

# SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

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## The Inductive Study of the Bible.

This method of studying the Word of God is more and more attracting deserved attention. This larger study of the Bible, as a whole, and of the relations of its inter-dependent parts will be a benediction to those who undertake it and to the whole Church. Too often attention has been focussed upon a single text, or a few verses, but one of the greatest advantages of the International Lesson system is that it selects large portions and leads to the study of the connecting links so as to give a more comprehensive idea of that wonderful book, the Bible, as a whole, and of God's leading, widening and brightening from age to age, from the narrow beginnings of patriarchal times to the broad sunlight of the new dispensation. It is well illustrated by Dr. Burwash's lectures to the Sunday-school teachers of Toronto, as given in the Victoria College Chapel and attended by a large number of Sunday-school workers and others in the city. Some notes from the lecture on the first lesson of the year will indicate some of the points of this method.

The lessons of the first quarter cover about one hundred years, and inclose the Canon of the New Testament. They are marked by the absence of the stupendous miracles of the eras of Moses and of the Divine Teacher of whom he testified. Few parts of Scripture are more instructive, more full of the spirit of faith, prayer, obedience to the command of God and the duties of everyday life. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are not a continuous history, but their object is to relate the various leaps by which God's plan was carried out, the Tabernacle set up in Jerusalem, and the old institutions of the land re-established after the captivity.

Beside the study of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, as a whole, Chancellor Burwash recommends that, in order to enter into the spirit of the period, the book of Isaiah, from the fortieth to the forty-ninth chapter, should be carefully read. This was written for the people of the captivity to arouse their faith and zeal. Then

the Psalms written in captivity should also be carefully studied, as the 107th, 126th, 137th; also the book of Daniel and the later prophets—Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The Jews in their captivity became sick with the idolatry of the nations, and the prophets used to employ their bitterest sarcasm in setting forth the wickedness of idolatry.

Dr. Burwash strikingly compared the return of the Jews from the fertile plains of Babylon, where many of them had long settled and become wealthy, to the sterile and stony hills of Judea and desolated city of Jerusalem, as a great religious movement, more akin to the migration of the Puritan Fathers of New England and of the United Empire Loyalists of Canada than to anything else which has occurred in history.

It has been well said that the wheat of the earth was sifted for the seed of that planting on the rugged New England shore, and doubly sifted for the second migration of the United Empire Loyalists to Canada, into the then pathless wilderness of this country. So the faithful Jews were winnowed by the fan of persecution, and they were men of high spirit and bold enterprise who traversed the nearly 5,000 miles from Babylon to Judea.

The broad and comprehensive study of this great religious movement will be full of lessons of patriotism and religious duty, of faith in God and love of country—the institutions and ordinances of God's house and God's law. We trust that all the teachers in Toronto and its neighborhood will endeavor in person to enjoy the advantages of the Chancellor's important lectures, and that very many teachers throughout the country will take up this inductive study of the lessons, and arrange for local examinations in the month of April, and that year after year the numbers may increase till all our teachers, and many who are not, shall become enthusiastic Bible students in the broad and comprehensive plan. Nothing will do more to improve the quality of teaching and to make the Word of God a more real, living, inspiring book.