Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Peloubet's Select Notes.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson IX. May 31. Luke 21: 20–36.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM FORETOLD.

Read Chapter 21: 5–38. Commit Verses 34–36.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."—LUKE 21: 33.

EXPLANATORY.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND THE END OF THAT AGE OR DISPENSATION. 20. "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed by armies." It is hard to realize the terrible times which came upon Jerusalem a few years after the death of Christ. The people were treated with horrible cruelty by the Roman authorities. They rebelled and retaliated, till there was open rebellion and it required the best power of the Roman Empire to conquer the city. Jerusalem was surrounded by the Roman Legions. Fearful wars and rumors of wars were all over the land. Soon there was civil war in Rome itself The first siege of Jerusalem was in A. D. 66, under Cestius. Then the disciples could "know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

21. "Let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." These could escape with comparative ease. Jesus practically forbids his disciples to join in the terrible series of revolts, and fierce insurrection, and frantic but useless attacks upon the Romans, or the fanatical disputes between the different factions of the Jews. They could do no good. Courage, but not wisdom, prevailed in the councils of the Jews, and the disciples could best serve their country and the world by keeping away.

22. "These be the days of vengeance," of the divine punishment on account of their sins. Josephus declares that "the misfortunes of men, 'from the beginning of the world,' if they be compared to those of the Jews, are not so terrible as theirs were" "nor did any age ever produce a generation more fruitful of wickedness 'from the beginning of the world.'" "All things which are written." The language refers to Old Testament prophecies, such as Leviticus 26: 14–24; Deuteronomy 28: 15, etc.; 29: 19–28; Daniel 9: 26, 27; Zechariah 11; 12: 2.

23. "But woe unto them," etc., whose sufferings will be aggravated by the distress. "Great distress . . . and wrath upon this people." The horrors of war and sedition, of famine and pestilence, were such as exceeded all example or conception. The city was densely crowded by the multitudes which had come up to the passover. Pestilence ensued, and famine followed. The commonest instincts of humanity were forgotten. Acts of violence and cruelty were perpetrated without compunction or remorse, and barbarities enacted which cannot be described. Mothers snatched the food from the mouths of their husbands and children, and one actually killed, roasted, and devoured her infant son. (Compare Lev. 26: 29; Deut. 28: 56, 57.) The besieged devoured even the filth of the streets; and so excessive was the stench that it was necessary to bury 600,000 corpses over the wall, while 97,000 captives were taken during the war, and more than 1,100,000 perished in the siege." Five hundred every day were, by the command of Titus, crucified on the walls around the city. The multitude of executions was so great that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies.

24. "Led away captive into all nations." A fact which has continued till this day. There are about 8,000,000 Jews in the world, somewhat more than the number in Palestine at the time of Christ. According to the last report of the English Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Jews, there are 5,000,000 Jews in Russia, 1,644,000 in Austria, 562,000 in Germany, 105,000 in Turkey, 63,000 in France, and 92,000 in Great Britain. In New York city there are 250,000. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles." "All sorts of Gentiles,—Romans, Saracens, Persians, Franks, Norsemen, Turks,—have 'trodden down' Jerusalem since then." "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." By the times,—"seasons" or "opportunities" of the Gentiles,—is meant the period allotted for their full evangelization. Rom 11: 25, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, 'until the fulness of the Gentiles' be come in." "The times of the Gentiles are the Gentile dispensation, just as the time of Jerusalem is the Jewish dispensation."

THIRD VISION. THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN. Vs. 25–33, also 16 and 19; Matthew 24: 13, 14.

FIRST. "The promise coming of Christ" is a great joy. 28. "Then look up," take courage, do not despair when you see these troubles and commotions, but see in them the sign and proof that "your redemption draweth nigh," your deliverance from evil, the success of your work, the uplifting of the truth, the gospel, the kingdom you preach, from its own down-trodden condition to a place of triumph. What seems so evil is the necessary sign of the triumph of the good. It is the stillness of death that is to be feared, not the commotions that arise from the progress of Christianity.

SECOND. The greater the commotion, the stronger the sign that the good time is near at hand.

29, 30. "The fig tree and all the trees; when they now shoot forth," when the buds burst their environment, "you know . . . that summer . . . is at hand." It is a natural and necessary sign.

31. "Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." The commotions were produced by the working of the kingdom of God upon a wicked world. They were the natural signs of that working, the visible proof of invisible forces. The battle was the sign of victory.

THIRD. The triumph was certain. This star shone in the darkest night.

33. "My words shall not pass away." They were fulfilled in the return of Christ, and in the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore are certain to be in the days to come.

