

an arbitrary statute of limitations which demands that as soon as a minister has been enriched and ripened by experience and practice he shall be regarded as ineligible to a call to a vacant pulpit, then no man of common sense or self-respect will enter the ministry.

What a cruel injustice it is to the man, and what a dishonor it is to his Divine Master, when a capable and godly-minded minister is practically shelved by this preposterous time limit.

We could give many a pathetic example of most excellent preachers and pastors whose names have been "blackballed" by pastorless churches simply because some gray hairs were visible on their honored heads. These same churches which rejected ripe experience were quite ready to entrust all their momentous spiritual interests to some raw youth just out of a theological seminary,

The supply of earnest, devoted, Holy Spirit-endowed preachers does not now keep pace with the demand in our vast country. And in the name of the Master let his church stamp out this abominable idea that any vigorous and consecrated winner of souls shall be "tabooed" on account of his age. There is enough famine of genuine Gospel now to make angels weep; and the best and brightest young men ought to have every possible encouragement to enter upon a work that any archangel might covet.

All that we have been saying in this article against arbitrary time limit is solemn truth; and yet we admit that there is a melancholy "dead-line in the ministry" which does not depend upon the nerves or on chronological tables. It is often reached before fifty.

It is reached when a minister ceases to study and to think—when the curse of indolence makes his sermons as barren as the east wind. manifold are the pitiful devices resorted to in order to hide the rags of his poverty. Sometimes old sermons—that were born old—are concealed under new texts; sometimes sensational topics are eagerly sought and presented, with more reliance on the newspapers than on God's Word or the "power from on high." It would be a mercy if such a sluggard would demit the sacred office entirely.

The dead line is also reached when a minister's faith in the Divine inspiration and absolute infallibility of his Bible is shaken—when he is hamstrung with doubts, and his vision is so dimmed that he loses sight even of the great head-lines of Sinai and Calvary. He may be alive as an essayist—perhaps a brilliant essayist—but as a soul-awakening, soul-converting, soul-edifying preacher he is a Samson shorn of his locks. It is a joyful and a glorious thing to be a live ambassador of Jesus Christ.

But it is the most pitiable of all earthly conditions when a minister becomes dry-rotted at the heart, and his inner life is no longer hid with Christ in God. "Gray hairs are upon him, yet he knoweth it not." He has swung over the dead line; and nothing but timely repentance and the restoring grace of God and a new baptism of the Holy Spirit can ever deliver him from the body of that death!—*Brooklyn N. Y.*

International S. S. Lessons.

DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL.

12 July.

Les. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12. Gol. Text, 2 Sam. 5: 10.
Mem. vs. 10-12. Catechism, Q. 66.

LESSON OUTLINE.

- I. David's Second Anointing. vs. 1-5.
- II. David's Taking of Jerusalem. vs. 6-8
- III. David's Prosperity. vs. 9-12.

HOME READINGS.

M. 2 am. 4: 1-12. *Death of Ishbosheth.*
T. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12. *David King over all Israel.*
W. 1 Sam. 16: 1-17. *David Chosen by the Lord.*
Th. Psalm 89: 15-37. *David Anointed by the Lord.*
F. Psalm 76: 1-12. *God's Dwelling Place in Zion.*
S. Psalm 101: 1-8. *David's Resolution.*
S. Psalm 30: 1-12. *David's Thanksgiving.*
Time.—B. C. 1048. Places.—Hebron; Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS IN STUDY.

For seven and a half years there was strife between the houses of Saul and David. At last Abner revolted against Ishbosheth, and negotiated with David with the intention of bringing all Israel over to him. Joab, the commander of David's army, was displeased with these negotiations and treacherously slew Abner. David cursed Joab for this foul murder, and mourned for Abner. Soon after this, Ishbosheth was murdered by two of his own captains. Representatives of all the tribes now came to David at Hebron and anointed him king over all Israel amid three days of rejoicing by the people. David now determined to establish the seat of government at Jerusalem, the city of the Jebusites, which was a great stronghold and more central than Hebron. The lower part of the city had once been taken by the warriors of Judah (Judges 1: 8), but its fortress was still held by the Jebusites. It was now captured by David and became the "city of David" and the capital of the kingdom.

WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.

1. God blesses those who are faithful and wait patiently for him.
2. We should make Christ our King, and covenant with him.
3. Christ desires to capture our strongholds and occupy them himself.
4. Every unconquered hill in sin's heart we should surrender to Christ.
5. When Christ becomes King he makes all things new.

THE ARK BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM

19 July.

Les. 5 Sam. 6: 1-12. Gol. Text, Ps. 8: 12.
Mem. vs. 11, 12. Catechism, Q. 67, 68.

LESSON OUTLINE.

- I. Honoring the Ark. vs. 1-5.
- II. Dishonoring the Ark. vs. 6-10.
- III. Blessing from the Ark. vs. 11, 12.

HOME READINGS.

M. Exod. 40: 17-38. *The Ark in the Tabernacle.*
T. Josh. 6: 1-20. *The Ark at Jericho.*
W. 1 Sam. 4: 1-11. *The Ark Taken by the Philistines.*
Th. 1 Sam. 6: 1-21. *The Ark Sent Back to Israel.*
F. 2 Sam. 6: 1-23. *The Ark Brought to Jerusalem.*
S. Psalm 132: 1-18. *David's Prayer at Its Removal.*
S. Psalm 84: 1-12. *The Tabernacle of the Lord.*

Time.—B. C. 1042. About six years after David became king over all Israel.