

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON VI. (August 6.)

THE NEW HEART. Ezek. 36. 25-36.

GOLDEN TEXT: "A new heart also will I give you." Ezek. 36. 26.

Primary Notes.

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Preliminary. [Drill for a few moments upon the Golden Thought for the quarter, that is, God cares for his own—and refer to the use of the shield for protection. Repeat that our Father keeps us, but at the same

time gives us something to do to please him; so each lesson shield has a duty written on it.] We have had shields of faith the past month; now for a month we will have a shield of hope each week. "Take the shield of faith," Jesus says; but he also says, "Hope thou in God." We must expect as well as believe that God will care for us. We must ask for his blessing and then look for the answer. When we look forward to something glad and good it keeps the heart light and helps us to bear what may be hard now.

A poor prisoner long ago and far away was shut up in a lonely castle. The king who held him as a captive said he should not go free till a large sum of money was paid for his freedom. The captive had no money, but he had a brother who was rich. He was allowed to send word to this brother, but it took long for the messenger to go and come. It was hard to wait for the answer, but day by day the poor captive kept up his courage by looking forward to the return of the messenger with the money from his rich brother. He hoped it might be to-day when he woke each morning, and so, though all was strange and hard, and he suffered much, he had something to hope for, and by and by he was set free, as he hoped. His brother had helped him before; therefore he knew he might hope for it again. As we go on with our lessons we shall learn what God has done, and our hope will be strong as we look forward to what he will do. Every sweet promise Jesus has made gives us something to hope for, and we may pray this prayer, "Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope."

Approach to the lesson. [Hold up the Bible.] Whose book is this? Who wrote it? It is called God's word, but just as we use a pen to put

down our thoughts so God used holy men long ago. He used their minds and their hands, and told them his word, to put down upon paper, to keep for us even now. One of the holy men of old who wrote part of God's book was called Ezekiel. You may not think it a beautiful name, but it has a beautiful meaning—the strength of God, or, God shall strengthen. He had many hard things to do, but in God's strength he did them fearlessly and faithfully. He lived in a sad time. When King Jehoiakim gave up Jerusalem to the king of Babylon many were taken captive even before the city was destroyed under King Zedekiah. Ezekiel, one of the prophets who taught the people and told them God's messages, was carried away among the rest, and there in that heathen land God still spoke to him, and told him what to say to the people. He told them of their sins, which had brought such trouble upon them, and he told them, too, of the love of God even for sinners, and taught them to hope in him, for he would by and by bring them back to their own home land, forgiving them, and leading them as his own people. Our lesson to-day is one of these messages from the loving Father in heaven, and it is about

THE NEW HEART.

How sad it was for those poor captives, away from home and from their beautiful temple. Ezekiel told them, from God, of their sin, of his pity, and his plan to take them home. Then he promised them what they needed most. Perhaps the poor captives thought something else might be better; but God knows best. The Golden Text is the promise. [Drill upon this.]

We are sin's captives. We need a new heart. What is a new heart, and how shall we get it? O it is so important to know. The lesson tells us. God says "Ye shall be clean." [Write on board.] Sin soils. Jesus makes pure. He died that our sins might be forgiven, and even the



stain taken away. Then God says, "I will put my Spirit within you." [Write below the first sen-