

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Amos? **One of the prophets of Israel.**

How long before Christ did he live? **Nearly eight hundred years.**

To whom did God send warnings by him? **To the people of Israel.**

Whom had the Israelites forsaken? **The true God.**

What did they worship? **Idols.**

Who had reproved them many times? **The Lord.**

Why had he sent famine upon them? **To lead them to repentance.**

What did he withhold from them? **Rain.**

What did he send upon their gardens and vineyards? **Blasting and mildew.**

What was sent upon the people? **Pestilence.**

How had many of the young men been slain? **With the sword.**

What were all these troubles meant for? **The good of Israel.**

Did they learn the lesson God sent them? **No; they did not return to the Lord.**

What did God tell Amos to say to them? **"Prepare to meet thy God."**

Who only can meet God in peace? **Those who obey him.**

Words With Little People.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS.

THE SAFE WAY OF	{ Love,
	{ Faith,
	{ Obedience.
THE DANGEROUS WAY OF	{ Self-will,
	{ Self-pleasing,
	{ Disobedience.

Whisper Motto.

"I will follow Jesus."

General Statement.

Nearly one hundred years have passed since that memorable evening when the city of Samaria, starving to death in the grasp of the Syrians, was suddenly called back to life and hope by four lepers who shouted across the walls that Ben-hadad and his soldiers had fled and left behind them the luxuries of their camp. Great changes have taken place since then. The group of little kingdoms that were packed together in what we now call Palestine—Israel, Judah, Syria, Philistia, Edom, and Moab—have had a turbulent century. Constantly warring with each other, they have diminished in power and shrunken in size, until when Jeroboam II. ascended the throne of Israel his kingdom was about one half the size of the average American county. Bounded on the east by the Jordan River, it did not extend on the west to the Mediterranean Sea, and it was threatened on the north by Syria, and on the south by Judah. But a great intellect throbbed under Jeroboam's crown, and he steadily pushed his conquests in all directions, until from the Dead Sea to the northern boundary of Syria, and from "the Great Sea" to Solomon's remotest desert frontiers, the dominion of Israel was extended. But with prosperity came corruption. "The consequences of these victories," says Dr. Milman, "were not a holier worship, purer morals, and national virtue, but pride and luxury in ivory palaces, oppression of the poor, unlawful sacrifices, and foreign idolatries." Meanwhile, hardly noticed by Israel's politicians and warriors, two great powers were developing, one in the north-east and one in the south-west—Assyria and Egypt—between which, as between upper and nether mill-stones, all the petty states of Palestine were being destined to be crushed. The clear eyes of Jehovah's prophets recognized in Egypt and Assyria the executioners of God's wrath, and the scholarly Isaiah and the rustic Amos alike, when denouncing the sins of the Hebrews, foretold their coming doom, and implored them to return to the God of their fathers. Amos was a shepherd of Tekoa, in Judah, and it was a strange providence that called him to cross the bounds of his native land and proclaim God's threatening message to the proud court of Israel. In this lesson the prophet recalls the frequent punishments which God had inflicted on his people, and pathetically pleads for their return to him.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 4. Come to Beth-el, and transgress. A sarcastic and ironical invitation. Beth-el, the chief seat of the golden-calf worship, had been from early times regarded as a sacred place (Gen. 28. 19; 35. 7; 1 Sam. 4. 3). Gilgal, between Jericho and the Jordan, was the place of the first encampment of the Israelites in the promised land; there the rite of circumcision was renewed; there the first passover was kept; it was for years the military head-quarters of the people, and the place where the ark abode. It also had early become a seat of spurious worship. The calves are often al-

luded to as the transgression of Israel (1 Kings 12. 32; 13. 2), and many Israelites, who would have scorned to resort to gross idolatry, worshipped Jehovah with degrading accessories at Beth-el, Gilgal, and Dan. Lesson II, First Quarter (1 Kings 12. 25-33), gives the origin of this false worship. It was instituted and perpetuated as a political device, to prevent the union of the two kingdoms; it directly violated the second commandment, and incidentally disobeyed God's orders concerning the priesthood; it degraded the religious ideal of the nation, and subverted that hope of the coming