

is of the three classes mentioned, whose spirit God had stirred (Rev. Ver.). While the king and his subjects had their part in it, the work was God's.

IV. A JUST RESTITUTION.—7-11. Cyrus gives back the holy vessels of the Lord's house taken by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kgs. 25 : 13-15. Unto Sheshbazzar; the Persian name of Zerubbabel, the leader of the return to Judah (compare chs. 5 : 16; 3 : 8). He was a prince, descended from King David. These vessels may have been on the tables at Belshazzar's feast (see Lesson II.), but they were now to be used once more in the holy services of God's house.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Returning from captivity, Ezra 1 : 1-11. T.—Jeremiah's prophecy, Jer. 29 : 10-14. W.—Isaiah's prophecy, Isa. 44 : 21-28. Th.—God's Word to Cyrus, Isa. 45 : 1-13. F.—Prayer for restoration, Dan. 9 : 16-25. S.—Help from the Lord, Psalm 124. S.—The joy of deliverance, Psalm 126.

Prove from Scripture—That Christ gives true freedom.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 98. What is prayer ? A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

The Question on Missions—39. What kind of climate has Central India ? There are three well-defined seasons. The hot season; from March to June, when all vegetation has died away; the rainy season beginning in July, when all nature quickly revives; the cold season beginning in October.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 389; 385; 98 (Ps. Sel.); 583 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 268.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Juniors—By what king was Babylon captured ? How did he feel towards the Jews ?

1, 2 Where were the Jews in captivity ? Who had said they would be brought back to their own land ? After how long ? Who gave them leave to go ? Why ? What does Cyrus call God ?

3, 4 What two things were the Jews permitted to do ? How were their neighbors to help those who went to Jerusalem ?

5, 6 What two tribes here mentioned ? What

kingdom did they form ? Did they wish to go back to their own land ?

7, 11 What king had taken the temple vessels from Jerusalem ? Who was now to take them back ?

Seniors and the Home Department—Give the date of Cyrus' decree. How did he show his friendliness towards the Jews ?

1, 2 What story does Ezra continue ? What did Isaiah prophesy concerning Cyrus ? Show that God rules over nations. (Ps. 22 : 28.)

3, 4 To whom was the king's decree addressed ? From whom were the returning Jews to get help ? How did the Egyptians help the Israelites in their escape from Egypt ? (Ex. 12 : 35, 36.)

5-11 How many classes mentioned in v. 5 ? By whom were they influenced ? How are Saul's followers described ? (1 Sam. 10 : 26.) Who gives power for Christian service ? (Acts 1 : 8.) Who was the leader of the return from captivity ?

THE LESSON IN LIFE

1. Those whom God leads always reach the goal He intends for them—perhaps not soon, but always certainly.

2. How many things there are that stir the spirits of men! Ambition, wealth, pleasure—these are some of them. They spur eagerly on, but not always along a safe road. We can be sure that there is no danger, when it is the spirit of the Lord that stirs us.

3. Each language spoken by men has a different name for the sun, but it is the same sun that shines upon all people. And so people have their various ideas about God, some false, some true. But the same loving Father cares for all. (Matt. 5 : 45.)

4. "The man who never does any more than he is paid for never gets paid for more than he does." When our hearts are opened wide to let love flow out in kindly deeds that seek nothing in return, then the blessings of heaven flow in upon us.

5. Those who went down to Babylon loaded with chains of slavery came up loaded with gifts of gold. And there is no hard experience of life out of which God cannot bring the fruits of victory and joy.

6. A surgeon may be the tenderest-hearted man alive. And yet with strong, sure strokes he severs a leg from the body. His is true kindness, for losing the leg may save the life. There was love in God's sending His people into captivity. This punishment cured them of the sin that was destroying them.

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. What had Jeremiah prophesied regarding the return from captivity ?

2. How did Cyrus fulfil this prophecy ?

3. Describe the response to the king's decree.