FOURTH. They should be safe. V. 18. Those who obeyed Jesus' words at the siege of Jerusalem were all saved. All true disciples will be saved at the end of the world. The results of the lives of the martyrs were never destroyed. They really lived. "They possessed (rather, they won) their souls."

FIFTH. The gospel was to be preached to all the world. Matthew 24: 14.

IV. HOW TO ACT IN VIEW OF THESE THINGS.—Vs. 34–36. Matthew 24: 37–51; Mark 13: 33–37.

FIRST. "Take heed to yourselves." Be attentive, be alert, be on your guard against the dangers which are so insidious which come like a moral malaria.

SECOND. "Watch ye." Not by sitting still, but by serving the Lord as faithfully as if he were ever looking upon us. We watch by being on our guard against every temptation and danger

SANCTIFIED LISTENING.

Preaching may be regarded as dealing either with truth or with life. In the former case it addresses itself to the intellect, but in the latter it goes deeper. Both points of view are right, but the second is the more important. We hear, in order to obtain a mastery of the truth; but we hear still more in order to live well. We ought to go to church to get the perplexities of the past week cleared up, and to obtain light and strength for the duties of the week to come. It is a great thing when the truth makes us intelligent, but it is a greater when it makes us true and pure. A distinguished preacher has told of a lesson and rebuke which he received from a simple hearer. She had experienced so great benefit from a sermon of his that chancing some time afterwards to receive a visit from him in her own home, she told him how much his message had been blessed to her soul. He asked her what the text of the sermon had been; but she was unable to remember. Somewhat annoyed, he asked her to tell him what had been the subject; but this also had completely escaped her memory. His suspicions were now thoroughly aroused, and he demanded how that could have been blessed to her so much of which she recollected so little. She still, however, adhered to the statement that the impression of blessing remained bright and strong in her feeling, though her memory had let the letter entirely escape; and her ready wit enabled her to demonstrate on the spot how this could be. Taking him outside the house to a green where some clothes, which had been washed, were lying perfectly dry in the summer sun, she pointed to them and said, "You believe that these were drenched with water yesterday?" "Yes," he said, "of course." "But, look," she said, "there is not one drop of water in them now; they are as dry as they can be." "Yes," he said, "the water has completely evaporated." "Yet," said she, "it has done them good, though they now retain none of it." "Oh, yes," said he, "it has made them white as snow." "Well," she added, "though every word of your sermon has left my memory, I know I am still profiting by it, for it has sanctified my soul." It was an unanswerable argument; and it shows that the truth, in passing through the mind, may leave something better behind than even a deposit of conviction—namely, a deposit of character.—Dr. Stalker.

Who shall say that the spirit of the noble army of martyrs has not been reproduced in our own time. Among the missionaries who lost their lives at Kucheng in China, were two young ladies who had left the comforts of a christian home to carry the gospel to the heathen, and when the sad news of the massacre reached their mother, instead of complaining, she exclaimed, "Would to God that I could go to China to take up the work of my martyred daughters." What a striking exhibition of lofty christian faith and devotion! How poor beside this cheerful surrender of beloved children seem the largest pecuniary gifts! Ah, if the spirit of this bereaved mother prevailed the church of Christ, there would be no lack of men, women or means for the work of evangelisation at home or abroad.

Unbelief is the egg out of which all sins are hatched.

We should know no fear except the fear of doing wrong.

It is easy to borrow trouble, but the rate of interest is ruinous.

A good intention clothes itself with sudden power.—Emerson.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works.

No pillow so soft as God's promises. Trust for your rest, yield for your light, obey for your joy.—D. David.

God never fails to come to time, but we should remember that heaven's clock was not set by our watch.

God knows a thousand "might have beens" where we know one. He can look at them all patiently, because—this is the blessedness—he knows a thousand "may be" also.—A. D. T. Whitney.

We do not mourn the departure of the old, faded carpet, when we are permitted to look upon the bright, beautiful fabric that has taken its place. So let us believe that, when God takes something out of our lives that has given us pleasure, it is that he may give us something more beautiful in exchange.

Life is a burden—bear it;
Life is a duty—dare it;
Life is a thorn-crown—wear it
Though it break your heart in twain,
Though the burden crush you down,
Close your lips and hide your pain;
First the cross and then the crown.
—Rev. Ryan.

I have said and I feel that my sorrows lead me to God, my joys drive me to Him. One is so overful when much happiness comes, how can he help running to the great Giver to thank Him? Often slowly, slowly, do we step when griefs make our feet heavy; still as surely if not as quickly we find our way to Him even when our sadness guides us, and in either case we are strengthened.

Ask God to give thee skill
In comfort's art,
That thou mayst consecrated be,
And set apart
Unto a life of sympathy.
For heavy is the weight of ill
In every heart;
And comforters are needed much
Of Christlike touch.
—*Anna E. Hamilton.*

B. Y. P. U.

OUR OBJECT.

