

faith. France does not want sermons, eloquence, but men and women who will live the life of Christ. What creates infidelity is the great gulf fixed between theory and practice. The best that infidelity can give a man is doubt. Only one man dared say, 'I will give you rest.' Said Commissioner Tucker once, 'Give me two Ceylons, but only one France.' In dealing with the Roman Catholics in France we do not talk 'Protestantism' to them. Said one woman to me, 'You do not honor Mary; you cannot honor your own mother.' 'Oh, yes,' I said, 'I reverence my mother, and I honor Mary more than you do. Do you not know that the very truest way to honor a mother is to honor her son. Her son died in Calvary for you, yet you honor her and neglect him.' 'Ah, I see,' she said; 'it is so beautiful, I have no more trouble.' A dead Protestant is worse than a dead Catholic. It is not a change of religion France wants but a change of heart. France, with its warm heart, must worship something, either God or devil or woman, or something. Religion is not belief—it is life, and if you have not come in living contact with Jesus you are lost. Where there is infidelity there is also suicide. In Paris there are fifteen or twenty suicides every day. I myself have prevented thirty or forty suicides. Oh, that some one had given the invitation in time to General Boulanger! The Marechal makes everywhere strong appeals for money to help in this French work. "In this country," she said, "you have no idea of the poverty of France. There families live on what similar families here throw away. You think so much of your gold here, yet you cannot take it with you into the next world—even the two threepenny bits which cover your eyes. One hundred dollars given me here I will spend so as to raise two hundred in France. If you do not want the chill of infidelity here help us to fight it off there."

THINK ABOUT IT.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"Good morning, Miss Lee. Have you ever thought about taking a class in our Sunday school?" said Superintendent Clapp, holding himself by the strap in a crowded horse-car, and leaning over to speak to a handsome young woman who was evidently thinking of nothing so much as of her own stylish appearance. And she did, indeed, look very attractive in her new suit, although its fashion and fabric combined to make her somewhat conspicuous.

"Me!—teaching in Sunday-school?" she replied, in astonishment. "No, sir, I never thought of such a thing."

"Then think about it, please."

All self-consciousness went out of the young woman's mind as she thought, "What an odd, abrupt manner, Mr. Clapp has! Why am I to think about taking a class in Sunday-school, and what am I to think about it? I could never teach a Sunday-school class; I have no taste in that direction. There is no use in my thinking about it, and I will not."

This determination did not so easily as she had fancied dismiss the matter from her mind. It recurred to her so continually that she said, with a sort of indignation: "What right has that man to direct me regarding my thoughts? He seems to think that it is his privilege to advise and direct every one who is in any way connected with his Sunday-school. Although I have seen him almost daily for years, he has never said a dozen words to me upon any other subject, and it is the same way with all the other young people. He is a real Sunday-school crank; that is what he is. If I miss him for a day, I am sure to see in the city locals that he is off somewhere speaking at a Sunday-school convention. I don't understand how any one can be so absorbed in anything so tame and uninteresting as Sunday-school work."

A week later she met the gentleman again on a street corner, and he said, "Well, Miss Lee, have you thought about it?"

And she replied with natural frankness, "Yes, Mr. Clapp."

"What were your thoughts, please?"

"I could hardly repeat them all. At first, I determined to think nothing about it, but, when I found that I could not help it, I decided that I never would, under any con-

ditions, teach a class in Sunday-school, for there was no reason in my placing myself in a position that it was impossible for me to fill acceptably. Then the thought came, just as if some one who had the right was questioning me, 'Is there not good reason for your doing something for the Saviour who has done so much for you? Is there not something that you can do to help on the Lord's work in the world? You are a professing Christian, or church-member, and an unprofitable servant.' I felt rebuked and grieved. O sir! I have thought a great deal, but I am sure I am unfit to be a teacher," and the tears welled up and overflowed from the young woman's clear blue eyes.

"Ask the Lord to make you fit."

That was all, but the words came with startling force to the perturbed heart.

"Ask the Lord to make you fit." She repeated the words over and over, and thought, "How can I ask him? To do that is to give in and to agree to take a class if he fits me for it. Then now am I to ask him? I say my prayers, but I don't believe I ever really pray. That shows that I am unfit for a teacher, for if I was a Sunday-school teacher I should want to be a good one. I should want to pray for my scholars by name with a real anxiety that they should be converted, but I fear I should have no such feeling. I never have been anxious for any one's soul but my own, and, after I was taken into the church, I felt no more need of doing anything. It must have been because I did not ask the Lord to use me. 'Ask the Lord to make you fit.' Oh, I will, I will! and I will ask with a desire to receive."

Another week passed, and then the announcement was made in the Sunday-school that it was thought expedient for some of the experienced teachers to go to the West End and start a mission Sunday-school there, and volunteers were asked for to take their places in the home school.

Miss Lee was among the first to offer herself to fill the need. She could not help herself, for had she not promised the Lord to serve if he wanted her? A class of young girls was given her, and her first thought was: "These are poor working girls. I must set them an example in every way. I must not dress at church as I have been in the habit of doing. I must be plain and neat in my attire and have fewer changes."

That was her first sacrifice for her class, and it was, to her, a real giving up of self, but it drew her toward the girls. She soon grew fond of them; they really loved her in return, and that made it easy for her to gain an influence over them, and it was not many months before one by one they were converted.

