

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON III.]

"Jerusalem has three principal hills, an eastern, a western and a northwestern. The eastern hill is a ridge extending for somewhat more than half a mile from north to south, which rises to a height of from 200 to 300 feet above its encompassing valleys, tapers to a blunt point at its southern extremity, and at its northern end was almost separated from the tableland of which it is a part, by a branch of the eastern ravine (the Kidron). This ridge attains a general altitude of 2,400 feet above sea level.

The southwestern hill is much the largest of the three. In form it is oblong, with a spur thrown out on the northeastern corner toward the eastern ridge. It rises abruptly from the encircling valleys. Its broad summit begins at an altitude of about 2,400 feet above the level of the sea and swells 150 feet higher, with its greatest elevation on the west. The third hill is rather a projection of the plateau than an isolated mound." (Davis.)

THE LESSON APPLIED

Be contrite in heart, v. 21. If the returning captives would have the help of Almighty God they must seek for it through fasting, prayer and penitence. We need the help of God to-day against powerful and ruthless Germany. Because our cause is so unmistakably just we are apt to think that we ourselves are fit for victory. But are we, while evil, public and private, flourishes to such a notorious degree? We need to turn from sin and return unto God, and since the repentance of a nation is but the aggregate repentance of its individuals, we do well each one of us to repent before God. We need men and money—more men and more money—in this awful strife, but contrition—national and individual—is the need of the hour.

Be consistent, v. 22. Ezra was very careful not to do anything which might be regarded as a denial of his faith. "Consistency, thou art a jewel." "That gentleman," said an infidel, pointing to a passerby, "is the founder of our club." "What," said the other, "that man is a Christian." "Yes," replied the infidel, "but his inconsistencies have driven many of us into infidelity and led to the founding of our club."

God can be intreated, v. 23. Some people do not believe in prayer and some of those who do believe in prayer have ceased to pray from want of will to do so. Prayer is a force. God hears and answers. The greatest men of history have been men of prayer. The lowest of the earth have been exalted in character through prayer. Mr. Harold Begbie in his *Twice Born Men*, tells of a criminal, who, during the frequent times spent in prison, came to think that his life was wrong

and that perhaps prayer might set it right. He prayed for the first time in his life, that heaven might send him a good wife who would help him to live a respectable life. On getting out of prison he continued to pray for this and for other things until one night at a religious meeting the crisis came and a change of heart was experienced. Ever since, he has lived a life that shows how faithfully God answers prayer.

Organize for church work, v. 24. These are days of stress when for the sake of truth and righteousness and liberty, the people of our land are organizing for national service. Oh, that the church membership and the roll of workers were co-incident! If all had a mind to work, how much sooner Christ would win.

A charge to keep we have, v. 29. Twelve priests and ten laymen had weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the treasures with a charge to watch and keep until the journey to Jerusalem was accomplished. Each boy and girl of to-day has a charge to keep. "As a lisping child, little Frances Willard learned the mighty first chapter of St. John's gospel from her mother's lips. Then came the rocking chair lullaby in her father's deep tones:

'A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age
My calling to fulfil;
Oh, may it all my powers engage
To do my master's will."