

religious. But when they fall they fall far. Reaction is a law of character. "The last estate of that man is worse than the first." "The child of godly parents cannot tamper with temptation without the greatest peril." Both virtue and depravity are in exact ratio to the resistance overcome.

**Whom the Lord destroyed.**—Here a study in prejudice is not alien to the passage. "There's a God for you!" Ingersoll exclaims. If such an objection should arise in class, I should ask the objector if it had occurred to himself, or if he had read or heard of the criticism elsewhere. In all but very very rare cases you will find it is given second-hand.

But how should this stale objection be met? Thus: Have you any prejudice against a just magistrate punishing crime? Or have you any prejudice against God punishing sin by its natural consequences? Then why should not God do what the magistrate does, and as the magistrate does it?

But even if the Canaanites deserved it, the Israelites have to be considered. True, but have you any prejudice against the jailer's coming in contact with criminals, or the missionary's going to live among the evils of the heathen? Are you alarmed that the judge may injure his moral life by pronouncing sentence? Then why prejudiced against this transaction in the Bible?

The fact is, the Canaanites were, as every student of history knows, a moral plague-spot; and the command was so given that Israel was not only guarded against cupidity and Pharisaism, but for a time cured of these evils by doing God's will upon them.

**The Lord spake.**—A study in grace.—Manasseh not only deserved punishment, but had forfeited the right to respite. Men think that God is stern, while they will not forgive their debtors a second time, and count a first forgiveness magnanimous. "I said not unto thee, unto seven times, but unto seventy times seven," is the measure of the Saviour. "I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking," saith the Lord. That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, seems a fearful truth, but that it is revealed is a blessed one.

**Ye will not hearken.**—A study in hardening.—Try to make the scholars realize that each successive lesson known and not acted

on, is a step in the hardening process. Be ye doers of the word, not hearers only.

**Brought upon them.**—A study in chastisement.—God has wisely diverse ministries of good. You know the class of boys who say "I never took a chastisement." Are they the class of boys one honors? We receive profit from the rebukes of parents and teachers; we give them honor therefor; shall we not rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live.

**Humbled himself.**—A study in repentance. It has been often said of the malefactor on the cross that one death-bed repentance is recorded that none may despair, and but one, that none may presume. Manasseh is an example of notorious guilt and of illustrious repentance. "But he was one of a thousand. No other is clearly declared in the Scriptures to have run that risk with safety at last."

**The God of his fathers.**—A study in answered prayer.—How great is this encouragement to believing parents to pray for their children. What instance could seem more hopeless than Manasseh's? A half century after his godly father's death; a monumental sinner meantime, at last he calls upon his father's God.

**Knew that the Lord was God.**—A study in Providence.—"He plants his footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm." God guides in history. He doeth according to his will among the inhabitants of the earth. Had men but wisdom to read the large type of Providence, they would know that the Lord is God.

**Took away the strange gods.**—A study in reform.—Manasseh's restoration is a well-spring of hope to all true penitents. If any one might despair on looking back, he should. But instead he girds himself with strength to undo the evil he had wrought. Faith without works is dead.

#### THE BLACKBOARD.

MANASSEH	{	SINNING	}	GREATLY.
		CHASTENED		
		HUMBLED		
		CHANGED		