

GOLDEN TEXT

Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Luke 3: 4.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 3: 1-9. } The preaching
T.—Luke 3: 10-17. } of John the
 } Baptist.
W.—Mal 4. Malachi's prophecy.
Th.—John 1: 15-28. John's testi-
 } mony.
F.—Matt. 3: 1-12. Repentance
 } necessary.
S.—Eph. 4: 25-32. Fruits of re-
 } pentance.
S.—Isa. 40: 1-8. A voice in the
 } wilderness.

TIME

The summer of A.D. 28. John preached about two years.

PLACE

In the wild, rocky desert region west of the river Jordan.

CATECHISM

Q. 5. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

LESSON HYMNS

360; 7 (Ps. Sel.); 217; 587; 252.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Wilderness Prophet, 1-6.

Preaching repentance, and so preparing the way of the Lord.

II. His Stern Demands, 7-14.

All must repent or suffer wrath, people, publicans, and soldiers alike.

III. His Witness to the Christ, 15-17.

A mightier than himself, whose baptism would be of the Holy Ghost and of fire.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Juniors—1-3 How were John and Jesus related? By what prophet was John spoken of? What was his special work? Name the rulers, John's parents. Who had announced his birth? How did he dress? (Matt. 3: 4.) What was the subject of his preaching?

4-6 What was John called by Isaiah? What Eastern custom referred to? How did John prepare the way for Christ? What should lead to repentance? (Rom. 2: 4; 2 Cor. 5: 11.)

7-9 Who formed John's audience? What did he call them? On what did the Jews rely? What warning given? (v. 9.) What the result of bearing no fruit? How can we escape this?

10-14 What question asked? By whom? How answered? What does this mean? Who were the publicans? How regarded by the Jews? Why? What command given to them? What to the soldiers?

15-17 What were the people expecting? (Compare John 1: 19-22.) How does John compare himself with Christ? What difference in their baptism? Describe "threshing floor," "fan," "garner." Who are meant by "wheat," "chaff"? To which class do we belong? When is the separation to be made? How only can we escape the "unquenchable fire"?

Seniors—1-6 Who is the preacher spoken of? What drew the crowds? What was Herod's opinion of John? (Mark 6: 20.) What, Christ's? (Luke 7: 28.) Why John's peculiar manner of living? (Mark 12: 38; Luke 7: 25.) What was his theme? Who preached the same truth? (Matt. 4: 17.) How should repentance be shown? (2 Cor. 7: 11.) How regarded in heaven? (Luke 15: 7-10.) What obstacles stand in the way of Christ's reigning in our hearts? In the world? How to be removed?

7-9 What two classes specially indicated? What in them merited the name "vipers"? What is the "wrath to come"? What is the way of escape? What Jewish boast and error spoken against? What promise made to Abraham, and how fulfilled? (Gal. 3: 7-29.)

10-14 What was the effect of the preaching? Does

becoming a Christian mean to forsake an honest calling? How should we act in such?

15-17 How does John speak of Christ? Of what is fire a symbol? When was this visibly shown? Acts 2: 1-4.

Bible Side Lights—THE WORD OF GOD—1 Chron. 17: 3, 4; Luke 8: 21; Rom. 10: 17; Eph. 6: 17.

REPENTANCE—Ezek. 18: 21, 22, 27, 28; 33: 11, Matt. 28: 75.

SALVATION TO ALL MEN—Ps. 86: 9; Micah 4: 1, 2, Heb. 8: 11.

THE WRATH TO COME—Rom. 1: 18; Heb. 10: 31; Luke 12: 4, 5.

PUBLICANS—Matt. 9: 10, 11; Luke 21: 31, 32; Luke 18: 13, 14.

Practical Points—1. It needed a brave man to stand up against such a wicked time. If we feel that we are speaking what God tells us to say, we shall have no fear of any man.

2. True greatness is always humble. John was only a voice; it was his message, not himself, that he wished remembered.

3. The message still comes to us all, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," by removing every evil thing from our lives that would prevent Christ's dwelling in our hearts.

4. It is no real repentance that does not show itself in works, v. 8. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts." (Isa. 65: 7.)

5. It is a good thing to have Christian parents, but no one can be accepted by God because he has had a good father and mother. Each one must believe and repent for himself.

6. The spirit of the Gospel working in heart and life will make people generous, just, and contented.

7. It is a sad thing when people so destroy character that they become good for nothing, as useless as "chaff."

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. On what text did John always preach?

2. What is "repentance"?

3. Who are meant by the "wheat," the "chaff"?