

LESSON VIII—November 22nd, 1896.

Rewards of Obedience. PROV. 3: 1-17.

(Commit to memory verses 1-4.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3: 6.

PROVE THAT—We should trust in the Lord. Prov. 3: 5.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 63, 64, 65, 66.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 75, 250, 223, 78.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Rewards of obedience. Prov. 3: 1-17. *Tuesday.* God's word in the heart. Deut. 6: 1-13. *Wednesday.* Blessings to the obedient. Deut. 6: 17-25. *Thursday.* The safe way. Prov. 3: 19-26. *Friday.* Despise not discipline. Heb. 12: 1-11. *Saturday.* Doers of the word. Jas. 1: 19-27. *Sabbath.* Friends of Jesus. John 15: 1-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. We study to-day a choice portion of one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible. Try and commit our lessons to memory.

LESSON PLAN. The Rewards of, I. Obedience. vs. 1-4. II. Faith. vs. 5-8. III. Liberality. vs. 9, 10. IV. Patience. vs. 11, 12. V. Wisdom. vs. 13-17.

1. Forget not—We forget what we do not care to remember (John 14: 15; 15: 14). My law—R. V. marg. "teaching" (Deut. 8: 1, 30; 16, 20). Thine heart—Mere outward obedience amounts to nothing. God wants the willing service of loyal hearts (Matt. 15: 8; 23: 27; Jer. 31: 33). 2. Years of life (R. V.)—The words imply a long and prosperous life. One who trusts and obeys God avoids those vices and perils which shorten and embitter life (Ps. 34: 12-14; 1 Tim. 4: 8; 6: 6). 3. Mercy—Unselfishness and loving sympathy with others. The grace spoken of in 1 Cor. 13. Truth—Integrity, honesty, straightforwardness. These are the two cardinal virtues of man and attributes of God (ch. 14: 22; 16: 6; 20: 28; Ps. 25: 10; 40: 11; 57: 10; 108: 4; 138: 2). Bind them—as you would an ornament that you were proud of. Glory in your obedience (ch. 1: 9). Upon the table—i. e. "tablet." See Luke 1: 63. (ch. 7: 3; Jer. 17: 1; 2 Cor. 3: 3). We write down what we wish to remember. What is thus inscribed upon the heart becomes the rule of our life (Jer. 31: 33; Rom. 7: 22). 4. Good understanding—R. V. marg. "good repute," or reputation. One who is true and kind is beloved by both God and man. 5. Trust in the Lord—This is a rock on which you may build securely (Ps. 37: 3, 5, 7). Thine own understanding—You must use your own best judgment in every case, but always remember to ask God to guide you to what is right and to bless your plans with success so far as is best for you (Jer. 9: 23, 24; 10: 23; Prov. 20: 24). 6. Acknowledge him—Lit. "take notice of him," recognize him as a source of all success and the One to whom you are responsible for all you say and do (Phil. 4: 6). 7. Wise in thine own

eyes—Be not puffed up with conceit of your own cleverness (Rom. 12: 16). This is as bad as too much self-reliance (verse 5). One who fears God will distrust his own inclinations and so avoid much of the evil that he would be led into (ch. 14: 16; 16: 6; Job. 1: 1; 28: 28). 8. This verse means that trusting and obeying God will be as good for the soul as anything that promotes health and strength is for body and bones. 9. Honor the Lord—By giving to his cause a liberal portion of your riches, and the first and best of all you get. 10. God will bless the liberal hearted (Mal. 3: 10-12; Prov. 11: 24, 25; 22: 9; Luke 6: 38; 2 Cor. 9: 6, 7). 11. Despise not—Do not be impatient and fretful, refusing to accept it as sent by God. Be weary—Do not feel angry and disgusted (Job 5: 17, 18; Ps. 94: 12; 119: 67). 12. Prosperity is no positive sign of God's love but chastening is (Deut. 8: 5; Heb. 12: 5-8; Rev. 3: 19). 13. Happy—"O the blessednesses of the man." What varied and abundant blessings are his in body and in soul, in time and in eternity (Prov. 8: 34-36). 14. The merchandise of it—That is, what wisdom buys. The gain it brings. This is, in our word, salvation (Job. 28: 13-28; Matt. 13: 45, 46; 16: 26). 15. Length of days—Long life. Wisdom is here personified and offers blessings with both hands. Other things being equal, the godly man has the best prospect of reaching a hale and hearty old age. Riches and honor—Although a good man may not be a millionaire he has more satisfaction out of his moderate wealth than the possessor of unblest thousands (ch. 8: 18; 1 Tim. 4: 8). 16. True religion in the heart brings peace of conscience, reconciliation with God, and harmony in our social relations. (Matt. 11: 29, 30).

LESSONS. 1. God does not want the outward life if we will not give him the heart. 2. Honesty and kindness are the two virtues most admired everywhere. 3. A humble opinion of oneself is most becoming and Christ-like. 4. Disappointment and sorrow are sent to make us better. 5. Strive to "win Christ."