 Tim. 6:17-19), to lay up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20), and to be "rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). The secret of abundant and cheerful liberality is in first giving oneself to God—body and mind and soul.

Paul points to the example of Christ as an encouragement to liberality. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) God did not spare anything that was needed for the redemption of man, and Christ became a willing sacrifice for others. He died that we might live; he served that we might be blessed.

V. The Bible Way of Contributing

Paul directed the churches in Galatia, and also the church at Corinth, as follows: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." (1 Cor. 16:1, 2.) This manifests the wisdom of God, as God is the author of this system. Notice the following: (1) It places before all a proper purpose for giving—the necessity of "the saints;" (2) regularly and when—"upon the first day of the week;" (3) who "each one;" (4) how much—"as he may prosper." No human wisdom and no man-made scheme to raise money can equal this. God, who directs the universe, can direct the finances of a congregation. It is not the money, as such, that God wants; he seeks to lead his people through their own liberality to richer spiritual blessings and to salvation. God wants a congregation to use only the money it has; he does not require more of a congregation than it can do. God's way of making money "for the church" is stated as follows: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good [at some honest occupation], that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Eph. 4:28.) This is the right and successful way to "raise money for the church," to use a

modern expression. Those who resort to other ways are either unwilling to work or to give of what they have made. If all church members would do this, they would have all the money that God wants them to give, for he does not want one to give more than he can make honestly. Many work to make money to spend upon their own lusts or to hoard up, but few work to give it away.

All contributions to the poor, to the spread of the gospel, and to the general good of men cannot go through the contribution made by the church on the first day of the week. Christians are to do good unto all men as they have opportunity. (Gal. 6:10.) There are two ways of giving to the Lord—namely, through the church and direct to the individuals who are in present need. All giving should be done in the name of the Lord.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The earth and the fullness thereof belong to God. All that we have we hold from God in trust. We are his stewards, and should not use what he has given into our hands for any selfish end.

2. We are intrusted with influence, intellectual power, and ability, and should use these to the glory of God. We are not our own; we belong to him, and we should let him direct us in the use of all things.

3. Every child of God has a mission; hence, all are missionaries. One does not have to go to a foreign country in order to be a missionary. Wherever duty calls and we respond, we are filling our mission and are missionaries.

4. A Christian's liberality should be measured, not by the amount given, but by the amount left after giving. Where we compare what we have given with what we have left, we can then determine whether we have given liberally.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

How are the two themes in the title of this lesson related?
What is a steward?
What are some of the qualifications of a steward?
How are all Christians judged?
With what have we been intrusted?
How do all stewards have missions?

Restoration of the Kingdom to Israel

How long did Jesus remain on earth after his resurrection?
Where did he last meet with his disciples?
What question did they ask him?
What kind of a kingdom did they understand Christ to restore?
Had Christ's kingdom been established at this time?
How do you know it had not?
Who constitutes “the Israel of God” today?
Has the kingdom been restored or given to “the Israel of God?”

The Father's Time and Authority

What did Jesus answer his disciples?
What did this mean?
What must they first receive?
What was their present duty?
What did they learn from the Holy Spirit?
How did the Holy Spirit qualify them to be witnesses?

The Lord's Program for Missionary Work

With what were they intrusted as witnesses?
Where were they to begin preaching?

When did they begin?
Where were they next to labor?
And then where next?
And finally where next?
Where should churches begin to-day?
Should a failure to do anything at home be an excuse for not doing something abroad?
Which is worse, to help abroad and not at home, or to help at home and not help abroad?

Liberality in Giving

How had Paul gloried to the Corinthians?
Mention the nine points of the liberality of the Macedonians.
What was the secret of their liberality?
To whom does Paul point as an example in liberality?

The Bible Way of Contributing

What instruction did Paul give to the churches in Galatia and Corinth concerning giving?
When was this giving to be done?
Mention the four points, involved in the Bible way of contributing.
Does man have any better way?
What does God require of every congregation?
What does he not require of a congregation?
Should any congregation plan a work that it cannot take care of itself?
What are the two ways that a Christian may give?

Practical Suggestions

To whom do all things belong?
How are Christians related to these things?
When we give to God, whose things are we giving?
What else may we give besides money?
Who is a missionary?
Where do we have to go to become a missionary?
How may a Christian's liberality be determined?

Go, labor on; spend and be spent;
Thy joy to do the Father's will.
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labor on; 'tis not for naught;
Thine earthly loss is heavenly gain.
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises—what are men?

Go, labor on; your hands are weak;
Your knees are faint, your soul cast down.
Yet falter not; the prize you seek
Is near—a kingdom and a crown!

—*H. Bonar*.

Lesson XIII—March 31, 1929

THE FUTURE LIFE
(EASTER LESSON)

Luke 24:1-12; John 14:1-6.

1 But on the first day of the week, at Early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel:

5 And as they were affrighted and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men.
and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the tomb, and told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: and the other women with them told these things unto the apostles.

11 And these words appeared in their sight as idle talk; and they disbelieved them. 12 But Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by themselves; and he departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass.

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.

4 And whither I go, ye know the way.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACE. Jerusalem.

PERSONS. Jesus and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 23:1-6.

DAILY HOME READING.

March	25. M.	The Empty Tomb. (Matt. 28:1-10.)
March	26. T.	Victory Over the Grave. (1 Cor. 15:50-58.)
March	27. W	.Faith Removing Doubt. (John 20:11-18.)
March	28. T.	Our Resurrection Assured. (1 Thess. 4:13-18.)
March	29. F.	The Father's House. (John 14:1-10,)
March	30. S.	At Home With the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:1-10.)
March	31. S.	The Christian's Inheritance. (Ps. 23:1-6.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This is an appropriate close for this quarter. We have studied God as our Father; Christ, our Savior; the Holy Spirit, our helper; the

Holy Scriptures, God's revelation to us; sin; faith and repentance; prayer; Christian growth; the church of God; baptism and the Lord's Supper; the Jewish Sabbath and the first day of the week; and stewardship and missions. It is very appropriate to give attention to "The Future Life." All these other lessons very helpfully instruct us and encourage us in preparing for life beyond the grave. Jesus, our Savior, came to earth; lived in the flesh; was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; suffered death on the cross; was buried; was raised from the dead; and made his ascension back to the Father. He completed the circuit from heaven to earth, from earth back. to heaven. Our souls, or spirits, came from God, dwell in a body of flesh, and pass through the portals of death back to God, from whence they came, where the "many mansions" are. There is a life for us beyond the grave. As sure as Christ was raised from the dead, so surely will there be a resurrection for us; and as there was a life for Christ beyond the grave with God, so there is a future life for the faithful in Christ Jesus. Jesus has gone "to prepare a place" for us; and if he has gone "to prepare a place" for us, he will "come again, and will receive" us "unto" himself, "that where" he is, there we "may be also." As sure as there is a death, so surely will there be a resurrection; and as sure as there will be a resurrection, so surely will there be a judgment and a future life. "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." (Heb. 9:27.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Christ Is Risen

At the moment when Christ died, nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak, more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn and extinction and despair, than the church which Jesus had come to establish. Jesus had but a handful of weak followers. They were poor, ignorant, and hopeless; they could not claim a single synagogue; they were insignificant and had the bitter opposition of their own race; furthermore, the Roman authorities were opposed to them. What has enabled them and their teaching to overcome the world? There is one, and only one, possible answer: the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

The order of events was as follows: (1) The burial of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph (Matt. 27:57-60); (2) the guard placed over the tomb (verses 63-66); (3) at dawn there is an earthquake, and an angel rolls the stone from the door of the sepulcher (Matt. 28:2-4); .(4) the soldiers on guard are affrighted and become as dead men; (5) the women approach the sepulcher from the city, Mary Magdalene alone or with the other Mary and Salome, arrive in advance of the others, starting at dawn and arriving at sunrise (Matt. 27:1; Mark 16:1); (6) Mary, seeing the sepulcher empty, hastens away to tell Peter and John (John 20:1, 2); (7) the other women continue to approach, and, entering the tomb, see the angel within, who tells them that Jesus has risen (Mark 16:2, 7); (8) they leave the sepulcher to inform the apostles (verse 8; Luke 24:10).

Our future life and bliss and the hope of immortal glory are all based upon the resurrection of Jesus. If he were raised from the

dead, we may entertain the happy hope of a home in heaven; if he were raised from the dead, we may hold firmly to the faith of the gospel; but if he did not rise from the dead, "if we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable" (1 Cor. 15:19). But "now hath Christ been raised from the dead," and we hold tenaciously to the faith, and our hope grows brighter as the years come and go.

II. The Story of Easter

John 14:1-24, with the rest of that chapter, is a part of the most interesting and profoundly important conversation Jesus had with his apostles on the night of his betrayal after he instituted the Lord's Supper and before he went into the garden of Gethsemane. In the verses selected for this lesson 'Jesus very tenderly tells his apostles of the many mansions in his Father's house, encourages them to still believe in him, although he should be taken from them, and shows them what it is to love him and to love one another. But these verses are not "the story of the first Easter," as some say it is. There is no story of Easter in the Bible. Easter and Easter services do not come from the Bible. The word "Easter" is found in the King James Version of the New Testament in Acts 12:4. This is the only place where it appears in the Bible. Verse 3 of the same chapter speaks of "the days of unleavened bread," which is the Jewish Passover, and which shows that "Easter" of verse 4 is the same as the Jewish Passover. All the use made of it here is to show when Peter was in prison and when Herod intended to behead him. How did the word "Easter" get into the King James Version at this place? When this version was made (1611), the Church of England was observing Easter as a religious ordinance, and at the time the Jews kept their Passover, because Jesus arose from the dead then, and the men who made this version put "Easter" instead of "Passover." The word in the original is the one for "Passover," and the American Revised Version properly puts it "Passover." There were no Easter services and no Easter in the days of Peter, or when the New Testament was written. Neither is there any connection between the Jewish Passover and the day called "Easter" or "Easter services." And if there were, Christians are not commanded to keep the Passover. . . The Passover has been fulfilled in Christ, who has been sacrificed as the Christian's Passover. (See 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.)

Then the .story of Easter is of human origin, not of Bible origin; man, and not God, ordained this service. After Christ had built his church and had given the New Testament, sealed by his blood, and had given, therefore, all that people can do and be in obedience to God, men, in their wisdom and in addition to the word of God, began to ordain fasts and feasts to commemorate principal events in the life of Christ—namely, his birth and circumcision; the coming of the wise men; his baptism; the first miracle; his death, called his "passion;" his resurrection; and his ascension and glorification. Humanity seems prone to celebrate noted events and marked epochs. It seems just as prone also to neglect and to even reject God's requirements and to institute ways and laws of its own.
To honor God and Christ is to obey them and to trustfully follow

their wisdom. It is self-glorification to follow human ways and human wisdom.

It is astonishing to learn the heathen origin of some of these celebrations. “The name 'Easter' also comes from Ostara, goddess of the morning light, or return of the sun in spring.” (See Fisher's “Church History,” page 145.) On fasts and feasts, Fisher, in his “Church History,” says: “Fasts, at first voluntary, came to be ordained by church law. The Christian festivals related to Christ and commemorated the principal events of his life, with his death, resurrection, and ascension to glory .... The first yearly festival generally observed was Easter, standing in the room of the ancient Passover .... After Easter followed Pentecost, lasting for fifty days, and commemorating the glorification of Jesus. Later the fortieth day was kept as a memorial of his ascension. About the end of this period [the beginning of the fourth century.—Editor] two new festivals came in. One was Epiphany, originating in the East, not improbably with Jewish Christians, and commemorating the baptism of Christ; the other was Christmas, a festival of Roman origin, taking the place of the heathen festival in honor of the sun, or of the deity bearing that name, which was celebrated at the winter solstice, or on December 25, the time erroneously assigned for the solstice in the Julian calendar.” (Pages 64, 65.) This was during the period 100-313. During the next period—313-590—Fisher says: “Friday continued to be kept in memory of Christ's passion .... The first feast of the year was Epiphany, the manifestation, which in the East connected itself with Christ's baptism; while in the West, where it appeared later, it commemorated the coming of the wise men and the first exhibition of miraculous power in Cane. Christmas originated in the West, and from there passed over into the Eastern churches. Many Christians still took part in the heathen festival of New Year's. To put an end to this practice, a fast was proclaimed at this time, and was gradually developed into the festival of Christ's circumcision,” (Pages 118, 119.) Easter by this time had grown into “the great religious anniversary of the year,” “with its associated feasts.” A period of-forty days' fasting preceded it. “The festival began with Palm Sunday. At that time, to increase the thanksgiving of the people, the emperor was accustomed to publish special decrees of mercy. On Thursday the Lord's Supper was joyously celebrated, without the usual fasting, in commemoration of its original institution. Good Friday was kept with great solemnity, not even the kiss of peace being allowed. Then came the Sabbath (Saturday) before Easter. On that day many were baptized and clothed in white robes. In the evening the people, with torches in their hands, filled the churches, where services were held until dawn. The Easter celebration was concluded, after the manner of the Jewish Passover, on the eighth day, 'White Sunday.' Then the baptized laid aside their white robes and appeared with the rest of the church. The festival season was prolonged from 'White Sunday' to the day of. Pentecost.” (Page 119.)

III. The Growth of Error

All this shows how error crept into the pure, simple worship required in the gospel, and was gradually fastened upon the church as

laws of God. The farther the church drifted from the Bible, the more it grew into imposing ceremonies, empty forms, and expensive displays. These historic references are given that all may know the origin of these fasts and feasts. Not one word is said in the Bible about Christmas, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, or Whitsunday, with their displays and celebrations; yet thousands are more disposed to observe these than they are to go along quietly and without ostentation in the humble and simple worship of God. These make a display of piety and righteousness. God does not require us to celebrate the birth of Christ, his circumcision, his baptism, his first miracle, and his ascension. When God tells men to observe a day, he also tells what to do in observing it and why to observe it. He says nothing about these things. It is strange that, after being led out of all these things, and much more, people manifest such a desire to return to them. Look at the Easter services of to-day! Christians should discourage everything that looks toward special services, preparations, and displays on this day. The surest and most effectual way to prevent any corruption of the worship of God or any departures from it is to oppose it in its incipiency.

IV. The Duty of Christians

We are to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in so far only as we meet upon the first day of the week to break bread, and that is done on one Sunday as much as on another, and on every Sunday alike. Celebrating it on Easter with special services and ceremonies is on a par with eating the Lord's Supper on Thursday before Easter. As Christians, we are taught to meet on the first day of the week to break bread to eat the Lord's Supper (Acts 7:20); to speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in the heart and making melody in the heart unto God (Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 3:16); to teach and admonish one another (1 Thess. 5:27; Col. 4: 16); to pray together (1 Cor. 14:14-17); and to contribute of our means as we may prosper (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). We may preach on the first day of the week, as did Paul, and should do so as the occasion demands. We should preach the gospel and teach the word of God, as Jesus and the apostles did, wherever and whenever we can reach the people one man or a multitude. It cannot be acceptable worship to God to leave undone that which he has commanded and do something which he has not commanded.'

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The “tree of life” was first placed in the garden of Eden. Man had access to it then. After man had sinned, God separated him from the garden and the “tree of life,” lest he should eat of it and live forever as a sinner.

2. The “tree of life” was transplanted in the paradise of God above. Man cannot now have access to it, except in a redeemed and glorified state. The plan of salvation, faithfully accepted by man and faithfully followed under the mercy of God, will prepare man for access to the “tree of life” again.

3. The sentence of death was passed upon all men. Man must pay

the penalty and go into the grave; but “as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” What we have lost in Adam through sin we gain in Christ through obedience.

4. We have the promise of eternal life through faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Eternal life, or a future life, is only a promise to the child of God here. We are to receive “the end of” our “faith, even the salvation of” our “souls.”

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

What is the subject?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Why is this an appropriate lesson at this time?
What lessons have we studied in this quarter?
Repeat the important events in the circuit of Jesus from heaven to earth and back to heaven.
Repeat the circuit for our spirits.
What assurance have we of life beyond the grave?

Christ Is Risen

Why did the hope of the apostles seem dark at the death of Christ?
What opposition did his apostles have?
What has finally enabled them to overcome?
Name the order of events concerning the resurrection of Christ..
Upon what is our resurrection based?

Story of Easter

What is there in the Bible about Easter?
Did God intend that we should observe Easter?
How do we know that he did not?
Where did Easter originate?
Who is the author of Easter celebrations?
Need we hope to be blessed in keeping them?

The Growth of Error

How does error grow?
How did the error of Easter grow?
What does man celebrate which God has not authorized?

The Duty of Christians

How are we to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus?
What are we to do on the first day of the week?
What are the simple items of worship?
Can we truly worship God and willfully neglect that which he commands to be done?

Practical Suggestions

What is the tree of life?
Where was it first placed?
Where is it now?
Was man's separation from it after he had sinned a blessing?
How may man have access to it now?
Upon whom has the sentence of death been passed?
What have we lost in Adam?
What may we gain through Christ?
Do we actually have eternal life now?
When are we to receive it?

SECOND QUARTER

PROPHETIC TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP OF JUDAH FROM ISAIAH TO THE EXILE

(FIRST HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS' COURSE)

AIM: To lead the pupils in discovering and appreciating how God, through prophets and other leaders, gave help and guidance to the people of Judah, in order that the pupils may come to see the hand of God in their own lives and in all human affairs.

Lesson 1—April 7, 1929

THE MINISTRY OF ISAIAH

Isa. 6:1-8; 20:1, 2; 38:1-5.

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 I 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.

I In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it;
2 At that time Jehovah spake by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go, and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put thy shoe from off thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.
2 Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto Jehovah,
3 And said, Remember now, O Jehovah, I beseech thee, how I have walked before

thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

4 Then came the word of Jehovah to Isaiah, saying,

5 Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Then I said, Here am I; send me." (Isa. 6:8.)
TIME.—The year King Uzziah died, B.C. 756.
PLACE.—Temple at Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Jehovah, the seraphim, and Isaiah.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—-PS. 116:12-19.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

April	1.	M.	The Call of Isaiah. (Isa. 6 1-8.)
April	2.	T.	Isaiah Encourages Ahaz. (Isa. 7:1-9.)
April	3.	W	.Immanuel. (Isa. 7:10-17.)
April	4.	T.	The Future Happiness of Zion. (Isa. 35:1-10.)
April	5.	F.	Isaiah Ministers to Hezekiah. (Isa. 38:1-8.)
April	6.	S.	Obeying the Heavenly Vision. (Acts 26:12-20.)
April	7.	S.	Faithfulness to Jehovah. (Ps. 116:12-19.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This lesson takes us back to the Old Testament. We ought to want to study all that God has revealed to us. We should not neglect the study of the Old Testament. Some one has said that

The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed,
And the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.

This expresses very beautifully the relation between the two Testaments. God, in his goodness and wisdom, has preserved the Old Testament for us, and we show the part of wisdom when we study it as opportunity is offered us.

The book of Isaiah takes us into the field of prophecy. A prophecy is the foretelling of future events. A prophet is said to be God's mouthpiece to the people—that is, God spoke through the prophets to the people. Much that is classed as prophecy in the Old Testament is now history. History is a record of past events; prophecy is a record of future events. When prophecy has been fulfilled, then it becomes history. Isaiah prophesied about B.C. 756. Much of his prophecy was fulfilled before Christ came; other portions of his prophecy were fulfilled in the coming of Christ, his personal ministry, his death, burial, resurrection, ascension, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the establishment of his church upon earth. So all of the prophecy of Isaiah which has been fulfilled is now to us history, but we still speak of it as prophecy.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Isaiah

Isaiah was the son of Amoz. "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." (Isa. 8:3.) 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 hasteneth.” Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of the kings of Judah—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. (Isa. 1:1.) He did not prophesy through the entire reigns of all these kings, but belonged to this period of the national history. Uzziah (called also “Azariah”) reigned fifty-two years (2 Kings 15:1, 2); Jotham, sixteen years (2 Kings 32:33); Ahaz, sixteen years (2 Kings 16:2); Hezekiah, twenty-nine years (2 Kings 18:1, 2). Supposing that Isaiah began to prophesy when a young man and before the close of Uzziah's reign, he was an old man at the .beginning of Manasseh's reign. He touches on the destiny of the kingdoms surrounding Judea and Israel, and he saw, beyond the revolutions of kingdoms and downfall of empires, the coming Savior, whose work and kingdom should surpass all others. Tradition says that Manasseh had Isaiah sawn asunder in the trunk of a tree. It is supposed that reference is made to this in Heb. 11:37.

II. The Condition of Judah at This Time

This was a critical period in the history of the kingdom of Judah. 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; 26:6-15.) The kingdom was prosperous up to the close of Uzziah's reign. Under Jeroboam II, contemporary with Uzziah, the kingdom of Israel flourished and was extended to “the entrance of Hamath,” on the north. (2 Kings 14:25.) So the two kingdoms together occupied almost as much territory as the united kingdom under Solomon. (1 Kings 8:65.) These kingdoms had never enjoyed so much wealth and worldly greatness since the time of Solomon. With this prosperity came luxury, ease, drunkenness, licentiousness, idolatry, oppression of the poor, and all kinds of immorality. Many social evils were rampant at this time, such as legal injustice in the courts, misuse of political authority, debauchery, and incompetency on the part of many of the official class. With all this came vain confidence in man, a corresponding lack of confidence in God, and a perfunctory performance of religious ceremonies—a form of godliness without the power. With all this sin came decay, and the two kingdoms began to decline. Their enemies began to overrun them.

III. Isaiah's Vision

“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 and for fidelity in that. God gave Isaiah a true insight into the condition of affairs, the cause and the remedy. The more righteous he became and the nearer to God he grew, 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 was not

revealed to him at the same time. If he prophesied at all during Uzziah's lifetime, this vision was not his call to become a prophet, for it came in the year that Uzziah died. This was a glorious vision—the Lord sitting upon his 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; I 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 commandment concerning the children of Israel. (Ex. 23:22.) The “four living creatures” in Ezekiel's vision had each “four wings” (Ezek. 1:5, 6), 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.” (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 no one knows, and no one need attempt to guess.

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. The “one cried unto another,” or spoke alternately, it seemed: “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.) “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 says that in this vision Isaiah spoke of Christ. “These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory; and he spake of him.” (John 12:41.)

IV. Isaiah's Humility

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 ease of Moses and the children of Israel (Heb. 12:18-21); Gideon (Judg. 6:22); Manoah (Judg. 13:21-23); Peter, James, and John (Matt. 17:6; Rev. 1:17, 18). 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.”

V. Isaiah's Willingness to Go

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 he should do in order to be saved from his past sins, but that he would do whatever God would have him 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 ready to work for the spread of the gospel and to do every other duty. The Lord is pleased with a life that is ready to respond: “Here am I; send me.”

Again, when Jehovah spoke to him, “In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it,” Jehovah gave another command unto Isaiah. Sargon reigned B.C. 722-715. Isaiah as promptly and willingly obeyed this command as he had done in the former case. Jehovah said to him: “Go, and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put thy shoe from off thy foot.” “Sackcloth” was a coarse cloth and often worn by mourners (2 Sam. 3:31) and by prophets. They wore it as an outer garment, fastened at the waist by a girdle. (Matt. 3: 4; 2 Kings 1:8; Zech. 13:4.) This was an emblem to show that Egypt should be stripped of its possessions. The dress of Isaiah and other faithful prophets was a silent exhortation to repentance. When Isaiah received this command, he obeyed promptly. “And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.” Nothing was too severe or difficult for Isaiah to do when Jehovah commanded him.

Again, when Isaiah was sent to Hezekiah, he went with promptness and delivered faithfully Jehovah's message to the king. King Hezekiah was sick, and Isaiah came to him and said: “Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.” (Isa. 38:1.) When Hezekiah heard this message, he “turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto Jehovah.” Hezekiah prayed earnestly and “wept sore.” Jehovah heard his prayer and answered it through Isaiah. Jehovah sent Isaiah back to Hezekiah and delivered to him another message, which was in answer to his prayer. Isaiah told him that Jehovah would “add unto thy days fifteen years.” Isaiah was a typical servant. He was ready to go at any time and faithfully perform whatever task Jehovah placed upon him. He is a fine example of Christian service to-day.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The study of prophecy is a fruitful field for speculation. It is difficult for students of prophecy to keep from trying to get out of prophecy what the Lord has not put in it. We should not attempt to explain that which inspiration has not interpreted.

2. The accumulation of wealth on the part of nations or individuals often brings pride and arrogance. The kingdom of Judah was prosperous just before and at the time that its leaders became so corrupt. Prosperity should furnish an occasion for gratitude and thanksgiving; it should be the occasion of more faithful service to Jehovah. The more one has, the greater the responsibility to God.

3. Isaiah became consecrated to Jehovah for his work. His life and lips were purified so that he might be a chosen vessel for Jehovah to use. Jehovah cannot use an unfaithful or an unconsecrated life to bless others. The mother of a family is often the greatest blessing to the family, since she is consecrated to Jehovah.

4. Jehovah uses people as they are prepared to be used. If they are pure in heart and whole in life, he will always make them a blessing to others.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Why should we study the Old Testament?
What is the relation between the Old Testament and the New Testament?
What is a prophet?
What is the difference between prophecy and history?
What does prophecy become when it is fulfilled?

Isaiah

Who was Isaiah?
What does the name “Isaiah” mean?
What was the name of Isaiah's wife?
What was the name of his first son—its meaning?
What was the name of his second son?
Its meaning?
When did Isaiah prophesy?
Of what does he prophesy?
How did he probably die?

The Condition of Judah at This Time

Who was the king of Judah at the time Isaiah began prophesying?
Who was the king of Israel at this time?
What was the condition of Judah?
What about the sins of Judah?
Name three common sins.
What dangers accompany prosperity?
What was the cause of the decline of the kingdom?

Isaiah's Vision

When did Isaiah see this vision?
Repeat the points of the vision.
Was this the beginning of Isaiah's ministry?
Why did the sins of Judah appear so heinous to Isaiah?
Who had similar visions?
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?

Isaiah's Humility

How did the voice affect the foundation of the temple?
How do we know that this vision embraced Christ?
What effect did the appearance of an angel in the presence of God have upon Isaiah and others?

Isaiah's Willingness to Go

What did Isaiah say?
What inquiry did the Lord make?
What reply did Isaiah make?
Who else made similar replies?
What Spirit should all manifest?
Name two other missions which Isaiah filled.
What message did Isaiah first take to Hezekiah?
What was his second message?

Practical Suggestions

What is the danger in studying prophecy?
What should prosperity furnish us?
Why cannot Jehovah use an unfaithful servant?
How does Jehovah use people?

Lesson II—April 14, 1929

HEZEKIAH LEADS HIS PEOPLE BACK TO GOD

2 Chron. 30:1-9, 25-27.

1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel.

2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the assembly in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing was right in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly.

5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem: for they had not kept it in great numbers in such sort as it is written.

6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may return to the remnant that are escaped of you out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, who trespassed against Jehovah, the God of their fathers, so that he gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

8 Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto Jehovah, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve Jehovah your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto Jehovah, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.

25 And all the assembly of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners that came out of the land of Israel, and that-dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.

27 Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy habitation, even unto heaven.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful." (2 Chron. 30:9.)

TIME.—About B.C. 726.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Hezekiah and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 145:8-17.

DAILY HOME READING.—

April 8. M. . . . . The People Summoned to Keep the Passover. (2 Chron. 30:1-9.)
April 9. T. . . . . The Passover Kept. (2 Chron. 30:13-22.)
April 10. W . . . . . .The Joyful Result. (2 Chron. 30:23-27.)
April 11. T. . . . . Jehovah Yearns for His People. (Hos. 11:1-11.)
April 12. F. . . . . The Loving-Kindness of Jehovah. (Mic. 7:14-20.)
April 13. S. . . . . God Is Love. (1 John 4:7-16.)
April 14. S. . . . . Jehovah Is Gracious and Merciful. (Ps. 145:8-17.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Hezekiah was the son of Ahaz—a godly son of a most ungodly father. Hezekiah 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." Hezekiah's mother may have been a good woman, from whom he received righteous impressions. He also gave heed to the instruction and warning 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). Hosea had been king over Israel three or four years when Hezekiah began to reign. (2 Kings 17:1; 18:1.) This reformation of Hezekiah was five or. six years before the downfall of the kingdom 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." (2 Kings 18:3-6.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Hezekiah Sent Out Missionaries

The Levites and priests having sanctified themselves, the temple having been cleansed, the altar and vessels having been replaced, the offerings named above having been made, "the service of the house of Jehovah" having been set in order, and everything having been made ready so that the people could worship God "as it is written," Hezekiah then sent messengers (missionaries) with letters of invitation throughout both his kingdom and the kingdom of Israel to come to Jerusalem "to keep the Passover unto Jehovah." The king and his princes had consulted, and had decided "to keep the Passover in the second month." God ordained the Passover, gave the reasons for observing it, and set the time for keeping it. This time was the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year. (Ex. 12:3-6, 14, 17; Lev. 23:5.) The week following this day was the Passover week. How, then, could Hezekiah and his princes set the second month for observing the Passover? God had made provisions that if any persons should be unavoidably unclean or be afar off at the appointed time for the Passover and could not observe it for such reasons, they could observe it on the fourteenth day of the second month. (Num. 9:1-14.)

Verse 3 gives two reasons why the Passover could not be observed the first month: (1) there were not enough priests prepared to make the offerings of the Passover and to serve the people; (2) the people could not reach Jerusalem in time. "The priests were too few." (2 Chron. 29:34.) The Levites had to help the priests, and "were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests." "Sanctify" means to set apart to the service of God exclusively—to hallow. The temple was God's sanctuary, or house, or house used only for his service. The priests and Levites sanctified it at this time by cleansing it of dirt, cleansing the altar and vessels, putting all in their places, and setting in order "the service of the house of Jehovah." (Verses 17, 19-35.) The priests and the Levites sanctified themselves when they turned from their sins and made the offerings required to purify

themselves of all ceremonial uncleanliness. (Lev. 7:19-20; 22:1-9; Num. 19:11-22.) The people could not reach Jerusalem by the fourteenth of the first month, because it required sixteen days to clean the dirt out of the temple and the porch (2 Chron. 29:! 17-19), some time afterwards to make the offerings named in verses 20-36 and to send out the missionaries urging all to come.

II. "As It Is Written"

It was the right thing to do, "in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly," to make the necessary preparation for the keeping of the Passover. "So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem." This was truly missionary. The salvation of Israel, as well as of Judah, was sought. Christians Likewise seek the salvation of all people. All this preparation had been according to the will of God, and the people from Dan to Beersheba had been urged to come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover unto Jehovah for the reason here given: "They had not kept it in great numbers in such sort as it is written." They had kept it, but not "as it is written." Not to do that which God commands, but to do something else instead, or to attempt to do that which God commands in some other way than that which he commands, is vain worship. (Mark 7:1-13.) To keep the Passover, but not "as it is written," was not acceptable to God. Hezekiah knew there was no way to reform and save the people, to lead them back to God, except to persuade them to worship God "as it is written" and to work according to his will. Josiah, great-grandson to Hezekiah, and another godly king, reformed the people by reading the word of God to them and urging them to worship "as it is written." (2 Kings 23.) Ezra and Nehemiah restored the worship of God after the captivity in the same way. They taught the law of God to the people, and whatever they found written therein they did. They said: "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done exactly for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" (Ez. 7:23; see also verse 10 and Neh. 8.) This was done at all costs and to the most serious extent of putting away the wives and the children born of them—"foreign Women" and "strange women." Some of the priests, some of the Levites, and some of the men of Israel had married wives of the wicked nations from which God had said they must not take wives. (Ez. 9, 10.) God must be obeyed. Jesus resisted the mighty temptation of Satan by saying, "It is written," and telling that which had been written. God must be worshiped now "as it is written" in the New Testament, in the "law of faith" (Rom. 3:27), "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2), the "law of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21), "the law of liberty" (James 1:25). As "it is written" that the Jews should worship "as it is written" in the law of Moses, so "it is written" that all now must worship God "as it is written" in the law of Christ.

Paul declares that now all should "learn not to go beyond the things which are written." (1 Cor. 4:6.) "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.) In all obedience to God we must do that which he has written; nothing else is obedience to him. When we come to worship God on the first day of the week, we must do the things that are written. What is written? It is written that as Christians we should meet together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 16:1, 2; I Cor. 11:17, 33); that we should meet then to eat the Lord's Supper, what the Lord's Supper is, and why we should observe it (1 Cor. 11:20-26; I Cor. 10:16); that we should sing together, what we should sing, and the purpose for which we should sing (Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 13:16; I Cor. 14:15); that we should pray together (1 Cor. 14:14-17); that we should study the word of God and edify one another (1 Cor. 1:14; I Cor. 14; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27); that we should contribute every one as he may prosper (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). Paul preached on the first day of the week, but the church did not meet on that day merely to hear preaching. So we must preach on that day. If we do all the things mentioned above on the first day of the week, then we will be doing "as it is written" for us to do. Enough has been written to keep us busy and to lead us to heaven.

III. Exhortation to Repentance

The king of Assyria had distressed Judah and had led many into captivity. "The posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may return to the remnant that are escaped of you out of the hand of the kings of Assyria." The exhortation went throughout Judah and Israel, calling upon all to repent and turn again to God and not be stiff-necked as were their fathers, whose sins had brought all this distress and humiliation upon them, and with the gracious promise that if they would yield themselves unto God and enter into his sanctuary and serve him truly, his fierce anger would turn away from them, and their brethren and children would find compassion before their enemies and be rescued from captivity.

IV. "Great Joy in Jerusalem"

Through the instruction and leadership of their good king, Hezekiah, the people returned to Jehovah and worshiped him in keeping the Passover "as it is written." The people of Judah "and all the assembly that came out of Israel" united in worshiping God "as it is written," and they"rejoiced" together. This was a joyful occasion. The people had turned from their sins and turned to God. "So there was great joy in Jerusalem," for there had not been such an occasion in Jerusalem "since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel." After the worship, "the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy habitation, even unto heaven." (2 Chron. 30:27.) There was occasion for rejoicing, since the people had done what God had commanded. The eunuch went on his way rejoicing after he had done what God had commanded. So with us; we have opportunity for rejoicing and a firm foundation for joy when we have done God's will "as it is written."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Many profitable lessons may be learned from Hezekiah's example. When true and faithful men to-day preach the gospel and urge people to worship God "as it is written," for he is not worshiped "in great numbers in such sort," they are mocked and laughed to scorn. They are called by ugly names and considered out of date.

2. The temple which Hezekiah repaired and cleansed was a type of the temple, or church, of God now. All should be interested in keeping the church "without spot or blemish" to-day. One should be as much interested as another in this good work.

3. The spiritual temple in many places needs repairing and cleansing of the trash and filth of worldliness and sin. God will bless all who set their hearts to this task. They should be encouraged by the example of Hezekiah and the blessings which he received.

4. Before Hezekiah sent out to ask the northern kingdom to come to Jerusalem to worship God "as it is written" he had the temple cleansed and the priests consecrated. The people could worship God "as it is written" when they came there. All Christians now are priests of God, and before they ask others to come and worship God "as it is written" in the New Testament they should "clean up" and get right with God themselves.

5. Hezekiah could not fully do his duty by serving God himself; he must seek the salvation of Israel as well as of Judah. So the church to-day must send out missionaries and seek the salvation of all. No one can go to heaven alone, it has been said; for the life that one lives to go to heaven will influence others to go. So the life that one lives to go to torment will lead others there.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who was Hezekiah?
What kind of a father did he have?
How long did he reign?
What kind of a king was he?
What does "Hezekiah" mean?
What was the condition when he began to reign?
How long was Hezekiah's reformation before the downfall of Israel?

Hezekiah Sent Out Missionaries

What did the Levites and priests do?
What did Hezekiah then do?
What feast did he purpose to keep?
When should the Passover be kept?
On what conditions could it be kept in the second month?
What two reasons are given here for keeping the Passover?
What must the priests and Levites do before they can keep it?
Why did they plan to keep it on the second month?

"As It Is Written"

How many of the people were invited to come to Jerusalem?
How did they purpose to keep the Passover?
What is it to do anything "as it is written?"
Will God bless people worshiping any other way?
What course did Josiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah pursue in restoring the true worship of God?
Give the names by which the law under which we live is called.
State what is written in this law for Christians to do as worship on the first day of the week.
State what is written to be done through the week.

Do people meet on the first day of the week to hear preaching?
Has God given enough in the New Testament to keep all busy?

Exhortation to Repentance

What had the king of Assyria done?
What exhortation was given to all the people?
How could they return to God?
What encouragement did they have to return to him?
Could they be blessed without returning?

"Great Joy in Jerusalem"

What was the occasion of the joy?
Who rejoiced?
What did the priests and the Levites do for the people?
What is said about their prayers?
When only do we have occasion to rejoice?

Practical Suggestions

What must one endure to-day when he worships God "as it is written?"
What are some of the names that are thrust upon him?
Of what was the temple a type?
What responsibility rests upon each member?
What is the need of the spiritual temple to-day?
What did Hezekiah do before inviting others to worship with him?
What should churches do to-day before inviting others to worship "as it is written?"
Could Hezekiah do his duty without encouraging others to worship God?
Why can we not go to heaven alone?

Come, let us join our friends above
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of love
To joys celestial rise;
Let all the saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone,
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in him,
One church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.
One army of the living God,
To his command we bow;
Part of his host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.
—*Charles Wesley.*

Lesson III—April 21, 1929

COMFORT FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Isa. 40:1-11.

1 Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins.
3 The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain:
5 And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shah see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.
6 The voice of one saying, Cry. And one said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field.
7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the breath of Jehovah bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass.
8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever.
9 O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God!
10 Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and parry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (*Isa. 66:13.)
TIME.—About B.C. 712.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Jehovah, Isaiah, and God's people.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 30:1-5.
DAILY HOME READING.—

April	15.	M.	Comfort for God's People. (Isa. 40:11)
April	16.	T.	God Comforts Elijah. (1 Kings 19:9-18.)
April	17.	W	God Comforts His People. (Amos 9:11-15.)
April	18.	T.	Jesus the Comforter. (Luke 4:14-19.)
April	19.	F.	Jesus Comforts Martha. (John 11:17-27.)
April	20.	S.	Another Comforter. (John 14:15-24.)
April	21.	S.	Comfort in Sorrow. (Ps. 30:1-5.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Isaiah had just delivered a declaration telling of the dissolution of the kingdom. He had prophesied of the captivity of the people and the royal house of David. He said: "The days are coming, when all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith Jehovah." (Isa. 39:6.) Not only would the property be destroyed and much of it be carried into Babylon, but he told Hezekiah that "of thy sons that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they

take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." (Verse 7.) Although they would be carried into Babylon, yet a promise of the restoration is made. The people should be brought from their captivity through the goodness and mercy of God and restored to their former home. Necessarily this would be a sad message to the Lord's people. It was sad for them to think that their kingdom should be dissolved, the royal house should be made slaves, and their cherished possessions should become the property of another or completely destroyed. Just at this time Isaiah brings a message of comfort to them, and not only to them, but to the Lord's people in every age. A message of redemption and consolation is given to them at the very time that they are so despondent and disappointed.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Suffering for Evil

Sin is the cause of all evil and suffering being in the world. With sin came suffering. There can be no sin without suffering; the suffering will be physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. There is no escaping the consequences of sin in this life. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were separated from the garden of Eden, and Jehovah placed a three-fold curse because of their sin—a curse upon the woman, a curse upon the man, and a curse upon the serpent. He said unto the woman: "I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children." (Gen. 3:16.) He said unto the man: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." (Verse 17.)

After Jehovah had placed the curse upon Cain for his sin, "Cain said unto Jehovah, My punishment is greater than I can bear." (Gen. 4:13.)

Wickedness multiplied Upon the earth for a few generations after Adam sinned, and Jehovah said: "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground." (Gen. 6:7.) Examples could be multiplied showing that pain, sickness, suffering, and death follow sin. It is an eternal law of God that those who sin must suffer, and often the innocent suffer because of sin. Peter said that the evil must suffer, and he warns Christians against having to suffer for wrongdoing. "For let none of you suffer as a murderer; or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler in other men's matters." (1 Pet. 4:15.) Paul said: "Rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." (Rom. 13:3, 4.)

II. Suffering as a Christian

There are two kinds of suffering. One is when the evil suffer for wickedness; the other is the suffering which the good have to endure because of the evildoer. Peter said: "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." (1

Pet. 4:16.) Again: “Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12.) Paul, in relating his experience, mentions more than a dozen different kinds of evil treatment which he endured. (See 2 Cor. 6:4-10.) Again he said: “For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed.” (2 Tim. 1:12.) Paul instructs the church at Thessalonica: “To the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.” (2 Thess: 1:5.) After Peter and John had been punished for preaching the gospel and severely threatened if they continued to preach, they “departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.” (Acts 5:41.) Later Peter wrote that “it is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for welldoing than for evildoing.” (1 Pet. 3:17.) He gives the suffering of Christ for our sins as an example of suffering “for welldoing.”