The unification of Baptist young people; their increased spirituality; their stimulation in Christian service; their edification in scriptural knowledge; their instruction in Baptist history and doctrine; their enlistment in missionary activity, through existing denominational institutions

OUR FELLOWSHIP.

All Young People's Societies of whatsoever name in Baptist churches, and Baptist churches having no organizations are entitled to representation. We depend for our unity not upon any young people's name or method. Our common bond is in the New Testament, in the full affirmation of whose teachings

WE ARE ONE PEOPLE WITH ONE MISSION.

Kindly address all communications for the column to Rev. G. O. Gates, St. John, N. B.

Prayer Meeting Topics for May 24.

B. Y. P. U. Topic—"Punishment for sin. Its certainty.—Jer. 38: 24; 39: 2. Heb. 10: 26–29.

C. Endeavor Topic—"Christ's widening Kingdom", (Missionary).—Is. 11: 1–10.

B. Y. P. U. Daily Bible Readings.

(From Baptist Union.)

Monday, May 25.—Ezekiel 29. Egypt —"My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself" (vs. 3). Compare Ezek. 28: 2

Tuesday, May 26.—Ezekiel 30. "I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations" (vs. 23). Compare Ezek. 29: 12.

Wed. May 27.—Ezekiel 31. "Pharaoh, the great cedar cut down." Compare Ezek. 32: 1–5.

Thursday, May 28.—Ezekiel 32: 1–16. "Kings shall be horribly afraid for thee" (vs. 10). Compare Ezek. 26: 16.

Friday, May 29.—Ezekiel 32: 17–32. "A wail for the fallen." Compare Isa. 14: 9–15.

Saturday, May 30.—Ezekiel 33: 1–20. "I have set thee as a watchman" (vs. 7). Isa. 52: 7–8.

We were expecting our executive would have reported for this week. No doubt in the meeting held last week in Truro, important matters were discussed and plans proposed that our societies should have at once for consideration. It seems a little unfortunate that we must wait.

The article of President McDonald, in our last issue will, no doubt, awaken thought. That our young people ought to be more deeply concerned for our Foreign Mission interests we firmly believe, and to be brought in closer contact with the work—with the representatives on the field—seems a necessity. But how shall this be done? We must keep in mind our young peoples' societies are in the church and of the churches, and subject to the wish of the individual church to which the society belongs. Would it be wisdom to start out on some scheme, however good, independent of our churches? We think not. We were not organized for such a purpose. But this can be done. Let the churches request their societies to make a special effort in the raising of funds and awakening an interest among their members in relation to this important department of our church work. Let there be kept in mind the work already in hand demands a constantly increasing outlay and then that such are the needs to give the Gospel to the *present generation* of Tulugus, that much more than we are doing should be done. But let it be as churches we do this extra. If there is to be praise let it be the church that gets it, and not a society of the church. Let it be the aim of the young peoples' societies to hide themselves in all their undertakings in that one institution that Christ ordained—in the body of which He is the head. There is not a church in the land to day but will be stimulated and blessed if it will but urge its young people along in this direction:—and not a young peoples' society but may have its spiritual life intensified by seeking in the church to develop this spirit of self-sacrifice for the perishing and too long neglected Tulugus.

It was with pleasure we listened to our returned missionary, Bro. Higgins, last week. Just from the field, he is full of enthusiasm. He assures us the outlook is full of hopeful encouragement. The work already done has told and is telling. The Spirit of God is owning the labors of those "sent forth". Our brother is now giving thought and prayer to the subject of a return, leaving wife and children behind. Our young people will join with him, in this hour of seeking guidance. While all of us know that to human nature such a step would mean many a struggle—yet we as well know if our Father asks the return, He will give to our brother and his dear ones the needed grace.

That Banner.

In a communication from the Secretary of a small country Society comes the question "What of the Banner?" "Please give us some information."

In reply we are compelled to say as things are at present, all a small society in the Maritime Provinces can hope for is to add their help in getting it for the Provinces and then it will go to the Society that sends the largest number of "exam" papers.

We are of the opinion this is unfair to Societies that in the nature of things are numerically small. Our executive have this in mind and it is hoped see long some solution will be arrived at that will make it possible for a small Society to enter the contest with a fair show in the competition.

Ledge Dufferin, N. B.

