

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who was Daniel? **A young Jewish captive in Babylon.**
2. Where was he taken to be educated? **To the palace of the king.**
3. How did Daniel act in the palace? **He was faithful to his God.**
4. How did he show his faithfulness? **By refusing to drink the king's wine.**
5. How did God reward Daniel for his faithfulness? **He gave him wisdom and honor.**
6. What counsel to young men is given in the Golden Text? **Wherewithal, etc.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

7. In what other ways did he show this?
By the heavenly wisdom, the authority, and the graciousness of his teaching.
Never man so spoke.—John vii. 46.
[Luke iv. 2.; Mark i. 2.; Luke xxiv. 32.]

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Six Elements of Success in Life.

- I. FIXED PRINCIPLES.
Purposed in his heart. v. 8.
"This one thing I do." Phil. 3. 14.
- II. GENTLE MANNERS.
Requested of the prince. v. 8.
"Be gentle unto all men." 2 Tim. 2. 24.
- III. PURITY OF LIFE.
He would not defile himself. v. 8.
"God is good to... a clean heart." Psa. 73. 1.
- IV. TOTAL ABSTINENCE.
With the wine which he drank. v. 8.
"Look not thou upon the wine." Prov. 23. 31.
- V. REGARD FOR MEN.
Favor and tender love with the prince. v. 9.
"King's favor... toward a wise servant." Prov. 14. 35.
- VI. INTELLIGENCE.
God gave them knowledge. v. 17.
"Men that had understanding." 1 Chron. 12. 32.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

How God Rewards Faithfulness.

1. Notice that our lesson shows us *young men* who were tried by exile, by temptation, by danger, yet young men who were true to their consciences. Let every youth "dare to be a Daniel."
2. God rewarded these young men by giving them favor and regard from their fellow-men. v. 9. This is not always the result of faithfulness, for sometimes God's servants suffer persecution, but generally they win the favor of men.
3. God rewarded these youths by giving them health and physical vigor. This is one of the results of a pure life. Contrast the appearance of young men who live for pleasure with those who live for God.
4. God rewarded these youths by giving them knowledge and wisdom, which come to such as seek the truth and live according to its laws.
5. God rewarded these youths by giving them success in life, lifting them up to honor and usefulness.
6. We shall see in the next lesson how God rewarded their fidelity by protecting them in trial.

English Teacher's Notes.

THE first thing one looks for in coming to a muddy place, where footing is insecure, is a stepping-stone. By means of such stones a miry path may be passed over, not only in safety, but comparatively without soiling the feet, and carrying away disagreeable marks of the passage. But coming to such a place in the dark, or even the twilight, it is not easy to discern the stepping-stones, and a wayfarer might flounder about, and even fall and damage himself in the slippery mire. This seems to be the idea presented to us in the Golden Text. The psalmist speaks of a difficult and slippery path to be traversed by every young man. With some it may be easier, with others harder, but each one has a way before him when he needs stepping-stones, and not stepping-stones only, but a light that shall reveal them clearly, so that the wayfarer may place his feet surly and safely. He tells us also where such a light is to be found. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

The passage for to-day presents us with an illustration of this from real life. It shows us a difficult and miry path, a light falling upon it, and young men passing over in safety upon the stepping-stones revealed by this light.

1. *The miry path.*

It is difficult for us to appreciate this fully. Take the case of a young man reared in a pious family, going forth from his quiet home into the turmoil and temptation of a great city, and this hardly gives an idea of the slippery and difficult way that lay before the four royal captives delivered by Nebuchadnezzar into the keeping of Ashpenaz. These boys, for such in fact they were, came as captives into a land with different customs, traditions, and standards of right and wrong, a land given up, not merely to ungodliness, but to something still more formidable—a false religion, which permeated the whole of public and private life. They were to be brought up as natives of the country, instructed in all the learning of the Chaldeans. In order, by and by, to "stand before the king"; that is, to do high and important service to this heathen monarch. The new names given to them show that they were expected to forget their country and their country's God, for by these names, Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (derived from Bel, the chief god, Rak, the sun, Shak, the earth, Nego, the fire), they were dedicated to the principal idols worshipped by the Chaldeans. How could Daniel and his companions hope in such a position to keep clean from taint of idolatry? The thing seemed impossible. But they had,

2. *A light and stepping-stones.*

Solomon had written long before, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light." And so these four youths found it. The law of Jehovah divided the animals into clean and unclean, the former only being allowed as food to the Israelites. Deut. 14. 4, etc. It also forbade the eating of things sacrificed to idols. Exod. 34. 14, 15. For an