The kingdom of Judah had sinned, and it must suffer. Jerusalem is used to represent the kingdom, and the prophet says “that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins.” Indeed, it is far better to suffer for welldoing, or suffer for righteousness' sake, than to suffer for wrongdoing. There is a soul satisfaction in suffering as the people of God for righteousness' sake. When we look back to the earthly life of Christ and see those who suffered with Christ, we look with wistful eye upon those who rendered personal service to him during the day of his earthly life. We think of Joseph, who provided a home for Mary and the holy Child (Matt. 1:18-25); Mary and other devoted women, who ministered to him of their substance (Matt. 26: 7-13); the owner of Gethsemane, who reserved Jesus a quiet place where he might suffer and pray; the good man who lent “the upper room” for the great Passover (Luke 22:8-13); Joseph of Arimathea, who would not see Jesus laid in a malefactor's grave (Matt. 27:5760); the mourners who wrapped his body in spices and fair white linen (verse 61); finally, Simon, the Cyrenian, who carried the cross for Jesus (verse 32); and a long list of others who served and suffered with him. We almost envy them. It is a blessing to suffer for Christ. “Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” (Matt. 5:11.) Those who so suffer with him are taught to “rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.” (Verse 12.) Paul had imbibed the Spirit of Christ and had suffered persecution for his sake, and was able to say: “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24.) Truly, comfort is given to God's people who suffer for righteousness.

III. A Message of Comfort

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.” (Isa. 40:1, 2.) Many think that this prophecy belongs to the days of the Messiah. It has direct application to the Lord's people at that time. They needed comforting. Jehovah has ever sought to comfort his people. The Psalmist said: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bear-

ing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him." (Ps. 126:5, 6.) This message of comfort contains three items—namely: (1) the struggle in warfare is ended; (2) their iniquity was pardoned; (3) the punishment for sin had been fully rooted out"that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins." All of these items brought comfort to a war-disturbed people. She had "received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins"-that is, blessings double to the punishment. The ultimate end of these blessings was realized in Christ.

The prophet instructed the people to prepare "in the wilderness the way of Jehovah." The idea here seems to be that practice of Eastern monarchs who would send messengers before them to prepare the way. This way was prepared by making "level in the desert a highway for our God." The hills were to be brought low and the valleys were to be filled until a level highway was prepared. Hence, "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain." (Isa. 40:3, 4.) At this time "the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Verse 5.) This is similar to the message which John the Baptist preached and very similar to his work in preparing a people for the Lord. Certainly no greater message of comfort could come to a people than that which specifically told them of the coming Messiah. The valleys of depression are to be lifted up, or exalted, and the obstructing "mountain and hill shall be made low." The "highway" means Jehovah's way that is, the way that he would have his people live. This was the way of peace and happiness to the people and the way of salvation through Christ, where the greatest joy and comfort may be found.

IV. Jehovah as a Shepherd

In numerous Scriptures God has revealed himself to his people as a shepherd. This' brings comfort and a feeling of security to the Lord's people. All are familiar with the "Shepherd Psalm," wherein it is declared that "Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Ps. 23:1.) The entire psalm is a message of comfort to the Lord's people. Frequently God's servants have prayed: "Increase thou my greatness, and turn again and comfort me." (Ps. 71:21.)

Man is insignificant when compared to Jehovah. He needs the protection and guidance of Jehovah. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23.) Paul declares Jehovah to be to us the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort." (2 Cor. 1:3.) God is not only a shepherd to his people, but he is also a Father. He is the source of all comfort. He comforts his people through the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ is all "edification, and exhortation, and consolation." (1 Cor. 14:3.) It is a source of comfort to us when we know that "all flesh is grass.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God still stand forever."

V. Comfort in Sorrow

The time that we need comfort is when we are in trouble and bowed in sorrow. As truly as man is a sinful and suffering being, he is also

a sorrowful being. He must be comforted and encouraged in serving the Lord. Christ is the one "who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:4.) As we are comforted in Christ, so we are to comfort others. The blessings which we receive are to be passed on to others; so the comfort that we receive is to be passed on to others. David prayed: "Let, I pray thee, thy loving-kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant." (Ps. 119:76.) Again, he said: "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." (Verse 50.) Paul declared: "I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction." (2 Cor. 7:4.) Again, he said: "Therefore we have been comforted: and in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his Spirit hath been refreshed by you all." (Verse 13.) Titus brought a good report to Paul of the church at Corinth, and this good report filled his heart with comfort. Paul said of Tychicus that he had sent him to the church at Colosse "for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts." (Col. 4:8.)

In speaking of the bereaved of the Lord's people, Paul wrote: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18.) Again, he prayed that they be of "good hope through grace," and that the Lord Jesus Christ should "comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." (2 Thess. 2:16, 17.) There is not a sorrow- that God's people may experience but that comfort may be found in the hope, promises, and blessings which are in Christ Jesus.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Man by his own wisdom has never been able to solve the problem of evil and the suffering which attends wrongdoing. We may know that it is for man's good, for man's welfare. If we suffer for good or evil, it will all work out for our salvation.

2. In Christ Jesus there is balm for the aching heart, there is comfort for every sorrow. We should learn how to reach the comfort and consolation that are in Christ. Through prayer, as the people of God, we may touch the deep joys which are even in suffering.

3. God is good. Everything that comes from him is good. The sorrow and suffering will help purify and chasten our lives.

4. Some flowers must be crushed before they yield up their sweet fragrance; so some lives must be broken with sorrow and contrition before they can be made a blessing to others.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What message had Isaiah brought to the people?
What did he say would be done with their property?
What would be done with their sons?
Where would the people be taken?
How would this affect the people?
What did they need at this time?

Suffering for Evil

Why do people suffer?
What is the origin of suffering?

What curse was put upon man for sin?
What did Cain say of his curse?
What did God purpose to do for the wicked?
What good may come from suffering as evildoers?

Suffering as a Christian

There are how many kinds of suffering?
What is it to suffer as a Christian?
Mention some of Paul's sufferings.
What did Peter and John have to suffer?
Why is it better to suffer for well-doing than for evildoing?
What about the kingdom of Judah?
What can you say of the sufferings of Christ?
Name some who suffered with him while he was in the flesh.
What comfort did they receive?

A Message of Comfort

To whom does this prophecy refer?
Name the three items included in this message.
What is the way of Jehovah?
How is it to be prepared?
Where does the way of Jehovah lead?
Can there be true comfort out of Christ?

Jehovah as a Shepherd

How is Jehovah a shepherd to his people?
Can you repeat the twenty-third Psalm?
What is its message to us?
To what is man compared?
How is man dependent on God?
How is God a Father to his people?
How long will the word of God endure?

Comfort in Sorrow

When do we need comfort?
What may man be called?
Who is the source of all comfort?
How did Titus comfort Paul?
How was Tychicus to comfort the church at Colosse?
With what may we comfort the bereaved?

Practical Suggestions

Can man solve the problem of evil?
What will we find in Christ?
How may we reach the consolation that is in him?
What comes from God?
How may sorrow affect our lives?
Why must some hearts be broken?

Our highest joys succeed our griefs,
And peace is born of pain;
Smiles follow bitter, blinding tears,
As sunshine follows rain.

We gain our rest through weariness,
From bitter draw the sweet;
Strength comes from weakness, hope from fear,
And victory from defeat.

We reap where we have sown the seed;
Gain is the fruit of loss;
Life springs from death, and, at the end,
The crown succeeds the cross.
—*Author Unknown.*

Lesson IV—April 28, 1929

THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF JEHOVAH

Isa. 53:1-12.

1 Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed?

2 For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?

9 And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shah prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many,; and he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"With his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53:5.)

TIME.—B.C. 712.

PLACE.—Written in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, the coming Messiah, and Isaiah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Rev. 5:9-14.

DAILY HOME READING.—

April	22.	M.	The Suffering Servant of Jehovah. (Isa. 53:1-12.)
April	23.	T.	The Atonement Typified. (Ex. 12:1-11.)
April	24.	W	.The Atonement Accomplished. (John 19:28-37.)
April	25.	T.	The Meaning of Christ's Sufferings. (Rom. 5:6-11.)
April	26.	F.	Partakers of Christ's Sufferings.(1 Pet. 4:12-19.)
April	27.	S.	Christ Suffers With His Saints.(Acts 22:1-8.)
April	28.	S.	The Suffering Servant Honored.(Rev. 5:9-14.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The entire chapter considers the Messiah—treats of his person, character, mission, enemies, and death. It is devoted to "the great Deliverer," who is styled "the servant of Jehovah." It was univer-

sally admitted by all scholars among the Jews to be descriptive of the character and mission of the promised Messiah until about A.D. 1150. Its Messianic character was then abandoned by them only on account of its perfect application to Jesus Christ and the necessity of escaping from the force of such testimony of fulfilled prophecy. They, therefore, applied it some to Jeremiah, some to Josiah, some to the people of Israel; but for us the use that is made of it in the New Testament should be conclusive of its Messianic application.

Polycarp calls Isa. 53 "the golden passional of the Old Testament evangelists." Delitzch says of it: "It is the center of this wonderful book of consolation, and is the most central, the deepest, and the loftiest thing that the Old Testament prophecy has ever achieved." Mr. Urwick remarks on it: "Here we seem to enter the holy of holies of Old Testament prophecies—that sacred chamber wherein are pictured and foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow." It could hardly have applied more clearly and directly to Jesus Christ if it had been written after his history had transpired. It is now a very minute history in detail of Christ. While depicting the shame, sufferings, innocence, and death of the Messiah, it especially emphasizes the vicarious nature of all his sufferings; it combines the ideas of the sufferings of the triumphant Messiah, and represents him as at length reaping in glory the fruit of his sorrow and death.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Christ Despised

"Who hath believed our message?" This seems to be a question that the prophet puts into the mouth of believers. The past tense is used, but the prophet projects himself into the future. He sees the Messiah vividly standing before his prophetic eye in anticipated history. Another question is: "To whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed?" That is, who has seen the arm of the Lord in the workings of providence which have brought the Messiah to earth? Who realizes that this suffering Messiah is the true Messiah? The Jews stumbled at this very point. They could not understand why the Messiah should suffer and die.

He is described "as a tender plant" that is, a feeble plant—one with very little promise of vigorous growth. He is further described "as a root out of a dry ground." The idea is the same as that of the previous figure dry, unattractive, unpromising. "He hath no form nor comeliness." To the mind nurtured on false ideas of the Messiah there was nothing in his appearance that was attractive. "He had no splendid surroundings, no regal pomp or splendor nothing about him to attract men's eyes or make them think him extraordinary." (Rawlinson.)

"When we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." How true to the unbelieving Jews! They saw nothing in him. Many to-day do not appreciate the spiritual beauty that belongs with his life. "He was despised, and rejected of men." They contemptuously asked: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3.) The rabbis listened to his teaching only to deride and oppose it. Truly, he was rejected of men, and his life on earth among sinful men made him "a man of sorrows," and he was truly "acquainted with grief."

To the sensitive heart of Jesus, how constant must have been this sorrow and grief as he compared the world in its degenerate condition with his own high ideals! His heart was touched with a feeling of the infirmities of the flesh, and his sympathy went out to those who were suffering.

II. Christ's Suffering

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He suffered all of this on our behalf. He staggered along under the heavy burden which our sins had placed upon him. At the same time that he was carrying this heavy burden, base ingratitude kept the people from appreciating him. "Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Suffering to the Jews was a sign of judgment; and as Jesus suffered, he was worthy of and merited all the sufferings which were placed upon him. As he was "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," it was because, the Jews thought, he was an evildoer. He was reviled in the midst of his enemies. (Matt. 27:39-44.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." By thorns and nails and spear was Jesus pierced and wounded. He suffered all this for the transgression of even those who were heaping the cruelties upon him. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." The chastisement through which peace comes to us—peace with ourselves, peace with each other, and peace with God. (Eph. 2:15-17; Col. 1:20.) Besides the blows inflicted on him with the hand (Matt. 26:27) and with the reed (Matt. 27:30), our Lord was judicially scourged (verse 26). Such scourging would leave the stripe marks on his body as spoken of here. "We are healed" in a spiritual sense by his suffering. We have all gone astray like sheep without a shepherd. We have turned from Jehovah "every one to his own way." God "laid on him the iniquity of us all." Christ had power to lay down his life or to refuse to lay it down. (John 10.) But he voluntarily offered himself a sacrifice for all. He is a universal Savior and the only hope of salvation.

III. Christ's Death and Burial

"He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth." Herod and the high priest and others heaped upon him indignities, yet "he opened not his mouth"—he made no defense nor attempt to escape. He humbled himself and uncomplainingly endured the cruel treatment of man. "As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." The significant phrase, "he opened not his mouth," is repeated here for emphasis. It was literally fulfilled. (Matt. 27:12-14; Mark 15:3-5; John 19:9.)

"By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?" Nobody but Pilate eared to save him, and even he preferred his own personal interest to justice to Christ. He was "stricken" with death for our sins. (1 Cur. 15:3.) "And they made

his grave with the wicked." This seems to have direct reference to his crucifixion with the two thieves. In this way he was numbered with the wicked, and would, if the custom were followed, be buried with them; but it is added that he was "with a rich man in his death." This was literally fulfilled when Joseph asked Pilate for his body. "And when even was come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, . . . and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded it to be given up. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock." (Matt. 27:57-60.) His enemies were unable to bring the slightest testimony of wrong or immorality against him. (John 8:46; 1 Pet. 2:22;2 Cur. 5:21; 1 John 3:5.) He is the only sinless one. He is the spotless, sinless Son of God. "Neither was any deceit in his mouth." The simplest truth was the essential constituent of every utterance of Jesus.

IV. Christ's Triumph Through Suffering

"It pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief"—not that God took pleasure in causing his own Son to suffer, but it became the will of God to crush him because of the compact by which man was to be rescued through his suffering. While Jesus willingly suffered a vicarious death, there was to be compensated to him victory in the end. There is to be a triumphant conclusion to all the suffering of shame and pain. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand." Whatever Christ does, God may be said to do, because of the perfect understanding between them. "The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works." (John 14:10.) "He shall see his seed." A numerous posterity was considered a great blessing by the Jews, and especially when one lived a long time to enjoy their companionship. The spiritual children of God to-day and of all ages become the numerous posterity of God. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days." This seems to mean the resurrection of Christ. The once dead, hut now living, Messiah shall see his spiritual seed. Though "cut off out of the land of the living" and buried, yet he shall be raised from the dead and "prolong his days" and "see his seed."

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Such is the interest and joy in the great work of redemption. (Phil. 2:711; Heb. 12:2.) The sight of myriads of souls born into eternal life through "the travail of his soul" (painful labor) satisfies him for all his anguish. "By the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities"—that is, through the knowledge of him, through the knowledge of Jesus as Savior and Lord, "shall my righteous servant justify many." They will be reconciled to God in Christ and justified by faith in him. "He shall bear their iniquities"—that is, their sins, by faith and obedience to him, shall be forgiven.

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong." This is the repetition of thought of reward and triumph of the Messiah. Paul states it as follows: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which

is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11.) This is a part of his triumph, and he has received this exalted position. "Because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors." This very beautifully expresses the richness and fullness of his surrender to death on our behalf. He "was numbered with the transgressors." Christ was condemned as a blasphemer (Matt. 26: 65), crucified with malefactors (Luke 23:32), called "that deceiver" (Matt. 27:63), and regarded generally by the Jews as a curse, because he was hanged "on a tree" (Deut. 21:23). In contrast to what was done by man to him we have the statement that "he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Though he was numbered with the transgressors, he was not one of them. He was suffering for the sins of others, not for his own; therefore, he becomes an efficient advocate. He "made intercession for the transgressors." He is still interceding for them, and will intercede until the end of time. (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25.) "In this chapter the incarnation, teaching, humiliation, rejection, sufferings, death, atonement, resurrection, and mediation of Jesus Christ are all predicted, together with the prevalence of his gospel and the extension of his kingdom through all ages." (Clarke.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. If one does not see the beauty of holiness in the life of Christ, that one is spiritually blind. The more of moral excellence that one can see in Jesus, the more spiritual that one becomes. A failure to see in him what God has revealed leads to a rejection of him.

2. It was a high crime against heaven for the Jews to reject their own Messiah. Though this crime was committed in ignorance, it is a crime nevertheless. People reject him to-day when they reject his teaching, when they reject his church and commit a crime against God and Christ.

3. He is a "burden bearer" for the Lord's people to-day. Not only has he become a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, but he is still bearing burdens for God's people. We are taught to "take it to the Lord in prayer," to "cast our cares upon him." He cares for us as much now as he did while he was suffering on the cross.

4. The gentle, silent submission of Jesus to undeserved suffering is an example to us. It is difficult for us to follow this example, because we have not enough of his Spirit. There was no retaliation in him and should not be in us.

5. Since he has suffered so much for us, we ought to be willing to sacrifice, serve, suffer, and die for him.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Of what does the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah treat?
What was the Jews' first interpretation of this?

Why have they changed?
What does Polycarp call this chapter?
What has this chapter now become?
How does prophecy become history?

Christ Despised

With what question does the prophet begin?
What does it mean?
What is meant by “the arm of Jehovah?”
To what is Jesus compared?
What is said of those who see him?
Why could they see no beauty?
When was he despised and rejected?
As what kind of a man is he described?

Christ's Suffering

Whose griefs and sorrows was he bearing?
What is vicarious suffering?
Did the Jews understand his suffering?
What was suffering a sign of to them?
Tell when he was wounded.
How are we healed by his stripes?
How does he bear the iniquity of all?
This makes him what kind of a Savior?

Christ's Death and Burial

What is said of Christ's silence?
How is it illustrated in the New Testament?
What figures are used to illustrate it?
For what was Christ taken?
What two different things are said of his grave?

How did they meet in Jesus' history?
What is said of his life and character?
What fault could be found in it?

Christ's Triumph Through Suffering

What did it please Jehovah to do?
How do we understand this statement?
What victory did he achieve?
Does one always triumph in vicarious suf-
ferings?
How did he see “his seed?”
Who are “his seed?”
What is meant by the expression, “he shall
prolong his days?”
How was he “satisfied?”
What is the product of his travail?
What did he bear?
How did the Jews regard one ,who was hanged?
What is the contrast between Christ and
transgressors?

Practical Suggestions

Why can we not see beauty in him?
Why can we not see in him what God revealed?
How can people reject him to-day?
Is it as great a crime to-day to reject him as it
was then?
What is he to us?
How can we cast our cares on him?
How is his silent submission to evil treatment an
example to us?
What ought we to do for him?

Behold the Savior of mankind
Nailed to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that him inclined
To bleed and die for thee!

Hark, how he groaned! While nature shakes
And earth's strong pillows bend!
The temple's veil in sunder breaks,
The solid marbles rend.

'Tis done! The precious ransom's paid!
“Receive my soul!” he cries.
See where he bows his sacred head;
He bows his head and dies.

But soon he'll break death's envious chain,
And in full glory shine.
O, Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love, like thine?

—*Samuel Wesley, St.*

Lesson V—May 5, 1929

WHAT HILKIAH FOUND IN THE TEMPLE

2 Chron. 34:14-16, 29-33.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah giver by Moses.

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and moreover brought back word to the king, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they are doing.

29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

30 And the king went up to the house of Jehovah, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of Jehovah.

31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book.

32 And he caused all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were found in Israel to serve, even to serve Jehovah their God. All his days they departed not from following Jehovah, the God of their fathers.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." (Ps. 119:105.)
TIME.—B.C. 624.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Josiah, Shaphan, Hilkiah, Huldah, and others.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 19:7-14.
DAILY HOME READING.—

April	29.	M.	Josiah's Righteous Reign. (2 Chron. 34:1-7.)
April	30.	T.	The House of Jehovah Repaired. (2 Chron. 34:8-13.)
May	1.	W	What Hilkiah Found in the Temple. (2 Chron. 34:14-21.)
May	2.	T.	Ezra's Public Reading of the Law. (Neh. 8:1-8.)
May	3.	F.	The Scriptures Are Inspired. (2 Tim. 3:10-17.)
May	4.	S.	The Scriptures Are for Instruction. (Rom. 15:1-7.)
May	5.	S.	Praising God's Word. (Ps. 19:7-14.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Josiah was a good king. He had the temple set in order and repaired. He was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. (2 Chron. 34:1.) A full history of Josiah may be read in 2 Kings 22:1-24. The first twelve chapters of Jeremiah throw much light upon the general character of the Jews in his day. Hilkiah was high priest at this time, and taught

Josiah in his youth. One important work that he did was to destroy the high places, groves, images, and all outward signs and relics of idolatry. While the temple was being repaired, a book of the law was found, and this becomes the subject of our lesson to-day.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. How the Book Was Lost

Soon after Josiah began to reign, a collection of money for repairing the temple began and continued until the eighteenth year of his reign. When the persons Josiah had sent to attend to this matter "brought out the money" from where it had been stored, "Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses." The margin says, "by the hand of" Moses. Moses commanded the priests to place the copy he had prepared beside the ark of the covenant (Deut. 31:24-26), while the king was commanded to make a copy of it for his own use in order to "read therein all the days of his life," that he might fear and obey God and teach the people to do the same (Deut. 17:18-20). Printing was unknown at that time, and the law had to be transcribed. There were but few copies of it at any time, and less during the times of wicked kings, for they kept no copy for their own use. They despised God's law, desecrated his temple, destroyed the sacred vessels of his service, set his altar and the ark of the covenant aside (2 Chron. 35:3), and worshiped and served idols. In all this negligence and wickedness, the original copy of the law could have been easily lost, and this one found by Hilkiah may have been it. Besides, this verse in the margin says: "The book of the law of Jehovah given by the hand of Moses." How long it had been lost, we have no way of knowing, and it is useless to conjecture.

While there were but few copies of the law at any time, God made provision for it to be taught orally. The priests were commanded to read it at the end of every seven years—the year of release—during the Feast of Tabernacles, to men, women, children, and sojourners assembled for the purpose of hearing it, that all might understand it and fear God and that those who had not hitherto known the will of God might learn and obey it. (Deut. 31:9-13.) God strictly and solemnly commanded the parents to teach his word daily and diligently to their children, to retain it in memory, and to meditate upon it day and night. (Deut. 6:6'-9.) Jehoshaphat sent his princes and the priests throughout all the cities of Judah to teach the law to the people, but they carried "the book of the law of Jehovah with them" (2 Chron. 17:7-9), and taught it orally. Josiah taught the law (after it had been found) to the people by reading it to them. Ezra taught it in the same way. (Neh. 8.) There were not copies of the law in every man's home from which he and his family might read at will. Priests, parents, and others were required to remember it and to teach it to those who knew it not.

This is the law that was "written, and engraven on stones," but the New Testament is the law of the Spirit written on the tables of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:1-11.) If, then, God required his people to remember the one, how much the more does he require them to remember the other? In fact, the law of God cannot be written upon the heart un-

less it is studied and retained in the heart, directing the thoughts and actions. “Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” (Ps. 119:11.)

II. How the Bible Is Lost To-Day

There are Bibles now in every home in the land; yet, in a sense, the word of God is lost to many. Some never read and study it; some read it for its history and literature; some, to pick flaws in it; some, to prove some religious theory, but not to learn and obey the will of God. To all such it is lost. This is a most fearful thought. It is not stated just where Hilkiah found the book of the law, except that he found it in the temple. (Verse 15.) He alone, as high priest, had the right to enter the most holy place; and in removing the rubbish and preparing the temple for the service of God, he found the lost and forgotten law. Josiah had no copy of the law, and was not familiar with the curses which it pronounced upon the rebellious and idolatrous people. He knew the general law which had been handed down from father to son. People may find the word of God to-day by studying it, seeking God's will, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and obeying the truth as they learn it.

It seemed to be a strange thing that the bo)k of the law was lost in the place of worship—the very place where they were supposed to use it in directing the worship of the people. Strange as this may seem to us, we have a still stranger condition. The Bible is lost to the hearts and lives of many homes. A copy of the Bible may be found in the home, but it is not found in the hearts of the people. Again, in churches the Bible is lost. To a large number of churchgoing people the Bible is lost. Even preachers who stand in the pulpit weekly do not know the Bible. It is lost to them. When worshiping people do not follow the Bible, the Bible is lost to them; when churches are not organized, governed, and directed in all of their activities by the Bible, the Bible is lost to these churches. The Bible is lost in the very place where we would expect to find it.

III. What Was Done With the Book

Hilkiah informed Shaphan of the fact that he had found this book. Shaphan was the scribe and the king's secretary. He was in touch with the king (Josiah) at all times. Hence, Hilkiah informed him concerning the book. After Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, Shaphan read it. He saw that it was the law of God, and that the king should know of it. He at once informed the king that Hilkiah had given him the book. “And Shaphan read therein before the king.” The king was able to read the book himself, but it was the duty of the secretary to read for the king. When the king heard the terrible curses which must come upon the nation, “he rent his clothes.” This was done as an expression of humiliation and distress. So Ezra acted when he learned the sins of the people. (Ez. 9:3.) The king sent Hilkiah and others to inquire “of Jehovah” for him and “for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great is the wrath of Jehovah that is poured out upon

us, because our fathers have not kept the word of Jehovah, to do according unto all that is written in this book." (2 Chron. 34:21.)

Hilkiah inquired of "Huldah the prophetess" if the words of the book were true. "She said unto them, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Tell ye the man that sent you unto me, Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah." (2 Chron. 34:23, 24.) The prophetess further informed Hilkiah that because Josiah "did humble" himself "before God" when he heard the reading of the book and because he was penitent and prayed, these curses would not come upon the people during his lifetime. This word was brought back to Josiah.

IV. Josiah Renews the Covenant

Josiah "sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem." He continued his good work by gathering the people together "both great and small," and by reading himself the word of God to them and calling upon them to make a solemn covenant to return to Jehovah and serve him. "The king stood in his place, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book." The king stood on a platform. (2 Kings 11: 14; 23:3.) Josiah sets the example of pledging himself to serve Jehovah. It was right for the king, as the leader of the people, to set the example of faithful service and worship to Jehovah.

Not only did the king make the covenant with Jehovah, but he called upon all the people to do the same. "And he caused all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it." The people agreed to the covenant, or to do just what the law required of them to do. They were Likewise stirred by the reading of the book of God, and were ready to make the covenant with Josiah.

Josiah renewed his effort, begun six years before that (2 Chron. 33: 3), to cleanse thoroughly the land of all forms of idols and idolatry (2 Kings 23:4-20). The only way to turn to God is to put away sin, to destroy idols. Josiah, as did Hezekiah, extended his good influence into the kingdom of Israel and made all "that were found" there "to serve Jehovah." The ten tribes had gone into captivity, but a few poor people were left. "All his days they departed not from following Jehovah, the God of their fathers." Josiah restored the worship of God "as it is written" in the law of God. He did this by studying the word of God and learning what it teaches. See the account of the Passover kept then. (2 Kings 23:21-25; 2 Chron. 35:1-19.) Notwithstanding all the good that Josiah did, he did that which the kings of Judah seemed prone to do He formed an alliance with the king of Assyria and went out against the king of Egypt at Megiddo, and was slain. (2 Chron. 35:20-26.) This was a sad termination of the reformation Josiah had so well begun.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. It seems that it was a very difficult matter for Jehovah's people to keep from worshiping idols. It seems as though they should have

learned by this time that idols could not bless them and that Jehovah only could bless and help them. They had numerous examples of Jehovah's help; they did not have a single instance where any idol had helped them. It seems that they should have been loyal to Jehovah, who had so abundantly blessed them.

2. We have a parallel with the people of God to-day. We have been called out of the world to serve the true and living God; we have turned away from the lusts and pleasures of the flesh and pledged ourselves to live the Christian life. Yet so many times we turn back to the world. We turn away from God and follow the inclinations of the flesh. The flesh has never blessed us; it can only lead us to ruin. God alone can save us and bless us. We should be faithful to him.

3. It seems strange that Jehovah's people would lose Jehovah's law in Jehovah's house. But it is equally strange that the Lord's people will ignore or push aside the law of God even in the house of God today. We should look well to it that we do not lose the will of God in the worship of God to-day.

4. If we do not study diligently and prayerfully the word of God daily, we are likely to drift away from it; we are likely to lose it. The only way to keep from losing it is to let God's word dwell in us richly.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who was king at this time?
What good work had he done?
How old was he when he began?
How long did he reign?
Who was high priest?
What kind of man was he?

How the Book Was Lost

For what were they collecting money?
What was ordered to be done after the money was collected?
What was found in the temple?
What law was this?
What commandment had been given to the kings?
What were they to do with the law?
How many copies were there at that time?
How had the original copy been lost?
What provision had God made for the teaching of his law?
When were all the people to come together to study it?
What command was given to parents concerning it?
If God so strictly commanded the teaching of the law of Moses then, what does he require of his people to-day?
Was it more important for the Jews to study the law than for Christians to study the will of God to-day?

How the Bible Is Lost To-Day

Where may we find Bibles to-day?
Why do some read the Bible?
Why do others read it?
How is the Bible lost to all who so read it?
Why was not Josiah familiar with the curses pronounced in the book?
Why are people to-day not alarmed at their ignorance of the Bible?
Why was it a strange thing for the book of the law to be lost?
What is an astonishing thing about the Bible to-day?
Is the Bible lost to all who do not study it?

What Was Done With the Book

Who found the book?
What did he do with it?
Who was Shaphan?
To whom did he take the book?
What did he do when he took it to the king?
How did it affect the king when he heard it?
Who else was so affected at the reading of the book of the law?
What did the king do after learning of the book?
Whom did he send to Huldah?
Who was Huldah?
What did she tell them?
Why would not the curses be brought during Josiah's day?

Josiah Renews the Covenant

What did Josiah do when the book was brought back to him?
Did the people listen to the reading?
What covenant did Josiah make?
What did he cause the people to make?
What other good work did Josiah do?
What finally became of Josiah?

Practical Suggestions

What was a difficult task for the children of Israel?
Why should they have served Jehovah?
What is a difficult task for us?
What can the flesh do for us?
How can the Bible be lost among churches?
What is a solemn duty for us?

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun.
It gives a light to every age;
It gives, but borrows none.

The hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat;
His truths upon the nations rise;
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be thine
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of Him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above.
—*William Cowper*

Lesson VI—May 12, 1929

THE EARLY MINISTRY OF JEREMIAH

Jer. 1:6-10; 26:8-15.

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord Jehovah! behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child.
7 But Jehovah said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak.
8 Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah.
9 Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth:
10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

8 And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.
9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of Jehovah.
10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house unto the house of Jehovah; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house.
11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying', This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.
12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.
13 Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.
14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes.
15 Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29.)
TIME.—About B.C. 607.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Jeremiah, priests, princes, and elders.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 26:1-7.
DAILY HOME READING.—

May	6.	M.	The Call of Jeremiah. (Jer. 1:1-10.)
May	7.	T.	Jeremiah's Lament. (Jer. 8:18-22.)
May	8.	W	The Ministry of Jeremiah. (Jer. 26:1-9.)
May	9.	T.	Results of Jeremiah's Preaching. (Jer. 26:19-19.)
May	10.	F.	Daniel's Courage. (Dan. 6:19-18.)
May	11.	S.	Stephen's Courage. (Acts 6:8-15.)
May	12.	S.	Walking in Integrity. (Ps. 26.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Jeremiah is the second prophet among the list called "major prophets." He prophesied during the reigns of Amon and Zedekiah. He

was the prophet at the time of "the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month." (Jer. 1:3.) The word of Jehovah came unto him and said: "I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations." (Verse 5.) Hilkiah, Jeremiah's father, is thought to have been a different man from the high priest of that name so prominent in Josiah's time. Jeremiah began to prophesy while young (verse 6), and continued from the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign until a short while after the downfall of Jerusalem. His prophecy extended over a period of more than forty years. He was probably carried into Egypt, where it is thought he was martyred. Jeremiah prophesied the downfall of Jerusalem and the nation because of sin, and then advised the people to submit to the Babylonians as chastisement from the Lord.

Great and grievous were the sins of the people. They had rebelled against Jehovah, rejected his word, practiced dishonesty and oppression of the poor; they were guilty of covetousness, murder, adultery, falsehood, treachery, deceit, and idolatry with all its abominable practices. Jeremiah's prophecies and his advice to submit to the Babylonian captivity as chastisement greatly displeased the people, as well as the king. He was shut up, and at times was placed in the dungeon—a horrible pit. His life was a martyr's life. He has been called "the weeping prophet." We cannot read his prophecies and not be impressed with his tears and lamentations over the sins of the people and his earnest prayers to God.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Jeremiah's Call and Commission

Jeremiah was a youth when Jehovah called him to be a prophet. He said: "Behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child." He had not learned that when Jehovah called one to do service for him, Jehovah would also qualify that one to do the service. Samuel was but a child when Jehovah called him and delivered unto him a message concerning the curse which was to come upon Eli. (1 Sam. 3:3-9.) Jehovah made reply to Jeremiah and said: "Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak." Jehovah instructs him that it is Jehovah's words and Jehovah's message, not his own, that he should deliver. As Jehovah would teach him, his youth and inexperience would not be a hindrance to him. Jehovah further encourages him by saying: "Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee."

Jehovah "touched" his mouth and said unto him: "I have put my words in thy mouth." He had a great task before him, which required courage and determination as well as the power of endurance. He was placed "over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." The wicked nations should be destroyed. The kingdom of Judah should be plucked up and carried into captivity. It should be brought back out of captivity and reestablished in Jerusalem and Judah. Jeremiah was faithful in delivering the message; he was courageous and firm in declaring God's words against wickedness.

II. Jeremiah Arrested

God sent Jeremiah to “stand in the court of Jehovah's house” and to teach all who came from all the cities of Judah to worship. This was a public place, and many people could be reached in this way. (Jer. 7:2; 19:14; 2 Chron. 24:20, 21; Luke 19:47, 48.) Jeremiah was not to “diminish” a word of all that Jehovah had commanded him. His message was very unpleasant to the people, but he must deliver it. If the people would hearken unto him and turn from their evil ways, God would stop the evil which was coming upon them; but if they would not hearken to God, to walk in the law he had set before them, then he would destroy the temple of Solomon and would make Jerusalem “a curse to all the nations of the earth.” The people heard his message.

We must admire Jeremiah's courage and Faithfulness. He never flinched and never ceased his warning until he had declared all that God had put in his mouth. He reminds us of Paul. Paul at no time shrank from declaring “the whole counsel of God,” at no time kept back anything that was profitable to the church, but admonished “every one night and day with tears,” and at no time held his “life of any account as dear unto” himself. (See Acts 20:18-38.) His one purpose, as was the purpose of Jeremiah, was to save the people. “And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.” Why did the priests, prophets, and people threaten to kill Jeremiah, when he, too, was a prophet and sought the salvation of the people? They seemed to think that because he was announcing to them the curses and doom which should befall them, he was responsible for these curses coming upon them. They seemed to think that if they destroyed the messenger, that would keep the message from being true, just like people to-day who bemean the preacher for telling them the truth. Sometimes they try to get some accusation against the preacher, as though that would nullify the truth which he has spoken to them. There never was a greater blunder than this. Because Jeremiah had the faith and courage to solemnly warn the false prophets and priests against their sins they sought to kill him. Human nature and worldly wisdom and ways are the same to-day.

III. Jeremiah Tried

Having been arrested, Jeremiah was tried “in the house of Jehovah,” and all the people were gathered there for that purpose. He was asked why he had prophesied in the name of Jehovah that “this house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant.” For some time after te Israelites had crossed over the Jordan into the land God had promised them their camp and the tabernacle were at Gilgal (Josh. 4:2, 8, 20; 5:9, 10; 10:43); then they removed to Shiloh and “set up the tent of meeting there” (Josh 18:1). It remained there for about a hundred and thirty years (Josh 18:31; 21:19; 1 Sam. 1:3), until the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant and Eli's house was destroyed (1 Sam. 4:10-22). God destroyed Shiloh because of the sins of the priests and the people, and he would now

destroy Jerusalem, where his temple was, and make all a desolation for the same reason.

"When the princes of Judah heard" that Jeremiah had been arrested and that the assembly of the people was great, they went "up from the king's house" and took charge of and conducted the trial. The princes were the king's cabinet, or counselors. The good king, Hezekiah, had his princes, and he and they took counsel together. (2 Chron. 30:2.) The priests and prophets accused Jeremiah to the princes and all the people, saying: "This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears." Jeremiah "was his own lawyer," as we say, and defended himself. To the princes and the people he replied to the accusation of the priests and prophets as follows: "Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard." He did not deny the charge, but said God had sent him, and all that he had said was the word of God. This he could not change; this he would not change, even if he could; and, let the consequences be what they may, he could but speak the word of God. They ought not to want anything else. They should have wanted that, but they did not.

Jeremiah continued by saying that the only way to escape destruction was neither by his retracting nor by their killing him, but by the repentance of priests, prophets, and people. "Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you." Jeremiah was not abusive and bitter; he was courageous, unflinching, and kind. We need more like Jeremiah to-day. He was firm, and said: "As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes." He assured them that if they killed him, they would bring innocent blood upon themselves, upon the city, and upon its inhabitants, because God had sent him to speak all that he had said. In the same dignity and calmness all real lovers of the truth and faithful servants of God meet opposition and persecution now. Faithful servants of God never shun, through fear of personal loss or punishment, to speak bravely at all times the word of God. Killing the speaker does not kill the truth he speaks; bringing accusation, false or otherwise, against the speaker or preacher does not nullify the truth which he preaches. All preachers ought to make their lives consistent with the truth they preach. Crucifying Jesus did not destroy, but established, the truth.

IV. Jeremiah Acquitted

The Scripture text of our lesson closes with verse 15. However, it seems well to consider a little further the case of Jeremiah. The princes, having heard the charge against Jeremiah and his defense, decided that he was innocent, and, hence, not worthy of death. The reason they gave was. a wise and just one: "For he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God." (Verse 16.) No one should be killed for speaking the word of God. Certain elders then arose and addressed the assembly, citing the case of the prophet Micah and Hezekiah's treatment of him when he prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem. He said: "Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." (Jer. 26:18.) But instead of putting Micah to death, Heze-

kiah feared, and entreated the favor of Jehovah, and Jehovah withheld the punishment. The conclusion was that to kill Jeremiah would be to commit a great evil against their own souls.

The sequel of chapter 26 shows the difference between the conduct and end of the prophet Uriah and the conduct and end of Jeremiah. Uriah also prophesied against Jerusalem and the land of Judah; but when the king sought to put him to death, he feared and fled into Egypt, whence he was brought back and killed. Jeremiah stood his ground and was spared. Jeremiah manifested true courage and Faithfulness to God. Jehovah had imposed upon him the task of prophesying his words to the people. It was Jehovah's work. Jeremiah delivered Jehovah's message as Jehovah commanded him to do. So he left the results and consequences to Jehovah, and Jehovah took care of him. Jeremiah said they could kill him, but that would not destroy the truth or change the purpose of God. They would only be adding crime and sin to their already long list of sins. This would only bring greater condemnation upon them.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Jeremiah did not seek the work of a prophet; he rather shrank from its responsibility; but when he once undertook the task, he was firm and steadfast in performing his duties. He is a beautiful example for all who would serve God to-day. No one should rush, without due consideration, into any work; but when the work has once been undertaken, hardship and opposition should not hinder his doing the work.

2. Oftentimes, as with Jeremiah, our work will be unpleasant. It will render us unpopular; sometimes it will bring ridicule and even persecution; but we should not try to evade or shirk our duty. Jeremiah is an example to us in this respect. He kindly and firmly taught the people the unpleasant prophecies. We should be as faithful and courageous in teaching the unpopular truths of God as we are the popular ones.

3. It is popular to teach honesty, truthfulness, and virtue. We can teach these things with all boldness. It is unpopular to teach that God has but one church, that baptism is a burial, and that only believers can be members of the church of our Lord. We should teach these truths with equal boldness as we do the first-mentioned ones.

4. The path of duty is often the path of safety. Jeremiah turned neither to the right nor to the left, but continued firm and courageous in the path of duty. The people, though they did not believe his messages, respected him for his courage and firmness. So with us to-day. Self-respecting people respect one who has convictions and stands by these convictions. Jeremiah was kind in his firmness, again setting us an instructive example. No one can respect himself if he does not respect the truth. A lover of the truth should be a courageous proclaimer of it.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who was Jeremiah?
When did he prophesy?
Over what time did his prophecy extend?