Bro. R. M. Wilbur, Cor.-Sec. of the Young People's Society of Ledge Dufferin, reports encouragingly. The officers are Bro. F. P. Hunter, Pres.; Bro. Allen Williams, Vice-Pres.; sister Blanche Young, Sec.-Treas. This Society now numbers 33 active and 22 associate members. One of the members, Bro. John Boyd, was lost at sea and the Society mourns their loss. The reports of the past year show that the Society gave to the church $15 and have placed to their credit in the bank $50 towards putting new pews in the house of worship. Our Bro. wishes to know what about the Banner? Should there be a chance for a small Society like theirs to win it? He thinks it might float in a N. B. breeze.

Moncton, N. B.

Our Society is progressing. Since our last report 28 new members have been added to our roll making a total membership of 181. At our last consecration service 135 personal responses were made to the roll call and altogether a very profitable evening was spent. The reports of the various committees at the business meeting last Tuesday evening showed that they were at work, each one striving to do his or her work for the Master. A. E. W.

May 8. Cor.-Sec.

West End Church, Halifax, N. S.

On Tuesday evening the 12th inst., a meeting was held in this church for the purpose of organizing a B. Y. P. U. Several members of the District Union were with us and rendered valuable assistance. For twenty minutes pastor Lawson conducted a devotional service. Our hearts were warmed by the earnest testimonies and prayers. God was with us and blessed us. At the close of this service Bro. Geo. A. McDonald, our enthusiastic and competent Maritime President, gave an excellent address on the importance of the young people's work. He was followed by our District President, and also by members of the different local Unions. Our Society was then organized with eleven active and two associate members, and the following officers for the ensuing year Pres., Chas. Humphrey; Vice-Pres., Miss Francis Olivey; Sec.-Treas., Miss Florrie Bleakney; Cor. Sec., Mrs. G. A. Lawson. The "Local Constitution" was unanimously adopted, PLEDGE and all. The outlook for this society is bright We want the prayers of our sister Unions. More anon. COR. SEC'Y.

Halifax, March 13

SAVIOUR, MASTER, FRIEND.

Jesus Saviour, we adore Thee
For Thy love so full and free.
In return for all Thy goodness
We would yield ourselves to Thee.
Thou Thy life hast freely given
To redeem us for Thine own,
Each day may we love Thee better,
May we live for Thee alone.

Thou hast still Thine ancient power,
Thou can'st heal the sin sick soul;
'Tis Thy touch alone, oh Saviour,
That can make our spirits whole.
We who know Thy healing power;
May we tell it far and wide;
Until many now in darkness,
Trust in Thee—the Crucified.

Jesus Master, we will serve Thee
Yielding to Thee everything;
Following whereso e'er Thou leadest,
Owning Thee our Lord and King.
Thou hast bought us with Thy life-blood.
We belong alone to Thee
Thou hast freed us from our bondage,
We will now Thy servants be.

We will labor in Thy vineyard,
Telling of Thy wondrous love;
Gathering sheaves along life's highway,
For the Harvest home above.
When our work of love is ended,
We will lay our trophies down;
At Thy pierced feet, dear Master.
And from Thee receive our crown.

Jesus Friend; so true and faithful
Ever near to cheer and bless;
Thou wilt share our every sorrow,
Comfort us when in distress.
When life's burdens press us sorely,
We may come to Thee in prayer;
Drawing near in sweet communion,
Casting on Thee all our care.

Other friends may prove unfaithful,
But we now Thy promise claim;
Thou wilt not forsake nor leave us,
While we trust in Thy dear name.
Jesus, we will gladly trust Thee
Till our life on earth shall end,
Then throughout Eternal ages
Praise Thee, Saviour, Master, Friend.
—EGLANTINE.

From a Representative Man

The following letter from D. Lawler, Esq., is self explanatory. Mr. Lawler is a native of Halifax, but has been in business upwards of fifty years in North Sydney, Nova Scotia, being the head of the firm of D. Lawler & Son, merchant tailors. He has a provincial reputation as a temperance man; and is also an active and leading spirit in masonic lodges in the province in which he lives. Commendation from a man of such high standing must necessarily carry great weight:—

NORTH SYDNEY, N. S.,
April 23, 1896.

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"At the present time I am just finishing a bottle of Safe Cure which has already relieved me of an attack which I think was aggravated by a heavy cold contracted a few weeks ago.

"I have, and would recommend any one troubled in a similar way to give your medicine a trial, and if one bottle does not relieve, then to continue taking it, as relief is sure to come.

I remain, yours.
D. LAWLER.

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Are all the Lesson Help orders in for second quarter? What's the matter with those schools closed all winter? Are you soon going to send your orders? The little ones I know are alive and anxious.

Yours truly,

GEO. A. McDONALD,
Secretary-Treasurer.

MEN AND WOMEN

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Stanley, the explorer who relinquished his American citizenship for a seat in the British House of Commons, is regarded in London as a parliamentary failure. He is said to be dissatisfied with public life.