To whom did he prophesy?
What was the condition of the people at this time?
What has Jeremiah sometimes been called?

Jeremiah's Call and Commission

How old was Jeremiah when he was called?
What excuse did he first make?
Who else was called when but a child?
How did Jehovah answer Jeremiah's excuse?
Whose work was he to do?
Who would qualify him for it?
What can you say of his Faithfulness in doing it?

Jeremiah Arrested

Where was Jeremiah to stand?
What kind of a place was this?
How was he to-deliver his message?
Was it a pleasant task?
What do you see in Jeremiah to admire?
To whom may he be compared?
What was his deep purpose?
Why did the priests and prophets threaten to kill him?
What view did the people take of his message?
What false view do people have to-day about one who delivers unpleasant truths?

Jeremiah Tried

Where was Jeremiah tried?
Before whom was he tried?
For what was he tried?
Where was Shiloh?
What would be done to Jerusalem?
What did the princes do when they heard of Jeremiah's arrest?
What accusation did the priests and prophets make against him?
Who was Jeremiah's lawyer?
What reply did he make to the accusation?
How did he make his reply?
What of his courage?
What effect does killing the speaker have on the truths which he speaks?

Jeremiah Acquitted

When the princes heard the accusation against Jeremiah, what did they say?
What did Hezekiah do when Micah prophesied against Jerusalem?
What would Jehovah have done if the people had turned from their sins?
Relate the difference between the conduct and end of Uriah and that of Jeremiah?

Practical Suggestions

Did Jeremiah seek the work of a prophet?
Did he shrink from the task?
How is he an example to us?
Was his task a pleasant one?
Can a faithful servant of God do only the pleasant things?
What is the difference in teaching unpleasant truths and pleasant ones?
Name some things which it is pleasant to teach.
Name some things which are hard to do.
Why did the people respect Jeremiah?
Can one be firm and at the same time be kind?

It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And, 'mid the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God.

It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake, in glorious repose
To spend eternal years.

It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise, on strong exulting wing,
To live among the just.

Jesus, thou Prince of life,,
Thy chosen cannot die;
Like thee, they conquer in the strife,
To reign with thee on high.

—H. A. C. Malan.

Lesson VII—May 19, 1929

JEREMIAH CALLS TO OBEDIENCE

Jer. 7:1-11, 21-23.

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying,

2 Stand in the gate of Jehovah's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of Judah, that enter in at the these gates to worship Jehovah.

3 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor;

6 If ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt:

7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even for evermore.

8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.

9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known,

10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations?

11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah.

21 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh.

22 For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices:

23 But this thing I commanded them, saying, 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.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." (Jer. 7:23.)

TIME.—About 607 B.C.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Jeremiah, and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 96:7-13.

DAILY HOME READING.—

May	13.	M.	Jeremiah Calls to Obedience. (Jer. 7:1-11.)
May	14.	T.	A Disobedient People. (Jer. 7:21-26.)
May	15.	W	Obedience Better Than Sacrifice. (1 Sam. 15:17-23.)
May	16.	T.	Obedience and Blessing. (Deut. 11:26-32.)
May	17.	F.	Disobedience and Punishment. (Deut. 28:15-24.)
May	18.	S.	The Obedient Christ. (Phil. 2:1-11.)
May	19.	S.	Worship Enjoined. (Ps. 96:7-13.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The people of God then were prone to rebel against God. Frequently they turned from Jehovah and turned to idols. Jehovah sent Moses to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage, gave to them the law

which taught them good and right statutes, made known to them the way of Jehovah, and revealed to them the wonderful work of Jehovah in caring for. his people. The prophets were sent to instruct further the people and encourage them in their obedience to God. The great burden of all the prophets was not merely to foretell future events, but to instruct the people in the ways of Jehovah, to warn them of the consequences of sin, and to encourage them in obeying Jehovah. In to-day's lesson Jeremiah calls the people back to Jehovah. He would save the people from the certain doom which awaited them if they continued in sin

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Obedience

The importance of faithful obedience to God cannot be overestimated. It is hard for people to comprehend it fully. Without obedience, faith is dead. (James 2:14-26.) Faith works through love. (Eph. 5:6.) No obedience, no love (1 John 5:3); no fellowship with the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32), no fellowship with God (John 14:23; I John 1:6, 7); no obedience to God, no entrance "into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21-27). No obedience, then no becoming a Christian, no living the Christian life, and no salvation. Nothing can exist, the worlds cannot roll on, human life cannot continue, and heaven cannot stand out of harmony with God's will—his law. Angels, in disobedience to God, could not remain in heaven (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Ps. 103:20-21); and without obedience to his will, man cannot enter heaven. All this emphasizes the importance of obedience.

There can be no substitute for obedience. King Saul attempted this, and Samuel, the prophet of Jehovah, said to him: "Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15:22.) Nothing can take the place of obedience. It is folly on the part of man to attempt to offer piety, prayer, and assume humility or anything else for obedience. God is pleased with obedience. He is displeased with everything else that is offered as a substitute for it. There are different forms or ways of disobedience. People can disobey God in many ways. (1) By refusing to do what God commands, stubbornly refusing to do his will, they disobey him. "And ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." (John 5:40.) (2) By adding to God's word they disobey him. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you." (Deut. 4:2.) (3) Again, they disobey him by taking from his word. "Neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2.) (4) And, again, they may disobey him by substituting something else for his word. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. 5:20.) It matters not which way or which type of disobedience one may be guilty of, the condemnation of God rests upon that one. God condemns all forms of disobedience.

II. Blessings Conditional

Many of the blessings of Israel were conditional—that is, God made the promise to bless Israel on certain conditions. He frequently said,

"If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them," then he would bless them. (See Deut. 7:12 to 8:10; 28:1-14.) These conditions were often repeated. They could not be misunderstood. The people could comply with them or not; they could obey them or disobey them. They could not change the command by adding to or diminishing from it; neither could they obtain the blessings without complying exactly with the conditions. No condition could be changed without being in disobedience to God.

Jeremiah was told to "stand in the gate of Jehovah's house, and proclaim there this word." This was the public place where all came for worship and social intercourse. He was to say to the people: "Hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship Jehovah." All were to hear, because all had gone into sin. He calls upon them to repent of their wrongdoing. He says: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." The blessings of remaining in their land and worshiping God in the temple were conditioned upon their amending their ways, turning from their sins, and complying with the conditions which God had laid down for them.

It seems that they attempted to offer some substitute for their obedience to Jehovah or the conditions which he had laid down. To change a condition upon which a blessing is promised is to disobey God and to rob the life of that blessing.

Jeremiah told them that they should not trust in anything else. He said to them: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these." They need not repeat their professed loyalty to the temple of Jehovah without doing what Jehovah required of them. The Jews thought—falsely, however—that because their temple had been chosen by Jehovah as his peculiar dwelling it could never be destroyed. They seemed to think that they could take refuge in the temple and receive blessings by professed loyalty without obeying God, without complying with all of the conditions which God had imposed upon them for the blessings of protection. Men think to-day that merely a profession of religion will bring blessings to them. They do not appreciate the fact that the conditions of the blessings must be complied with as commanded by Jehovah before any blessing is given. The triple repetition of "the temple of Jehovah" expresses the intense confidence of the Jews. The prophet continues his emphasis that the blessings are conditional by saying: "For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the Widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even for evermore." (Verses 5-7.) They were practicing all these things. They must cease these sins and Jehovah would let them continue to dwell in the land. Their sojourn longer in the land and their blessings from Jehovah were all conditioned upon their "thoroughly" amending their ways and their doings.

III. Worship of No Avail to the Disobedient

Jeremiah brings a strong indictment against them. He says: "Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit." They must trust in Jehovah; they were trusting in false prophets. A false prophet is a false teacher. There have been false prophets in the world since Satan deceived Eve. The Bible speaks of false gods, false Christs, false apostles, false prophets, false teachers, false brethren, false witnesses, and false accusers. Jesus said of some that they are those "who come to you in sheep's clothing"—false teachers assuming the garb of humility, friendship, and good will. They appear as harmless as sheep, "but inwardly are ravening wolves." (Matt. 7:15.) Nothing can describe them more accurately and truly than the word of God. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." (Rom. 16:17, 18.) Again, they are described as those "that creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:6, 7.) These people were trusting in false teachers. They are rebuked because they "trust in lying words, that cannot profit."

They need not attempt to worship God in disobedience. It seems that they were continuing in their sins and hoping to receive the blessings in spite of their sins. The prophet says: "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations?" They thought that they would practice all of these sins and yet stand before Jehovah "in this house"—that is, in the temple—and expect him to bless them. They had termed "this house, which is called by my name," a place of worship, while in reality the prophet said they had made it "a den of robbers." Jesus quotes this and applies it to the Jews of his day. When he cleansed the temple and cast out those who were corrupting the worship and defiling the temple, he said: "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer: but ye make it a den of robbers." (Matt. 21:13; see Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46.) They were to learn, as we are to learn, that Jehovah cannot be worshiped acceptably in disobedience. Worship, to be acceptable, must be in Spirit and in truth. (John 4:23.) We must worship God "with clean hands and pure hearts."

IV. The Curse of Disobedience

Every act of disobedience to God is condemned by him. Under the law of Moses "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." (Heb. 2:2.) Jehovah would not and could not consistently bless people in disobedience; but, on the other hand, he has condemned every act of disobedience. Jehovah did not require mere burnt offerings and sacrifices of animals for the sake of offerings, but as training for his people. "For! spake not unto your fa-

thers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, 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." (Verses 22, 23.) Jehovah required sacrifices, but these sacrifices were to be combined with moral obedience. (Ps. 50:8; 51:16, 17.) The superior claim of the moral obligation took precedence over all other things. Love-to God is the supreme end; external observances are means toward that end.

Jehovah would Accept their repentance and stay their punishment if they would obey him. But if they would not hearken to him, he would punish them for their sins; he would break their pride and power; he would curse them instead of blessing them. Jehovah deals with people the same way to-day. He blesses when they obey; he curses when they disobey.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. In no period of man's history has he been without law. God created man and enjoined upon him certain laws. These laws, when obeyed, help man to obtain unto the richest and fullest blessings of God. This is true in every department of life. The laws must be obeyed in order to receive the blessings.

2. Man is so constituted that he will obey some authority. If he does not obey God or submit to his authority, he will obey Satan. Blessings come only through obedience to God.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT,
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What were the people prone to do?
Who delivered them from Egyptian bondage?
What was given them for their government?
What was one of the purposes of the prophets?
What did Jeremiah do in this lesson?

Obedience

What is obedience?
How can we measure its importance?
Give examples of the importance of obedience.
Why cannot substitutes be offered for obedience?
Name the four ways by which people may disobey.
What can we say of all disobedience?

Blessings Conditional

What blessings do we receive which are unconditional?
What was Jeremiah told to do?
Why should he stand at the gate?
What did he tell the people to do?
What blessings would follow?
Could they receive these blessings without doing this?
In what were the people trusting?
What did they seem to think they could do?
Why the triple repetition of "the temple of Jehovah?"
What sins were they practicing?

Worship of No Avail to the Disobedient

What accusation did Jeremiah bring against the people?
Who is a false prophet?
Who are false teachers to-day?
Can Jehovah be worshiped acceptably by the instructions of false prophets?
How many false things have we mentioned in the Bible?
What must be done with false teachers?
From what sins must they turn away?
Into what had they turned the house of God?
To whom does Jesus apply this quotation?
Can Jehovah be worshiped acceptably in willful disobedience?

The Curse of Disobedience

What can we say about every disobedience?
Why could not Jehovah bless people in disobedience?
Why did Jehovah require sacrifices?
What was implied in every sacrifice?
On what conditions did Jehovah accept their repentance?
On what conditions does Jehovah accept our repentance?

Practical Suggestions

What laws have been imposed upon man?
What can man do with these laws?
Wherein will man find his greatest happiness?
Can man live without submitting to some authority?
How may man obtain the greatest blessings?

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for thee.

To scorn the senses' sway,
While still to thee I tend;
In all I do, be thou the way,
In all be thou the end.

If done to obey thy laws,
E'en servile labors shine;
Hallowed is toil, if this the cause,
The meanest work, divine.

Thee, then, my God and King,
In all things may I see;
And what I do, in anything,
May it be done for thee.
—*George Herbert.*

Lesson VIII—May 26, 1929

GOD'S LAW IN THE HEART
Jer. 31:29-34; John 1:17.

29 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.
30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.
31 Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:
32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah.
33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (*Ps. 119:11.)
TIME.—Between B.C. 606 and B.C. 587.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Jeremiah, the Jews, and all Christians.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 119:9-16.
DAILY HOME READING.—-

May	20.	M.	Israel's Restoration. (Jer. 31:1-9.)
May	21.	T.	God's Law in the Heart. (Jer. 31:31-37.)
May	22.	W.	Teaching the Scriptures. (Deut. 6:1-9.)
May	23.	T.	The Faith-Producing Word. (John 20:30, 31.)
May	24.	F.	The Hope-Inspiring Word. (Rom. 15:8-13.)
May	25.	S.	The Saving Word. (James 1:19-27.)
May	26.	S.	The Cleansing Word. (Ps. 119:9-16.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Jeremiah has been called "the weeping prophet," so full are his writings of sad laments of wretchedness and sorrow which were brought upon the people through their sins. But he attunes the prophetic lyre to more joyous themes and invites the people to look forward to better times which are to come. The first twenty-two verses of this chapter are devoted to the northern kingdom, assuring the people thereof that though God in justice was compelled to chastise, he has never lost his love for them and will, upon their repentance, restore to them his favor. He then turns to Judah, so recently despoiled, with the same message of forgiving love. Then at the beginning of this lesson he combines the two kingdoms in his thought and assures

them first of the repopulation of the country, then of his watch care for blessing, then of their release from further consequences of the old sins, then he launches into a description of a new and spiritual covenant that he would make with them. His prophecy is so lofty in its ideas that it must have a broader application than to the Jews in Palestine. The New Testament recognizes it as applying to the blessing to be brought to the whole world through Christ. (Heb. 8-10.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Personal Acceptability

Jeremiah looked forward to the period when in the long captivity the little ones should have grown up, and even others born after captivity began. They had not committed the sins for which Israel were punished, and yet they suffered in consequence of their fathers' sins. They would have a proverbial saying among them: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." This is a very vivid picture of the children suffering for the sins of the parents. But Jeremiah looked still further forward to the restoration, when they could use this proverb no longer. He looked to the time when "every one shall die for his own iniquity," when they may use the proverb changed to this: "Every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge." The restoration of Israel from Babylonian captivity was not to put an end to responsibility; but the accumulation of sins, of which the destruction and captivity were the concentrated punishment, were now swept away, and nations and individuals would have a clean, white page for the future record.

God has now put duties and responsibilities upon individuals. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4.) No child shall suffer divine punishment for the sin of the father. Of course, if the child Acts in the same way or commits the same sin, he shall be punished as his father. God is "no respecter of persons." "Every tub stands on its own bottom." Every one must give an account to God for his own life. Since sin is an individual matter, repentance is also personal and individual. No one can obey God by proxy; no one has to bear the condemnation of God except the one that sins.

II. The New Covenant

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." The prophet extends his vision forward till he spans the centuries between him and the Messiah. This new covenant is to include all of God's people. The old covenant, which was made at Sinai, was to wax old and vanish away. (Heb. 8:13.) Jeremiah saw its end and a fulfillment of its purpose. It was to give place to another and a better covenant. "But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises." (Heb. 8:6.) "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away." (Verse 13.) So the old covenant was to be taken away and a new covenant was to

be made. Since the old covenant has been fulfilled, room was left for a new covenant. As the new covenant is superior to the old, so Christianity, which was included in the new covenant, is superior to Judaism.

The prophet refers to the time when the old covenant was made. At that time Jehovah, like a father, “took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” This figure very beautifully refers to the affection and care with which, Jehovah had guided them out of the slavery of Egypt into the “land flowing with milk and honey.” They broke this covenant, although Jehovah “was a husband unto them.” The figure is changed here from that of a father's care to that of a husband's love and protection. They had broken his covenant without cause and were in rebellion to him as a husband and a father.

III. The Two Covenants Contrasted

The old law was engraved on tables of stone, and consisted largely of external observances. The new covenant, or new law, was put “in their inward parts, and in their heart.” The old covenant had the Aaronic priesthood, while the new covenant has Christ as the great High Priest and all of the children of God as priests under him; the old covenant with its priesthood was upon earth and temporal, while the High Priest of the new covenant is in heaven and is spiritual; the first covenant was written on tables of stone, the new covenant is in the hearts of God's children; the old covenant was sanctified with the blood of animals, the new covenant is sanctified with the blood of Christ; the old covenant had to be taught to the members of the covenant, the new covenant must be learned before people can become members of it; the old covenant was imperfect and transitory, the new covenant is perfect and shall continue until Christ comes again; the old covenant was a type, the new covenant is the antitype; the old covenant was a shadow, the new covenant is the substance; under the old covenant the Jews went to God largely through the priests and the earthly altar, under the new covenant we approach God through Christ and sustain a spiritual relationship tv him; under the old covenant sins were rolled forward a year at a time, while under the new covenant he says: “I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.” The close union with God as children is possible only when sins have been blotted out and forgotten. This is done in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Cleansed by the blood of Christ, the soul may indeed draw near to God with humble confidence and enter into the closest relationship while receiving the supreme gift of God's love and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Grace and Truth

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17.) The law was given through Moses. It was one definite act, and, as an external and authoritative statute, fixed and rigid; but what Jesus brings comes to be through him, forever flowing out in a vital process and taking shape in the hearts of the children of men. The contents of the law are statutes; those of Christ's gift are love bestowed and bestowing truth as a rich legacy. There is a wide contrast here between “law” and “grace and

truth." The law was not a system of grace. It could not make men perfect. "Grace and truth," as given by Christ, is a system of mercy and love. All the grace and truth of salvation came through Jesus Christ. Grace and truth in the ideal sense were brought into the world through Christ. The law at best was only the shadow of good things to come, while grace and truth represent the good things. The gist of the new covenant may be summed up in the expression, "grace and truth." The law was only given or transmitted through Moses. It was in substance the eternal rule of right existing in the mind of God, hut "grace and truth" were brought into being through the sacrifice of Christ.

In the law we have the justice and vengeance of Jehovah given. "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." (Heb. 2:2.) We are told that "a man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses." (Heb. 10:28.) The law said: "If there be found in the midst of thee, within any of thy gates which Jehovah: thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that doeth that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshiped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, and it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it; then shalt thou inquire diligently; and, behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel, then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, who hath done this evil thing, unto thy gates, even the man or the woman; and thou shalt stone them to death with stones. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. So thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee." (Deut. 17:2-7.) The law gave no mercy; neither did it encourage with any hope. In direct contrast with the law of the old covenant, the new covenant is a covenant of mercy, grace, and truth.

"Grace" is usually defined as unmerited favor. "Grace" is preeminently a New Testament term. Paul uses "grace" as the first word of many of his greetings in his Epistles. "Grace" is coextensive with "truth." Stephen is described as a man "full of grace and power." (Acts 6:8.) Barnabas rejoiced when he "had seen the grace of God" extended to the Gentiles. (Acts 11:23.) Paul and Barnabas urged the people "to continue in the grace of God." (Acts 13:43.) "Truth" is used in the New Testament to describe God's will as revealed to man. Paul speaks of those who "hinder the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom. 1:18, 25.) Again, Paul speaks of the "manifestation of the truth." (2 Cor. 4:2.) The truth thus becomes synonymous with the gospel. (Eph. 1:13; Gal. 2:5, 14.) Jesus declares that people must worship "in Spirit and truth." (John 4:24.) Again, he declares: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (John 14:6.) So in the new covenant grace and truth are the cardinal elements. We should strive to be more worthy of grace and more in harmony with truth.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. God sees the end from the beginning. He saw that the old covenant would pass away and that a new covenant would take its place. We should show by our lives that we who live under the new covenant appreciate it even more than those who lived under the old covenant.

2. We are to look through the type under the old covenant to the antitype under the new covenant. The priests under the old covenant pointed to the spiritual priests under the new covenant. The high priest under the old covenant pointed to our High Priest, Christ Jesus. As the subordinate priest under the old covenant officiated under the supervision of the high priest, so all the children of God do service in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Under the old covenant when the children grew up they had to be taught of God. They did not know Jehovah until they were taught of him, yet they were members of the old covenant. Under the new covenant the gospel must be preached. People must hear and]earn of God and Christ. They must believe the testimony and be baptized into the sublime names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then they are children of God and members of the covenant of "grace and truth." They must know God before they have the blessings of the covenant.

4. The new covenant is world-wide and age-lasting. It is perfect, holy, and true. No nation or race can outgrow it. Every individual needs it and may have access to the mercies of God through it.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What has Jeremiah been called?
Why?
To what does he direct attention in this lesson?
What is the general theme of the first part of this chapter?
Who is included in this lesson?

Personal Accountability

Why were the children of Israel carried into captivity?
How long did they remain there?
Why did those born in captivity have to remain for a time in captivity?
What proverb did they coin?
What was the meaning of this proverb?
Was this interpretation true?
To what did Jeremiah look?
What was the second proverb?
What is its meaning?
How are responsibilities personal?
Why does a child not have to suffer for the parents?
For whom must each of us give an account before God?
How is repentance an individual matter?
Why cannot one obey God by proxy?

The New Covenant

With whom would Jehovah make the new covenant?
What was the old covenant?
When was the old covenant given?
How long did it last?
Why was the old covenant taken away?
What is the new covenant?
Who is the author of the new covenant?
Jehovah is represented as what to the people?
Hew had they broken the old covenant?

The Two Covenants Contrasted

Upon what was the old law written?
Of what did it consist?
Who was the head of the priesthood under the old law?
Who is the head under the new law?
How long was the old covenant to remain?
How long is the new covenant to remain?
How was the old Covenant sanctified?
How is the new covenant sanctified?
Of what was the old covenant a type?

How does the new covenant become the antitype?
How did people approach God under the old covenant?
How do they approach him under the new covenant?
How were sins removed under the old covenant?
How are they removed under the new covenant?

Grace and Truth

What came through Moses?
What came through Christ?
Contrast "the law" and "grace and truth."
What are some synonyms for "grace and truth?"
What mercy was received under the law?
What received "just recompense of reward" under the law?
How many witnesses were necessary for conviction under the law?
What is grace?
What is truth?
What does the new covenant include?

Practical Suggestions

What was the general purpose of the old covenant?
How should we show our appreciation for the new covenant?
To whom did the priests under the old covenant point?
Who are priests under the new covenant?
Why do people have to be taught of God under the new covenant?
How long will the new covenant last?

Come, let us use the grace divine,
And all, with one accord,
In a perpetual covenant join
Ourselves to Christ, the Lord.

Give up ourselves, through Jesus' power,
His name to glorify;
And promise, in this sacred hour,
For God to live and die.

The covenant we this moment make
Be ever kept in mind;
We will no more our God forsake,
Or cast his words behind.

To each the covenant blood apply,
Which takes our sins away;
And register our names on high,
And keep us to that day.
—*Charles Wesley.*

Lesson IX—June 2, 1929

LATER EXPERIENCES OF JEREMIAH

Jer. 38:4-13.

4 Then the princes said unto the king, Let this man, we pray thee, be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

5 And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand; for the king is not he that can do anything against you.

6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malehijah the king's son, that was in the court of the guard: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

7 Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch, who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin),

8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die in the place where he is, because of the famine; for there is no more bread in the city.

10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence rags and worn-out garments, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these rags and worn-out garments under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

13 So they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." (Matt. 5:11.)

TIME.—B.C. 598.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jeremiah, Zedekiah, his princes, and Ebed-melech. DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Matt. 5:3-11.

DAILY HOME READING.—

May	27.	M.	Later Experiences of Jeremiah. (Jer. 20:1-6.)
May	28.	T.	Jeremiah in the Dungeon. (Jer. 38:1-6.)
May	29.	W	Zedekiah's Interview With Jeremiah. (Jer. 38:14-23.)
May	30.	T.	Daniel Persecuted. (Dan. 6:1-9.)
May	31.	F.	The Apostles Persecuted. (Acts 5:33-42.)
June	1.	S.	The Early Church Persecuted. (Acts 8:1-8.)
June	2.	S.	Persecuted for Christ's Sake. (Matt. 5:3-11.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took Jerusalem, carried away some of the vessels of the temple, Daniel and other captives, and put Jehoiakim in chains, intending to carry him to Babylon, but, it seems, changed his purpose and left

Jehoiakim as tributary ruler at Jerusalem. (Jer. 25:1, 2; Dan. 1: 1, 2; 2 Kings 24:1; 2 Chron. 36:6, 7.) Jehoiakim served Nebuchadnezzar three years and then rebelled. Nebuchadnezzar then "sent against him bands of the Chaldeans," who were subject to Babylon. God emphasized in this connection the fact that the sins of Manasseh led to this. (2 Kings 24:1-7.) This was the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. Jehoiachin (also called "Jeconiah" and "Coniah") succeeded his father, Jehoiakim. He reigned only three months and ten days. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, and it surrendered. The temple was again plundered, and a great number of captives were carried to Babylon. Among the number were Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:1, 2), Jehoiachin, his mother, wives, officers, and chief men of the land (Jer. 29). Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, an uncle of Jehoiachin, was made king by Nebuchadnezzar. He reigned eleven years (2 Chron. 36:13); but in the fourth year of his reign we find Zedekiah in the lead of the whole of Syria in an effort to throw off the yoke of Baby-Ion. Again in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign he rebelled against Babylon.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. What Jeremiah Did

The second siege against Jerusalem lasted eighteen months. It was terrible. (2 Kings 25:1-8; Jer. 52:3-7.) It progressed steadily to most extreme starvation and suffering, and famine and pestilence raged. Children cried for bread and there was none, and the tongues of the sucking children cleaved to the roof of their mouths for thirst. Men and women searched dunghills, hoping to find scraps of bread; and, more horrible still, delicate women and tender mothers boiled and ate their own children. (See Lain. 4:1-10.) Jeremiah not only prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the people led away into Babylonian captivity, but also that, after seventy years, they would return; and he showed his faith in this by purchasing a piece of land during the siege. (Jer. 32.) During this siege Jeremiah reminded Zedekiah, by the command of Jehovah, of his refusal to keep the solemn covenant he had made with the people—that every man according to the law should set his servants free, and that for a breach of this covenant the sword, famine, and pestilence should come. (See Jer. 34.) Zedekiah was weak and vacillating. While he allowed Jeremiah's imprisonment, he felt his dependence upon him, had secret interviews with him, and asked for his prayers and the word of God, but would not then act according to that word. (See Jer. 21:1-14; 37: 1-21; 38:14-26.) Jeremiah showed his true courage in all these interviews by plainly declaring that the city would be destroyed and the people led into captivity, that it was vain to look to Egypt for help, and that the only safe thing to do was to submit to the Chaldeans.

II. Jeremiah in the Dungeon

After beginning the siege of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar learned that the king of Egypt was coming with an army out of Egypt, and he broke up the siege to go and meet the Egyptians, but only to return shortly and renew it. (Jer. 37:5-10.) During this cessation of the

siege Jeremiah was arrested and imprisoned. He started out of Jerusalem to the land of Benjamin "to receive his portion there," which was probably a piece of land near Anathoth; but as he was passing out of the gate of Benjamin, he was accused of "falling away to the Chaldeans" as a traitor, and was arrested by Irijah and taken before the princes, who smote him and imprisoned him. Jeremiah was placed in the house of Jonathan, the scribe, which had been converted into a prison—"into the dungeon house" (or "house of the pit," margin)—in one of the cells, where he remained many days. During this time Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah and had a secret interview with him; and upon Jeremiah's request, Zedekiah commanded that he should be placed in "the court of the guard," where he had a measure of liberty and was allowed "daily a loaf of bread out of the baker's street, until all the bread in the city was spent." (Jer. 37:11-21.)

The princes requested the king to have Jeremiah put to death for the following reasons: "He weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city [some had already been taken away into captivity], and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt." Jeremiah was the only true friend of the people. Pharaoh accused Moses and Aaron of disturbing the people (Ex. 5:4); Ahab accused Elijah of troubling Israel (1 Kings 18:17, 18; 21:20); Amaziah, the priest, accused Amos of conspiracy (Amos 7:10); and wicked men accused Paul and Silas of troubling Philippi (Acts 16:20). In discouraging the rebellion against the Babylonians, Jeremiah sought the peace and welfare of the people and the protection from pestilence, famine, and sword of their defenseless wives and helpless children. The king was weak, and surrendered Jeremiah into the hands of the princes. He respected the prophet and feared his princes. They did not kill Jeremiah outright, but cast him into the dungeon, where he would likely die of suffocation and starvation. The dungeon, or pit, was in "the court of the guard," and Malchijah probably had charge of it. "The court of the guard" was the quarters of the guards of the palace. (See Jer. 32:2.) To "the court of the guard" Zedekiah removed Jeremiah from the "dungeon house" referred to above (Jer. 37:15, 16, 20, 21), and before this effort of the princes to destroy his life.

III. Jeremiah's Sufferings

"And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; and Jeremiah sank in the mire." This dungeon, or pit, was deep, because Jeremiah had to be let down into it and drawn up out of it with cords, or ropes. It was a pit, or cistern, from which the water had been exhausted by the famine; but it was damp and filled with foul gases, and the filth and mire on the bottom was deep. Into this mire Jeremiah sank. Joseph was east into a pit in which there was no water, but not such a horrible one as this. (Gen. 37:24.)

"Ebed-melech the Ethiopian" was servant "in the king's house," and was kind and just. Ethiopia was north of Egypt. Such servants as Ebed-melech were common in those days. When he heard that the princes had cast Jeremiah into the dungeon, he went out to Zedekiah, who was sitting "in the gate of Benjamin," and reported what had

been done to Jeremiah, and said that he was likely to die of starvation “because of the famine,” for there was no more bread in the city. The gates of the city were places of public gatherings. The gate of Benjamin was on the north side of the city, looking toward the land of Benjamin.

IV. Jeremiah Removed From the Dungeon

When the king heard of Jeremiah's condition, he commanded Ebed-melech to “take from hence thirty men” “and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.” The thirty men were doubtless for protection against any resistance on the part of the princes. Ebed-melech took from the king's house “under the treasury” “rags and worn-out garments, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.” These “rags and worn-out garments” were placed under Jeremiah's arms to prevent the cords' cutting him while he was being pulled up out of the pit. Ebed-melech “said unto Jeremiah, Put now these rags and worn-out garments under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.” When Jeremiah had placed the cords around his body under his arms, and “rags and worn-out garments” between the cords and his body and under his arms, they drew him up out of the dungeon and placed him again in “the court of the guard.” Here he remained “until the day that Jerusalem was taken.” (Jer. 38:28.) After this, Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah and had a secret interview with him, and promised that he should not be put to death; the princes also had an interview with him. After all this persecution, Jeremiah still stated the truth to the king and the princes and advised them what was best to do. (Jer. 38:14-28.) God rewarded Ebed-melech for his justice and kindness to Jeremiah. (Jer. 39:15-18.)

When Jerusalem was taken, the temple was burnt. The king and his princes shared the fate of Jehoiachin. At that time Jeremiah gave utterance to his sorrow in the book called “Lamentations.” It is thought that Jeremiah was taken into Egypt. Some, trying to escape the effect of famine and persecution, went into Egypt and took Jeremiah with them. In captivity his words were sharper and stronger than ever. He did not shrink even there from speaking of the Chaldean king once more as “the servant of Jehovah.” (Jer. 43:10.) It is not known how or where Jeremiah died. Tradition has it that he died in Egypt, but the divine record does not so state. Jeremiah was a noble example of the triumph of the right and faith in God over physical opposition. He suffered severe persecution; yet this was the common lot of those who were faithful to God.

It is as true to-day as it was then that all who are faithful to God will suffer persecution. “Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12.) Stephen, in reasoning with the Jews, said: “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers.” (Acts 7:51, 52.) Christ spoke to the Jews and said: “Wherefore ye witness

to yourselves, that ye are sons of them that slew the prophets." (Matt. 23:31.) The more faithful one is to Jehovah, the greater will be the persecution.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The kingdom of Judah was greatly disturbed at this time. There was not a sin in the long catalogue of sins of which they were not guilty. Sin always disturbs. Wherever there is a disturbance, there is sin. Sin disturbs peace of mind, peaceful relations between men, and peace between man and God.

2. The people thought that if they could destroy Jeremiah they would nullify the message which he delivered. They could imprison Jeremiah, and did, but they could not prevent his prophecy from being fulfilled; they could persecute him even unto death, but they could not ward off the impending doom of their city. People to-day need not think that persecution will nullify the word of God. Persecution should serve to make the people of God strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. When we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, we ought to say: "Here is an opportunity for the Lord to give us a blessing.

3. The boldness of Jeremiah and his courage to stand by the message of God brought him into trouble. He could have weakened or compromised or denied the truth of his message, but he did not do so. He stood firm and endured the persecution. He was blessed in his faithfulness.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What had the children of Israel done at this time?
Who came against them?
What did he do with some of the vessels of the temple?
Who were carried into Babylon?
What finally became of Jehoiakim?
Who succeeded him?
What did Nebuchadnezzar do at this time?
Who were among the captives?
Who was finally made king of Judah?

What Jeremiah Did

How long did the second siege last?
How did the people suffer?
What did Jeremiah prophesy?
What kind of a ruler was Zedekiah?
What did he permit to be done to Jeremiah?
How did Jeremiah show courage?

Jeremiah in the Dungeon

What was the king of Egypt planning to do?
How did this keep Nebuchadnezzar from besieging Jerusalem?
Who was arrested at this time?
Where had Jeremiah started?
What did they accuse him of doing?
How did he show his faith in God's bringing his people out of captivity?
Where was Jeremiah first placed?
What kind of a dungeon was it?
What did the princes want the king to do with Jeremiah?
What did the king tell the princes to do?
Was Jeremiah an enemy to the people?
Name some others who were falsely accused?
Describe the dungeon.

Jeremiah's Suffering

What was in the pit?
How did Jeremiah suffer in the pit?
Who reported his condition to the king?
What did the king order to be done?
How many men did Ebed-melech take with him?
What were the gates of the city?

Jeremiah Removed From the Dungeon

Why were thirty men taken to rescue Jeremiah?
How did they get him out of the pit?

Where did they place him after removing him from the dungeon?
What communication did Zedekiah have with him?
What did Jehovah do for Ebed-melech because of his kindness?
What was done with the temple?
When did Jeremiah write Lamentations?
What finally became of Jeremiah?
What does Paul say about Christians suffering?
What did Stephen accuse the Jews of doing?
What did Christ say that they had done with the prophets?

Practical Suggestions

What had disturbed the kingdom at this time?
What is the nature of sin?
What mistaken idea did the people have?
Why will not killing the prophet nullify his message?
What occasion is offered those who suffer for righteousness' sake?
In what is Jeremiah an example to us?

My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

O, watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Fight on, my soul, till death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He'll take thee, at thy parting breath,
To his divine abode.

—*George Heath.*

Lesson X—June 9, 1929

THE STORY OF THE RECHABITES (TEMPERANCE LESSON)

Jer. 35:5-11.

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever:

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn.

8 And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians; so we dwell at Jerusalem.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We will drink no wine." (Jer. 35:6.)
TIME.—About 607 B.C.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Jeremiah, the Rechabites, and the Jews.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 107:1-9.
DAILY HOME READING.—

June	3.	M.	The Story of the Rechabites. (Jer. 35:1-11.)
June	4.	T.	Judah Compared With the Rechabites. (Jer. 35:12-19.)
June	5.	W	Intemperance and Poverty. (Prov. 23:15-25.)
June	6.	T.	Intemperance and Sorrow. (Prov. 23:26-35.)
June	7.	F.	Intemperance Forbidden. (Eph. 5:15-21.)
June	8.	S.	The Drunkard's Hope. (1 Cor. 6:1-11.)
June	9.	S.	Jehovah Delivers Men. (Ps. 107:1-9.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Jonadab, the son of Rechab, was a fervent supporter of Jehu's attack on the house of Ahab and he endeavored to root out the idolatrous WOE-ship which that dynasty had encouraged. (2 Kings 10:15-28.) He had much influence with Jehu, as is seen from the prominent place which Jehu gave him. He was a devout worshiper of Jehovah. His descendants are called the "Rechabites."

The Rechabites were descendants of Rechab (2 Kings 10:15), who was a Kenite (1 Chron. 2:55); and the Kenites were descendants of Jerhro, Moses' father-in-law (Num. 10:29-32; Judg. 1:16; 4:11). Their manner of living is described in this lesson. They had before them the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other patriarchs, who were sojourners in a land not their own, while they looked for the heavenly country. They would not bind themselves in any way that

would impede their progress toward the heavenly country. Their life they pursued conscientiously and religiously in faithful adherence to the command of Jonadab and all their fathers. They had fled to Jerusalem for protection from the Chaldean army, which was invading the land. Their habits of life furnish us with a good lesson.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Life of the Rechabites

They refused to drink wine, which was a common drink in that day. Many drank unto drunkenness. They claimed that they were following the principles given them by Jonadab. They built no houses, sowed no seed, planted no vineyards. They dwelt in tents all their lives. They cultivated no fields and lived a nomadic life, subsisting on their flocks, and believing that in this way they could live the longest and happiest lives. They were extremists. While it is right for us to cultivate the soil, to follow any other honest business, and to build houses and to dwell in them, yet God teaches us to use these blessings as not abusing them, to set our affections on things above and not on things upon the earth, and to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. That which God commands in the Rechabites is not their nomadic life, but their purity of life, and especially their Faithfulness to the instructions of their followers.

Acording to genealogy, the Reehabites identified themselves with a section of the Kenites, a Midianitish tribe which came into Palestine with the Israelites and retained their nomadic habits. They always worshiped Jehovah, yet they did not consider themselves bound by the Mosaic law and ritual. The worship of Baal was offensive to them. Their father, Jonadab, inaugurated a reformation and imposed upon them a very rigid law. They were strict in obeying this law. They adhered more rigidly to the regulations which their father had imposed upon them than the children of Israel did to the law of Jehovah. They are to be commended for this. They were to dwell in tents. For two centuries and a half they adhered faithfully to this rule. The invasion of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar drove the Rechabites from their tents to Jerusalem, where they stood firmly against temptation and were blessed. Professed descendants of this sect still live as nomads in Mesopotamia and Arabia. The term had, however, in the days of the apostles, Become merely a term for an ascetic. It is, therefore, probable that the present claim of people from this sect is unfounded.

II. The Rechabites Tested

Jeremiah received word from Jehovah to “go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of Jehovah, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.” Jeremiah did as he was commanded, and “brought them into the house of Jehovah, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes.” (Verses 3, 4.) Igdaliah is called “the man of God.” It is not a worldly honor, but a far greater honor, to be distinguished as a “man of God”—a man who honors and loves God and whom God uses to serve his purposes.

Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and the other prophets and faithful servants of Jehovah have been so distinguished. To be a "man of God" is to be the very greatest thing one can be on earth. This is a man who knows God, who knows the will of God, whose meat and drink and life are to do the will of God, who spends his life in teaching and persuading others to obey that will, and who has the Spirit of God.

When these Rechabites were brought into "the chamber," "bowls full of wine, and cups," were set before them, and command was given unto them to "drink ye wine." This was an invitation to them to drink. Sparkling and refreshing wine with its fragrant odor was before them. Bowls filled with wine were within their reach, and they were invited to drink. This was not to induce them to do wrong, but to bring out their strength of character and test their fidelity to principles. When this strong temptation was presented to them, they replied promptly and firmly: "We will drink no wine." So they promptly and kindly refused the invitation. They gave their reason.

III. Their Reason

Jonadab, their father, had charged them and their wives, their sons and their daughters, to drink no wine all their days. This reminds us very much of the Nazarite vow. The Nazarite "shall 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." (Num. 6:3, 4.) The Rechabites were not Nazarites. They did not refrain from drinking wine because God forbade it, but because their father commanded it. They were faithful to their regulations of life as given by their father. They built no houses to dwell in, planted no vineyards, sowed no fields; but they dwelt in tents and lived a life of self-denial as required by their father. They gave their reason for being in Jerusalem at that time. "When Nebuchadnezzar . . . .came up into the land," they went into the city of Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians." Whether they dwelt in tents in Jerusalem or not, we are not told. It is presumed that they were faithful in obedience to this, as they were to other principles.

IV. The Meaning of the Lesson

After Jeremiah had tested the Rechabites and they had remained firm to the principles of their father, Jehovah sent him to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to say: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Will ye not receive instructions to hearken to my words?" The Rechabites through trials and temptations had remained faithful to the words of their father, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, not to drink wine. Nothing had ever caused them to disobey their father. But God had spoken unto his people, "rising up Early and speaking;" but they had not hearkened unto him. God had spoken to his people through different earnest and faithful prophets, and had promised many times that if they would turn every man from his evil ways and amend their doings and not go after other

gods to serve them, they should dwell in the land which he had promised their fathers and not be carried away by the Chaldeans; but they would not do so.

The example of the Rechabites was a severe rebuke and a forceful way of impressing upon the Jews certain lessons. The Rechabites had hearkened unto their father, but the people of Judah had not hearkened unto God. They had not obeyed him, and, therefore, he would destroy Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. God declared that because the Rechabites had obeyed their father and had been true to the principles he had taught them, they should not lack a man to stand before him forever. If the Rechabites should regard the customs and commands of their fathers, should not the people of God much more be true and faithful to him? This is a fine lesson on Faithfulness and its reward, on principle and its blessings, on self-control and courage and their glorious end. Even though these Jews did not profit by the lesson of the Rechabites, it is not too late for us to do so.

The children of God at that time had so much more instruction and solemn warnings, many times repeated to them by Jehovah and his prophets, than the Rechabites had, and yet the children of Israel had failed to obey God. The example of the Rechabites should have put to shame these Jews. To-day the people of God have not only all the examples and warnings of the Old Testament, but also all the New Testament, and yet many are failing in self-control and self-denial and submission to the will of their Father in heaven. Of how much sorer punishment will they be judged worthy?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. This is intended as a lesson on temperance. The Rechabites were total abstainers from strong drink. They did not indulge. They refrained from principle. They must have been a strong sect, so far as character is concerned. No one can adhere rigidly to a principle without being strong in character. The more rigidly one stands for that which is right, the stronger one becomes in the right.

2. The Rechabites practiced rigid self-denial and endured all hardships which it may have cost them to stand for principle. The world needs this lesson to-day. Few have the courage to stand for their conviction; few will suffer for the right. If there were more in the church who imposed upon themselves rigid self-discipline, the church would be purer and stronger.

3. No one can be a blessing to the world who does not stand for something. We are worth to the church and to the world just about as much as that for which we stand. We cannot be an example or blessing of purity unless we stand rigidly for purity; we cannot be an example of honor and honesty unless we stand for honesty; we cannot be Christians unless we stand for Christ. Sum up what one stands for, and we have the sum total of what one is and the blessing one can be to others.

4. Every one ought to have certain well-defined principles fixed in his heart for which he stands. The greatest blessing that can come to the church will be through those who have stood “like a stone wall”

for all that the church stands for. When one gets the teachings of Christ on the church well fixed in mind and sees that God teaches that the one church is his body and has the courage to stand for this, that one will be a wealth of blessing to his community.

5. God has given all instructions necessary; he has given all opportunity to]earn his will; he has given all sufficient encouragement to know his will and promised innumerable blessings to those who will do it. Man is left wholly without an excuse. All the people of God should love righteousness and hate iniquity; they should abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good; they should keep themselves unspotted from the world and walk in peace. It requires a temperate life—a life of self-discipline and self-denial—to please God.

6. Temperance is a broad subject. It includes the whole range of man's activity. We should be temperate in eating, drinking, sleeping, work, recreation, and all bodily activities. There are two classes of things—lawful things and unlawful things, right things and wrong things. We are to refrain from all evil and wrong things. We are to practice total abstinence with all unlawful or evil things. We are to be temperate and moderate in the use of all righteous things.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who was Jeremiah?
Where did he live?
When did he prophesy?
Who was Jonadab?
Who was Rechab?
Who was Jehu?
Who were the Rechabites?
Who were the Kenites?
How long had it been since Jonadab lived?

The Life of the Rechabites

Describe the manner of life of the Rechabites.
What men of God had lived such lives?
Why did they not cultivate fields?
Why did they not drink wine?
Is it wrong to cultivate the soil?
Upon what does God teach us to set our affections?
What must first be sought?
How must we use the things of this life?

The Rechabites Tested

Where did God command Jeremiah to bring the Rechabites?
What did he tell him to set before them?

Who was Igdaliah?
What is he called?
What is it to be a “man of God?”
What were the Rechabites asked to do when brought in?
Did they drink it?
Why did they not drink?

Their Reason

What reason did they give for not drinking?
Of what does this remind us?
Who was a Nazarite?
Why were the Rechabites in Jerusalem?
Did they dwell in tents while in Jerusalem?

The Meaning of the Lesson

What did God command Jeremiah to say to his people?
Who had given the Rechabites their principle?
Who had given Israel the law?
Why were the Rechabites more faithful to the father's principle than the Israelites were to God's law? How had God given his law?
What encouragement had he given them to obey it?
How was the example of the Rechabites a rebuke to God's people?
What blessings came to the Rechabites?
What lesson can we get from this?

Practical Suggestions

Why study the lesson of the Rechabites?
Why did they refrain?
How will this add strength to character?
How did the Rechabites practice self-denial?
Why is this lesson needed to-day?
Why should church members practice self-discipline?
How can one be the greatest blessing to others?
For what should we stand?
Who will be the greatest blessing to the church?
What encouragement has God given all to learn his will?
How can one keep oneself "unspotted from the world?"
In what should one be temperate?
Give the two classes of things.
In what are we not to be temperate?

Mourn for the thousands slain,
The youthful and the strong;
Mourn for the wine cup's fearful reign,
And the deluded throng.

Mourn for the ruined soul—
Eternal life and light,
Lost by the fiery, maddening bowl,
And turned to hopeless night.

Mourn for the lost; but call,
Call to the strong, the free;
Rouse them to shun that dreadful call,
And to the refuge flee.

Mourn for the lost; but pray,
Pray to our God above
To break the fell destroyer's sway,
And show his saving love.

—*Seth C. Brace.*

Lesson XI—June 16, 1929

JUDAH TAKEN CAPTIVE

2 Kings 25:1-12.

1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it-; and they built forts against it round about.

2 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

4 Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about); and the king went by the way of the Arabah.

5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

6 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

8 Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem.

9 And he burnt the house of Jehovah, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house, burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 And the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive.

12 But the captain of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." (*Prov. 14:34.)

TIME.—B.C. 588.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Babylon.

PERSONS.—The Jews and Babylonians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 107:10-16.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

June	10.	M.	Judah's Early Strength. (Judg. 1:1-7.)
June	11.	T.	Judah Warned. (2 Kings 21:10-15.)
June	12.	W	Judah Taken Captive. (2 Kings 25:1-12.)
June	13.	T.	Jerusalem Rebuilt. (Ez. 1:1-11.)
June	14.	F.	Piety and Patriotism. (Matt. 22:15-22.)
June	15.	S.	Rulers Ordained of God. (Rom. 13:1-7.)
June	16.	S.	Saved from Affliction. (Ps. 107:10-16.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This lesson brings us to the consummation of the repeated sins of the kingdom of Judah. The destruction of the kingdom of Israel and the captivity of the ten tribes will be found in 2 Kings 17:7-26. This took place about one hundred and thirty years before the captivity of

Judah. The destruction of the kingdom of Judah had long since been foretold, and the people had God's warnings against sin and rebellion and the results to which they would lead. The good and loyal kings had stayed at times this destruction by temporary reformations, but during the reigns of the wicked kings the people had relapsed until now it was inevitable. God sent numerous prophets to warn and to teach the people, but they gave no heed. Jeremiah labored faithfully until old age, and was then cast into the dungeon to be starved to death because he spoke the truth. We are astonished that the people did not heed God's solemn warnings and turn from their sins and serve Jehovah. It is a still greater astonishment that people now, with all this before them, do not heed his warnings against sin and repent and obey him. We have recorded by inspiration for our instruction and warning all that befell the kingdoms of Israel and Judah because of sin; and, besides this, we have all that the New Testament contains. Like the Jews, people are sinning and persisting in rebellion against God in the face of all truth. That fearful "destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thess. 1:7-10), of which the New Testament gives solemn and repeated warnings, will as surely come as destruction came upon the Jews.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Jerusalem Besieged

Zedekiah was king of Judah at this time. His former name was "Mattaniah." (2 Kings 24:17.) Josiah was succeeded by his son, Jehoahaz, who reigned only three months. Eliakim, another son of Josiah, was made king by Pharaoh-necoh, who changed his name to "Jehoiakim." Eliakim reigned eleven years, and was succeeded by his son, Jehoiachin, who reigned only three months. Nebuchadnezzar made Mattaniah, uncle to Jehoiachin and son of Josiah, king, and changed his name to "Zedekiah." (2 Kings 23:31 to 24:20.) Zedekiah began to reign at the age of twenty-one years, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. (2 Chron. 36:11.) "He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah his God." He followed the example of his brother, Jehoiakim, and of other wicked kings, and not the good example of his father. "He humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of Jehovah." (2 Chron. 36:12.) Jeremiah warned Zedekiah from God against rebelling and fighting against the king of Babylon; but while at times he consulted Jeremiah and seemed disposed to listen to him, he would not obey the word of God spoken by Jeremiah. For this and the continued sins of the Jews, God brought the Babylonians against Jerusalem and the kingdom to destroy them. In this sense Nebuchadnezzar is God's "servant" and "battle-ax and weapons of war," although a wicked and heathen king. (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10; 51:20.) Nebuchadnezzar made war upon the Jews with wicked intent to plunder and to destroy; but God, in his overruling power, used them to chastise his people.

In the ordinary order of human events it is said that Nebuchadnezzar did this, but in the divine record we see in it the hand of God. (See Dan. 4.) God brought upon Jerusalem the king of the Chaldeans. (2 Chron. 36:17.) When God had served his purpose with the Chaldeans, he destroyed Babylon for its own wickedness. Jeremiah pro-

nounced the terrible condemnation against Babylon in Jer. 50, 51. This demonstrates the fact that God overrules a wicked nation to chastise and punish others, and yet does not approve of that nation, but destroys it for its wickedness.

II. Zedekiah and His Men Flee and Are Captured

"Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." (2 Kings 24:20.) In the fourth year of his reign Zedekiah took an oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 51:59; Ezek. 17:11-21), but he broke this oath and sent to Egypt to get help in his rebellion against Babylon. In addition to the sins of the king, the chief priests and the people "trespassed very greatly after all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of Jehovah which he had hallowed in Jerusalem." (2 Chron. 36:14.) All the abominations of which the people were guilty are mentioned in Jer. 7:8-11; 23:9-15; Ezek. 8:18. Against all these abominations and the transgressions of his people God warned them through his prophets frequently. The prophets pointed out clearly the destruction to which their many sins would lead them, but the people "mocked the messengers of God" and killed many of them.

Nebuchadnezzar went against Jerusalem in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. The captivity began then. (Jer. 25:1; Dan. 1: 1, 2; 2 Kings 24:1.) The Chaldeans put Jehoiakim in chains for the purpose of carrying him to Babylon, but for some cause they did not carry him away. Nebuchadnezzar went against Jerusalem again in the reign of Jehoiachin, when the second captivity took place. (2 Kings 24:8-16; Ezek. 1:1-13.) The siege of this lesson began on the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah and continued until the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of his reign—eighteen months. (Jer. 52:4-6.) The famine in Jerusalem was sore. Many of the people starved, and great sufferings were endured. At this time the complete downfall of the nation and the destruction of the city came. It seems that many houses within the city walls were torn down and the material used for strengthening the walls of the city. (Jer. 33:4.) A breach was finally made in the wall. "All the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate." The inner gate may be "the middle gate." No one can determine. When Zedekiah and his men of war saw these officers and generals of the Chaldean army sitting "in the middle gate," probably holding a conference as to how to proceed, they fled out of the city by night. They went "by the way of the gate between the two walls." (Jer. 52:7.) We learn of these two walls in 2 Chron. 32:5. Zedekiah "went by the way of the Arabah." This was the depression of the Jordan valley. The route which they went after leaving the city was toward Jericho. Possibly they hoped to cross the Jordan and to escape that way. "But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho." His army had scattered and left him. (2 Kings 25:5.) Having arrested Zedekiah, the Chaldeans took him to Nebuchadnezzar, "to Riblah," in the land of Hamath, and Nebuchadnezzar "gave judgment upon him."III. The Punishment of the King

The judgment that Nebuchadnezzar gave was that Zedekiah's sons should be slain at Riblah "before his eyes." Also "all the princes of

Judah" were slain "in Riblah." (Jer. 52:10.) In Jerusalem also young men were slain "with the sword in the house of their sanctuary," where they had gone for refuge. No compassion was shown to "young man or virgin, old man or hoary-headed." (2 Chron. 36:17.) The further judgment was that Zedekiah's eyes should be put out and he should be bound in fetters and carried to Babylon. The last thing his eyes beheld was the death agonies of his sons and nobles. A horrible picture for a blind man to the end of his life! Ezekiel prophesied that Zedekiah should be carried "to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there." (Ezek. 12:13.) Jeremiah said that Zedekiah should not escape out of the land of the Chaldeans, but should surely be captured and should speak mouth to mouth with Nebuchadnezzar and should look into his eyes. (Jer. 32: 3-5.) Zedekiah's eyes did look into the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar. This was done at Riblah, whence Zedekiah, blind, was carried to Babylon; and, hence, although there in the land, yet he never saw the city. God's word had not failed. Everything which the prophets announced would occur did actually occur.

IV. The People Taken as Captives to Babylon

The temple was again robbed, and everything that was left after the former spoiling was carried to Babylon. (2 Chron. 36:10.) The king's house and all the houses of his princes were robbed of all their treasures. (Jer. 52:17-23.) The walls of the City were broken down. All this came to pass as Jeremiah had foretold. (2 Chron. 36:21; Jer. 7:12-15; 21:8-14; 25:11; 29:10; 34:1-5.)

All who escaped from the sword, even the deserters who fell away to the Chaldeans, were taken as captives to Babylon. Only the poorest of the people were left. These were left as vinedressers and husbandmen. A great number of the best people were taken away before this with Jehoiachin. (Jer. 52:28-30.) Jeremiah had foretold that the captivity should continue for seventy years, "until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths." (2 Chron. 36:21.) God ordained that the land should rest every seventh year. This was the sabbath year. (Lev. 25:1-7.) He warned the people that if they did not obey him in allowing the land to rest every seventh year he would scatter them among their enemies until the land should keep its sabbaths. (Lev. 26:27-35.) This was fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar made provision for Jeremiah's safety and comfort. (Jer. 39:11-14.)

The people had asked for a king that he might lead them in battle and win victories for them. God, through Samuel, warned the people against a change in the government to a kingdom. After one hundred and twenty years, the kingdom was divided. Ten tribes rebelled and set up the northern kingdom, or the kingdom of Israel. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained faithful to the house of David and continued his kingdom, known as the kingdom of Judah. The kingdom of Israel had been destroyed about a hundred and thirty years before this time. Now the kingdom of Judah has been destroyed. The kingdom had proved to be an utter failure.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The history of the children of Israel should teach us that no nation or people can prosper when in rebellion against God. Sin is a reproach to any people. The path of success must be the highway of holiness. It was true with Israel, and it is true to-day with us.

2. The people had been sufficiently warned against sin. They had been encouraged to turn from sin, but they would not do so. The integrity of Jehovah demanded punishment for their sins. Jehovah did not force them to turn away from evil, but instructed and warned them. Jehovah does not force his people to-day to do right. He shows us the good and the right way and encourages us to walk therein, but we are responsible if we do not turn from our evil ways.

3. The people had asked for a king and rejected Jehovah. Their king did not, because he could not, save them. The children of Israel had their own way, but that way led to destruction. The way that seemeth right unto man, then as now, is the way of death. We should not be slow in learning this.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

To what does this lesson bring us?
How long had it been since the kingdom of Israel was destroyed?
At what should we be astonished?
What are we warned against?
What lesson should we learn from the history of Israel?

Jerusalem Besieged

Who was king of Judah at this time?
What other name did he have?
Who was Nebuchadnezzar?
When did Zedekiah begin to reign?
What kind of a king was he?
Of what did Jeremiah warn him?
How was Nebuchadnezzar the "servant of God?"
Did Nebuchadnezzar know that he was being used of God?
Who sent Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem?
What punishment was to be meted out to Babylon?
Who besieged Jerusalem?

Zedekiah and His Men Flee and Are Captured

What agreement had Zedekiah made with Nebuchadnezzar?
Why did he break this?
What other sins did he commit?
Who joined him in his sins?
What did the prophets do?
When did Nebuchadnezzar go against Jerusalem?
What did they do with Jehoiakim?
When did Nebuchadnezzar go against Jerusalem the second time?
How long did he besiege the city?
Describe the suffering of the people.
How did the Chaldeans get to the middle gate?
What did Zedekiah and his men do?
How did they escape?
Which way did they go?
What became of Zedekiah's army?
Where did they capture Zedekiah?
Who gave judgment upon him?

The Punishment of the King

What punishment was first meted out to Zedekiah?
What further judgment was passed on him?
What picture did he have to hold in mind the remainder of his life?
Who else were punished?
What had Ezekiel prophesied?
Had anything failed that had been prophesied?
Where did Zedekiah die?

The People Taken as Captives to Babylon

What was done to the temple?
What was done to the vessels of the house?

What was done to the walls?
What was done with the people who remained alive?
Who were left in the land?
How long were they to remain in captivity?
Why should they remain there seventy years?
Why had the people asked for a king?
Describe the miserable failure of the kingdom.

Practical Suggestions

What lesson does the history of Israel teach us?
What warning did they have then?
What warnings do we have?
Why does Jehovah not force people to serve him?
Who is responsible for our condemnation?
How does the way of man lead to destruction?
What lesson should we learn from this?

Day of wrath — O dreadful day!—
When this world shall pass away,
and the heavens together roll,
Shriveling like a parched scroll,
Long foretold by saint and sage,
David's harp and sibyl's page.

Day of terror, day of doom,
When the Judge at last shall come!
Through the deep and silent gloom,
shrouding every human tomb,
Shall th' archangel's trumpet tone
Summon all before the throne.

—Celaeno

Lesson XII—June 23, 1929

A PSALM OF PRAISE

Ps. 103:1-13.

1 Bless Jehovah, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless Jehovah. O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits:
3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
5 Who satisfieth thy desire with good things,
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.
6 Jehovah executeth righteous Acts,
And judgments for all that are oppressed.
7 He made known his ways unto Moses,
His doings unto the children of Israel.
8 Jehovah is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness.
9 He will not always chide;
Neither will he keep his anger for ever.
10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins,
Nor rewarded us after our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is his lovingkindness toward them that fear him.
12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
13 Like as a father pitieth his children,
So Jehovah pitieth them that fear him.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"Bless Jehovah, 0 my soul." (*Ps. 103:1.)

TIME.—During David's lifetime, if he wrote this song; about B.C. 536, if it was written after the captivity.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The author of the Psalm, men, and angels.

DEVOTIONAL READING—-Ps. 107:23-31.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

June 17. M. . . . . Praise for Mercies. (Ps. 103:1-12.)
June 18. T . . . . . .Universal Praise. (Ps. 103:13-22.)
June 19. W . . . . . .A Worthy God. (2 Sam. 22:1-7.)
June 20. T. . . . . A Wonder-Working God. (Isa. 25:1-8.)
June 21. F. . . . . A Song of Trust. (Isa. 26:1-10.)
June 22. S. . . . . Praise Through Christ. (Heb. 13:7-17.)
June 23. S. . . . . Seeing Jehovah in the Sea. (Ps. 107:23-31.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

It is not known who wrote this Psalm. The inscription says that David wrote it, but many think it was written at the end of the captivity. Any time is a good time to thank and praise Jehovah. The Jews were filled with the deepest gratitude upon their return from captivity. All people should be grateful now. This Psalm contains expressions of the highest conceptions of God's mercy and many bless-

ings and the deepest gratitude. It places before us the loftiest motives for continued obedience and praise to God. The beauty and meaning of this lovely Psalm are so simple upon the face of it that not much is needed to be said here. There is no nobler song of praise in any language. It covers an immense scope of thought and mingles the personal and general in exquisite harmony. Almost all the prominent attributes of Jehovah find place within its short compass, and yet without undue crowding. It touches the borders of the gospel revelation in its presentation of the goodness, love, and compassion of God.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Exhortation to Praise Jehovah

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul." To "bless Jehovah" is to thank, praise, and magnify him; it is not simply to use words. "Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised." Many other Psalms abound in such praise and gratitude as this Psalm. Through Christ we are to "offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name." (Heb. 13:15.) "0 my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." The Psalmist calls upon all the faculties and powers within him to praise God and to magnify his holy name. All praise and all service must be from the heart. We must worship God in Spirit and in truth. All praise must be in Spirit and in truth. As the whole nature in all its parts shares in his blessing, so should it all participate in his praise. We become so accustomed to the myriad blessings of God's goodness that we need to be aroused to the realization of gratitude for it. We all have a multitude of blessings which should keep us from forgetting "all his benefits."

II. God's Forgiveness

Among the first things mentioned for which .we are to praise God is his forgiveness. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." This stands at the head of the blessings he is about to enumerate, because, under the old dispensation, where sin incurred its punishment in the present life, the removal of guilt was considered the condition of blessing. God is here regarded as the true healer of diseases. "Diseases" includes all kinds of inward as well as outward sufferings. We need to keep this thought before us in the treatment of diseases. Three verses here speak of God's forgiveness—verses 3, 10, 12. All of us can say and will say when we see our own sins: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities." The more we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin and realize its fearful and everlasting consequences, the more we rejoice in the forbearance, mercy, and forgiveness of God. Both David (Ps. 32:1, 2) and Paul (Rom. 4:7, 8) in the forgiveness of God exclaim: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." As the east and the west are far and forever apart or can never meet, so sins forgiven will never be punished or remembered against justified persons so long as they continue in the righteousness of God. Under the new covenant it is said: "For I will forgive their

iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more." (Jer. 31:34.) But none of the righteous deeds of the righteous man will be remembered when he turns away from his righteous life or from God and pursues the course of the wicked, but in his sins he will be lost. (Ezek. 18: 23, 24.) So that the entrance into heaven is that we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end. (Heb. 3:6, 14.)

III. God the Giver of All Blessings

God "redeemeth thy life from destruction." Life was the great boon of Jewish thought. "That thy days may be long in the land," was a promise that every Jewish heart appreciated to the full, Early death was a thing of constant dread; therefore, they praised God greatly for the protection of life. God healed Hezekiah. He used a fig plaster as a remedy. (Isa. 38:21.) The use of means does not destroy the fact that God healed. We are grateful to God for all remedies for diseases and afflictions. Many times the Psalmist prayed God to heal him. (Ps. 6:2; 30:2.) At different times and in different ways God saved David from destruction. He so saved the children of Israel. God's "loving-kindness and tender mercies" are so abundant that they are called a "crown." By satisfying the desire "with good things" youth is "renewed like the eagle." Different birds and other animals are commended in the Bible for different things. The eagle is the king of birds. It represents courage, strength, endurance, and long life.

"They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa. 40:31.) God bore the children of Israel on eagles' wings in saving them from Egypt. (Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11.) For the abundance of the temporal blessings of life God must be praised. Our hearts are enlarged, our gratitude is deepened, and our thanksgiving is increased as we sum up and Consider all of God's benefits and blessings. Every good thing that we enjoy comes from God. Satan has nothing good to give God's people. He is too mean to give it to the Lord's people, even if he had anything good to give them. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." (James 1:17.) We are to "praise God, from whom all blessings flow." All material prosperity, all advantages in education, our homes and their comforts and conveniences, our parents, our children, our friends, and everything good that we have ever enjoyed or ever will enjoy must come from God. He is the bountiful Giver of life and all its attendant blessings.

IV. God Is Merciful

Another reason for praising God is that he is "merciful and gracious." He judgeth in righteousness and "executeth righteous Acts." He metes out righteous "judgments for all that are oppressed." He is just and merciful. He "crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." The figure of crowning suggests the ideas of dignity and beauty, while the absence of merit in the object and the sovereign freeness of the gift are indicated by making the crown itself a crown 164

of “loving-kindness and tender mercies.” The crown is, as it were, woven out of “loving-kindness and tender mercies.” The grace of God is the unmerited favor of God. To be merciful is to treat an offender better than he deserves. God treats us far better than we deserve. If we are merciful, if we treat others better than their unkindness and sins deserve, we shall obtain mercy; if we show no mercy, none will be extended to us in the judgment of God. “Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness and truth; keeping loving-kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation.” (Ex. 34: 6, 7; see also Ps. 86:15.) God's mercy is as great toward men as the heavens are higher than the earth. How beautiful and encouraging are these lines: “For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime: weeping may tarry for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.” (Ps. 30:5.) God's anger is not an animal passion, but a just and righteous condemnation of sin; yet he is merciful. “He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger forever.” We know something of the pity and mercy of a father toward his children. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him.” The father in the parable of the prodigal son is a fine example. This is the nearest approach the Old Testament makes to that precious and all-pervading thought of the gospel, the Fatherhood of God. Here, however, it is only “like” a father.

V. The Glory of God

The love, justice, and mercy of God are connected with the glory of God. The latter part of this Psalm emphasizes God's glory. The song of the Psalmist near the close of the chapter swells into a magnificent apostrophe, in which, leaving earth behind him and soaring into the heavens, he sees Jehovah sitting upon the throne of the universe and calls upon all the orders of the heavenly intelligences to unite in an overwhelming song of praise to his glory. “Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” (Verse 19.) Jehovah is neither an earthly monarch nor a local deity. As the heavens overarch the whole earth, so does his power. Because of all that God is and has done for men, the human heart, with its deep gratitude and overflowing praise, is not competent to fully thank God and give to him the adoration due his holy name. So the Psalmist calls upon the angelic host, all works of his in all places of God's dominion, and again upon his own soul, to bless Jehovah. Three things are declared concerning the angels here: (1) they are mighty in strength; (2) they fulfill his word by “hearkening unto the voice of his word;” (3) they do God's pleasure, or please him. Since angels in heaven obey God, can men expect to reach heaven in disobedience to him? With all our gratitude, praise, obedience to God, and desire and effort to impress the tenderness, pity, forbearance, mercy, grace, forgiveness, love, and salvation of this Psalm, we realize that we fall far short; but we heartily and fully and forever join the Psalmist in saying: “Bless Jehovah, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.” This beautiful Psalm ends just where it begins—in the personal homage of the Psalmist's own Soul.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. We should see to it that our “souls” bless the Lord, not merely our “lips.” If our souls bless him, we will surely serve him. No one can truly praise God without serving him; no one can truly serve him without praising him.

2. We often forget the goodness and the mercy of our God. If God were as forgetful of us as we are of him, we would be lost. It is in him that we live, move, and have our being. He sustains us every moment of our existence. We are his dependent creatures. We should praise him for his watch care over us and for his never-failing grace which sustains us.

3. Any one of the attributes of Jehovah is infinite. It is infinite in dimensions. Finite minds cannot grasp it. We can meditate upon it and praise God for a knowledge of it. The sum total of the revealed attributes of God is expressed in “God is love.”

4. We should praise God for his forgiveness. We are in a complex world. We violate the law of our being and the laws of God possibly hourly. Hence, we need pardon, and it comes only through the forgiving nature of God. We need his forgiveness hourly as his children.

5. God's forgiveness and his mercy are linked together. We cannot merit the mercy of our God. We are unworthy of his mercy. The knowledge of this should deepen our gratitude and enrich our praise. It is possible for us to be eternally crowned in heaven through the ten-tier mercies of our God. Let us ever sing his praise.

6. At the throne of divine grace new strength is ever waiting for those who claim it by faith. The true Christian may ever be young in spiritual strength. It is only in Christ that we can become strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. We should know the value of spiritual strength and call upon all that is within us to praise God for it. The worst oppression is that of sin. The true emancipator is Christ. He is ever ready to deliver us from the bondage of sin and give us the liberty which is in Christ. This is another reason for our praising him. The Psalmist summoned all the wondrous hosts of heaven to praise God. How shall you and I dare to withhold our full measure of praise to him? “Bless the Lord, O my soul.”

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who wrote this Psalm?
Why were the Jews filled with gratitude on their return from captivity?
What can you say of the beauty of this Psalm?
What does it contain?

Exhortation to Praise Jehovah

What does “bless Jehovah” mean?
What sacrifices are we now to offer God?
How are these to he offered?
From what must all service come?
What should we not forget?

God's Forgiveness

What is the first reason mentioned for praising God?
What can we all say?
What causes us to rejoice in the forgiveness of God?
To whom is God's forgiveness extended?
Upon what condition is salvation in heaven based?
Will God ever remember sins again when they have been forgiven?

God, the Giver of All Blessings

How was life considered under the law?
Upon what was long life conditioned?
Name some one whom God has healed.
Does the use of means show that God does not do the healing?
With what does God crown those who obey him?
From whom do we receive all good things?
Does Satan have anything good to offer God's people?
Why would he not give it if he had it?
Who is the bountiful Giver of life and all its blessings?

God Is Merciful

Give another reason for praising God.
With what does he crown his people?
What is the grace of God?
What is it to be merciful?
What blessings come to the merciful?
How great are God's mercies for man?
What may be said about God's anger?

The Glory of God

With what are the love, justice, and mercy of God connected?
What does the latter part of this Psalm emphasize?
How is Jehovah represented in this Psalm?
Upon what does the Psalmist call to praise God?
What should we give God always?
Name the three things declared concerning angels.
In what should we join the Psalmist in saying?

Practical Suggestions

How should we praise God?
What do we often forget?
What would be the result if God forgot us?
What can we say of any attribute of God?
Why should we praise him for his forgiveness?
Why can we not merit God's mercy?
What may all have by faith?
From what have we been set free?
What should be the full measure of our praise?

O, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace!

My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad,
The honors of thy name.

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Savior comes;
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Lesson XIII—June 30, 1929

REVIEW—PROPHETS AND KINGS OF JUDAH'S DECLINE

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 130.

DAILY HOME READING.—

June 24. M. . . . . Isaiah's Inspiration. (Isa. 2:1-11.)
June 25. T. . . . . Hezekiah's Reign. (2 Chron. 29:1-11.)
June 26. W . . . . . .The Suffering Savior. (Heb. 9:23-28.)
June 27. T. . . . . The Message of Jeremiah. (Jer. 2:1-13.)
June 28. F. . . . . The Sure Word of Prophecy. (2 Pet. 1:12-21.)
June 29. S. . . . . Judah Taken Captive. (2 Chron. 36:11-21.)
June 30. S. . . . . Hoping in Jehovah. (Ps. 180:1-8.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

During the days of Samuel the children of Israel asked for a king. This was a change from God's government to man's government. The faithful prophet, Samuel, was greatly distressed and took the matter to Jehovah. Jehovah told him that the people had not rejected him, but had rejected Jehovah. Samuel was instructed to warn the people and tell them what their king would do for them. They listened to Samuel, but said, "Nay; but we will have a king over us" (1 Sam. 8: 19); and when they refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel, "Jehovah said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king" (verse 22). Jehovah told them the kind of kingdom they should have and selected their first king. Saul, the first king, reigned forty years; David, the second king, reigned forty years; and Solomon, the third king, reigned forty years. The kingdom stood a united kingdom for one hundred and twenty years. The ten tribes rebelled against the house of David and set up the northern kingdom, or the kingdom of Israel. Benjamin and Judah constituted the southern kingdom, or kingdom of Judah. The kingdom was divided about 903 B.C. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed B.C. 640; the kingdom of Judah was destroyed B.C. 507. The northern kingdom continued for about two hundred and sixty-three years, and the kingdom of Judah continued three hundred and ninety-six years, or one hundred and thirty-three years after the kingdom of Israel was destroyed. The united kingdom had continued for one hundred and twenty years, thus making the reign of the kingdom about five hundred and sixteen years. When the people asked for a king to be like other nations and to save them, they thought that man's way was better than God's way. We now behold the destruction of the kingdom and the people in captivity. Indeed, the way that seems right unto man leads to destruction.

Isaiah and Jeremiah were the two major prophets who instructed, encouraged, and warned the children of Israel. Their teachings and warnings were disregarded, and destruction came upon them. Other prophets also warned them. Isaiah prophesied about the advent of Christ, the Jewish Messiah, the Savior of the world. He has been

called the "Messianic prophet." Jeremiah prophesied during the siege of Jerusalem and wept over the destruction of the kingdom. He has been called the "weeping prophet."

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSONS

Give the subject of this lesson.
Repeat the Golden Text.
How long did the kingdom continue united?
How long did the kingdom of Israel continue after the division?
How long did the kingdom of Judah continue after the destruction of Israel?
How long did the kingdom continue in existence?

LESSON I

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Tell what you know about Isaiah.
What was the condition at that time?
To whom did Isaiah prophesy?

LESSON II

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was Hezekiah?
What did he do to instruct the people?
How did they worship God?
What was the occasion of joy in Jerusalem?

LESSON III

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
What two kinds of suffering are there?
What blessing is there in suffering?
What comfort was given the people?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON IV

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
How was Christ despised?
Describe Jesus' sufferings.
With whom did he die?
How did he triumph?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON V

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was king at this time?
How had the book been lost?
Tell how it was found.
Tell what was done with it after it was found.
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON VI

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was Jeremiah?
Why was he arrested?
Describe his punishment.
How was he acquitted?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON VII

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
What is obedience?
Are all blessings conditional?
Can one worship God acceptably in disobedience?
Mention some of the curses of disobedience.
Give some practical point on this lesson.

LESSON VIII

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
What was the old covenant?
What is the new covenant?
Contrast the two.
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON IX

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Relate what Jeremiah did.
Describe his suffering.
What was done to the temple?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON X

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who were the Rechabites?
Describe their manner of living.
How were they tested?
What is the meaning of the lesson?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON XI

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who besieged Jerusalem?
Describe its fall.
What was done with the king?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

LESSON XII

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text.
What were the people called upon to do?
What reasons have people for praising God?
How can people glorify God?
Give some practical point of this lesson.

THIRD QUARTER

PROPHETIC TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP OF JUDAH

THE EXILE AND THE RESTORATION

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS' COURSE)

AIM: T*o lead the pupils in discovering and appreciating how God, through prophets and other leaders, gave help and guidance to the people of Judah, in order that the pupils may come to see the hand of God in their own lives and in all human affairs.*

Lesson I—July 7, 1929

THE STORY OF EZEKIEL

Ezek. 3:4-11; 24:15-18.

4 And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

5 For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of a hard language, but to the house of Israel;

6 Not to many peoples of a strange speech and of a hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, if I sent thee to them, they would hearken unto thee.

7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for au the house of Israel are of a hard forehead and of a stiff heart.

8 Behold, I have made thy face hard against their faces, and thy forehead hard against their foreheads.

9 As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house.

10 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thy heart, and hear with thine ears.

11 And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah; whether they will hear. or whether they will forbear.

15 Also the word cf Jehovah came unto me, saying,

16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet thou shalt neither mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.

17 Sigh, but not aloud, make no mourning for the dead; bind thy headtire upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.

18 So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

*GOLDEN TEXT.—"As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (*Ezek. 33:11.)

TIME.—About B.C. 594. PLACE.—The land of the Chaldeans. PERSONS.—Ezekiel and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—-Ps. 121.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

July 1. M. . . . . Ezekiel's Call. (Ezek. 2:1-7.)
July 2. T. . . . . Ezekiel's Preparation. (Ezek. 3:4-11.)
July 3. W . . . . . .Ezekiel's Vision. (Ezek. 1:4-14.)
July 4. T. . . . . Ezekiel's Message. (Ezek. 2:8 to 3:3.)
July 5. F. . . . . Ezekiel's Responsibility. (Ezek. 3:16-21.)
July 6. S. . . . . Hearing and Obeying. (Matt. 7:24-29.)
July 7. S. . . . . Jehovah a Preserver. (Ps. 121.)

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

This lesson is found in the book of Ezekiel. This book is the third of the major prophecies. Ezekiel was taken captive, with Jehoiachin and others, eleven years before the destruction. These captives were settled at Tel-abib, an unknown place on the river Chebar. This was a river of Babylonia, which emptied into the Euphrates from the east almost two hundred miles north of Babylon. Some say this river was in the vicinity of Babylon.

Ezekiel was the son of Buzi and belonged to the priestly family. (Ezek. 1:1-3; 2 Kings 24:8-16; 2 Chron. 36:9, 10.) He began to prophesy before the destruction of Jerusalem in the fifth month of the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, and "in the thirtieth year," either of his age or of "the new era of Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, who began to reign B.C. 625." (Smith's Bible Diction-any.) The Jews in captivity with Ezekiel were yet rebellious and idolatrous (Ezek. 2:20:33-39), and hearkened unto false prophets (Ezek. 13:1-19). Jeremiah exhorted them to hearken not to false prophets, but to seek the peace of the city where they were held as captives, for in the peace of their conquerors would they have peace; and to take wives, rear children, build houses, and till the ground until the expiration of seventy years. (Jer. 29:1-32.)

When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, he made Gedaliah ruler over the poorer people left in the land (2 Kings 25:23; Jer. 50:5), with his seat of government at Mizpah. Ishmael slew Gedaliah. (Jer. 44:1-10.) Johanan rescued the Jews whom Ishmael had compelled to follow him, and through fear of the Chaldeans persuaded them against the wise counsel of Jeremiah to go into Egypt. (Jer. 41:11-18.) These Jews who fled to Egypt against the counsel of God for safety from Nebuchadnezzar were slain by him there. (Jer. 42.) During this time Ezekiel was prophesying and encouraging the Jews in captivity. The last date he mentioned is the twenty-seventh year of the captivity (Ezek. 29:17); so he prophesied for at least twenty-two years. During a part of this period at least Daniel also was a famous prophet. (Ezek. 14:14; 28:3.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Ezekiel’s Prophecies

It is well, as we are to study a few lessons from the book of Ezekiel, to learn something of Ezekiel's prophecies. Smith's Bible Dictionary gives the following: "His predictions are marvelously varied. He has instances of visions (as 8:11), symbolic actions (as 4:7), similitudes (as 12, 15), parables (as 17), proverbs (as 12:22; 18:1, 2), poems (as 19), allegories (as 23, 24), open prophecies (as 6, 7, 20, etc.)."

His book has been divided into nine sections: "I. Ezekiel's call (1:1 to 3:15). II. The general carrying out of the commission (3:16 to 7:27). III. The rejection of the people because of their idolatrous worship (8-11). IV. The sins of the age rebuked in detail (12-19). V. The nature of the judgment, and the guilt which caused it (20-23). VI. The meaning of the now commencing punishment (24). VII. God's judgment pronounced on seven heathen nations (24-32). VIII. Prophecies after the destruction of Jerusalem concerning the future condition of Israel (33-39). IX. The glorious consummation (40-48)."

II. The Prophet's Commission

God spoke unto Ezekiel, and the Spirit entered into him. (Ezek. 2: 2.) God addressed him as "son of man." He was sent to the house of Israel. lie was to speak only the words which Jehovah gave him. He was true and faithful to his commission. "Son of man" is often applied to Ezekiel. It is once applied to Daniel (Dan. 8:17) , but it is not applied to any other prophet. The phrase was no doubt taken from Chaldean usage during the sojourn of Daniel and Ezekiel in Chaldea, but the Spirit who sanctioned the words of the prophet implied by it lowliness and frailty of the prophet as a man and not as angels. Though he was permitted to see the visions befitting angels, yet he is not to be exalted, but just the "son of man."

He had been told to eat the roll which was presented to him. (Ezek. 3:1.) He had been commanded to open his mouth and "eat that which I give thee." (Ezek. 2:8.) He is to receive the words of Jehovah and speak them faithfully to the people. It matters not how unpleasant they may be nor how difficult the task, he is to obey/ God. This was in wide contrast to what the people had been accustomed to hearing before they came into Babylonian captivity. False prophets had prophesied to please the people. These prophets had not taught anything unpleasant or unpopular to the people. Ezekiel's task is to hear the word of God and teach it faithfully to the people. He is sent, not to a strange people or a people having a "hard language," or a language difficult to understand and speak, "but to the house of Israel." He is not sent "to many peoples of a strange speech and of a hard language," but he is sent to Israel, whose language he knew and could speak without difficulty, lie is not to mince matters, but to speak faithfully the word of Jehovah.

A strange people would be more inclined to hear the message which Ezekiel had from Jehovah. However, he is to deliver Jehovah's message to Jehovah's people. The people had just recently been brought into captivity, and it seems that they were not as yet ready to hear the message which God had for them.

III. The Hardness of Heart

It is strange that another race of people would be more likely to hear the message which God had for Ezekiel to present to them than the children of Judah would. The people had not yet suffered enough at the hands of the enemy to be willing to listen to Jehovah's message; they had not yet been chastised in their captivity sufficiently to cause them to repent. No people will hear the word of God with an

inclination of heart to do it until they are penitent of sins against God. Jehovah told him that "the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me." The prophets back in the land of Judah had pleaded with the people; Jeremiah had wept over them; but they would not hear Jehovah. The reason assigned is: "For all the house of Israel are of a hard forehead and of a stiff heart." Because the people were so hard-hearted Jehovah sends Ezekiel with a hard message to them. He tells Ezekiel: "I have made thy face hard against their faces, and thy forehead hard against their foreheads." Those to whom Ezekiel is sent are indeed wicked characters. Ezekiel is not to be discouraged or disappointed at their hard-heartedness. They are not ready to be convicted of sin or to tremble at the punishment which they are to receive. They were obstinate against God and against God's messenger. He must resolve to summon all courage in speaking unto them and denouncing their sins. He will need a heart "as an adamant harder than flint." Though they are rebellious and hardhearted, yet the prophet must not let pity or anything keep him from speaking plainly and emphatically the word of God to them. He should not fear them; "neither be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house."

Ezekiel should get the word of God in his own heart. "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thy heart, and hear with thine ears." lie could not speak with courage and conviction unless he should "hear with thine ears" and "receive in thine heart" the message of Jehovah. When we believe God's word firmly, the conviction of its truth gives us courage to speak it with boldness.

Ezekiel is to go to God's people. His commission is: "Get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." He must go to them of "the captivity," who are being afflicted by the enemies, and it was to be hoped that they would receive his message, lie is to look upon them as the children of his people—those of his own flesh and blood, those for whom he ought to have a deep concern, as Paul had for his kinsmen. (Rom. 9:3.) Ezekiel must tell them all that Jehovah had spoken unto him, and he must tell them that Jehovah .had told him to tell them. Ezekiel is not to hesitate, but to speak plainly and simply in the name of Jehovah all that Jehovah wants them to know. It is not for any preacher of the gospel to-day to question or doubt the good in what one may be doing in the name of the Lord; it is the task of the faithful servant of God to do God's will and leave the results to Jehovah. We need not think that any are too good to need the message of God; neither should we think that any are too bad to receive it. It is our business, as it was the task of Ezekiel, to preach the word of God to all.

IV. Death of Ezekiel's Wife a Sign to Judah

Ezekiel has been telling the people who are in captivity of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The people had been led away into captivity from Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem. He had heard of the destruction of it almost three years after it had

occurred. (Ezek. 33:21.) In the first part of this chapter he had told them there was no hope at all of preventing the trouble. Ezekiel was to deliver this message at great sacrifice and suffering. Jehovah said to him: "I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." (Ezek. 24:15.) At one stroke Jehovah will impress upon Ezekiel, and he in turn should try to impress upon Israel, the great cost of the message which he was to deliver to them. If they could appreciate the cost of the message, probably they would appreciate the message more. Ezekiel should "neither mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Sigh, but not aloud, make no mourning for the dead; bind thy headtire upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men." (Verses 16, 17.) He should lament in silence; no loud expressions of grief should escape from his lips. Ezekiel was a priest, and no signs of mourning should be upon him. The "headtire" was a part of the clothing of the priest. Ezekiel, faithful to God, "spake unto the people in the morning; and at even" his wife died." The death of his wife should symbolize to the Jews the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Ezekiel was faithful, for he says: "I did in the morning as I was commanded."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. There is much work in the kingdom of God to be done. The difficult tasks require consecration and faithfulness to Jehovah. Those who shun the hard tasks rob their lives of rich blessings.

2. The hearts of people are hardened as they turn away from God's word. The word of God, if received, will mellow the hearts; but if rejected, it will harden the heart. This is true of those who are in the church or out of the church. It is a dangerous thing to harden the heart against the will of God.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Where is this lesson found?
Who was Ezekiel?
When was he taken captive?
Where was he taken?
What was the condition of the Jews when first in the land of captivity?
Where did some of the Jews go for refuge?
What became of them?
While Jeremiah was prophesying to the Jews in Jerusalem, who was prophesying to those in captivity?

Ezekiel's Prophecies

Where is the book of Ezekiel classed in Biblical literature?
Name the different kinds of predictions found in this book.
Name the nine subdivisions of the book.

The Prophet's Commission

Who spoke to Ezekiel?
How did Jehovah address him?
To whom was he sent?
What was he to speak?
Why is he called "son of man?"
What other prophet is so called?
What was Ezekiel told to eat?
What did this signify?
What may be said of the unpleasantness of his task?
Why were the Jews less inclined to hear Jehovah than other people at this time?

The Hardness of Heart

Why did the people harden their hearts?
Name one blessing of chastisement.
How long had they been in captivity at this time?
What was the difference between Jeremiah and Ezekiel?
What is meant by Ezekiel's face being "hard?"
What did Jehovah require of Ezekiel?

Why should he not let pity affect him?
Whom should he tell had sent him?
How should he receive the word of God?
Can one deliver a message for God who has not received it in his own heart?
Was Ezekiel to consider the effect of his message on the hearts of his people?
Who need the word of God?
How would it harden the heart?
How would it melt the heart?

Death of Ezekiel's Wife a Sign to Judah

Of what was Ezekiel telling the people?
Did they know that Jerusalem had been destroyed at this time?
What suffering did Ezekiel endure to impress his message?
What did the death of Ezekiel's wife signify?
How should Ezekiel endure the grief?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What do the difficult tasks in the service of God require?
What effect does shunning work have on one?
How may we harden our hearts?
How may church members receive the greatest blessings from God's messages?

Hear what God, the Lord, hath spoken:
O my people, faint and few,
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Faith abodes I build for you;
Scenes of heartfelt tribulation
Shall no more complex your ways;
You shall name your walls "Salvation,"
And your gates shall all be "Praise."

There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord, your faith rewarding,
All his bounty shall bestow.
Still in undisturbed possession,
Peace and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you feel oppression,
Hear the voice of war again.

Ye no more your suns descending,
Waning moons no more shall see;
But, your griefs forever ending,
Find eternal noon in me.
God shall rise, and, shining o'er you,
Change to day the gloom of night;
He, the Lord, shall be your glory,
God your everlasting light.

— William Cowper.

Lesson ll—July 14, 1929

EZEKIEL TEACHES PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ezek. 33:7-16.

7 So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, hut his blood will I require at thy hand.

9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he turn not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul.

10 And thou, son of man, say unto the house of Israel: Thus ye speak, saying, Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then can we live?

11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

12 And thou, son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall he that is righteous be able to live thereby in the day that he sinneth.

13 When I say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his righteousness, and commit iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in his iniquity that he hath committed, therein shall he die.

14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that which he had taken by robbery, walk in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

16 None of his sins that he hath committed shall be remembered against him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Each one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12.)
TIME.—About B.C. 587.
PLACE.—The land of the Chaldeans.
PERSONS.—Ezekiel and the Jews.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 125.
DAILY HOME READING.—

July 8. M. . . . . Personal Responsibility. (Ezek. 18:20-30.)
July 9. T. . . . . Official Responsibility. (Ezek. 33:7-16.)
July 10. W . . . . . .Responsibility for Gifts. (Rom. 12:1-8.)
July 11. T. . . . . Responsibility According to Light. (Matt. 11:20-24.)
July 12. F. . . . . Responsibility According to Opportunity. (Matt. 25:19-30.)
July 13. S. . . . . Reward and Retribution. (Rom. 2:1-11.)
July 14. S. . . . . Abiding in Jehovah. (Ps. 125.)

Introductory Thoughts

The prophet has just prophesied against several foreign nations. As judge in the name of Jehovah, he has passed sentence upon all the neighboring nations. He has just finished sentence against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, and Babylon. The eight chapters preceding this lesson deal with these nations. He now turns

attention again to the children of Israel and begins to instruct and warn God's people. The Jews were glad to hear the doom which was passed on all these other nations; they were not so well pleased with the prophecy concerning Israel. They were then, as people are now, glad to hear the condemnation of others, but not so anxious to hear concerning themselves. We are ever ready to apply the teaching of God to others, but slow to take to heart the teachings ourselves.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Ezekiel Made a Watchman

The prophet now takes the figure of a watchman. In time of war or imminent danger it was customary for the city to place a watchman on the wall. This watchman was to "blow the trumpet, and warn the people" (Ezek. 33:3), when he saw the enemy approaching. If any should hear "the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning," then if he should be taken, his "blood shall be upon his own head." He heard the warning, but did not heed it. He could have fled or could have been rescued if he had heeded the warning. He has no one to blame but himself. The watchman was faithful in giving the warning, but the man was unfaithful in heeding the warning. If the watchman had been unfaithful in sounding the warning, then the watchman would have been responsible.

"So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel." The office of a watchman imposed very grave responsibilities on him. He is prepared for this. There is public danger which gives occasion for Jehovah's appointing him as a watchman. He is to be faithful to Jehovah. As a watchman, he is to deliver the message of warning that Jehovah will give him. "Therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me." Ezekiel had no choice in the matter. Jehovah imposed upon him the task and put into his mouth the words that he should say. Ezekiel had only the choice of being faithful to Jehovah or being unfaithful to him. His business as a watchman was (1) to discover the approach and advance of the enemy, and, therefore, he must not be blind or asleep when the enemy approaches; (2) to give notice of the danger promptly by sounding the trumpet. Special trust and confidence are reposed by Jehovah in Ezekiel. If he does his part, he will be blessed; if he fails to discharge his duties faithfully, he will be condemned.

II. The Responsibility of a Watchman

There are fearful responsibilities resting upon the watchman; and as Ezekiel is the watchman for God's people, his responsibilities and work are clearly set forth in this lesson. That he might be properly equipped and might discharge his whole duty as a watchman, God charged him to "hear the word" and to "give them warning" from Jehovah. Nothing but the word of God should be given to them; nothing but the word of God can save men to-day. No creeds and confessions of men could ever save men. "And give them warning from me," is Jehovah's commandment to the prophet. When Ezekiel delivered God's word only, he warned the people from God. They heard God when they heard his word through Ezekiel, and they refused to

hear God and rebelled against God when they refused to hear Ezekiel. Jesus says: "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (John 13:20.) To hear the apostles whom Jesus sent is to hear him, and to hear Jesus is to hear God. He that rejects whom Christ sends rejects Christ. "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16.) As God sent Christ, so he sent the apostles; and as God told Christ what to preach, so he-told the apostles what to preach. (John 17:8, 18; 12:44-50.) One cannot receive Christ and be saved by him while rejecting what the apostles teach. God teaches by Christ and the Holy Spirit through the apostles. God taught the Jews through Ezekiel and the ether prophets. "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them by the Spirit through thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the peoples of the lands." (Neh. 9:30.) There is only one way to be free from the responsibility as a watchman, and that is by faithfully obeying God as a watchman. All personal responsibilities must be met personally; no one can serve as a proxy for us in meeting our responsibilities.

Paul declares that he was free or pure from the blood of all men because he shrank not from declaring the whole counsel of God, kept back nothing that was profitable, and showed by example all things. (Acts 20:18-38.) All Christians are watchmen; all are responsible for the blood of men to the extent of their ability to teach and influence people to turn to God; all are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

III. Punishment and Blessings Conditional

The wickedness of man should be punished. Ezekiel was to warn the wicked of his evil ways and instruct him how to turn from his wickedness unto Jehovah. Condemnation was pronounced upon the wicked, if the wicked had been warned and failed to turn from his wickedness. Ezekiel would be free from the condemnation of the wicked only by faithfully warning them to turn from their wickedness. If the watchman failed to warn the wicked, then the watchman and the wicked both are under the condemnation; if the watchman warned the wicked, but the Wicked failed to turn from his unrighteousness, then the watchman was free from the obligation and condemnation, but the wicked rested under the condemnation.

Ezekiel was to say to the house of Israel: "Thus ye speak, saying, Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then can we live?" The only way that they could live was by hearing the conditions which Jehovah gave to them and by complying with those conditions. There was no other way then, and there is no other way now. The personal responsibility rests upon each one to turn from his own sins. Jehovah wanted his people to turn from their evil ways. Ezekiel was to say unto them that Jehovah had "no pleasure in the death of the wicked," but the pleasure of Jehovah was "that the wicked turn from his way and live." "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repent-

ance." (2 Pet. 3:9.) Jehovah does not will the death of any. He has sent the Lord Jesus to earth to redeem man, and has taught clearly the conditions of man's salvation.

As man cannot lay down the terms of escaping punishment, neither can man specify the conditions of blessings. God has given the conditions upon which he will bless people as clearly as he has given the conditions upon which he will punish the wicked. No one can do righteousness and then turn back in sin and hope that his former righteousness will save him from the condemnation of his later sins. If Jehovah should say unto his people that he would bless the righteous, he means that he will bless the righteous who continue in righteousness. "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression." He must continue in his righteousness to be blessed. The same is true in regard to the wickedness of man. If Jehovah says that the wicked shall be condemned, he means that if the wicked continue in their wickedness they shall be lost; but even after Jehovah has said that the wickedness of man shall be punished, if the wicked turn from his wickedness and do righteousness, he shall be saved. "When I say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trusts to his righteousness, and commit iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in his iniquity that he hath committed, therein shall he die. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right," then "he shall surely live, he shall not die."

Blessings and curses are conditional. Salvation is conditional, condemnation is conditional. The conditions in both must be met before salvation or condemnation is meted out. Salvation is individual, condemnation is individual. There is no way which we can escape the condemnation without complying with God's conditions; there is no way by which we may obtain the blessings except by complying with the conditions.

IV. Jehovah a Righteous Judge

When Abraham was informed that Jehovah would destroy Sodom, he asked: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gem 18: 25.) God is a righteous judge. He will judge the world in righteousness. (Ps. 9:8.) Again, he will judge the people righteously. (Ps. 67:4.) He will judge uprightly. (Ps. 75:2.) He will judge with righteousness the poor. (Isa. 11:4.) He will judge according to the deserts. (Ezek. 7:27.) Jehovah loves righteousness and hates iniquity. (Ps. 45:7.) "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne." (Ps. 97:2.) All of the conditions of blessings and punishment are given in the wisdom of God and executed in righteousness. No one need fear not getting justice from Jehovah. His throne is a throne of righteousness and his judgment just and holy. The goodness of God is the basis of his judgment; his will, the standard of the judgment; his mercy, the adornment of his judgment. Men may not judge each other righteously, but God's judgments are righteous altogether. His judgments upon the children of Israel were righteous, and his judgments to-day are righteous and holy; and his judgments at the end will be founded upon love, mercy, and justice. Every one will be judged "out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:12.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Our responsibilities are personal. The measure of our responsibilities is our ability and opportunities. No one's responsibility can go beyond his opportunities and ability.

2. We have talents which measure our ability. The use that we make of these helps to develop and increase our ability. We will be blessed or condemned according to the use which we make of our talents.

3. No one can get out from under his load of responsibility, except by discharging one's duty. Our duties and responsibilities are personal, and we must answer to God and to our fellows personally.

4. We are responsible not only for the evil that we do, but we are responsible for the good that we might do. We are often guilty of sins of omission as well as sins of commission.

5. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." We may suffer the consequences and results of the sins of others, but we are condemned only for our own sins.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who is the prophet of this lesson?
Against whom had he prophesied?
To whom does he now direct attention?
Why were the Jews pleased with Ezekiel's prophecy against other nations?
Why were they not pleased with his prophecy to them?

Ezekiel Made a Watchman

Who is a watchman?
What is his work?
What kind of a man should he be?
Who made Ezekiel a watchman?
Over whom was he a watchman?
Whom should he warn?
What was the work of Ezekiel?

The Responsibility of the Watchman

Name some of the responsibilities of the watchman.
What words must he speak?
What words must people speak to-day?
What is meant when Jehovah says that the wicked shall die?
What is meant when he says that the righteous shah live?
What is it to reject Christ?
What is meant by accepting Christ?
How did God teach the Jews?
What would be tho fate of Ezekiel if he did not teach them God's word?
What will be our condemnation if we do not teach God's word?
How only can we be saved?
Who are watchmen to-day?

Punishment and Blessings Conditional

On what conditions will the wicked be condemned?
On what condition will the righteous be saved?
Was there any other way by which they could be saved?
Who names the terms or conditions of salvation?
Why cannot we name the conditions of our condemnation?
How is salvation?
How is condemnation?
How may we always obtain the blessings?
How are we personally responsible?

Jehovah a Righteous Judge

What question did Abraham raise?
What shows that Jehovah is a righteous Judge?
How will he judge his people?
How will he judge the world?
What are the foundations of his throne?
What is the basis of his judgment?
What is the standard of it?
Does he will the punishment of any?
How will he judge all?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

How may our responsibilities be measured?
How may our ability be increased?
Why cannot we escape responsibilities?
How are we responsible for evil?
How are we responsible for good that we have not done?
For whose sins will we be condemned?

Lesson III—July 21, 1929

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF HOPE

Ezek. 47:1-9

1 And he brought me back unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward (for the forefront of the house was toward the east); and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar.

2 Then he brought me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looketh toward the east; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

3 When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the ankles.

4 Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the loins.

5 Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.

6 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the bank of the river.

7 Now when I had returned, behold, upon the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah; and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea shall the waters go which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be healed.

9 And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Of the increase of his government and of peace there shah be no end." (Isa. 9:7.)

TIME.—B. C. 574.

PLACE.—Tel-abib, on the river Chebar.

PERSONS.—Ezekiel and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 100.

DAILY HOME READING.—

July 15.	M.	Ezekiel's Vision of Hope.(Ezek. 47:1-10.)
July 16.	T.	Blessings of the Kingdom.(Ps. 72:12-20.)
July 17.	W.	Triumphs of the Kingdom.(Isa. 25:1-12.)
July 18.	T.	Permanence of the Kingdom. (Ps, 72:1-10.)
July 19.	F.	Glories of the Kingdom. (RED. 22:1-7.)
July 20.	S.	The Universal Invitation. (Isa. 55:1-5.)
July 21.	S.	Praise to Jehovah. (Ps. 100.)

Introductory Thoughts

In the twenty-fifth year of Ezekiel's captivity, "in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after" the destruction of Jerusalem, God carried Ezekiel in a vision to Jerusalem, and gave him, through a man whose appearance was like that of brass, a measurement of the temple and all that pertained thereto,

the various duties of the priests, and the services of the temple. He saw the glory of God returned to the temple, and was informed as to hallowing it. (Ezek. 40-46.) This was to encourage the Jews in the hope of returning and restoring the worship of God. There seems to have been a double significance in this vision—(1) the temple rebuilt and the worship of God restored at Jerusalem, and (2) the spiritual temple of God and redemption through Christ. The ultimate end of the material temple and its significance pointed to the spiritual temple, which is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. A Vision of the Temple

"And he brought me back unto the door of the house." The one "whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed." (Ezek. 40:3.) After showing Ezekiel the temple in detail and all of its services and glory, he brought him back to the door of the temple proper. (Ezek. 41:2, 2325.) The house fronted the east. The temple was built similar to the tabernacle and fronted the east. Ezekiel saw issuing from beneath the threshold and from under the house, "from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar," the stream described in this lesson. It seems that Ezekiel had observed all external things and environments of the temple. This would help him to appreciate more that which he could see coming out of the temple. God had recorded his name in the temple; his glory at the dedication of the house had filled it; and all worship should be toward this house. It was sacred in the eyes of all Jews, and this was a very impressive way to arrest the attention of the Jews and impress a lesson upon them by giving them a vision of the temple.

II. A Vision of the Holy Waters

Ezekiel saw that the "waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; . . . and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar." Ezekiel does not have to trace the stream to its fountain; he first observes it at its source and traces downward. "There ran out waters on the right side," signifying that from Zion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2:3.) The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, while they were tarrying in Jerusalem, and guided the apostles in preaching the gospel on that day. After Ezekiel had seen the source of this stream and had observed that it flowed eastward, the angel took him out through the north gate and led him around without to the east gate. The east gate was closed, because Jehovah had passed through it. (Ezek. 44:2; 46:1-5.) The waters ran out on the right side of this gate. The stream was small at first, but increased as it flowed.

"When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the ankles." The angel measured a thousand cubits—about one-third of a mile—toward the east, the way the stream ran, and the water was ankle keep. The angel had Ezekiel to

pass through the water at each measurement. The angel measured another thousand cubits eastward, or about one-third of a mile further down the stream, and the water was knee deep. At the end of another thousand cubits further down the stream the water was up to Ezekiel's loins. "Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through." When the angel had measured the fourth thousand cubits, the water was impassable except by swimming. This river flowed through the Arabah, the deep, sunken valley which extends from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea, and through the northern portion of which the Jordan flows to the Dead Sea. (Verse 8.) The prophet and his guide followed the stream as it ran down from the holy mountain. The waters seemed to widen and deepen as the stream flowed downward. It was an ever-increasing stream in width and depth.

III. The Significance of the Stream

What is the significance of this river? There was no such natural stream flowing from the temple. Water is frequently used in the Bible figuratively to represent prosperity and peace, salvation and spiritual life. "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jet. 2:13; 17:13.) "For with thee is the fountain of life." (Ps. 36:9.) "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." (Isa. 12:3.) "I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isa. 41:18; 35:6, 7; 49:9, 10.) "And a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Joel 3:18.) Jesus says: "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." (John 4:14.) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John 7:37; 6:35.) "He leadeth me beside still waters." (Ps. 23:2.) "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." (Ps. 46:4.) "And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof." (Rev. 22:1, 2.) This river which Ezekiel saw became broader and deeper as it proceeded from the temple, and received no tributaries from without, but had within itself, like the word of God, the power of growth and development. The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed and like leaven. (Matt. 13:31-34.) The word of God is the seed. Then it is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." (Mark 4:14, 26-29.) The word of God, the church of Christ, the kingdom of heaven, like this stream, have within themselves the power of growth and increase, and need no tributaries or additions of human institutions of man's invention.

IV. The Fruitfulness of the Stream

There was a purpose for this ever-widening and deepening stream. It has a significance. It also has its fruitfulness. After the prophet had observed this, he returned, and, "behold, upon the bank of the

river were very many trees on the one side and on the other." Ezekiel is many times addressed as "son of man." It is not stated why he received this appellation—probably to remind him of his frailty and to prevent him from becoming exalted over the revelations made through him. Daniel is called one time "son of man." (Dan. 8:17.) Jesus frequently speaks of himself as "the Son of man." Ezekiel was asked if he understood. The angel caused him to return along the bank back toward its origin. In his vision he had gone down the stream and had observed it as it enlarged toward its mouth, but now he returned up the bank toward the source and is asked to observe the fruitfulness of the river. His attention is first directed to the increasing depth of this river, and it is next directed to the fertility of the soil and the luxuriant growth on both sides of it. (See Isa. 60:13; 61:3.) "A tree planted by the streams of water" (Ps. 1:3) flourishes, and such trees are the righteous. So shall God's people flourish and the land produce its fruit when they are faithful and dutiful.

The water of this river flowed from the temple eastward through "the Arabah" into the Dead Sea. We have observed that the "Ara-bah" is the deep valley extending from Mount Hermon to the Red Sea. It is stated by those who know that the region between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea is most desolate. This river would make this region fertile. God "turneth a wilderness into a pool of water, and a dry land into water springs." (Ps. 107:35.) "And the waters shall be healed"-the waters of the Dead Sea—freed from salt and made a fit abode for fish. "And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed; and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." The Bible speaks of "living waters" that "shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." (Zech. 14:8.) These waters are life to all living creatures and produce "a great multitude of fish." Much of this was accomplished when the gospel was preached with success throughout all the regions in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1), and afterwards to all the nations, even to those that lay most remote and on the isles of the sea. The sound of the gospel went forth to the end of the world. The enemies of it could not stop its progress. It became as mighty in its spread as an onrushing river.

The abundance of fish and the many trees may illustrate the increase of the spread of the gospel and the number of Christians. The gospel began with a few on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. The few disciples at the beginning of that day were increased by three thousand at the close of the day. The number multiplied daily until they became about five thousand. (Acts 4:4.) Soon "the multitude of them that believed" became so great that Christians were found in all parts of the world, and by the close of the third century the gospel had conquered Roman civilization. Not only did the church increase in number, but it increased in good work. People were blessed through Christianity. The hungry were fed, the naked were clothed, the sick were visited, love abounded more and more, souls were saved, and God was honored and glorified.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Few things have not the power in themselves to multiply and increase. All seeds germinate and grow, all animals start at birth and grow, and all spiritual things have the power of increasing.

2. The forces of righteousness begin and increase by use until they become mighty before God to the pulling down of strongholds and the casting down of imaginations and everything that exalts itself against God.

3. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom. When planted in the heart, it produces fruit to the honor and glory of God. The rapidity of its growth depends upon the condition of the heart in which it is planted. It is like leaven; it will increase under favorable conditions.

4. The church is to develop in a community and to become a mighty agency for righteousness in the community. Each local congregation should get the vision of Ezekiel and become stronger and mightier as the years roll by. We should look well to the vision of the church and see that our work is accomplished in making it what the Lord intended it to be.

5. Ezekiel began at the source in his observation. This was the house of God, or the temple. We should make God the center of our lives and should always start with him. Even the day should begin with God and should flow on, like the stream, to its close in the channel which God has given.

6. We should ever remember that we have a fruit-bearing mission; that when we cease to bear fruit, much fruit, we are failing in our mission. The fruit of a Christian life should ever increase from year to year until at last the ripe fruitage of a life is claimed by our Father.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who was Ezekiel?
Where was he at this time?
When did he have this vision?
What was the purpose of the vision?
What is the purpose and significance of the material temple?

A Vision of the Temple

Where was the temple located?
How did Ezekiel see it?
Had he ever seen it with his natural eye?
How did the temple front?
What was located at the temple?
After viewing the surroundings, what did Ezekiel next see?
What had been recorded in the temple?
How was it regarded by the Jews?
Why was it easy for him to teach the Jews through the vision of the temple?

A Vision of the Holy Waters

What did Ezekiel see?
Where did the river start?
What direction did it flow?
How far down the stream did he first go?
How deep was it there?
How far did he next go?
How deep was it there?
How far did he next go?
What depth did it then have?
Describe the river.
Into what did it flow?
Through what did it flow?

The Significance of the Stream

Was there any natural stream flowing from the temple?
How is water frequently used?
What does Jeremiah say that the Jews have done?
Where did Isaiah say that rivers would be opened?
How did Jesus use the figure of "water?"
What kind of thirst was meant?
What is said about the river of life in Revelation?
How did the river increase?
How is the word of God represented?

The Fruitfulness of the Stream

What did Ezekiel observe as he came back up the banks of the stream?

How is Ezekiel addressed?
Why speak of him as the "son of man?"
Who else is so spoken of?
Did Ezekiel understand the meaning of the stream?
To what was his attention first called?
What next?
What is the "Arabah?"
What kind of a region is it between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea?
What did the banks of the river produce?
What did the river itself produce?
What effect did it have on the Dead Sea?
How does this fruitfulness represent the gospel?
How did the church begin?
How did it increase?
What should each congregation do?
What should each Christian do?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What seems to be a law of nearly all things?
Are spiritual things an exception to this law?
Upon what depends the rapidity of the growth of the word of God in the heart?
Where should we begin with all things?
What is the mission of a Christian?
How should fruit bearing increase?
Is this included in Ezekiel's vision?

Hark! the song of jubilee,
Loud as mighty thunders roar,
Or the fullness of the sea
When it breaks upon the shore.
Hallelujah! for the Lord
God omnipotent shall reign;
Hallelujah! let the word
Echo round the earth and main.

Hallelujah! hark, the sound,
From the depths unto the skies,
Wakes above, beneath, around,
All creation's harmony.
See Jehovah's banner furled,
Sheathed his sword; he speaks; 'tis done!
And the kingdoms of this world
Are the kingdoms of his Son.

He shall reign from pole to pole
With an illimitable sway;
He shall reign, when, like a scroll,
Yonder heavens have passed away.
Then the end; beneath his rod
Man's last enemy shall fall.
Hallelujah! Christ is God,
God in Christ, is all in all.

— James Montgomery.

Lesson IV—July 28, 1929

THE STORY OF DANIEL

Dan. 1:1-4, 19, 20; 2:17-24.

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God; and he carried them into the land of Shinar to the house of his God: and he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his God.

3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring in certain of the children of Israel, even of the seed royal and of the nobles;

4 Youths in whom was no blemish, but well-favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and endued with knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability to stand in the king's palace; and that he should teach them the]earning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm.

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his.

21 And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding;

22 He revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast now made known unto me what we desired of thee; for thou hast made known unto us the king's matter.

24 Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. (Dan. 12:3.)

TIME.—B.C. 606 and 603

PLACE.—Babylon.

PERSONS.—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, Nebuchadnezzar, and his officers.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 46.

DAILY HOME READING.—

July 22. M. . . . . Daniel Taken to Babylon. (Dan. 1:1-9.)
July 23. T. . . . . Daniel's Temperate Living. (Dan. 1:10-20.)
July 24. W . . . . . .Daniel Praying for Understanding. (Dan. 9:15-23.)
July 25. T. . . . . Daniel Interpreting the King's Dream, (Dan. 2:36-45.)
July 26. F. . . . . Daniel Honored. (Dan. 2:46-49.)
July 27. S. . . . . The Last Times Foreseen. (Dan. 7:9-14.)
July 28. S. . . . . Jehovah Our Refuge. (Ps. 46.)

Introductory Thoughts

This lesson and the two following ones are in the book of Daniel. This book is both historical and prophetical. The first six chapters are chiefly historical and the remainder prophetical. The visions of the book—such as the image and huge tree seen by Nebuchadnezzar, the handwriting on the wall seen by Belshazzar, and the visions seen by Daniel himself—are clear and striking, and show to God's people in their degeneracy and captivity that God's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, and to the enemies of God's people the difference between Jehovah and idols and God's people and heathens. The prophecies extend from Daniel's time to the resurrection of the dead.

The Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires and the kingdom of Christ are all represented and described. In the historical portion of the book Daniel is spoken of in the third person; in the prophetical part he is spoken of in the first person. Jesus mentions Daniel as a prophet (Matt. 24:15), and reference is probably made to him in Heb. 11:33, 34.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Daniel

Daniel was a young man of noble birth, "of the seed royal," who lived in Jerusalem, and who was carried into captivity with others in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim. An account of this is given in 2 Chron. 36:5-8 and in to-day's lesson. "Daniel" means "God is my judge" or "judged of God." Daniel's companions were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These, like Daniel, were "of the seed royal and of the nobles; youths in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and endued with knowledge, and understanding science, and such as bad ability to stand in the king's palace." (Verses 3, 4.)

Daniel is one of the most remarkable characters of the Old Testament, and is classed with the notably wise (Ezek. 28:3) and with those who, on account of their righteousness, had special influence with God in prayer. (Ezek. 14:14, 19, 20; Jer. 15:1.) The book of Daniel shows his wisdom and power. By his wisdom and righteousness he was promoted by the different kings whom he served to high places of trust and honor. "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian." (Dan. 6:28.) "And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus" (Dan. 1:21), and at least to the third year of the reign of Cyrus (Dan. 10:1). He lived through the entire seventy years of captivity and saw his people returned to Jerusalem; hence, he lived to a ripe old age.

"He . . . served five kings—Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus. Few courtiers have had so long a

reign, served so many masters without flattering any, been more successful in their judgment of public affairs, been so useful to the states where they were in office, or have been more owned by God, or have left such an example to posterity." (Clarke's "Commentary.")

Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ashpenaz, the master or prince of his eunuchs, to select of the children of Israel such young men of "the seed royal" as were suited to him and to "teach them the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." They were to be trained for royal servants and officers. "And the king appointed for them a daily portion of the king's dainties, and of the wine which he drank, and that they should be nourished three years; that at the end thereof they should stand before the king." (Verse 5.) It seems that it would require so long for them to learn the language and the science of the Chaldeans.

Daniel was one of the four who were chosen. His name means "God is my judge," but his name was changed to "Belteshazzar," having reference to Bel, or Baal, the chief God of the Babylonians, and meaning, perhaps, "the protection of Bel." (Dan. 4:8.)

II. Daniel's Fixed Purpose

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's dainties, nor with the wine which he drank." (Verse 8.) This purpose of Daniel's was not stubbornness on the part of Daniel; it was in keeping with the law of Moses, which Jehovah had given for the government of his people. In Leo. 11 a distinction is drawn between the clean fowls and beasts which the Jews could eat and the unclean ones which they were forbidden to eat. It was one of the defilements of the captivity of the Jews, which came as a curse for their sins, that they would have to eat "unclean food." (Hos. 9:3, 4.) Hence, Ezekiel (4:14) says: "Ah Lord Jehovah! behold, my soul hath not been polluted; for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn of beasts; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth." The Jews were forbidden to eat blood. (Deut. 12:16, 23-25.) The animals eaten by idolaters were offered by sacrifices to their gods, and libations of wine were poured out during each meal to their gods.

The following were probably the chief reasons why Daniel declined the food from the king's table: (1) Some animals and fowls were unclean; (2) some were strangled, or not properly bled; (3) portions of every meal were offered as sacrifices to idols; (4) it may have been it was intemperate to eat "the king's dainties," because they were corrupting to the body and mind. The Psalmist prayed to be kept from eating "dainties" of men who work iniquity. (Ps. 141:4.) To have eaten "the king's dainties" would have been disobedience and dishonor to God and to have joined the heathen in the worship of idols.

This was a temptation to Daniel. Not to eat these "dainties" would render him singular and would incur the disfavor of the king and his officers. To eat them would gratify the natural appetite, but to refrain from eating them would show loyalty to conviction and to God. Daniel declined to eat the king's food and feared not the consequences. How did he succeed in overcoming the temptation? He "purposed in his heart" that he would not. A fixed purpose and a strong will are

necessary to overcome temptation and pursue the right course. Every time one yields to temptation he weakens his will power and changes his purpose until finally he loses all will power and gives up his purpose. Daniel "requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself," and requested a different diet. His request was respected.

III. Daniel's Superiority

At the appointed time Daniel and his companions were brought before Nebuchadnezzar. "And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king." (Verse 19.) The king examined them and talked with them concerning these matters of importance, "and among them all"—all the youths from all provinces who had been in training—"was found none like Daniel" and his companions. They stood "before the king." It seems that four such men were wanted to become the king's attendants and high officers, and these Hebrews were chosen because of their superior ability. Officers and servants stood in the presence of their kings. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." (Prov. 22:29.)

Daniel and his companions had made such progress that when they stood before the king they made a most favorable impression, for "in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm." We do not know much about these "magicians and enchanters." They were "probably the same as philosophers and astronomers among us." (Clarke's "Commentary.") "Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus" (verse 21), through the reigns of different kings, to the end of the Chaldean Empire and into the beginning of the Persian Empire, when Cyrus took Babylon and issued his edict for rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem (Ez. 1:1-4).

This lesson teaches that, whether in freedom or in captivity, he who pursues the right course and faithfully and firmly serves God will always be blessed. It is a woeful deception of sin to think that men must do wrong in order to prosper. "When a man's ways please Jehovah, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Prov. 16:7.)

IV. Daniel's Prayer

Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed a dream, in which he had seen a great image in the form of a man. This image was a composite of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay. As the king saw this image in his dream, a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, as if thrown by some great power, smote it upon the feet, which were of iron and clay, and broke them into pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken into pieces together, and, as chaff of the summer threshing floor, were carried away by the wind, and there was no place found for them. This stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

The king was disturbed by this dream. He did not knew the inter-

pretation of it—in fact, the dream itself passed from him. This only increased his disturbed state of mind. He called for his magicians and asked them to tell him his dream and interpret it for him. They could not do this. They asked the king to tell the dream, and then they would interpret it for him. The king could not recall his dream, and insisted that they tell him his dream. They, in turn, insisted that the king tell his dream and they would interpret it for him. The king became "angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon." (Dan. 2:12.) This decree included Daniel and his companions, and they sought Daniel to slay him. When Daniel learned of this, he "returned answer with counsel and prudence" to the captain of the king's guard, and asked for a time to be appointed him, saying that he would show the king the dream and its interpretation. But, first, Daniel and his companions prayed. They asked God to grant to them mercy that they might not be slain. In answer to their prayers God revealed to Daniel this dream and its meaning.

In the prayer Daniel thanked God and said to him: "And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding; he revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." (Verses 21, 22.) Daniel was a man of prayer. He was "powerful in prayer." Ezekiel numbered Daniel among the favored of Jehovah. He said: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." (Ezek. 14:14.) Again, he said: "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, they should deliver neither son nor daughter; they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." (Ezek. 14:20.) Again, in prophesying, Ezekiel said: "Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee." (Ezek. 28:3.) Daniel lived close to God and prayed frequently. When the decree went forth later that no one should make petition or prayer to any other save King Darius, Daniel, as his custom was, "kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." (Dan. 6:10.) Daniel found favor with the king by interpreting his dream and living uprightly before God.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Daniel purposed in his heart to be faithful to God regardless of the cost and suffering. In this way he placed Jehovah first in his heart and life, and Jehovah gave him victory over all opposition.

2. If we do not purpose to-day in our hearts to be loyal to God, we cannot be pleasing unto him. Many make no progress in the Christian life because they have not purposed in heart to please Jehovah regardless of consequences.

3. Daniel lived a prayerful life. He lived in constant communion with God. The secret of his greatness may be found in his faithfulness to Jehovah. Any one is great who lives with the Lord Jesus Christ. The closer one gets to him, the greater in the sight of God one becomes.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Where is thin lesson found?
How may the contents of the book of Daniel be divided?
Over how much time do the prophecies in this book extend?
How is Daniel spoken of in the historical portion of the book?
How is he spoken of in the prophetical part?

Daniel

Who was Daniel?
Of what tribe was he?
Where was he taken captive?
What does "Daniel" mean?
Name his three companions.
What makes Daniel a remarkable character?
Through what reigns did Daniel live?
How many kings did he serve?
Who was Asbpenaz?
Who was Nebuchadnezzar?
What request did Nebuchadnezzar make?
What orders did he give concerning the training of these young men?
Why was Daniel selected?

Daniel's Fixed Purpose

What purpose did Daniel make?
Why did he make this purpose?
What was the teaching of the law on this point?
Give the four probable reasons why Daniel declined the king's food?
Was there a strong temptation to Daniel?
How did he overcome this temptation?
What effect does yielding to temptation have on one?
What effect does overcoming temptation have?

Daniel's Superiority

How long before Daniel was brought before the king?
How did he appear physically?
What progress had he made?
How was he spiritually?
What lesson may we learn from him?
What deception do some labor under?

Daniel's Prayer

What disturbed Nebuchadnezzar?
Describe the image which he saw in his dream.
Why could he not remember his dream?
How did the dream affect him?
What did he request his magicians to do?
What did they tell the king to do?
How did this affect the king?
What decree did the king issue?
Who was included in this?
What did Daniel do when he heard it?
For what did he pray?
With whom is Daniel classed?
How often did Daniel pray?
How did Daniel find favor with Jehovah?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What effect did Daniel's purpose have on his character?
How did he regard Jehovah?
How may we be loyal to God?
Why do many make no progress in the Christian life?
What was the secret of Daniel's greatness?

I love to steal a while away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer.

I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all His promises to plead
Where none but God can hear.

I love to think on mercies past,
And future good implore,
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On Him whom I adore.

—T. H. Brown.

Lesson V—August 4, 1929

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST
(TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

Dan. 5:17-28.

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.
18 O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty:
19 And because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down.
20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his Spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:
21 And he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts', and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever be will.
22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this,
23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine from them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood. and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.
24 Then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed.
25 And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.
26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end.
27 TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.
28 PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot." (Eph. 5:18.)
TIME.—B.C. 539.
PLACE.—Babylon.
PERSONS.—Daniel and Belshazzar.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—PS. 1.

DAILY HOME READING.

July	29.	M.	Belshazzar's Revelry. (Dan. 5:1-9.)
July	30.	T.	A Mystery Interpreted. (Dan. 5:17-28.)
July	31.	W	A Drunken Army Defeated. (1 Kings 20:16-21.)
August	1.	T.	The Woes of Drunkenness. (Prov. 23:29-35.)
August	2.	F.	The Works of the Flesh. (Gal. 5:16-26.)
August	3.	S.	Respect for Law. (Rom. 13:1-10.)
August	4.	S.	The Righteous and the Wicked. (Ps. 1.)

Introductory Thoughts

At the time of this lesson Daniel was an old man, for the seventy years of captivity foretold by Jeremiah (25:12-14) were drawing to a

close. As we shall learn, Babylon was taken by Cyrus, king of Persia; and in his first year, "that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished," God stirred up his Spirit to make the proclamation throughout his kingdom that the Jews might return to Jerusalem "and build the house of Jehovah" and should receive help from his subjects. (2 Chron. 36:22, 23; Ez. 1:1-5.)

Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son, Evil-merodach, who reigned two years and was murdered by his brother-in-law, Neriglissar. He reigned four years, and was succeeded by his son, Loborasoarchod, who reigned only nine months and was murdered. Some state that Nabonidus succeeded Laborasoarchod and reigned until Babylon was taken by Cyrus, and that Belshazzar was his son and temporary or real ruler of Babylon at the time of its downfall. Others say that Belshazzar was the son of Evil-merodach, hence the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. It is also a conjecture of some that Nabonidus married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and that Belshazzar, through his mother, was Nebuchadnezzar's grandson. The Bible mentions Evil-merodach (2 Kings 25:27) and Belshazzar, and our lesson states that Nebuchadnezzar was Belshazzar's father (verses 11, 18); but that may signify only that Nebuchadnezzar was Belshazzar's ancestor father, grandfather, or great-grandfather, etc., as the kings of Judah are called sons of David (2 Chron. 29:2; 34:2.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Babylon, Its Beauty and Downfall

Any history of Babylon makes the beauty, greatness, and grandeur of that city most apparent. The Bible speaks of its magnificence and glory. It was at the time of our lesson, in commerce, wealth, and learning, the greatest city of the world. It is said to have been about fourteen miles square. Surrounded by two walls, the outer of which, according to the most authentic estimates, was nearly eighty-five feet thick and about three hundred and fifty feet high, strengthened with two hundred and fifty towers, and entered by one hundred gates of brass, with brazen lintels and sideposts, it was the strongest fortress in the world. The Bible speaks of "the broad walls of Babylon" and "her high gates." (Jer. 51:53, 58.)

The city was built on both sides of the Euphrates, and was connected by a great bridge, and Cyrus entered it by the channel of the river, having turned the water out of its course. The Bible foretold the sudden capture of the city by the Medes and Persians. (Isa. 21: 1-9; Jet. 51:27-32.) Also the downfall and utter destruction of the city and empire were minutely foretold. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." It was predicted of it that "it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." (Isa. 13:19-22; Jet. 50, 51.) This is literally true to-day. The walls

of Babylon have fallen, the drought is upon her, her land is a wilderness, her cities are a desolation, wild beasts inhabit the place, the natives regard it as "haunted," the wandering Arab will not pitch his tent there, and there the shepherd will not fold his flock.

II. The Feast of Reveling

The very night when Babylon was taken Belshazzar had "made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." The king's wives and concubines were present. This feast was in the king's palace, and, in the eyes of the world, was a most brilliant affair. Feeling secure within the impregnable walls of his unrivaled fortress, Belshazzar gave this feast in the face of Cyrus' approaching army. He not only felt secure from any attacks from without, but he defied the living God. "While he tasted the wine," or felt its influence and was inflamed by it, he commanded to be brought "the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom."

These idolatrous revelers drank wine in this impious feast from vessels of the house of God, in defiance of God, "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." (Verses 1-4.) This was an exaltation of the idols of the heathen above Jehovah and a boast that they were greater than the only true and living God. During this blasphemous conduct, to the great consternation of the king, "the fingers of a man's hand" appeared writing "over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." (Verse 5.) This astounded and terrified Belshazzar. The ruddy glow of the wine instantly faded from his cheeks into the pallor of fear, "his thoughts troubled him," his frame shook in terror, "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." (Verse 6.) In this condition he "cried aloud" for the well-known enchanters, Chad deans, and soothsayers, and offered the following reward to the one who should read and interpret the writing on the wall: "Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." (Verse 7.)

The "wise men" of Babylon could neither "read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation." They were unable to read it, because it was not written in Chaldean letters. This increased the king's fear and perplexed his lords. (Verses 5-9.) It is impossible to describe the scene. The queen, supposed to be the king's mother, because his wives and concubines sat with him at the feast, heard of the distress of the king and his lords and told the king of Daniel and his gifts and powers and what he had done in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. It seems that Daniel at this time was not well known by the king and his lords, or in their defiance of the living God they ignored God's faithful servant. This shows the weakness and wickedness of the king.

III. Daniel Rejects the Gifts of the King

Daniel was then sent for, the case stated before him, and the reward offered him if he could interpret the writing. (Verses 10-16.) Daniel

spurned the king's gifts, saying: "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." (Verse 17.) This is one of the most heroic deeds in all history. Before the king on his throne, surrounded by a thousand of his lords and courtly ladies in this festive hall in a nightly carousal, suddenly changed into forebodings of evil and cries of consternation, Daniel was like Paul before Agrippa in the court of Festus, John the Baptist reproving Herod, and Elijah confronting Ahab. Daniel, in his serene composure, presents a striking figure in the midst of a distracted and terrified group of revelers.

IV. Jehovah Overrules All

Daniel reminded Belshazzar of what "the Most High God" had done for his father, Nebuchadnezzar, and the cause of this greatness—"all the peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him." If Belshazzar and his lords were drinking and praising their idols and blaspheming the God of Israel, it was the God of Israel who had given Nebuchadnezzar the victory over the Jews and over all nations and had made his empire universal. Whom Nebuchadnezzar "would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive," etc. (Dan. 2:12, 13; 3:1-7.) Then, by the course stated here and in Dan. 4, God taught Nebuchadnezzar that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men." (Dan. 4:17.) "For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? For all his works are truth, and his ways justice; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." (Dan. 4:34-37.)

Daniel charged Belshazzar (1) with not humbling himself, though he knew all this; (2) with lifting himself up in blasphemy and defiance "against the Lord of heaven" in using the vessels of his house in a drunken feast held in worship and honor of "the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know;" and (3) with not glorifying God, in whose hand was his very breath and the guidance of all his ways. Belshazzar had shut his eyes against these apparent truths and had refused to learn from the facts enumerated the lessons God would teach. Shall we in self-exaltation refuse to learn the same lessons? Because of these sins God put forth the part of the hand which Belshazzar saw, and this writing was inscribed.

V. The Writing and the Interpretation

"And this is the writing, that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." "Mene" is repeated for the sake of emphasis. Each word stands for a short sentence; "Mene" means "numbered;" "tekel," "weighed;" and "upharsin," "divisions." Those who understand the language say that "upharsin" is the plural, form of "peres" in verse 28, the prefix "u" meaning "and." That "this is the interpre-

ration" of the writing we know: "Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. Tekel; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." (Verses 26-28.) Men are compared to "refuse silver" (Jer. 6:30), and "the dross of silver" (Ezek. 22:18), which is too light for genuine money when weighed. So Belshazzar in character was but dross and refuse when weighed in the balances of God's justice. How is it with us? In the same balances our characters are being tested, and we must all appear at last before God's judgment throne.

God's scales are just and accurate. He judges the world in righteousness and will do right. Every one will be weighed separately and judged accordingly. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but Jehovah weigheth the spirits" (Prov. 16:2) and "weigheth the hearts" (Prov. 24:12). Our days are numbered. Life is the time to serve God. "Now is the acceptable time," and "now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2.) "To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." (Heb. 3:7, 8, 14, 15.) We have abundant opportunity now in which to repent, obey God, and do good. There is a hand now writing on the wall of time a solemn warning to us all. Shall we heed it? God is willing and ready to save. If we are lost at last, it will be because, like Belshazzar, we have shut our eyes to the truth.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. This is a fruitful lesson for God's people. All revelry in sin is condemned. The character is weakened, life impaired, and conscience seared in the practice of sin.

2. God gives warning to us as he did to Belshazzar. We should See the handwriting on the wall and take heed. All selfishness and worldliness have their effect on our lives. God in his goodness warns us to turn from such sins.

3. Daniel was bold and fearless in the presence of drunken royalty. When one is in the right, one has nothing to fear. A righteous life lived in the fear of God brings its reward here as well as hereafter.

4. The king and his nobles were slain, but Daniel came through it all unhurt. God was his protector and his salvation. He will be ours if we will let him.

5. God overrules in the affairs of nations. His eternal sovereignty will be recognized by all who are wise. Not only does he overrule in the nations of earth, but he makes all things work together for good to his children. We should see his hand in all of our affairs.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What was Daniel's condition at this time?
How long had the Jews been in captivity?
Who succeeded Nebuchadnezzar as king?
What relation was Belshazzar to him?
Whom do some people think Belshazzar was?
How does the Bible express Belshazzar's relation to Nebuchadnezzar?

Babylon, Its Beauty and Downfall

Describe the greatness of Babylon.
What was its condition at the time of our lesson?

Tell of its walls.
Where was the city built?
How did Cyrus enter it?
Who predicted this?
What did the prophets say would be the condition of Babylon?
What can you say of the truthfulness of this?

The Feast of Reveling

At what time was this feast?
Who were present?
Where was the feast held?
Why did Belshazzar think he was safe?
What was done with the vessels of the house of God?
Who had brought these to Babylon?
What appeared on the wall while at the feast?
How did it affect the company?
What did the king cry?
What proposition did he make to the one that would read and interpret it?
Why could they not interpret it?
How did this affect the king?
Who had Daniel brought in?
Did the king know Daniel?

Daniel Rejects the Gifts of the King

What reward did the king offer for the interpretation?
What did Daniel say about his reward?
What can you say of Daniel's heroism?
Who else manifested such courage?

Jehovah Overrules All

What had Jehovah done for Nebuchadnezzar?
What had he done for Belshazzar?
Why did not Belshazzar acknowledge Jehovah's power over him?
Does Jehovah rule in the nations of earth to-day?
What three charges did Daniel make against Belshazzar?
What had Belshazzar done with these apparent truths?

The Writing and the Interpretation

What was written on the wall?
What do the words "mane," "tekel," and "upharsin" mean?
What is the full meaning of the inscription?
To what is Belshazzar compared?
What can you say about God's scales?
Who is weighed in them?
For what do we have opportunity?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What lesson may we learn from this?
What is God's warning to us?
Why was Daniel so courageous?
Why was Daniel not hurt?
Over what does Jehovah rule to-day?
How does he make all things work together for good?

At the feast of Belshazzar and a thousand of his lords,
While they drank from golden vessels, as the book of truth records,
In the night as they reveled in the royal palace hall,
They were seized with consternation—'twas the hand upon the wall.

See the brave captain Daniel as he stood before throng,
And rebuked the haughty monarch for his mighty deeds of wrong;
As he read out the writing, 'twas the doom of one and all,
For the kingdom now is finished, said the hand upon the wall.

See the faith, zeal, and courage that would dare to do the right,
Which the Spirit gave to Daniel—this the secret of his might;
In his home in Judea or a captive in the hall,
He understood the writing of his God upon the wall.

So our deeds are recorded, there's a Hand that's writing now;
Sinner, give your heart to Jesus, to his royal mandate bow;
For the day is approaching, it must come to one and all,
When the sinner's condemnation will be written on the wall.

—Knowles Shaw.

Lesson VI—August 11, 1929

DANIEL AMONG THE LIONS

Dan. 6:10, 11, 16-23.

10 And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem); and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.
11 Then these men assembled together, and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.
17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.
18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him.
19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.
20 And when he came near unto the den to Daniel, he cried with a lamentable voice; the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy
God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?
21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.
22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.
23 Then was the king exceeding glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34:7.)
TIME.—Probably 538 B.C.
PLACE.—Babylon.
PERSONS.—Daniel, Darius, the presidents, and the satraps.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 91:9-16.

DAILY HOME READING.—

August 5. M. . . . . The Plot Against Daniel. (Dan. 6:4-15.)
August 6. T. . . . . In the Lions' Den. (Dan. 6:16-23.)
August 7. W . . . . . .The Courage of Daniel's Friends. (Dan. 2:8-18.)
August 8. T. . . . . The Courage of Ezra, (Ez. 8:21-30.)
August 9. F. . . . . Courageous Witnessing for Christ. (Acts 4:13-20.)
August 10. S. . . . . An Exhortation to Courage. (Eph. 6:10-20.)
August 11. S. . . . . Security in Jehovah. (Ps. 91:9-16.)

Introductory Thoughts

This entire chapter should be studied. The events of this lesson occurred soon after Darius became king. A satrapy was a province, and a satrap was the governor of it. Darius divided his kingdom into one hundred and twenty satrapies, set a governor over each one of them, and set over the governors three presidents. Daniel was one of

these presidents and chief of the three. "Daniel was distinguished above the presidents and the satraps, because an excellent Spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm," (Dan. 6:1-3.) This excited the jealousy of the presidents and satraps, and they conspired against Daniel to destroy him. To them he was a foreigner—a Jew, whose race was in captivity—and they could not bear the thought of having him over them. Envy is a child of Satan and leads to diabolical deeds.

Through envy Jesus was crucified (Matt. 27:18), and Paul and others were persecuted. These presidents and satraps sought first an occasion of complaint against Daniel in his administration of public affairs, but failed, because "he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." (Verse 4.) It is most wicked to hunt for mistakes and faults in others for the sake of accusing and injuring them. This wicked scheme served only to place Daniel's virtues in a clearer and stronger light. They sought next an occasion "against him concerning the law of his God." Unwittingly they paid him here the highest compliment possible. He had impressed them with his faithfulness and loyalty to Jehovah by his continual service to God, and they knew nothing could cause him to swerve. The greatest thing that can be done now is to serve God patiently and faithfully. (See Rom. 2:7.)

The next step Daniel's enemies took was to hold a convention, pass unanimously a resolution, and present it to the king for his approval. It was as follows: "That whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." (Verse 7.) They presented it to the king to sign it, saying: "Now, O king, establish the interdict, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." (Verse 8.) This flattered the king, appealed to his vanity, and caught him unawares. Besides, the king was supposed to be the image of the supreme God and an object of worship. The heathen at Lystra thought the gods had come down to them in the persons of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:11-13), and others called Herod a "God" (Acts 12:20-23); hence, these rulers said that no petition should be made to "any God or man," save the king. "Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the interdict." (Verse 9.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Daniel in Danger

"And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem)." Daniel knew the danger that he was in, and he went directly to God. "His windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem." This was his custom. He did not open them simply on this occasion. God had recorded his name in the tabernacle and then in the temple at Jerusalem. He had promised to meet with and bless his people there. (Ex. 20:24; Deut. 12:5.) God chose to put his name in Jerusalem. (1 Kings 8:43; 2 Chron. 6:6, 10.) God promised to hear the prayers offered toward that place. Should a foreigner hear of God's mighty works and for his name's sake should come from a far country and pray toward the temple, God would answer; should God's people be

taken as captives by their enemies into a far country and should there repent and pray toward the temple, God would hear and forgive them. (1 Kings 8:29, 41-43, 46-52.) God's people "went up into the temple to pray." (Luke 18:10; 3:1.) "In thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple." (Ps. 5:7.)

The temple was regarded as a place of safety. People who had committed crime sometimes resorted to the temple for protection. Joab fled to the tent and caught hold of the horns of the altar. (1 Kings 2:28.) The enemies tried to get Nehemiah to flee to the temple lest he be slain. (Neh. 6:10-14.) Daniel was in great danger, and he follows the instruction of God's people to pray toward the temple. Daniel did not open his windows to be seen of men; neither did he do this to disregard the interdict in the face of his enemies. He did not close them to conceal himself from his enemies after the passage of the edict. He simply followed the worship of Jehovah as he had been doing all the time. He neither changed to suit any one nor modified his worship for fear of any one. He trusted in Jehovah, and Jehovah blessed him.

II. Daniel Prayed

"He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." There are two things here worthy of note. They are: (1) "he kneeled upon his knees," and (2) he did this "three times a day." Kneeling shows a Spirit of reverence, humility, and devotion. One may pray without kneeling, as did Jesus on the cross and Paul and Silas in the jail at Philippi; but when one assumes an attitude of prayer, kneeling is the proper one. In Gethsemane, Jesus first kneeled (Luke 22:41), and "fell on his face" (Matt. 26:39) "on the ground" (Mark 13:45). Like Daniel, when we pray in our chambers, we kneel; we do not stand. The true and devout servant of God prays regularly and often. The best and greatest men of the Bible were prayerful men. The Psalmist called upon God morning, noon, and evening. (Ps. 55:17; see also Ps. 141:2.) We are taught to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17), to continue "steadfastly in prayer" (Rom. 12:12), and to pray always and not to faint (Luke 18:1).

Had he sought an excuse, Daniel could have offered a better one for failing to pray than many do now. He could have said his life was in danger. Daniel was in danger, and he went to God in prayer. Daniel did not go to God in prayer simply because, he was in danger; he was accustomed to praying, and went to God in prayer "as he did aforetime." It is well to go to God in prayer when we are in danger; there is no better place to go; but we should not wait until we are in danger before we go to God in prayer. Daniel did not do this.

III. The Work of Daniel's Enemies

His enemies were spying on him. "Then these men assembled together, and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God." They wanted to watch Daniel in order to have personal knowledge of his disobedience to the interdict. They did not have to watch very long until they "found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God."

After they found him violating the interdict, they approached the king and reminded him of the decree and recommitted him to it. He assured them that it was true and should stand, "according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." (Verse 12.) The law once made, all were bound by it; no man could annul or reverse it. (Esth. 1:19; 8:8.) The enemies next, after reminding the king of this point, informed him that Daniel, a Jew of the captivity, neither regarded the king nor the interdict, but made his petitions to Jehovah three times a day.

When the king realized the murderous conspiracy of this interdict, enacted, as he thought, in his honor, he was greatly displeased with himself for allowing himself to be caught in such a trap; and he set his heart to devise some way to deliver Daniel, and labored earnestly at it until sundown—the time, it seems, for executing Daniel. The enemies of Daniel, learning of the king's distress and his efforts to devise some way of delivering Daniel, assembled again before the king and held him to the established rule that "no interdict nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed."

IV. Daniel Delivered

When the king could find no way of saving Daniel, and urged by his nobles, he "commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions." It is thought by many that these lions were in the king's park as a part of his menagerie. They were kept for the purpose of devouring criminals who might be judged worthy of such punishment. The den was probably a cave or covered inclosure surrounded by a wall. Daniel had impressed the king, as he had his enemies, that he served God "continually," not occasionally. To continue "steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42), and to abound always in the work of the Lord (1 Col. 15:58), is the way to serve Jehovah now. For two reasons the king hoped the God of Daniel would deliver him, because (1) Daniel served God continually, and (2) he knew so much of what God had done for Daniel. Therefore, he said in encouragement to Daniel: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee."

"A stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel." Since the king had confidence in Daniel's God that he would deliver him, he makes further edict ,that none other should harm Daniel. If Daniel is rescued from the lions, his enemies might seek to kill him; so the king has the seal even of the lords placed upon it. So the unchangeableness of the king's edict, while it brought Daniel into danger, will also be a means of protecting him should the lions not devour him. The king "passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him."

Early the next morning the king went to the den of lions. When he came near to the den, "he cried with a lamentable voice." He said: "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" This shows that Daniel was not a spasmodic servant of God, but a regular or continual one,

and that the king and all his acquaintances knew this. By steadfast continuance in well-doing let us impress the world that we Likewise serve God continually. The king knew that unless Daniel's God had delivered him, his destruction was inevitable; but he had some hope that God had delivered Daniel. If he had had no hope, he would not have gone to the den the next morning and inquired of Daniel. Dan-tel replied to his question: "O king, live forever." This was the ordinary salutation. (Dan. 5:10.) So Daniel answered the king to the great relief and joy of the king.

Daniel further instructed the king of his God. He said: "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me." The angel of God's presence (Isa. 63:9) delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage (Num. 20:16) and from all their afflictions so long as they served him faithfully; an angel delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:28); an angel strengthened Jesus in Gethsemane for his trial and crucifixion (Luke 22:43), and rolled the stone from the sepulcher that he might be delivered from the tomb; and an angel delivered Peter from prison (Acts 12:11). While Darius fasted, was troubled, and spent a sleepless night, an angel was with Daniel in the den of lions. Daniel gives two reasons, corresponding to the two efforts made by his enemies to find him guilty, why God did not allow the lions to hurt him: (1) "Forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me;" (2) "and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." By preserving him God approved Daniel's loyalty to him and his integrity as an officer. The king rejoiced and commanded that Daniel should be removed from the den. The law had spent its force on him, and his enemies had no further recourse.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Daniel's steadfastness and integrity excited envy and jealousy on. the part of his enemies, but commended him to the king. Those who love right appreciate loyalty to the right and respect one who is true to his convictions.

2. God blessed Daniel in his faithfulness and loyalty to him. He will preserve us and bless us if we are loyal to him. Our only safety is in our loyalty to Jehovah.

3. Daniel gave all honor and glory to Jehovah. He did not claim any for himself. We should give praise and honor to God. It is he who preserves and blesses us; it is in him that we live.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What is a satrapy?
How many divisions did Darius make in his kingdom?
What position did he give Daniel?
How did the other nobles regard Daniel?
Why were they envious of him?
Why did they search for mistakes?
Is it right to look for faults in others?
Where could they not find fault against him?
Where did they think they could find fault in him?
What did they plan?
What law was passed?

Daniel in Danger

How did this edict affect Daniel?
What did he do?

Why did he open his window toward Jerusalem?
What had God promised to his people?
How did they regard the temple?
Who went there for protection sometimes?
How was Daniel in great danger?

Daniel Prayed

What did Daniel do when he learned of the edict?
Did he change his manner of life?
Give other instances of servants of God praying.
What is the proper attitude of prayer?
What are we taught concerning prayer?
Did Daniel have a good excuse for not praying?
Why should we not wait until danger appears to pray?

The Work of Daniel's Enemies

What did his enemies do after the edict was passed?
How did they get personal knowledge against him?
When they learned that Daniel continued to pray to God, what did they then do?
What accusation did they bring against Daniel?
How did it affect the king?
What did he seek to do?
Why could he not save Daniel?

Daniel Delivered

What did the king finally command to be done with Daniel?
How was he confined in the den?
Did the king have any hope of Daniel's being saved?
On what two grounds did he base his hope?
What did he do to prevent others from harming Daniel?
How did the king spend the night?
What did he do next morning?
How did he call for Daniel?
How did Daniel answer him?
Of what did Daniel instruct him?
Why did Daniel say God had preserved him?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What did Daniel's integrity excite in his enemies?
How did it affect the king?
Why did God bless Daniel?
To whom did Daniel give the praise?

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing;
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe.
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

And though this world with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure;
One little word shall fell him.

—F. H. Hedge.

Lesson VII—August 18, 1929

THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY

Ez. 1:1-6; Ps. 126:1-6.

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and lout it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath Jehovah, the God of heaven, given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3 Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel (he is God), which is in Jerusalem.

4 And whosoever is left, in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will-offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the heads of fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, even all whose Spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of Jehovah which is in Jerusalem.

6 And all they that were round about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.

1 When Jehovah brought back those that returned to Zion,
We were like unto them that dream.
2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the nations,
Jehovah hath done great things for them.
3 Jehovah hath done great things for us,
Whereof we are glad.
4 Turn again our captivity, O Jehovah,
As the streams in the South.
5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing seed for sowing,
Shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Jehovah hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." (Ps. 126:3.)
TIME.—B.C. 536.
PLACES.—Babylon and Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Cyrus and Zerubbabel.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 124.
DAILY HOME READING.—

August 12. M. . . . . Judah Taken Captive. (2 Chron. 36:14-21.)
August 13. T. . . . . Judah Mourns in Babylon. (Ps. 137:1-6.)
August 14. W . . . . . .The Return Prophesied. (Jer. 29:10-14.)
August 15. T. . . . . Cyrus Decrees the Return. (Ez. 1:1-4.)
August 16. F. . . . . Rejoicing in Deliverance. (Ps. 126:1-6.)
August 17. S. . . . . Spiritual Restoration. (Isa. 35:1-10.)
August 18. S. . . . . Jehovah a Deliverer. (Ps. 124.)

Introductory Thoughts

The book of Ezra was probably written by Ezra. In the last four chapters of the book he refers to himself as its author. It gives an

account of the return of the Jews from Babylon, their rebuilding the temple, their hindrances by their enemies, and the reformation produced by Ezra's teaching. Ezra was a descendant of Aaron, and was, therefore, of the priestly family. "He was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which Jehovah, the God of Israel, had given." (See Ez. 7: 1-10.) God remembers his people in the midst of their affliction which he had visited upon them. When his punishment had caused them to reform and his land had enjoyed its sabbaths of rest, he restored them to their former land and to his favor.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Cause of the Captivity

God punished the Israelites by captivity and servitude, according to his solemn warnings in Deut. 28, which read. The book of Judges gives an account of the lapses and restorations of the Israelites, while Kings and Chronicles give the downfall and captivity, first, of the kingdom of Israel, and, next, of the kingdom of Judah. The subjects of the kingdom of Judah were carried into captivity in Babylon at different times (2 Kings 24:1, 2; 2 Chron. 36:5-8; Jer. 52:28-30; Dan. 1:1); but the two principal deportations were (1) when Jehoiachin, his mother, princes, soldiers, and artificers were carried away (2 Kings 24:10-19), and (2) when Jerusalem was destroyed (2 Kings 25:1-21; 2 Chron. 36:17-21).

Sin weakened the Jews and made them easy victims of their enemies. In captivity they were in God's school of correction. Here they passed through the furnace of trial until the dross of idolatry and other sins was consumed. (See Heb. 12:4-12.) God's discipline and correction are not signs of his displeasure, but of his love. The chastisement of his love has served its purpose when it produces in his children the fruit of righteousness. The Jews were cured of idolatry, repented of their sins, and returned unto God. "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I observe thy word." (Ps. 119:67, 71.) They never could have returned to Jerusalem before learning these lessons. The ten tribes in a body never returned, but many of them returned with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. We read of those of other tribes serving God in the temple. (Luke 2:36.) Many of the Levites returned to Judah soon after the establishment of the kingdom of Israel, and many were in this return from Babylon. (Ez. 2:36-42.)

The Jews were encouraged to repent by the prophets, and were prepared for this return by their repentance. (Ezek. 20:33-39.) They were not carried all at once into captivity, and neither did they all return from captivity at the same time. From the beginning of the captivity until the beginning of the return, from the destruction of the temple until its completion when rebuilt, was seventy years.

II. The Return Foretold

God not only foretold the captivity in his solemn warnings against sin, but he foretold that it would last for seventy years. (Jer. 25:12; 29:10.) According to Jeremiah's instruction (Jer. 29:1-8), the Jews in captivity built houses, planted gardens, reared families, and sought the peace of their captors; hence, they increased in wealth and num-

ber, and some, as Daniel and Nehemiah, rose to places of the highest positions of trust and honor. God commands all Christians to make supplication, to offer prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all their rulers that they (Christians) may "lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." (1 Tim. 2:1-4.)

Such a life in any government God requires his people to live, and they must pray God to overrule the lawmaking powers of these earthly governments that they will enact such laws as will allow Christians to lead such a life. Paul requested the Thessalonians to pray that he "may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for all have not faith." (2 Thess. 3:1, 2.) God, then, could overrule "unreasonable and evil men" so as to bring about Paul's deliverance. Are all endeavoring and praying to live this life? Christians can engage in nothing which interferes in living this life. From the threatenings, solemn warnings, and persecutions of God's prophets, and especially Jeremiah, we know that this captivity was the result of sin; we also know that their return was the result of their repentance.

III. The Proclamation of Cyrus

"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia" this proclamation was made. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, and his mother was Mandane, the daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes. This was not Cyrus' first year as king of Persia, and probably not his first year as conqueror of Babylon, for we have learned that Darius reigned a while as king of Babylon, and Cyrus conquered it (Dan. 5:30; 6:1); but it was his first year as actual ruler of Babylon (Dan. 6:28). "That the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished," Cyrus permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Jeremiah had foretold that the captivity would continue seventy years (Jer. 25:12; 29:10), and this time had been fulfilled. The purpose, too, of the captivity m correcting the Jews and leading them back to trust in God and to his true worship had been accomplished.

"Jehovah stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus." Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed Jerusalem and led the Jews into this captivity, was overruled by Jehovah to do this, and was called "God's servant." (Jet. 25: 9; 27:6.) So when God had accomplished his purpose upon the Jews by captivity, he overruled Cyrus, calling him his "shepherd" and "anointed," to send them back to Jerusalem. God called Cyrus by name about one hundred and seventy-five years before this. It is stated also that Cyrus had not known God. In his overruling power God gave the nations to Nebuchadnezzar and led Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge his might, glory, and everlasting dominion. (Dan. 4: 2, 3, 37.) So he gave "all the kingdoms of the earth" to Cyrus and led him to make the proclamation for the return of the Jews.

It is more than probable that to Cyrus was pointed out the above quotation from Isaiah and the passages in Jeremiah stating that the Jews would return to Jerusalem in seventy years. In this way God "stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus" to make this proclamation. Cyrus made the proclamation first orally and then made it a matter of record that it might stand. Cyrus acknowledged that Jehovah had given to him "all the kingdoms of the earth." Cyrus' dominion was universal. He acknowledged that God had given him this rule and had charged

him "to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah." He gave permission and encouragement to the Jews' in the following: "Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel (he is God), which is in Jerusalem."

IV. Cyrus' Gifts to the Work

Not only did Cyrus permit the Jews to return, but he made gifts and encouraged others to make gifts for the rebuilding of the temple. He said: "Whosoever is left, in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem." The neighbors of the Jews where they so-journed were thus encouraged to give such things to the Jews for their journey and for their$ work in Jerusalem. When the Israelites left Egypt, they received help from the Egyptians. (Ex. 12:35; 36.) These gifts from the people among whom the Jews lived were in addition to the "freewill offerings" which the Jews themselves made. (Ez. 2:68.) The proclamation of Cyrus ordered the people in all parts of his dominion to assist the Jews in this way.

After Cyrus made this proclamation, the chief men of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and Levites, "even all whose Spirit God had stirred" to do so, went "to build the house of Jehovah ..in Jerusalem." God "stirred up" their spirits to go and do this work by teaching them, warning and encouraging them through his prophets. As the proclamation directed, "all they that were round about" the Jews "strengthened their hands" with the gifts mentioned. The full number of those who went was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, besides seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven servants and two hundred singers. (Ez. 2:64, 65.) The gifts which they received and their own freewill offerings are mentioned in Ez. 2:66-70. The beasts of burden carried the women, children, vessels of the temple, and personal property. If the number given refers to heads of families, which is probable, the women and children would greatly increase the number. This number, then, must be small compared to those who did not go.

Cyrus made gifts. He "brought forth the vessels of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah." (Verses 7, 8.)

V. Thanksgiving for Return from Captivity

It is not known who wrote Ps. 126. It is supposed to have been written praising God for his bringing them out of captivity. Whether it was written for that purpose or not, we cannot say; but it is very appropriate for that occasion. The Psalm begins: "When Jehovah brought back those that returned to Zion, we were like unto them that dream." Their joy and ecstasy were great and unrestrained. The Psalmist says: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the nations, Jehovah hath

done great things for them." Jehovah turned to his people when they turned to him. Not all of the Jews returned at the same time; some came later than the first return. It seems that their hearts were not stirred to return until after they had received word from the first company that had returned. They gave Jehovah praise for what was done. They said: "Jehovah hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." This should be the song of praise for every child of God to-day. The Psalm continues and says: "Turn again our captivity, O Jehovah, as the streams in the South." The "streams in the South" are dried up in the dry season, and when the rains fall they reappear. The point of comparison is joy at the reappearing of what has been so painfully missed. The Psalmist further sings: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Those who sow in sacrifice and service to God shall reap abundantly with faith and hope of spiritual things. The Psalm concludes with: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him." There is no end of sowing and reaping here, and there will be no end of joy hereafter. (Isa. 35:10.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. To the Jews Jehovah seemed severe in his punishment. They were taken from their homes and caused to be captives among a strange people; they were taken from their place of worship and placed among a people where they could not worship according to the law. This was all for the welfare of the people. They could not worship Jehovah acceptably while in disobedience. They needed the lesson of correction.

2. The chastening of the Lord seems hard to us, yet it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness in our own lives. The chastening of the Lord disciplines us and makes us better servants of Jehovah. Oftentimes it takes the sorrows and disappointments of life to prepare us for useful service.

3. The Jews were completely cured of idolatry. We do not hear of the Jews worshiping idols after their return from captivity. It is said that no Jew to-day is a worshiper of an idol. It was a hard and severe lesson, but the captivity helped to prepare the Jews for the coming of Christ.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Who wrote the book of Ezra?
What are some of its contents?
Who was Ezra?
How did Jehovah visit his people in captivity?

The Cause of the Captivity

How had the Jews disobeyed God?
What did Jehovah do for them?
Were they all taken into captivity at once?
What had sin done for the nation?
How did they live in captivity?
How long did they remain in captivity? When were they returned?

The Return Foretold

What prophet foretold the Jews' return?
What instruction did Jeremiah give them while they sojourned in captivity?
In what was their safety and welfare?
How does God require his people to live to-day?
What cannot Christians do to-day?
How did Jehovah treat his people while they were in captivity?

The Proclamation of Cyrus

Who was Cyrus?
What proclamation did he make?
Who stirred him up?
What did he call upon the people to do?
Who had given him dominion over all kingdoms?
How was his heart stirred up?
How did he encourage the Jews to return?
Who were to help them?

Cyrus' Gifts to the Work

Who of the Jews gave gifts?
Who of their neighbors gave gifts?
What did Cyrus give?
How did the Egyptians help the Israelites?
How many of the Jews returned?
Does this number include all or just a part?

Thanksgiving for Return from Captivity

Whose hand was recognized in all things?
Why should they praise Jehovah?
What did they say he had done for them?
What great things had Jehovah done?
How shall we reap?
How does this Psalm conclude?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

How did the captivity seem to the Jews?
Why was it needed?
Were they brought back before their repentance?
How does the chastening of the Lord always seem?
What blessing is there in it to us?
Of what were the Jews completely cured?
Do we ever hear of their worshiping idols afterwards?

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;
Waiting for the harvest and the time of reaping,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds nor winter's chilling breeze;
By and by the harvest and the labor ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Go, then, ever weeping, sowing for the Master,
Though the loss sustained our Spirit often grieves;
When our weeping's over, he will bid us welcome;
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.
—Knowles Shaw.

Lesson VIII—August 25, 1929

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

Ez. 3:10-13; 6:14-16; Ps. 84:1-4.

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise Jehovah, after the order of David king of Israel.

11 And they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah, saying, For he is good, for his lovingkindness endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised Jehovah, because the foundation of the house of Jehovah was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

14 And the elders of the Jews builded and prospered, through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the decree of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy.

1 How amiable are thy tabernacles,
0 Jehovah of hosts!
2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of Jehovah;
My heart and my flesh cry out unto the living God.
3 Yea, the sparrow hath found her a house,
And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
Even thine altars, O Jehovah of hosts, My King, and my God.
4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house:
They will be still praising thee.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the House of Jehovah." (Ps. 122:1.)

TIME.—B.C. 535 to B.C. 515—a period of twenty years.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Zerubbabel, the governor; Joshua, the high priest; Haggai and Zechariah, prophets; Cyrus, Ahasuerus (Cambyses, Cyrus' son), Artaxerxes (a usurper), and Darius Hystaspes, Medo-Persian kings.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 122.

DAILY HOME READING.—

August 19. M. . . . . The Altar Set Up. (Ez. 8:1-7.)
August 20. T. . . . . The Temple Foundations Laid. (Ez. 3:8-13.)
August 21. W . . . . . .Opposition of Enemies. (Ez. 4:1-6.)
August 22. T. . . . . Enemies Aiding. (Ez. 6:6-13.)
August 23. F. . . . . The Temple Completed. (Ez. 6:14-22.)
August 24. S. . . . . The Purpose of the Temple. (Mark 11:11-18.)
August 25. S. . . . . Love for God's House.(Ps. 122.)

Introductory Thoughts

It is not stated at what time of the year the Jews began their journey of about eight hundred miles from Babylon to Jerusalem on their return from captivity; but since they reached their destination sometime before the seventh month (corresponding to the last of September and the first of October with us), and since it required several months to make the journey, they must have left Babylon in the spring. It required Ezra and those with him four months to make this journey. (Ez. 7:9.) Upon their arrival in their own country, the Jews went to the cities which belonged to their respective families before the captivity. (Ez. 2:70; 3:1.) They found the cities, like Jerusalem, in ruins and the country desolate. Their first work was to prepare some sort of lodging places for themselves and families. This was done by repairing the old houses, constructing huts, and perhaps stretching tents. This done, in the seventh month "the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem."

The people went to Jerusalem in obedience to God. They did not wait until the temple was rebuilt before they began to worship God, but it was necessary to worship God during the time they would be employed in rebuilding the temple. They built on the original foundation the altar of burnt offering, and began "from the first day of the seventh month" to offer the daily burnt offerings. At the appointed time they kept the feast of tabernacles and offered the burnt offerings by number during the feast as "every day required." After this they offered the burnt offerings "of the new moons, and of all the set feasts." Although "fear was upon them because of the peoples of the countries," they began and continued the worship of God.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Worship Restored

There was but one way to restore the true worship of God, and that was to do all things according to his directions. The Israelites had been brought back from the captivity by Jehovah, and they were anxious to worship Jehovah in a way that would please him. They desired to worship him "as it is written;" hence, these Jews assembled at Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5, 6), made their burnt offerings, kept their set feasts, and did all things "as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God." (Verses 1-6.) Hezekiah reformed the people by persuading them to worship God "as it is written" (2 Chron. 30:5; 31:3); Josiah did the same (2 Kings 22:13; 23:3, 21). As our lesson shows, after the captivity the Jews restored the true worship of God by worshiping "as it is written ;" and, later, Ezra reformed them by insisting on doing "as it is written" (Neh. 8:1, 4, 9, 14). To restore the worship of God under Christ, as revealed in the New Testament, it is necessary to worship God "as it is written" in that book. On this point, see Mark 7:1-13; I Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9. The worship of God inaugurated as described above, the Jews then began to make preparation to rebuild the temple. Imitating Solomon (1 Kings 5:1-11), they purchased from the people of Sidon and Tyre timbers for this purpose. The grant also which they had from Cyrus allowed them to do this. (Verse 7.; 1:2; 6:3.)

II. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah

These three leaders were most prominent and did much in leading the Jews out of exile back to Jerusalem, rebuilding the temple, restoring the worship of God, and rebuilding the walls of the city. Zerubbabel's return was in B.C. 536; the laying of the foundation of the temple was in B.C. 535; the beginning of the work under the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah was in B.C. 519; the completion of the tem-pie was in B.C. 515; the events of the book of Esther were in B.C. 483473; Ezra's journey to Jerusalem was in B.C. 458; Nehemiah's prayer and visit to Jerusalem was in B.C. 445-444; the rebuilding the walls and reading and obeying the law was in B.C. 444. These dates are approximately correct.

The name "Zerubbabel" probably means "born in Babylon." He was the son of Shealtiel (Ez. 3:2), and was a descendant of the kings of Judah (1 Chron. 3:17). He was a faithful, unswerving, loyal servant of God. He did a great work in the restoration of the true worship of God. "Ezra" means "help." He was of the tribe of Levi and belonged to the priestly family. "Nehemiah" means "Jehovah consoles."

III. Celebrating the Laying of the Foundation of the Temple

In the second month (corresponding to the last of April and first of May) of the second year of their return the Jews were ready to lay the foundation of the temple. The Levites were appointed to have the oversight of the work. (Ez. 3:8; 8:9.) When the builders had laid the foundation of the house, it was made an occasion of a great celebration. The apparel of the priests is described in Ex. 39, and the use of the two silver trumpets made according to God's command is given in Num. 10:1-10, which see. In Solomon's time these trumpets were increased to one hundred and twenty (1 Chron. 5:12), and were employed as an accompaniment to songs of thanksgiving and praise. They were so employed on this occasion. "The Levites the sons of Asaph" used cymbals. These were a class of musicians named for Asaph. (1 Chron. 15:16-24.) This was done "after the order of David king of Israel"—that is, as David had directed, or ordained. (1 Chron. 6:31; 16:7; 35:1, 5, 6.)

"And they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah"—that is, they sang by choruses and responded to one another in singing. They sang thus "in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah." They said: "For he is good, for his loving-kindness endureth forever toward Israel." (See I Chron. 16:34, 41; Ps. 106.) All praised God "because the foundation of the house of Jehovah was laid." This is no precedent for celebrating the laying of the corner stone of houses of worship and of dedicating such houses, because this temple at Jerusalem was not a type of houses of worship, but of the spiritual temple, or building, of God. (See I Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; Heb. 3:6; 8:2; I Pet. 2:5.)

IV. The Old Men Weep

There were a few old men who had seen the former temple before they were carried into captivity who came out of captivity. "Many of

the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice." Their grief was very great. Why did they weep? Not because this house was smaller than the one which had been destroyed, for it was larger. This house was sixty cubits high and sixty cubits broad, while the first one was only twenty cubits broad and thirty cubits high. (See I Kings 6:2; 2 Chron. 3:3, 4; Ez. 6:3.) The contrast between the plainness and poverty of this one and the richness, beauty, and magnificence of the first one; the absence of the ark of the covenant and its contents, the mercy seat, and the fire from heaven; and old associations, made them weep. They felt that the glory of Israel had departed. To them the glory of this building, compared to the glory of the former one, was nothing. (Hag. 2:3.) Some of these men must have been very old men.

In this way God was leading his people away from the material splendor and glory to the greatness and glory of his spiritual kingdom. Fifteen years after this Haggai encouraged the people to proceed with this building, making the following promise: "The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts." (Hag. 2:1-9.) It was greater than the former because Jesus Christ would come to it and fill it with his glory. While these old men "wept with a loud voice," others "shouted aloud for joy;" so that the people could not tell the difference, wa

them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared." The Jews living in the country near Jerusalem would work through the day and return home for the night, but Nehemiah ordered all to remain in the city at night for a guard. He says: "So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard that followed me, none of us put off our clothes, every one went with his weapon to the water." (Verse 23.)

V. Other Efforts of the Enemy

Chapter 6 records other tricks the enemy resorted to in efforts to hinder the work. Their first attack, as we have seen, was mockery and ridicule; their second, conspiracy and arms. When these failed, they resorted to treachery. Under the guise of friendship, they invited Nehemiah to a conference "in one of the villages in the plain of Ono," a town about twenty-six miles north of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was on the alert in regard to any movement or strategy of his enemy. He said: "They thought to do me mischief." He declined this invitation for two reasons: (1) he was not in its treachery; (2) he was too busy doing the Lord's work. He said: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" Four times his enemies invited him to a conference, and four times he declined "after the same manner." While they were persistent, he was steadfast.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Nehemiah showed courage and perseverance. God's work to-day in preaching the gospel and restoring his worship "as it is written" in the New Testament requires great courage and perseverance.

2. Nehemiah had no time for conferences with the enemy, as they were determined to hinder the Lord's work. So with us to-day, we have no time to waste with the enemies of the cross who are determined on the destruction of the church. We should be like Nehemiah and tell them so and continue with our work.

3. They ridiculed, threatened, and tried by force to hinder the work; but they were unable. If God's people to-day are determined to work for him, no power can hinder or cause them to cease the work. This should be great encouragement to us. Let us pray and work on.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons,

Introductory Thoughts

Name some of the leaders of the Jews in this work.
What did they say they wished to do?
How was the work divided?
Why was this a practical way?
What progress did they make?
Why did they make such progress?
What is it to have "a mind to work?"
Can much be done without this?

The Enemies of the Jews

Name some of the enemies of the Jews.
Who was Sanballat?
Who was Tobiah?
How were these related to the Jews?
Who were the Ammonites, Arabians, and Ashdodites?
Why did they oppose rebuilding the wall?

The First Opposition of the Enemy

What was the first effort on the part of the enemy?
What did they say?
What did Nehemiah do?
What kind of a weapon is ridicule?
Who else used it?
What kind of a man was Nehemiah?
Can you endure ridicule?

A Conspiracy and Resort to Arms

To what next did the enemy resort?
What conspiracy did they form?
How did Nehemiah learn of it?
What other discouragement did Nehemiah have?
Describe the great task in rebuilding the wall.
What arrangement did Nehemiah make to offset their plans?
What work did each man have to do?

Precautions of the Builders

How did Nehemiah encourage his brethren?
How did he describe Jehovah?
What motive did he place before the workers?
What thought encouraged them?
How did he divide the workers?
How did they work?
What did each builder have with him?
How were the Jews exposed to their enemies?
What did Nehemiah keep with him?
Who did he say would fight for them?
Would Jehovah fight for them if they were not diligent?
What is said about his persistency?
What orders did Nehemiah give?
How hard did they work?

Other Efforts of the Enemy

What was the first method of attack?
What was the second?
What was the next?
What did they think to do to Nehemiah?
Where did they invite him to come?
What reply did he make?
Give the two reasons why he declined the invitation.
How many times did they invite him?
How many times did he decline?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What did Nehemiah show?
Why is such courage needed to-day?
Why do we not have time to-day to waste with the enemy?
What will God do for those who set their heart to serve him?

Courage, brother! Do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God and do the right.
Though the read be long and dreary,
And the end be out of sight,
Tread it bravely, strong or weary;
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee;
Trust in God and do the right.
Simple rule and safest guiding,
Inward peace and shining light,
Star upon our path abiding;
Trust in God and do the right.

—Norman Macleod.

Lesson XI—September 15, 1929

TEACHING THE LAW OF GOD

Neh. 8:1-3, 5, 6, 8-12.

1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the broad place that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had commanded to Israel

2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

3 And he read therein before the broad place that was before the water gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, and of those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law•

5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

6 And Ezra blessed Jehovah, the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with the lifting up of their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground.

8 And they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye grieved; for the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The opening of thy words giveth light." (Ps. 119:130.)
TIME—B.C. 444.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.
PERSONS.—Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Jews.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 119:97-104.

DAILY HOME READING.—

September 9.	M.	Reading the Law Commanded. (Deut. 31:9-13.)
September 10.	T.	Joshua Reading the Law. (Josh. 8:30-35,)
September 11.	W	.Ezra Reading the Law. (Heb. 8:1-6,)
September 12.	T.	Rejoicing in the Law, (Neh. 8:8-12.)
September 13.	F.	Jesus Reading the Law. (Luke 4:16-21.)
September 14.	S.	Teaching the Law at Home. (Deut. 6:1-9.)
September 15.	S.	Love for God's Law. (Ps. 119:97-104.)

Introductory Thoughts

The subject of this lesson should impress every one most seriously. The temple had been rebuilt and the wall was finished on the twenty-

fifth day of the Jewish month, Elul, the sixth month of the Jewish year, or about the middle or last of our September. (Neh. 6:15.) When this work was completed, Nehemiah made his brother, Hanani, and Hananiah rulers over Jerusalem. He also instituted the examination into the genealogies recorded in chapter 7. Every one's city was determined by the .register, and priests, Levites, and all Israel were settled each in his own city. (Nell. 7:73.) The wall having been finished, the temple having been put in order, all things were now ready for the restoration of the true worship of God. Ezra was joined by Nehemiah in this great work. The time was favorable, for the people desired to hear the word of God. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Law Read and Explained

On the first day of the Jewish year "all the people [men, women, and children old enough to understand the law of God] gathered themselves together as one man . . . before the water gate" and requested Ezra to read to them the law of God. "The water gate" was on the eastern side of the city and led to the brook Kidron, and "the broad place" before this gate was a public square south of the temple. According to the request of the people, "Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly." This, as stated above, was on "the first day of the seventh month." This was the first day of the civil year and the day of the feast of trumpets. The new year was ushered in by the blowing of trumpets, as described in Lev. 23:23-25 and Num. 19:1. This day was one of solemn rest and "a holy convocation."

Ezra began reading from the law "from early morning"—that is, from daylight in the morning—and continued reading "until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, and of those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." This was a most impressive sight. If people were now as anxious to learn God's will as those people were, and would soon come to a full knowledge of the truth. It is thought by some that the people stood while the taw was read and sat while it was explained.

"A pulpit of wood," or an elevated platform, was prepared for Ezra to stand upon, and beside him stood six prominent men on his right hand and seven on his left hand to assist him. When "Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people)," they stood out of respect for the word of God. Many people now show no respect at all for the word of God when it is read and give no attention whatever to it when it is explained. When the people stood, "Ezra blessed Jehovah, the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with the lifting up of their hands." They stood to thank and praise God. "And they bowed their heads, and worshiped Jehovah with their faces to the ground." (Verse 6.)

"And they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly." "Distinctly" means not only so the people could hear the words read, but, as the margin says, "with an interpretation." This is explained as follows: "And they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading." They gave the meaning so that the people who heard could understand.

Many of them had just recently come out of Babylon and were not familiar with the law of God. "The Israelites, having been lately brought out of Babylonian captivity, in which they had continued seventy years, according to the prediction of Jeremiah (chapter 25-:11), were not only extremely corrupt, but it appears that they had in gen-oral lost the knowledge of the ancient Hebrew to such a degree that when the book of the law was read they did not understand it; but certain Levites stood by and gave the sense—that is, translated it into the Chaldee dialect." (Clarke's "Commentary.") This was doubtless true of those born in the captivity. Many had also forgotten the commandments and ordinances of God and the manner of observing these ordinances; hence, the meaning of such had to be explained. This does not show by any means that people cannot now read for themselves and understand the word of God. It has already been translated into our language that we may read it and understand and obey.

II. The Effect Upon the People

Nehemiah, as we have learned, received from Artaxerxes the appointment of governor. (Neh. 5:14.) Ezra, as we have learned also, was "a ready scribe in the law of Moses." (Ez. 7:6.) The Levites mentioned in verse 7 "caused the people to understand the law;" hence, they "taught the people." Nehemiah, Ezra, and these Levites said to the people: "This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law." The people were so impressed with the truth and mercy of God, their sin and its retribution, that they wept and mourned. When Josiah heard the word of God from the beck which Hilkiah, the priest, found, he rent his clothes and wept and said: "For great is the wrath of Jehovah that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us." (2 Kings 22:11, 13, 18, 19.)

So the people on this occasion saw from the word of God how far they had gone from God, how terrible were their sins, and how fearful were the consequences; but in their penitence and return to God and the restoration of his pure worship he would forgive and bless them. Hence, this was not a day of sorrow and mourning, but of joy and gladness. God had appointed this day as one of general rejoicing. (See Deut. 12:7, 12.) The Jews should rejoice on this occasion because of their return from captivity, the completion of the wall around Jerusalem, their establishment in their own cities and homes, the restoration of the worship of God, and the mercy of God in pardoning their sins.

III. The Occasion of Rejoicing

Ezra said to the people: "Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord." They were to eat the good things of the land and rejoice; they were to divide with their neighbors and send portions to those who did not have anything. Our greatest and most lasting joy is in carrying joy and gladness to others. God com-

manded the Israelites to rejoice in all the good things he did for them. (Deut. 26:11-13.) So are we commanded to rejoice always. (Phil. 4:4.) "For the joy of Jehovah is your strength." "The joy of Jehovah" is the joy which Jehovah gives. God had given these Jews at this time the joy of safety from their enemies, the joy of his temple and restored worship, and the joy of pardon and salvation. To rejoice in the Lord is strength; the joy of Jehovah is indeed the stronghold of his people.

IV. Must Do "As It Is Written"

The people obeyed the instructions given and rejoiced, "because they had understood the words that were declared unto them." They saw and appreciated the mercy and goodness of God, which they more than ever realized was upon them. The word of God was a source of great comfort and joy. While all the men and women and children did not return "on the second day," the heads of fathers' houses, the priests, and the Levites came on that day also to Ezra to give attention to the words of the law. These probably did this of their own accord. These should know the word of God that they might teach and guide Other people in the good and right way. "And they found written in the law" that God had commanded the children of Israel to keep the feast of tabernacles in the seventh month and how it should be kept. (Verses 13-15.)

They "found" all this "written in the law," which shows that they did not know God had commanded it. Especially those who were born in the captivity and since then were ignorant of the word of God. The only way to restore the worship of God was to study his word and do what was written therein as fast as they learned it. It is most worthy of note that every one in any age who ever reformed those who had wandered from God's way did so by studying God's word and persuading the people to do "as it is written" therein. Many faithful servants of God led the people back to God's way by finding what was written in the book of God and teaching it to others and persuading them to do it. Hezekiah did a noble work of this kind. (2 Chron. 30:5; 31: 3.) Josiah was another faithful servant of God who helped to restore the worship of God "as it is written." (2 Kings 22:13; 23:3, 21; 2 Chron. 34:29-30.) Ezra and Nehemiah restored the worship of God after the long captivity in Babylon by learning the word of God themselves and teaching it to others.

No one can worship God acceptably te-day except by worshiping him "as it is written." He must be worshiped in Spirit and in truth. All should seek to know what the will of God is and should do that will. Nothing in the worship of God is so unimportant as not to be done "as it is written," or according to God's will.

One of the burdens of our heart ought to be to lead people to worship God "as it is written." Every faithful and true disciple of Christ ought to be afraid of everything in worship that is not found written in the New Testament; every child of God ought to be afraid to do anything as worship to God except that which is found written in the book of God. When the people had learned that God required them to keep the feast, they proceeded at once to keep it as God had taught the feast of tabernacles should be kept. Since this feast began on

the fifteenth day of the month, they had several days in which to prepare for it. (Verse 16.) We are told that they kept the feast in gladness and that "day by day" during the feast, "from the first day until the last day," Ezra read "the book of the law of God" to the people." (Verse 17.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Ezra and Nehemiah did a great work for the Jews when they taught them the law of the Lord. No one can do a better thing for us than to teach us God's will and encourage us to do the same.

2. It is the duty of all who know the word of God to teach it to others. There was a solemn obligation resting upon Ezra and Nehemiah to teach the law of the Lord unto the people; there was an equal obligation resting upon the people to learn the law. So wherever there is a duty to teach God's word to any one, there is a corresponding duty on the part of that one to learn the will of the Lord.

3. Ezra and Nehemiah not only learned the will of God, but they practiced it. They could not have had much influence in teaching the people had they not set the example of following the law of Jehovah. The same is true with us to-day. Any one who teaches God's will is under obligations to set the example in practicing his will. No one can earnestly teach the will of the Lord without prayerfully following the same.

4. The eager, anxious attention that the people gave to the reading of the law and the interpretation of it is a fine example for us to-day. Many people do not read the Bible. All that they get out the Bible is what they hear read; and if they do not give close attention to its reading, they never get very much Bible. Our souls ought to be hungering for the word of God.

5. People should be as anxious to know the law of God as some are to teach his word. All should strive to make the knowledge of God cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

When was the wall finished?
Who were made rulers in Jerusalem?
What examination did Nehemiah give?
For what were the people now ready?
Who were the leaders in this work?

The Law Read and Explained

When did they come together?
What did they request Ezra to do?
Where did they assemble?
Who came together?
What feast day was this?
When did Ezra begin reading the law?
How long did he read it?
What was made for Ezra?
What did the people do when Ezra opened the book?
What respect did they give to the reading?
What answer did the people make?
How did they worship God?
How was the book read?
What is it to read "distinctly?"
Why did the law have to be explained?
From what had the people recently been delivered?
Who helped Ezra and Nehemiah in this work?
Why does this not show that people cannot understand the law of God now?

The Effect Upon the People

From whom did Nehemiah get his appointment?

How was Ezra prepared for this work?
What part did the Levites have in it?
What kind of a day was this?
What did the people do?
What did Josiah do when the book of the law was found?
What did the people see?
For what had God appointed this day?

The Occasion of Rejoicing

What instruction did Ezra give the people?
What were they to eat?
How were they to help others?
What is the greatest joy that we can have?
What does rejoicing in the Lord mean?

Must Do "As It Is Written"

What did the people do?
What did they appreciate?
What voluntary service was rendered?
What did they find?
How did they prepare to keep this feast?
What was it to keep it "as it is written?"
Name some others who encouraged the people to worship "as it is written."
How must people worship God to-day?
Where will we find the will of God revealed in worship to-day?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What is the greatest thing one can do?
What is the next greatest thing one can do?
What is the duty of all?
What corresponding duty do all have?
How did Ezra and Nehemiah set examples?
What is the most effective way of teaching?
How should people give attention to-day?
How ought all to be?

Blow ye the trumpet, blow,
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

Jesus, our great High Priest,
Hath full atonement made;
Ye weary spirits, rest, rest;
Ye mournful souls, be glad;
The year of jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

The gospel trumpet hear,
The news of heavenly grace;
And, safe from earth, appear
Before your Savior's face:
The year of jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

—Charles Wesley.

Lesson XII—September 22, 1929

MALACHI FORETELLS A NEW DAY

Mal. 3:1-12.

1 Behold, f send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple: and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts.

2 But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment: and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts.

6 For I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

7 From the days of your fathers ye have turned aside from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts. But ye say, Wherein shall we return?

8 Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye the whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast its fruit before the time in the field, saith Jehovah of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you happy; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith Jehovah of hosts.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." (Mal. 3:1.)

TIME.—Not certain—about or after B.C. 433.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Malachi and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING—Isa. 11:1-10.

DAILY HOME READING.—

September 16.	M.	Insincere Worship. (Mal. 1:6-14.)
September 17.	T.	Wicked Priests Warned. (Mal. 2:1-9.)
September 18.	W	Purification Promised. (Mal. 3:1-6.)
September 19.	T.	The Blessings of Tithing. (Mal. 3:7-12.)
September 20.	F.	The End of the Wicked. (Mal. 4:1-6.)
September 21.	S.	A Warless World. (Isa. 2:1-4.)
September 22.	S.	The Age of Peace. (Isa. 11:1-9.)

Introductory Thoughts

"Malachi" means "my messenger." Malachi was the last of the prophets of the Old Testament. We know nothing of his personal his-

tory. He prophesied after Haggai and Zechariah, for he speaks of the temple as in existence at the time of his writing and of the temple service being conducted. (Mal. 1:10; 3:10.) The nation still had its chief ruler, called by the same title as was Nehemiah. It is thought that Malachi was contemporary with Nehemiah. By comparing the latter part of the book of Nehemiah with that of Malachi, it will be seen easily that the evils which Nehemiah endeavored to reform and the evils rebuked by Malachi are the same, which leads us to think that it probable that they were contemporary.

The book of Malachi is the next one in point of time to Nehemiah. Malachi's "whole prophecy naturally divides itself into three sections, in the first of which Jehovah is represented as the loving Father and Ruler of his people (Mal. 1:2; 2:9); in the second, as the supreme God and Father of all (Mal. 2:10-16); and, in the third, as their righteous and final Judge (Mal. 2:17 to 4:6). These may again be subdivided into smaller sections, each of which follows a certain or-der—first, a short sentence; then, the skeptical questions which might be raised by the people; and, finally, their full and triumphant refutation." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) God said to the people, "I have loved you;" and their skeptical question was: "Wherein hast thou loved us?" God said the people had not honored him as a son honors his father or as a slave honors his master, but had despised his name. They asked: "Wherein have we despised thy name?" God showed that they had offered polluted bread upon his altar, and, for sacrifices, the blind, lame, and sick, such as the governor of their land would not receive of them. (Chapter 1.) These are examples of the presumptuous way the people contended against the Lord. Malachi is frequently quoted in the New Testament. (Matt. 11:10; Mark 1: 2; 9:11, 12; Luke 1:17; Rom. 9:13.)

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. John the Baptist

God spoke through Malachi. "The burden of the word of Jehovah to Israel by Malachi." (Mal. 1:1.) He said: "Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." God promised to send a messenger before the Christ came. John the Baptist was this messenger, and this Scripture is applied in the New Testament to him. (Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27.) A fuller prophecy of John's work is given in Isa. 40:3-5. Malachi further says: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. 4:5, 6.) Jesus applies this also to John the Baptist. John came "in the Spirit and power of Elijah." (Matt. 11:14; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17.)

Many prophecies have a double significance—for instance, referring to the deliverance and blessings of the Jews and to the deliverance and blessings in Christ. While this promise and prophecy refer to John the Baptist, some think they refer to a reformation among the Jews wrought by Nehemiah. If Malachi prophesied during Nehemiah's absence from Jerusalem, his prophecy may refer to the sudden return and work of Nehemiah as well as to the work of John the Bap-236

tist. "He shall prepare the way before me." Nehemiah prepared the way for the pure worship of God, and John the Baptist prepared the way for Christ. In Christ's day the Jews knew the prophecy to send Elijah had not been fulfilled until Jesus showed its fulfillment in John the Baptist. "The Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple." The Jews looked for the Messiah to restore the kingdom of Israel. Jesus came as the Messiah suddenly and not as the Jews expected him to come. Jesus cleansed the material temple (Matt. 21: 12-14; John 2:13-17), and established the spiritual building, or tem-pie, of God. "The messenger of the covenant .... behold, he cometh." God's covenant with Abraham was that in his seed should "all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3), and Jesus is the fulfillment of this (Acts 3:25, 26; Gal. 3:8). Through Jesus and by his blood was made and sealed that blessed covenant which, in contrast with the law of Moses, is called "the new covenant," or "new testament." (Heb. 8:8-13; see also Jet. 31:31-35.) "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (1 Cor. 11:25.) God's covenant with Levi is given in Mal. 2:4-8, and he came in his power and blessings to the Jews in his restored worship at that time to keep his covenant with Levi; but the fuller meaning of this promise was the coming of Christ.

II. Mercy and Vengeance of God

"But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Who will be ready and able to stand the test? Christ "came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not" (John 1:11), and on one occasion many of his disciples turned back from following him (John 6:66, 67-69). "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12.) "For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." As the refiner's fire purl-ties the metal from the dross and soap cleanses garments of dirt, so Jesus purifies and cleanses from error and sin by his test of faith and trial of true service. John

ance," which is "self-control." Temperance is much more than merely abstinence from intoxicating liquors. Some who never touch intoxicating beverages are very intemperate in other things. Paul before Felix "reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come." (See Acts 24:24-26.) Temperance is embraced in the fruit of the Spirit, and is put in contrast with works of the flesh. "And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." (See Gal. 5:16-24.) it is one of the virtues of the Christian life, and is essential to entrance into heaven. (2 Pet. 1:1-11.) One of the greatest lessons in life is that of self-control, or temperance.

One of the greatest fights which we all have to make is against self, bringing self under control. Paul made this fight and gained the victory, saying: "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected." (1 Cor. 9:26, 27.) We must all do the same. Almost every kind of sin will spring from drunkenness, and no drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God. The only absolutely safe course is to touch not, taste not, handle not. Any intemperance weakens the mind and body; it unfits one for the greatest service. There are things which are lawful, and we should participate in these things with temperance; there are unlawful things, and we should practice total abstinence toward unlawful things.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. A Fixed Purpose to Be True to God

Daniel was a great man. He is classed with Job and Noah. Ezekiel said: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." (Ezek. 14:14; see also Dan. 1:20.) Daniel is presented to us as a young man who possessed sterling qualities of noble manhood. Such a one can be of the greatest service to God and to his fellow men. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's dainties, nor with the wine which he drank." (Verse 8.) Daniel was a leader of his companions, and his fixed purpose to remain true to God is the secret of his greatness. The law of Moses, under which Daniel lived, made a distinction between the clean fowls and beasts which the Jews could eat and the unclean ones which they were forbidden to eat. (See Lev. 11.) The Jews were in captivity at this lime, and one of the defilements which led to their captivity was the eating of "unclean food." (Hos. 9:3, 4.) Ezekiel, another prophet of the captivity, said: "Ah Lord Jehovah! behold, my soul hath not been polluted; for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn of beasts; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth." (Ezek. 4:14.) The Jews were forbidden to eat blood. (Deut. 12:16, 23-25.) The animals eaten were offered as sacrifices to their gods, and libations of wine were poured out during each meal to their gods. The following were probably the chief reasons why Daniel declined the food from the king's table: (1) Some animals and fowls were unclean; (2) some were strangled or not prop-

erly bled; (3) portions of every meal were offered as sacrifices to idols; (4) it may have been that it was intemperate to eat "the king's dainties," because they were corrupting to body and mind. The Psalmist prayed to be kept from eating the "dainties" of men who worked iniquity. (Ps. 141:4.) To have eaten "the king's dainties" would have been disobedience and dishonor to God and to have joined the heathen in the worship of idols. This was a temptation to Daniel. Not to eat these "dainties" would render him singular and would encourage disfavor of the king and his officers; to eat them would gratify the natural appetite. To refrain from eating them would be loyalty to God, but to eat them would be obedience to the king. "Daniel purposed in his heart" to be true to God. A fixed purpose, a strong will, and true courage were necessary to overcome the temptation and pursue the right course. A fixed purpose in the heart to do the right is necessary for the greatest usefulness in life.

II. Daniel and His Companions Gain Favor With God

"God made Daniel to find kindness and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs." (Verse 9.) By remaining faithful to God, Daniel gained the favor and blessings of Jehovah, and with the favor and blessings of Jehovah he finds favor with the rulers. Sometimes one may find favor with God and be unfavorable to man; sometimes one may gain favor with man, but lose favor with God. But Daniel, by being loyal to God, retained the favor of God and gained the favor of men. By such a course he was prepared to be of the greatest service to man. The only way that he could remain fit to serve others was to gain and retain the favor of God. No one can serve men to the greatest advantage without being in favor with God.

Daniel and his companions were following the wisdom of God, but Ashpenaz was following the wisdom of men. Ashpenaz thought that should Daniel and his companions not eat the food and drink the wine the king had appointed, they would not keep up their physical health and appearance and would be "worse looking" than the other youths in training, and thus his head would be in danger with the king; hence, he said he feared the king. Nebuchadnezzar was a harsh and stern ruler. He had slain Zedekiah's sons before his eyes and then had put out the eyes of Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:7; Jer. 39:6, 7); also he threatened to kill his own wise men because they could not reproduce and interpret his dream (Dan. 2:5, 12). Hence, Ashpenaz might well fear him.

Daniel made the proposition to the steward that he and his companions should be fed on pulse (herbs or grain—peas, beans, wheat, bar-ley-vegetable food) for ten days as a test. He was willing to risk a vegetable diet, and had confidence that God would overrule all things and that it would be well with him and his companions. The steward was afraid that they would not look so well, and that when the king found out that they were not eating the food which he had appointed for them he would be punished, as well as Daniel and his companions. Daniel's force of character sufficiently impressed the steward that it would be well to make the experiment. This he did. Daniel was wise and discreet. His purpose to be faithful to God gave him strength of character, and he was better fit to serve man and honor God. At the

end of ten days the steward was to compare the appearance of Daniel and his companions with the appearance of those who had feasted upon "the king's dainties." Daniel pursued a course which kept him fit in body and mind for the greatest service.

III. Daniel Gained the Favor of the Rulers

The steward accepted the proposition which Daniel submitted to him and acted accordingly. At the end of the ten days the countenance of Daniel and his companions "appeared fairer, and they were fatter in flesh, than all the youths that did eat of the king's dainties." (Verses 14, 15.) Right never fears investigation, and truth will bear the severest test. Dissipation or strong drink does not produce fair countenances, health, strength of body, and vigor of mind. Young people in schools and colleges addicted to the use of tobacco and other habits of dissipation are not capable of as high attainments as those who abstain from its use. Banks, railroads, stores, manufactories, and all good business men discriminate against boys and men given to strong drink. No young man ever lost a position because he did not use tobacco or whisky or did not dissipate; many have lost positions of honor and trust because of the use of these things. Such habits unfit one for the greatest service. Every one owes it to himself and others to follow such habits of life as will fit him for the greatest service.

When the steward saw the wide contrast between Daniel and his companions and those who had eaten "the king's dainties," he was willing to continue feeding Daniel and his companions on "pulse." They had found favor with him. Their temperance and discretion, together with their faithfulness to God, had won for them the confidence of the steward, and he was now willing for them to have their own way about their diet. He was willing to trust them. He was willing to rely upon the good judgment of Daniel. Daniel was thus prepared to serve him and others to the greatest advantage. Daniel had remained faithful to his convictions and loyal to his God. He had proved himself wise and discreet by his temperate life. Such a life will always win.

IV. They Excel in Body and in Spirit

"Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." (Verse 17.) They were young men—at least, about grown. As a reward for their abstinence from that which was defiling and corrupting and for their right living, "God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom"—that is, they understood the literature and science of the Chaldeans. Special mention is made of Daniel. He "had understanding in all visions and dreams." He surpassed the most learned and wisest of the Babylonians. God enabled him by inspiration or miraculous knowledge to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dreams of chapters 2 and 4 and gave him the visions revealed in the book of Daniel.

"And at the end of the days"—that is, "three years" (verse 5)—the king had appointed for their training, "the prince of the eunuchs brought" all the youths who were in training "before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them"—examined them, or talked

with them concerning these matters of importance. After looking all of the youths over and examining them, "among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king." Officers and servants stood in the presence of kings. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." (Prov. 22:29.) Daniel and his companions stood before the king upon their own merits. They had found favor with the king. They had no political friend to commend them or work for them. Their promotion was upon their merits and not upon anything else. They were prepared or fit in body and mind for the work which he had for them to do.

"In every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm." (Verse 20.) We do not know who these "magicians and enchanters" were. They were "probably the same as philosophers and astronomers among us." (Clarke's "Commentary.") We are told in verse 21 that Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus. He continued through the reigns of different kings to the end of the Chaldean Empire and into the beginning of the Persian Empire, when Cyrus took Babylon and issued his edict for rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem. (Ez. 1: 1-4.) Daniel continued even longer than this in the service of that country. (See Dan. 10:1.) We should learn that, whether in freedom or captivity, he who pursues the right course and faithfully serves God will always be blessed. It is a deceptive sin to think that men must do wrong in order to prosper. "When a man's ways please Jehovah, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Prov. 16:7.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The secret of Daniel's success was his faith in God and loyalty to the will of God. He had a strong intellect; possessed prudence, sobriety, and piety. These qualities will help to keep one fit for service to-day.

2. Daniel was courageous. Though a captive in a foreign land, yet he did not hesitate to ask for that which he knew to be right. His courage grew out of his strong determination to be faithful to God. Such a course will bring success and blessings to any one.

3. Daniel was courteous. He was firm in his conviction and determined in his purposes; yet these did not prevent his being kind and courteous. It is well for us to learn that kindness and courtesy should always go with courage and determination. Our victories must be won through love.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSONS

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What is temperance?
Why should it be studied?
Name some things in which some are temperate and some things in which they are intemperate.
Where does self-control belong in the Christian life?
What is the great fight that we all have to make?
What did Paul say that he did?
Toward what things should we practice total abstinence?

A Fixed Purpose to Be True to God

With whom is Daniel classed?
What purpose did Daniel make?
Did he remain true to it?
How did Daniel stand related to his companions?
Under what law was Daniel living?
What classification of food was made by the law?
Why would it defile Daniel to eat "the king's dainties?"
Give the four probable reasons for Daniel's refraining from eating "the king's dainties."
What would refraining from eating the king's food do for Daniel?
How does a fixed purpose of heart strengthen character?
How does a fixed purpose of heart fit one for greater service?

Daniel and His Companions Gain Favor with God

How did Daniel gain favor with God?
Can one find favor with God and men at the same time?
Which is better—to have favor with God or men?
Why was Ashpenaz afraid to follow Daniel's suggestion?
What proposition did Daniel submit to him?
Why did he finally agree to Daniel's proposition?
What is meant by "pulse?"
What is meant by "the king's dainties?"

Daniel Gained the Favor of the Rulers

At the end of ten days how did Daniel and his companions appear?
What effect did this have on the rulers?
How do some young people dissipate in school?
What effect does such dissipation have on them?
Have you ever known any one to lose a position because of self-control?
What were the main qualities found in Daniel that impressed his rulers?
How were Daniel and his companions better prepared to serve?

They Excel in Body and in Spirit

How long a time was given for the preparation of these four youths?
How did Daniel and his companions appear in contrast with the others?
In what were they superior?
Who observed their superiority?
What did God give them?
What may be said of a diligent man?
How long did Daniel continue in the service of kings?
What should we learn from Daniel's case?
What will God do for the one who pleases him?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Name some of the chief points of Daniel's character.
How will these be helpful to one?
What shows Daniel's courage?
What was the basis of his courage?
Can one succeed without this?
What can you say of Daniel's courtesy?
How must we win our victories?

True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful, and loyal,
King of our lives, by thy grace we will be;
Under the standard exalted and royal,
Strong in thy strength we will battle for thee.

True-hearted, whole-hearted, fullest allegiance
Yielding henceforth to our glorious King;
Valiant endeavor and loving obedience,
Freely and joyously now would we bring.

True-hearted, whole-hearted, Savior all glorious,
Take thy great power and reign there alone,
Over our wills and affections victorious,
Freely surrendered and wholly thine own.

—Frances R. Havergal.

Lesson III—October 20, 1929

USEFUL WORK A CHRISTIAN DUTY

Gen. 2:15; Ex. 20:9; Neh. 6:3; John 5:17; 9:4; Acts 20:33-35; 2 Thess. 3:6-12; Eph. 4:28.

15 And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work.

4 We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

33 I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you:

9 Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you; If any will not work, neither let him eat.

11 For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any will not work, neither let him eat." (2 Thess. 3:10.)

TIME.—At all times.

PLACE.—In every place.

PERSONS.—God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and all Christians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 8:1-9.

DAILY HOME READING.—-

October 14. M. . . . . The Gospel of Work. (John 5:10-18.)
October 15. T. . . . . The Idler Banned. (2 Thess. 3:6-15.)
October 16. W . . . . . .Christian Conduct for Workers. (Eph. 4:25-32.)
October 17. T. . . . . The Work of a Faithful Minister, (Acts 20:24-35.)
October 18. F. . . . . The Call for Laborers. (Luke 10:1-11.)
October 19. S. . . . . Inspired Workmen. (Ex. 31:1-11.)
October 20. S. . . . . The Master Workman. (Ps. 8.)

Introductory Thoughts

The word "work" is full of meaning and embraces much. It means exertion for the accomplishment of a purpose. It is active energy.

This may be physical, mental, moral, or spiritual energy, or two or more or all combined. There are good works and evil works—works of God and works of the devil. The meaning of "work" in this lesson is employment, occupation, mental and physical effort to make an honest living and to have something to give to others. There is an urgent need of the study of the Bible on work at the present time because of the widespread idleness and the prevailing love of idle ease. There is un unrighteous desire to receive as much pay as possible for as little work as possible. There is a sad condition of unreliability of many workmen. God's teaching in regard to work, just as his way in almost all other things, has been perverted. This perversion has helped to increase the wickedness which is spreading throughout society as foul waters flood the land. Christian people need to study this lesson that they may do the work that is pleasing to God. All people will be profited by studying what God says on the subject of work. It is to be hoped that a better knowledge of the subject of work will improve society in general and the church of our Lord in particular.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Work a Blessing, Not a Curse

It is a mistaken idea to think that work is a curse. Before man sinned God "put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." (Gen. 2:15.) God gave man at the first a useful and beautiful occupation. He gave him employment to cultivate the garden and to keep it in its beauty and productiveness as God had created it. Because of man's sin the ground was cursed with thorns and thistles, so that in the sweat of his face and in sorrow of heart he had to eat bread until his return to the dust. (Gen. 3:16-19.) The ground has received a double curse. It was cursed because of Adam's sin, and then it was cursed because of Cain's sin. (Gen. 4:11, 12.) The earth was cursed with thorns, briers, and thistles, which made it difficult for man to produce by cultivation of the soil. The fertility of the soil was cursed because of Cain's sin, which not only made it difficult for man to cultivate the soil, but the barrenness of the soil caused it to produce a very meager supply. This curse multiplied the work that man should do. God gave him more work than the first assignment.

In giving the law upon Mount Sinai, God incorporated in the Ten Commandments the Sabbath day. Man should "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," in order to have a day of rest; but in commenting upon the day of rest God said: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work." (Ex. 20:9.) Many have contended that it is as important for man to work six days as it is for him to rest on the Sabbath day. This is possibly too much emphasis on work. However, it is important for man to work. God has promised to bless the earnest, honest toiler in his labors. Idleness has ever been a curse. It is said that "nature abhors a vacuum," and it is equally true that God abominates an idler. God's law for man since his creation has required of man honest toil. There is no way now to produce honest bread except through toil and sweat. The Bible teaches the kind of work that it is right to do, and it also teaches the kind of work that should not be done. The motive for all right kind of work, as well as

the purposes to be accomplished by it, is set forth in the Bible. The Jews were so impressed with the importance of work that they coined the proverb which says: "A father had just as well teach his son to steal as not to teach him to work." Honest work develops all the powers of body, mind, and soul. There is no way to develop physically except by exercising the physical organs; there is no way to develop the moral powers except by exercising them; there is no way to develop the spiritual powers without exercise or work. The threefold blessings—physical, moral, and spiritual—are all received through work.

II. Jesus Always Busy

At the age of twelve Jesus was found in the temple by Joseph and his mother, and in answer to them he said: "Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49.) He was impressed early that he must be about his Father's business; that he must work in order to fulfill his mission. He said again: "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." (John 5:17.) Again, he said: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John 9:4.) God works; Christ works; the Holy Spirit works. Each member of the Godhead is represented to us as working.

Christ had much to do while on earth. His three and one-half years were crowded with intense work. He never found time to rest. He was ever busy teaching, working miracles, healing the diseased, and fulfilling the Father's will. No life on earth has been so full of good works as was the life of Christ. There was so much to do and so little time for him to do it that his life was crowded with one event or one work after another until he could say in the last moments of his life: "It is finished." He has given us an example that we should work. No one can follow the footsteps of Jesus and be idle; no one can walk in his steps and neglect to do good at all times.

III. Bible Motives for Work

The Bible not only teaches us to work, but sets before us the proper motives for work. Paul said to the elders of the church at Ephesus: "Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak." (Acts 20:34, 35.) Here are two motives for work—one to support himself, and the other to help others. Every one should try to make an honest living. It is the duty of all to "take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17), as God has commanded• Another command is: "Let our people also learn to profess honest occupations for necessary wants, that they be not unfruitful." (Tit. 3:14—margin.) The Bible condemns all kinds of fraud, cheating, gambling, stealing, getting something for nothing, oppressing the poor, and exploiting the wages of others. (James 5:1-6.) No one has any right to make money out of that which will bring only evil to others. There are hundreds of callings and professions which bring an honest and good living to all who follow them diligently and which result in only good to others. There are other callings which, while those who follow

them may increase for the time being their own possessions, work only evil to all others. Gambling is not good, for this reason: The loser receives nothing for the money the winner gains, and the winner gives nothing for the money he wins. This is contrary to God's law. Making and selling intoxicating liquors as beverages are not good. Those who make money out of such callings do so at the loss of money, health, happiness, homes, and the souls of those who buy and use them. It is not only unchristian, but also unpatriotic, to manufacture and sell intoxicating liquors as beverages.

Another motive set forth in the Bible for work is that one may support one's family and other dependents. Paul said while at Thessalonica that "neither did we eat bread for naught at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you. . . If man will not work, neither let him eat. . . Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." (2 Thess. 3:6-12.) The Bible teaches the following: "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. 10:4); "He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread" (Prov. 12:11); "The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness" (Prov. 21:5). Poverty and trouble belong to the indolent, the lovers of pleasure, and the sluggards. (Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4, 5, 26; 12:24; 13:4; 19:24; 20:4; 21:25; 24:30-34; 26:13-16.)

Another motive for work is that one may be useful and profitable in any community. (Tit. 3:14.) We are to set good examples, to "walk becomingly toward them that are without." (1 Thess. 4:12.) An idle or lazy man is an unprofitable one, a burden upon others, and a reproach upon the cause of Christ. Paul teaches that we are to work or labor that we may have something to give to the needy. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Eph. 4:28.) We are to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. (James 1:27.) This means that we are to give them such things as they need. The way to obtain these things is to work for them in some honest occupations, and not by suppers or some other fleshly entertainment. While certain widows are to be cared for by the church, there are other helpless ones who are to be cared for by their children and grandchildren. (1 Tim. 5: 1-4, 16.) It requires work to do this. Jesus said: "For ye have the poor always With you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good." (Mark 14:7.) That which is given to the poor and for the support of the gospel must be made by honest work. To sum up, there may be three general motives for work—namely, (1) to support oneself; (2) to give to the helpless; (3) to support the gospel.

IV. Wrong Motives for Work

Merely to make money or accumulate wealth is not a Bible motive :for work. When one works only for the money to spend upon his own lusts, that one works to serve mammon and not God. Jesus declares: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24.) We are warned against laying up treasures upon the earth. (Matt. 6: 19-25.) Again, 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. 3:5.) The "cares and riches and pleasures of this life" (Luke 8:14), with "the lusts of other things" (Mark 4:19), are the thorns which choke the word of God out of the heart. Man was not created in the image of God, nor, later, was he redeemed by the blood of Christ, in order to sleep, to eat, to drink, to wear clothes, or to make money to be consumed upon his lusts. (James 4:1-10.) All such are wrong motives for work.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. It was the purpose of God from the beginning for man to work. God gave man hands, brawn, and muscles. He gave him a mind, with intellectual powers. The possession of these things emphasizes the fact that he should use them. To use them is to work.

2. We should be reminded that since work is so important for our physical, moral, and spiritual welfare, God would direct usal,285 8f

What is it to submit to human government?
What should be done when human government conflicts with God's law?
Do you know of a time when such was the case?
What answer did Peter and John give?
Why cannot Christians join a mob?
Why cannot Christians go to law?
How must their differences be adjusted?
Why cannot Christians take vengeance?

Submission to the Ordinances of Man

What is the highest duty that Christians owe to human government?
Why do Christians need this instruction?
Should Christians obey a ruler simply because he is good?
Why should Christians not disobey wicked rulers?
What should be the motive of all Christians in obeying human authority?
What is it to do anything "for the Lord's sake?"
What does loyalty to Christ mean?

Practical Suggestions

What claim does human government have on all its citizens?
What should be the attitude of Christians to this claim?
What are the two purposes of human government?
Can Christians do either of these?
Why cannot Christians take part in punishing wrongdoers?
Where do all human governments get authority?
What should be the attitude of Christians toward this authority?
Should Christians vote?

O thou who camest from above,
Pure celestial fire to impart,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On the mean altar of my heart.

There let it for they glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
In humble love and fervent praise.

Ready for all thy perfect will,
My act of faith and love repeat,
Till death thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete.
— Charles Wesley

Lesson VI—November 10, 1929

WORLD PEACE THROUGH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Isa. 2:2-4; Acts 17:22-28; John 4:20, 21.

2 And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shah not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious.

23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you.

24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy, mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9.)

TIME.—For Isaiah, B.C. 758; for Acts, A.D. 51; and for John, A.D. 27.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, Athens, and Samaria.

PERSONS.—Isaiah, the Jews, Paul, Jesus, and the woman of Samaria.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 98:1-9.

DAILY HOME READING.—

November	4.	M.	Jehovah's Universal Reign, (Isa. 2:1-11.)
November	5.	T.	God of the Nations. (Acts 17:22-31.)
November	6.	W	No Racial Lines in the Kingdom. (John 4:15-26.)
November	7.	T.	The Comity of Nations. (Isa. 19:19-25.)
November	8.	F.	Kinship of the Nations. (Ps. 87.)
November	9.	S.	The Gospel in the Mother Tongue. (Acts 2:1-6.)
November	10.	S.	The Righteous Judge Acclaimed. (Ps. 98.)

Introductory Thoughts

This lesson should be studied carefully in the light of Bible truths. Universal peace is to be desired. There can be no peace in the world

so long as sin prevails. The nature of sin is to disturb peace. Wherever we find sin, we will find a disturbed condition. Peace may be spoken of in a threefold sense—peace of one's own conscience and mind, peace between man and man, and peace between man and God. Sin disturbs the peace of mind and conscience; sin disturbs the peace between one and his fellows; and sin disturbs the peace between man and God. "There is no peace, saith Jehovah, to the wicked." (Isa. 48:22.) Many will cry, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace." (Jer. 6:14.) So long as the world lies in sin, "no flesh hath peace." (Jer. 12:12.)

We need not deceive ourselves and think that peace may be had by agreement. The world cannot have peace by "mutual understanding." The only way to have peace is to submit to the authority of God and let the "Prince of Peace" rule in our hearts. Peace is desirable. All are longing for peace. War is considered the great enemy of peace. War is destructive both of property and lives. War is a relic of barbarism, and should find no encouragement among civilized people. But a cessation of war is not peace in the true sense. Nations may outlaw war, but this will not bring the peace for which the souls of men sigh. Abiding and universal peace can come only through the universal reign of the "Prince of Peace."

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. A Vision of World Peace

The prophet Isaiah was permitted to see the vision of universal peace, when "the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on top of the mountains, and shall he exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." (Isa. 2:2.) This has particular reference to the time when the Messiah would come and would establish his kingdom upon earth, when his church would be established among men on earth. This should be done in the last days of the earthly Jerusalem, just before the destruction of it, when the heavenly Jerusalem should be erected. (Heb. 12:22, 23; Gal. 4:26.) The establishment of the church on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ marks the time when the gospel in its fullness began to be preached. It is to be noted that "many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:3.) These points are to be observed—namely, (1) the setting up of the church; (2) it should be done in Jerusalem; (3) the Gentiles were to be brought in, or "all nations shall flow unto it;" (4) the word of the Lord should go forth from Jerusalem. The church was established on Pentecost, in Jerusalem, and the gospel in its fullness began to be preached to all nations at that time.

The result of the universal reign of Christ in the world would be to bring about universal peace. "And he will judge between the nations. and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:4.) Their instruments of warfare would be

converted into implements of husbandry. Nations would not be at war with each other, for they will have no occasion for war. This has been fulfilled to the extent that people have accepted the Christian religion and been guided by its principles. The tendency of the gospel and Christianity is toward peace. There can be no war where the Spirit of Christ, the Prince of Peace, prevails, and where people are guided by the teachings of Christ.

God is a God of peace (Phil. 4:9); Christ is the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6); his kingdom is a kingdom of peace (Rom. 14:17); his gospel is the gospel of peace (Acts 10:36); and the citizens of his kingdom are peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). All of his people are exhorted to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3.)

Christianity emphasizes the peace that is in Christ. Jew and Gentile are reconciled in Christ, and both are reconciled to God in him. "For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh." (Eph. 2:14-17.) Jews and Gentiles were brought together by the gospel, and there can be no war between them so long as both remain true to the gospel. When people accept the gospel, they are reconciled to God and to all of the Lord's people who are faithful to him. The Spirit of Christianity establishes peace in one's own mind; it makes peace for all who follow the teachings of Jesus; it makes one at peace with his fellows; it establishes peace between man and God. The only hope for a world-wide peace is in Christianity; the only way that one can enjoy peace is to follow the "Prince of Peace."

II. The Brotherhood of Man

While Paul was on one of his missionary tours among the Gentiles, he came to Athens and made a speech to the Athenians. In this speech he said to them: "As I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To AN UNKNOWN GOD." (Acts 17:23.) Paul began to teach them of this "unknown God." He showed them that God "made the world and all things therein." He taught them of this God and showed them that he was the Creator of all things, and that he could not be confined to dwell in a house "made without hands; neither is he served by men's hands." (Acts 17:24, 25.) He instructed them further that God was the giver of "all life, and breath, and all things." (Verse 25.) He reached the climax, it seems, when he said that God "made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Verse 26.) God created Adam and Eve, and from these all the teeming millions of earth have come. All the nations of earth, with their great diversities of tongues, customs, and varied interests, came from one. All have a common Father, who is God; and, therefore, all are related and constitute the great brotherhood of man.

Since all have one Father and are related as brethren, all should be at peace with each other. The common Father is the basis for peace. Again, as all are related as brethren, we have another ground

for universal peace. It is contrary to the very nature of human beings and contrary to the fundamental relations which all sustain to each other to be at war with each other. It is a sad Commentary on the human family for the different members of this family to be destroying each other in carnal warfare or any other way. The principles of the Christian religion emphasize this common relationship and give to each member of the human family the same rights and privileges in Christ Jesus, "where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all." (Col. 3:11.) Such is the Spirit and teachings of Christ and the Holy Spirit that every member of the human family must be at peace with God and with every other member of the family that acknowledges God as Father.

Since God created the entire human race from a common stock, the doctrine of the unity of the race is closely interwoven with that of the unity of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Since all have one com-men Creator, there should be no feeling of superiority and contempt on the part of some races for another. All should be interested in each other's welfare and salvation; all should work for each other's peace and happiness. The fact that the human family has been separated into so many different nations should not keep one from recognizing the common parentage; neither should it be a ground for making war one upon another. Let all remember that God is the common Father of the human family, and that by virtue of this relationship all should seek the peace of God, and in seeking the peace of God they will seek the peace of each other.

III. The Worship of God

As God is the Creator of all and as all are so closely related to each other that we can say, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), all should worship him with a common worship. In the kingdom of God, or church of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have a common altar. (Heb. 13:10.) People should be united in the worship which they offer unto God. As all have one Creator and one Savior, there should be but the one kind of worship. This unity is expressed by Paul when he said: "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 what Jesus meant in talking to the woman of Samaria. She perceived that Christ was a prophet, and at once propounded to him the question of the difference in worship between the Samaritans and the Jews. She said: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (John 4:20.) God had designated Jerusalem as the central place of worship for national Israel; he had recorded his name in the temple and regulated all of their sacrifices which were to be made on the common altar in Jerusalem. Jesus answered her and said: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father." (Verse 21.) Jesus pointed her forward to the establishment of his kingdom and to the worship that should be in the church. He tells her that acceptable worship to the Father in his church shall no

longer be localized, but "the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and truth." (Verse 23.) This makes acceptable worship come from the heart guided by the truth revealed through Christ, and may be offered unto God at any place by any race. Spiritual worship can be offered in any land and by any one wherever the soul can humble itself before God.

There can be no peace with religious people so long as they are divided into petty denominations or warring religious factions. If one is seeking to establish universal peace, then one ought to seek to destroy all parties, factions, sects, and denominations that exist in the religious world to-day. There is nothing that so disturbs the minds of religious people to-day as these divisions among the professed followers of Jesus Christ. There is a way of peace. This should be sought and followed. This peace cannot be had by uniting all of the different denominations into one big denomination. It can be had only by destroying all party names and creeds and confessions of faith and uniting upon the simple teachings of the "Prince of Peace." This will establish the universal worship of God in Spirit and in truth.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. War is horrible; it is destructive. No Christian can participate in such devastation of life and property, since Christians are peacemakers.

2. Sin, the great disturber of the peace, must be removed before there can be peace. It is the duty of all who love Christ to help destroy the disturber of the peace.

3. All human governments are founded upon force and depend upon force for their continuation. So long as worldly pride and ambition exist in the minds of a nation, so long will peace be impossible. Nations vie with each other and strive with each other for supremacy. This genders strife and so often results in bloodshed. Christians cannot encourage such nor engage in such work.

4. One God, one Savior, one Holy Spirit, one church, one faith, one baptism, and one common hope form the basis of unity of worship. This unity makes for peace and happiness. All should recognize this and promote the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Why should this lesson be studied?
What is peace?
What disturbs the peace?
How many kinds of peace are there?
To whom is there no peace?
How may peace be had?
What may be said of war?
Will the abolishing of war bring about peace?

A Vision of World Peace

Who was Isaiah?
What vision did he have?
When was it fulfilled in part at least?
When was the church established?
Who should constitute the Lord's people?
Name four points included in this prophecy.
What would be the result if all should accept Christ?
What would they do with their instruments of warfare?
Why cannot there be war where the Spirit of Christ prevails?
What is said of God?
How is Christ described?

What may be said of the gospel?
What may be said of the kingdom, or church?
What should God's people do?
How are Jew and Gentile reconciled?
How may all others be reconciled?
How may all live in this state of reconciliation?

The Brotherhood of Man

Where did Paul make this speech?
What was one of the inscriptions which the Athenians had?
What did Paul teach them about God?
From how many did the human race come?
Who was that one?
How is God a common Father?
How are all men related?
How does this become a basis for peace?
What presents a sad picture?
How are all in Christ?
Why should there be no prejudice existing between races?
How should all be interested in each other?
For what should all work?

The Worship of God

In whom do we all exist?
How many altars exist by divine authority? Mention the seven "ones."
What condition did the Samaritan woman mention?
How did Christ answer her?
Where may one worship God to-day?
How should all worship God?
How would one kind of worship help to establish peace?
What do different religious factions do?
What, then, should be the first step toward universal peace?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Describe war.
Why cannot Christians participate in carnal war?
What must be removed before peace may be had?
How are human governments maintained? What Spirit prevails in them?
What attitude should Christians have toward such?
How may we promote the “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin:
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.
Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed:
To do the will of Jesus—this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round:
On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found.
Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away:
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours:
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.
It is enough; earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace.

—Edward H. Bickersteth.

Lesson VII—November 17, 1929

LIVING WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER RACES

Acts 10:9-15, 30-35; Gal. 3:28, 29.

9 Now on the morrow, as they were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour:

10 And he became hungry, and desired to eat: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance;

11 And he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth:

12 Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean.

15 And a voice came unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common.

30 And Cornelius said, Four-days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel,

31 And saith, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are held in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by the sea side.

33 Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come, Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord.

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.

28 There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35.)

TIME.—For Acts, A.D. 40; for Galatians, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Caesarea, Joppa, and Galatia.

PERSONS.—Cornelius, Peter, Paul, and the Galatian Christians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 3:14-21.

DAILY HOME READING.—

November 11. M. . . . . Overcoming Racial Antipathies. (Acts 10:9-16.)
November 12. T. . . . . Christianity and the Races. (Acts 19:23-33.)
November 15. W . . . . . .Home-Making in a Foreign Land. (Ruth 1:6-18.)
November 14. T. . . . . Jesus and the Samaritan Woman. (John 4:5-14.)
November 15. F. . . . . Our Debt to Alien Races. (Rom. 1:8-17.)
November 16. S. . . . . Racial Prejudice Rebuked. (Acts 13:44-52.)
November 17. S. . . . . The Universal Spiritual Family. (Eph. 3:14-21.)

Introductory Thoughts

This lesson is supposed to teach how to live without friction or trouble among people who are of different nationalities. There are numer-

ous examples of people living with other nations. Abraham was called from among his kindred and lived among strangers. He had no trouble with the Canaanites, who inhabited Palestine at that time. (Gem 12:6.) He went into Egypt and sojourned there for a while. (Gem 13:1.) Isaac sojourned in Palestine and had no trouble getting along with the people. Sometimes he was imposed upon, but he suffered the imposition and caused no trouble. (Gem 26:12-22.) Jacob is another example of God's people living among others. Joseph lived in Egypt and won the favor of the king and his people. (Gen. 41:3745.) The twelve tribes lived in Egypt for a good many years. Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, lived in the land of Moab for some time with foreign people. (Ruth 1:1-5.) Ruth, who was a Moabite, dwelt among the people of God. (Ruth 1:15-18.) The children of Israel sojourned in 'the land of captivity for seventy years. Daniel and others found favor with the rulers. (Dan. 1:17-21.)

It is a fine lesson to learn to be able to move with grace and ease among any people. A Christian who is living faithful to the Lord makes a good citizen in any country. A Christian is the highest type of citizenship, and makes a good citizen in a kingdom, republic, or democracy. A Christian is kind and courteous to all and obedient and respectful to all rightful authority.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. Cornelius

Cornelius was a Gentile, and is usually considered the first Gentile convert to the Christian religion. He was a centurion, or captain of a company of soldiers, from Italy, and was stationed at Caesarea to protect the governor and aid him in maintaining order. In his association with the Jews, Cornelius had learned from them of the true God and had turned from idolatry to the worship of God.

The record which we have of him gives the following points of his character: (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 was liberal, as 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. (Acts 10:2, 7, 22, 30.) He was worshiping God according to the best light that he had at that time. He was probably worshiping according to the Jews' religion. He was not a saved man; for, as we learn, he had to learn from Peter words "whereby" he should "be saved," "and all" his "house." (Acts 11:14.)

If any man could be Saved on his morality or saved by worshiping according to a religion which had already served its purpose, then Cornelius would have been a saved man. The law had been fulfilled and had been taken out of the way. God no longer blessed people in worshiping him according to the law which Christ had fulfilled and taken out of the way. Cornelius must learn of Christ and worship according to the law of Christ. There is no salvation without Christ, "whom God set forth to he 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 salva-

tion" (Heb. 5:9). Cornelius had turned from idolatry to the acceptance of the true God, and was now walking according to the light which he had; but he must learn of Christ and accept him as his Savior. He needed more light. All who are honestly seeking for more light will be led into a fuller knowledge of the truth of God.

II. Peter's Vision

Cornelius had been praying to God, and an angel had told him to "send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter." (Acts 11:13.) He was told just where Peter was lodging in Joppa, even given the man's name with whom he was lodging. Cornelius immediately sent "two of his household servants, and a devout soldier," to bring Peter to him. (Acts 10:7.)

While these men were on their way for Peter, God was preparing Peter to go with them. "Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour." (Acts 10:9.) This was ab)ut noon. Peter was devout, and felt the need of prayer, of regular prayer, and he prayed regularly. 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 "the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth." (Verse 11.) This sheet, which was 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." (Verse 12.) With this sheet came a voice from heaven: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." Although this vision came in the form of a trance, yet 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." (Verse 14.) Under the law of Moses, certain birds and beasts were unclean, and the Jews were forbidden to eat them. (See Lev. 11; Deut. 14:3-21.) Again the voice came and, in response to Peter, said: "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common." (Verse 15.) This was done three times, and the vessel was "received up into heaven."

While Peter thought on the vision and was unable to decide what its meaning could be, the messengers which had been sent by Cornelius approached the gate and called for him. Still meditating upon the vision and wondering what could be its meaning, 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." (Verse 20.) 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. It seems that Peter was slow to understand that the Gentiles were entitled to the blessings of the gospel. The commission which Christ gave Peter and others said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15.) Peter had preached on the day of Pentecost: "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." (Acts 2:89.) It was hard for Peter to understand that he should go to another race and preach the gospel; it was difficult for him to lay aside racial

prejudices. This vision was to convince him that all nations had a right to the blessings in Christ Jesus.

III. God No, Respecter of Persons

Peter kept the messengers from Cornelius overnight and the next day took six Jewish brethren and started to Caesarea, which he reached on the fourth day after the appearance of the angel. He found Cornelius, his kinsman and near friend, waiting for him. Cornelius explained his vision to Peter in detail, rehearsing the instruction that the angel gave him. He expressed joy at Peter's coming so promptly, for he said: "Thou hast well done that thou art come." He further assured Peter that they were assembled "in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." (Acts 10: 33.) Peter "opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." (Verse 34.) The Jews thought God was partial to them (see 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

business," as the Authorized Version translates it. Thus early he realized that God had a work for him to do and he must be about it. It was this deep conviction which enabled him to accomplish so much in his eventful life and to say on the cross: "It is finished."

Jesus returned to Nazareth with Joseph and Mary, where he remained for eighteen years in the quiet affairs and daily routine of a carpenter's life. He is a beautiful and royal example to children in this respect. (Eph. 6:1-3.) The noblest, purest, most royal child that ever lived on earth was most obedient to his parents. Jesus was just as much in the work of God at home in Nazareth, subject to his parents, as he was in his public ministry. Disobedience to parents is a great sin and all too common at this age. (2 Tim. 3:1-7.) "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." The quiet years at Nazareth were spent in physical, mental, and spiritual development and preparation for his great public work.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The home of Joseph and Mary must have been an ideal home. In such a home Jesus grew up; in such a home all children should be blessed.

2. The great evil of divorce which threatens the stability of our society can be corrected by making the homes Christian. It is a crime against children to rear them in a home lacking love. All children are entitled to a training in a Christian home.

3. The family altar, at which every member of the family should kneel in daily prayer, should be restored to the home. Prayer in the home helps to make happy homes on earth.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What is one of the great needs of the age?
Why cannot anything take its place?
What modern tendencies help to destroy home life?
What is God's will in this matter?
What should old women do?
How is God's order perverted to-day?
What is one of the greatest works people can do?

What Is a Christian Home?

Describe a Christian home.
Name the things which are implied in it.
How should the members treat each other?
Of what is the home a type?
How may society and the church be made better?
Name some of the finer graces which belong to a Christian home.

Duties of Husbands and Wives

What are some of the duties of husbands?
Give some of the duties of wives.
Who is the head of the church?
Who is the head of the family?
How should the head rule?
Can this order be reversed and please God?
What instruction did Peter give to husbands?
How should wives regard their husbands?

The Child Jesus Grew

How did Jesus grow?
How did he grow physically?
How did he gain wisdom?
What is meant by the grace of God being upon him?

The Feast of the Passover

How many annual feasts did the Jews have?

How often did they have to go to Jerusalem?
What was the Passover?
When was it kept?
Who attended?
At what age did boys begin?
Who accompanied Joseph and Mary?
Describe the journey.

Jesus' Visit to the Temple

How did the people travel?
How old was Jesus at this time?
Why were Joseph and Mary not careless?
When did they miss Jesus?
What did they do then?
How long before they found him?
Where did they find him?
What was he doing?
What is a good way to teach?

His Father's House

What did his mother ask him?
How did Jesus answer her?
What is meant by being Win my Father's house?"
Did he return with them?
In what is Jesus an example to children to-day?
In what three things did Jesus advance?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

What kind of home do you suppose Joseph and Mary had?
How can the evil of divorce be checked to-day?
How will prayer in the home help to make Christian homes?

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home.
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home, home, sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!
There's no place like home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain—
O give me my lowly thatched cottage again,
The birds singing gaily, that came at my call—
Give me them, with the peace of mind dearer than all!
Home, home, sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!
There's no place like home!

—J. Howard Payne.

Lesson X—December 8, 1929

HELPING NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Matt. 25:31-46.

31 But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats;

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in;

36 Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink?

38 And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 And when saw we thee sick. or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shah answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was hungry, and ye did not give me to cat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink;

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst. or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me.

46 And these shall go away into eternal punishment: hut the righteous into eternal life.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Lev. 19:18.)
TIME.—Probably Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.
PLACE.—Mount of Olives.
PERSONS.—Jesus and his apostles.
DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 6:27-36.
DAILY HOME READING.—

December 2. M. . . . . Who Is My Neighbor? (Luke 10:25-37.)
December 3. T. . . . . Neighborliness a Touchstone of Character. (Matt. 25:31-46.}
December 4. W . . . . . .Personal Religion and Social Service. (James 1:19-27.)
December 5. T. . . . . Just Conduct Toward Neighbors Required. (Lev. 19:,9-18.)
December 6. F. . . . . Helping Neighbors in the Way of Life. (Acts 8:26-39.)
December 7. S. . . . . The Social Effects of Salvation. (Acts 2:87-47.)
December 8. S. . . . . God's Way of Loving Enjoined. (Luke 6:27-36.)

Introductory Thoughts

In Matt. 24 Jesus foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and also the end of the world. He warns all of his disciples to be ready. He does this by giving them different facts and parables. The parable of the faithful and unfaithful servants, the ten virgins, the talents, and

the facts of the budding of the fig tree and the sudden destruction of the flood are all given to impress these lessons. After giving these solemn warnings, Jesus exhorted all to "watch" and "be ready," giving as one reason the fact that they knew not the day nor the hour when he would come. (Matt. 24:42-44.) The parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the talents, and the present lesson, all show how to watch and be ready. Hence, to "watch" and "be ready" for the second coming of Christ is to be accurately engaged in his service, to discharge faithfully daily duties in private life and public service of God. No one can "watch" or "be ready" by standing and gazing upward. No one in disobedience to God or willfully neglecting present-day duties or teaching the doctrines and commandments of men can claim to be watching for the coming of Christ. All should learn this important lesson.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Coming of Christ

"But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." (Matt. 25:31.) The little word "but" connects the duty to "watch" and "be ready" and the truth that no man knows the day or hour when Christ will come, with what will take place when he does come. The time to prepare and to "watch" for his coming is before he comes. The judgment and the everlasting separation of the ones ready from the ones who are not ready will take piece when he comes. That will be the day of judgment, and there will be no time for preparation then.

The Scriptures as clearly and abundantly teach that Christ will come again as they teach that he came in his first advent. Jesus was "manifest in the flesh" (John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16), and in his humility Jesus frequently speaks of himself as "the Son of man."

"In his glory" embraces his majesty and authority as "King of kings, and Lord of lords," sitting upon his throne which he now occupies. He will then be attended by "all the angels." This is a most striking contrast with his humiliation, suffering, rejection, and shameful death on earth. He was judged and condemned on earth, but he will then judge the world. The New Testament frequently speaks of Christ's coming in power and great glory and with the angels. (Matt. 26:64; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; etc.) Jude says: "Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Verses 14, 15.)

All who love the Lord must also love "his appearing." (2 Tim. 4: 8.) No one can eat the Lord's Supper intelligently without looking forward to the coming of Christ. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26.) In eating the Lord's Supper there is a remembrance of the death and sufferings of the Son of God; there is also a looking forward to his coming. One of the fundamental doctrines of the New Testament is the coming of our Lord. Let us be ready.

II. The Last Judgment

This lesson teaches that "before him shall be gathered all the nations" in judgment when he comes. Much is said in the Bible of "the judgment," "the day of judgment," and "that day." (Matt. 7:22; 10: 15; 11:22, 24; 12:36; 2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7; I John 4:17; etc.) God commands "men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:30, 31.) This lesson and the Bible throughout states that all nations will be judged. God will judge the world "in righteousness," and, therefore, "every man according to his works"—that is, his acceptance or rejection of Jesus and the life to which faith leads or the life to which unbelief leads. (Rom. 2:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:10.)

In his judgment Jesus will separate the obedient from the disobedient, the righteous from the unrighteous, the good from the bad—those who have watched and are ready from those who have not watched and are not ready. "As the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." (Verses 32, 33.) Jesus' hearers were familiar with this illustration. (See Ezek. 34:17-24.) Like the parable of the ten virgins and that of the talents, this illustration of the sheep and goats has reference to Christ's disciples. The "goats" represent church members who refuse or fail to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, or help the sick. These "goats" have got in among the "sheep;" but Jesus, the great Shepherd, will finally separate the two forever, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory," or at the last day. Numerous other Scriptures teach that all who "know not God, and . . . obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus," will suffer "eternal destruction" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8); but this lesson teaches that the careless, unfaithful, and disobedient church members also will be condemned and lost.

III. The Reward of the Righteous

After this separation has been made at the judgment, "the King" will say to those who are on his right hand and are represented by "sheep:" "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Verse 34.) The wise virgins were admitted to the marriage feast; the "good and faithful" servants were invited into the joys of the Lord and were made rulers "over many things;" and these were invited to "come," blessed of God, into the inheritance of "the kingdom prepared" for them "from the foundation of the world." How appropriate to say to these: "Ye blessed of my Father". They had blessed others in the different ways mentioned in this lesson, and "it is more blessed to give than to receive." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them." (Rev. 14:13.) It is stated that God will not forget the "work and the love" which the disciples of Christ show "toward his name" in that they minister "unto the saints." (Heb. 6:10.) What is meant by "the kingdom prepared for you from the founda-

tion of the world?" In God's purpose and plan of redemption "the works were finished from the foundation of the world." (Heb. 4:3.) God foreknew "before the foundation of the world" that "with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ," he would redeem all who would accept and obey Christ. (1 Pet. 1:17-25.) In this way "the kingdom" has been prepared for the faithful "from the foundation of the world." The rewards offered to the righteous were offered because they had done to Jesus the things mentioned in verses 35, 36. In their humility, modesty, sincerity, and genuine love for the poor they will ask when they did all these things to Jesus. They had not done alms to be seen of men. They had not done these things with the blast of trumpets and had not let the left hand know what the right hand had done. They had done all these things for love's sake, and knew they had done nothing but their duty. When they "have done all the things that are commanded" them, all true and faithful disciples of Christ will say: "We are unprofitable servants; we have clone that which it was our duty to do." (Luke 17:10.)

The practical and vital point is the King's reply to their question. He says: "Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." (Verse 40.) "The least" means the humblest, the poorest, the most ignorant, the most needy, the most unfortunate, the ones who lack "social standing" and whom the world despises. It is not difficult to help those who in turn help us, but it is the Spirit of Christ to help those who cannot help us. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, lodge strangers, and minister to the sick are expressions of the Spirit of Christ. "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14:12-14.) Our treatment of Christ's poor is our treatment of him. We can tell by our treatment of the poor, the blind, the lame, the sick, just how we would treat Jesus were he on earth now.

IV. The Doom of the Wicked

After having blessed the righteous, the King will say to those "on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." The kingdom mentioned above was prepared for the righteous themselves, but "the eternal fire" into which the unrighteous must go was prepared for "the devil and his angels." (Verse 41.) Fearful is this punishment, and fearful is sin, since it fits people for the place prepared for "the devil and his angels."

The reason given for this punishment is just the reverse of the one given for blessing the righteous. The unrighteous had not fed, clothed, visited Jesus when sick and in prison, given him water to drink when thirsty, or lodged him when a stranger. They asked when they had seen Jesus in such sad conditions and had not ministered. (Verse 44.) His reply was: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye

did it not unto me." (Verse 45.) Note that Jesus says "one of these least"—just one of the least. To refuse or to neglect to care for even "one" of the least of Christ's disciples—-one of the lowliest, humblest, weakest, and most neglected and despised by the world and its great ones—is to be lost. Jesus says: "For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good." (Mark 14:7.) This makes it a matter of one's own choice whether or not he will help the poor and treat the afflicted as God directs. To neglect the poor • and distressed is to disobey God, and this disobedience leads to "eternal punishment." The punishment of the wicked is as eternal as the reward of the righteous. (Verse 46.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. To be able to help the distressed is a great blessing. One reason given for working is that we may have to give to those who need.

2. Christ lived upon earth, but now is in heaven. In the wisdom of God he has made it possible for us to minister unto him. We do this when we minister unto the Lord's people.

3. Those who are condemned in this lesson are condemned not so much because of something that they did, but for something which they could do, but did not do. The sin of omission is as great as the sin of commission.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the place.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

What has Jesus foretold?
Of what does he warn his disciples?
How does he give this warning?
What did he exhort all to do?
What is it to “watch" or to “be ready?"
How may we look for the coming of Christ?
Can one fail to look for the coming of Christ when that one is faithful to God?

The Coming of Christ

When will Christ come?
How will he come?
When should we prepare for his coming?
What will take place when he comes?
What does Win his glory" mean?
How does the New Testament represent Christ as coming?
What must all who love the Lord do?
What reference does eating the Lord's Supper have to the coming of Christ?
What is a fundamental teaching of the New Testament?

The Last Judgment

When will the judgment be?
How does the Bible speak of it?
When should we prepare for it?
Who will be at the judgment?
What will take place at the judgment?
Describe the two classes into which all will be separated?
Where are the wicked of this lesson found?
Is there any other class of wicked people?

The Reward of the Righteous

What will take place after the separation?
What will he say to the righteous?
Who are invited to enjoy his blessings?
Why are they blessed?
What is meant by “the kingdom prepared for you?"
How was it prepared?
How had they done righteously?
Why had they done these things?
How had they done them?
What will the King reply?
To whom is it most difficult to do good?
Whom should we always help?
How may we always minister unto Christ?

The Doom of the Wicked

When will the wicked be punished?
Where will they be punished?
For whom was “the eternal fire" prepared?
Why are these to be punished?

When did they refuse to minister unto Christ?
What does Jesus say about the poor?
Do we have any excuse for not ministering unto them?
To refuse to minister unto them is to refuse to minister unto whom?
How long will the punishment last?
How will the reward continue?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Why should we work?
How has God arranged so that we can minister unto Christ now?
For what will people be condemned?

While with ceaseless course the sun
Hasted through the former year,
Many souls their race have run,
Never more to meet us here;
Fixed in an eternal state,
They have done with all below.
We a little longer wait,
But how little, none can know.

Thanks for mercies past received;
Pardon of our sins renew;
Teach us henceforth hew to live
With eternity in view.
Bless thy word to young and old;
Fill us with a Savior's love;
And when life's short tale is told,
May we dwell with thee above.

—John Newton.

Lesson XI—December 15, 1929

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT IN INDUSTRY

Deut. 24:14, 15; Eph. 6:5-9; I Tim. 6:17-19.

14 Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates:

15 In his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee.

5 Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men:

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.

17 Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them Likewise." (Luke 6:31.)

TIME.—For Deuteronomy, B.C. 1451; for Ephesians, A.D. 63; for First Timothy, probably A.D. 64.

PLACES.—Plain of Moab, Rome, Ephesus.

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

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 7:1-5.

DAILY HOME READING.—

December 9.	M.	Putting Religion Into Business. (Deut. 24:10-18.)
December 10.	T.	Pleasing Our Common Master. (Eph. 6:1-9.)
December 11.	W	.Injustice Offensive to God. (Amos 5:6-15.)
December 12.	T.	Laborers in the Vineyard. (Matt. 20:1-16.)
December 18.	F.	Basic Principles for Industry. (Deut. 5:12-20.)
December 14.	S.	True Riches. (Eccles. 5:10-20.)
December 15.	S.	Impartial Judgment. (Matt. 7:1-5.)

Introductory Thoughts

The Spirit of Christ should be manifest at all times with the Lord's people. "The Christian Spirit" and the Spirit of Christ are one and the same; hence, all Christians must have the Spirit of Christ. "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8: 9.) When we speak of "the Christian Spirit in industry," we mean that the Spirit of Christ should be manifested by all in every relationship of life. It matters not what a Christian does, he should do it

heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men. This is the Spirit of Christ. So far as Christian people are related to industry, so far will the Spirit of Christ be in industry.

Christian masters are told in the Bible how to treat their servants; servants are told how to treat their masters. If each treats the other as the Lord would have them treat each other, then the Christian Spirit will be in industry. There is no other way for industry to have the Christian Spirit. Of course, no inanimate thing can have the Spirit of Christ; neither can any organization or institution, save the church of God, have the Christian Spirit. The Spirit of God, which may be called "the Christian Spirit," dwells in Christians. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16.) In speaking of the church, Paul said: "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Eph. 2:22.) So the only way that the Spirit of Christ, or the Christian Spirit, can be in anything or any one is through the Lord's people; and when his people are true to him, everything they do will be done in the name of Christ and the Christian Spirit will be manifested unto all.

EXPOSITORY NOTES

I. The Sin of Oppression

God gave the law of Moses to govern his people until Christ should come and give a new law. In all ages the sin of oppression has been great. God specifically said to the children of Israel: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates." (Deut. 24:14.) Hired servants who are poor should be treated kindly and sympathetically. It is not right to take advantage of one's needy condition. The cry of the poor who are oppressed reaches high heaven, and Jehovah has severely condemned such sin. Oppression is one species of cruelty and tyranny. One reason Jehovah heard the cry of Israel in Egypt was because they were oppressed by the Egyptians. Jehovah said: "I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them." (Ex. 3:9.) Again, Jehovah "saw the oppression of Israel, how that the king of Syria oppressed them," and hearkened unto their cry. (2 Kings 13:4.) "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker." (Prov. 14:31.) Again: "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his gain, and he that giveth to the rich, shall come only to want." (Prov. 22:16.) And again: "A needy man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food." (Prov. 28:3.)

Hired servants in the East are paid at the close of the day. It is a crime against the poor to withhold his wages and defraud the laborer of his hire. The poor have families and dependents as well as the rich; they are as affectionately attached to their loved ones as are the wealthy; and for the rich to withhold their wages or beat them out of their wages through shrewdness or otherwise is a sin against the poor and a crime in the sight of heaven. "In his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee." (Deut. 24:15.) The wisdom of God saw the

necessity of legislating against the oppression practiced against the poor.

Oppression in any form is a sin. It may be practiced in many ways. The wealthy oppress the poor; capital oppresses labor; the powerful oppress the weak; the intellectually strong take advantage of the less fortunate; the socially prominent oppress the less prominent. "Holdups" are forms of oppression; robbery is another form. Oppression is practiced in every walk of life. James said: "Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the Judgment seats?" (James 2:6.) Violence in enforcing the payment of debts or in keeping the wages or earnings of another is not the Spirit of Christ. The law of love and the Spirit of Christ impel all to treat others as they would be treated.

II. Relation of Master and Servant

All relationships of life should be regulated by the principles of Christianity. When this is done, the Spirit of Christianity will pervade all. The relation of master and servant may be pleasant and profitable to both if both have the Spirit of Christ. Servants are instructed to "be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are" their "masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." (Eph. 6:5.) Servants should learn this lesson. Their own happiness and welfare will be found in their obeying their masters. Paul made a good prisoner at all times. He was obedient unto his master. Joseph, while in Egypt as a servant, obeyed his master and won a favor. Daniel obeyed his masters and became a blessing unto them. If a Christian is in the relationship of a servant, he must obey his master. Servants are to obey their masters "with fear and trembling." This does not mean slavish terror. Paul said to the Corinthians: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (1 Cor. 2:3.) They are to serve "in singleness" of heart—that is, they are not to be doubled-minded or hypocritical. They are not to seek to please outwardly only, but with sincerity are they to serve their masters. Servants are to be loyal to their masters in all that is right.

Servants are not to serve "in the way of eye-service, as men pleasers." (Verse 6.) In serving their masters faithfully they are serving Christ. A Christian servant, serving in the name of Christ, is doing the will of God and will be-blessed in his service. The best servant on earth is a Christian servant, and any master would be glad to have just such a servant. If all who are now serving in the capacity of servants were honest, sincere, faithful, and industrious, there would be but little trouble in the industrial world. A lack of such servants disturbs social and industrial conditions.

"And, ye masters, do the same things unto them." (Eph. 6:9.) The master should remember that he is to please God as a master. He is to manifest the Spirit of Christ in his relation as a master. re woulci Tc 0.1995upd21.52 0 TD 0 s8 1.08 Tw (0 s8 1.08 Twpleaorvant) Tvants are de

God and a reverential fear toward him. True worship must be to honor God and secure his blessings and favor. Worship to be seen of men or to advance one's own interest or to please men comes from the wrong Spirit and wrong motive. The Psalmist said: "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker." (Ps. 95:6.) Again: "He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." (Verse 7.) Again, the Psalmist says: "Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship Jehovah in holy array." (Ps. 96:8, 9.) It is possible to worship God in the wrong Spirit. No such worship is acceptable to God. Jesus said: "This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15:8, 9.) The right Spirit is as important as the right object.

IV. Fidelity in the Worship and Service of God

We are encouraged and instructed to "draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water." (Heb. 10: 22.) The priests under the old law drew near to God when they approached the golden altar to burn incense. They had to be purified before they could approach Jehovah. So with God's people to-day. We must approach him "with a true heart in fullness of faith"—that is, our hearts must be free from all deceit and hypocrisy. A true heart is one which has renounced all self-righteousness and has received Christ and trusts in him with all earnestness. In regular worship we "hold fast the confession of our hope;" our bodies have been washed with pure water; we have passed through the waters of baptism and. have been cleansed from sin. Hence, we are in condition of heart and life to approach the altar of God in worship. We are to keep ourselves clean that we may worship acceptably. Paul says that Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it, "that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word." (Eph. 5:25, 26.) Christians as living stones are built into the spiritual temple, or church. All who are brought into the church are baptized into Christ, hence have been cleansed. No material has gone into the spiritual temple except that which has been cleansed, and we are cleansed through the forgiveness of sins as we are baptized into Christ. In this purified condition we are to continue faithful in the worship of God. "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh." (Heb. 10:25.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. In worship we become like the object that we worship. We will become like the object of worship as rapidly as we earnestly desire to be like the object.

2. It is important that we have a true knowledge of God, that in worshiping him we may become like him. In true worship we become partakers of the divine nature. We cannot become like God without worshiping him "in Spirit and truth."

3. There ought to be a hungering and thirsting after righteousness in every heart. If there be such a condition of heart, then worship will be a blessing; otherwise, a curse.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the time.
Locate the places.
Name the persons.

Introductory Thoughts

Why is this an important lesson?
What is fellowship?
With whom and what may we have fellowship?
With whom and what can there be no fellowship?
What is worship?
Where may we worship God to-day?
What is it to worship God "inspirit and truth?
What is it to have zeal without knowledge?
What is it to have knowledge without zeal?

The House of Jehovah

Who may have written this Psalm?
What is it called?
What was "the house of Jehovah" to the Jews?
What other way is "house" used in the Old Testament?
What is meant by "the house of God" today?
How may the church be called "the house of God?"
How should the Lord's people encourage each other in worship?
How may we provoke one another to love and good works?
Name some of the blessings which come to those who are in the house of God.
Can people have fellowship with each other and not have fellowship with God?
Can God's people have fellowship with each other and not have fellowship with God?

The Call to Worship

What is meant by "the call to worship?"
In what are many lacking to-day?
What should we be doing?
What should every Christian do?
After people are invited to the place of worship, what should be the next step?
What evidence do we have that man is a worshiping being?
What does every normal soul have?
What is the highest expression of life?
Where may one satisfy the longings of his soul?

The Spirit of Worship

How may one worship God with the wrong Spirit?
How may God be worshiped with the right Spirit?
Where must we worship God?
When must we worship God?
What are some of the motives for worshiping God?
Name some wrong motives in worship.
Which is more important—to worship God in the right Spirit or in the right way?

Fidelity in the Worship and Service of God

How should we draw near to God?
What is it to draw near to him?
How did the priests under the law draw near to God?
What did they have to do before approaching the altar?
How are our bodies washed and made pure?
Can one worship God who has an impure heart?
What are Christians?
How are they brought into the church?
What is it to forsake the assembling together?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

How do we become like the object we worship?
Why is it important to have a true knowledge of God?
How do we become partakers of the divine nature?
What should all have?