The day on which they were baptized and taken into the church some one said to Mr. Clapp: "Miss Lee has been the making of that class. She has not only taught them in the Sunday-school, but has made herself a part of their daily lives. It is surprising in how many ways they have developed. How neat and dainty they are, how ladylike, quiet, and intelligent, how willing to make themselves useful as opportunity offers! They will make lovely Christian women."

"That class was the making of Miss Lee," replied the superintendent confidentially. "Before she took it she was an idle, aimless, young woman, decidedly pronounced in her manner of dress, and spending her time in calling, visiting, and amusing herself, and with no idea that she had any duty or any capability."

"My girls have done more for me than I have done for them," said the young teacher. "They have brought me into sympathy with the great army of workers who are marching grandly onward to conquer the world for Christ. I have never been so happy in my life as I have been since I found that the Lord had need of me; and I think, dear Mr. Clapp, that you were prompted by the Holy Spirit to ask me that day in the horse-car, 'Have you ever thought about teaching a Sunday-school class?'"—*Golden Rule.*

THE WEDDING GARMENT.

A pleasing illustration of an old Jewish custom implied in one of our Lord's parables is given in the book of the Marchioness of Dufferin, entitled "Our Vice-regal Life in India." The parable is that

of the marriage feast, (Matt. 22.) where one of the guests was turned out just as the feast was going to begin, because "he had not on a wedding garment," although nothing had been previously said about the need or the provision of such a garment. The common explanation is that such garments were provided by the giver of the feast. This is confirmed by Lady Dufferin's account of a native dinner party. "Our first proceeding was to dress ourselves properly for this festival, and as soon as we got to the house we were taken into a dressing-room, were divested of our own gowns, and were draped in saris. . . . About ten o'clock we took off our native costumes and returned home, our hostess insisting upon presenting each of us with the saris we had worn."

THE WINTER EVENINGS.

Again the long winter evenings are here, and again the young man asks himself, "What shall I do with them this year? Shall they pass by and only leave memories of hours spent in idle enjoyment; or shall my character be better for their coming and going? The question is not What will you do with them? but, What will they do with you? If you spend them well, they will make you more of a man; they will bring you knowledge, power, and, best of all, independence, that "glorious privilege" which it should be every young man's aim to possess. Or they will leave you enervated and wearied, disgusted with yourself and your surroundings. They will serve you, or rule you—which shall it be?"

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON VII.—FEBRUARY 14, 1892.

THE NEW COVENANT.—Jeremiah 31: 27-37.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 33, 34.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jeremiah 31: 34.

HOME READINGS.

M. Jer. 31: 1-14.—The Restoration of Israel.
T. Jer. 31: 27-37.—The New Covenant.
W. Heb. 8: 1-13.—The Covenant of the Gospel.
Th. Heb. 9: 11-28.—The Sacrifice of the New Covenant.
F. Heb. 10: 4-25.—The One Offering of the New Covenant.
S. Heb. 12: 18-29.—The Meditation of the New Covenant.
S. Heb. 13: 7-21.—The Benediction of the New Covenant.

LESSON PLAN.

I. A Promise of Prosperity, vs. 27-30.
II. A Promise of Spiritual Blessing, vs. 31-34.
III. A Promise that Cannot Fail, vs. 35-37.
TIME.—Probably about B. C. 606: Jehoiakim king of Judah; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.

OPENING WORDS.

Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah, a priest dwelling at Anathoth (ch. 1: 1), about four miles north-east of Jerusalem. He began his work as a prophet B. C. 629, in the thirteenth year of king Josiah, and continued it during the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, a period of more than forty years. When he died is quite uncertain.

HELP IN STUDYING THE LESSON.

27. *I will sow*—will fill the depopulated land with a great multitude. 29. *They shall say no more*—they shall no more complain that they are suffering for the sins of their fathers, while they themselves are innocent. 31. *I will make a new covenant*—the apostle quotes this passage (Heb. 8: 12; 10: 16, 17), as referring to gospel times. 32. *Not according to the covenant*—the Old Testament covenant is here contrasted with the gospel covenant. Under the new covenant God, through his son, fulfilled what had only been shadowed forth under the law. 33. *I will put my law*—the law written in the heart by the spirit takes the place of the law on tables of stone. It is obeyed, loved, delighted in, becomes a part of their very souls. Ezek. 36: 25-32. *I will be their God*—this promise of the covenant includes everything that is necessary for salvation. Psalm 144: 15. 34. *They shall all know me*—not merely with an intellectual knowledge, but with an experimental, spiritual, approving, obeying knowledge. For *I will forgive their iniquity*—these blessed results follow and flow from God's undeserved, forgiving, loving favor. When we honor and love God he blesses us in all ways, giving us mercies and favors. 35-37. *Thus saith the Lord*—all these blessings of the new covenant are as certain as the ordinances of nature.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Who was Jeremiah? During what reigns did he exercise the prophetic office? Title of this lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. A PROMISE OF PROSPERITY, vs. 27-30.—What does the Lord promise in verse 27? How will he watch over his restored people? Upon whom shall punishment be inflicted?

II. A PROMISE OF SPIRITUAL BLESSING, vs. 31-34.—What is promised in v. 31? With what is the new covenant contrasted? What will be the terms of the new covenant? Meaning of v. 33?

III. A PROMISE THAT CANNOT FAIL, vs. 35-37.—What assurances are given that these promises shall be fulfilled? How far have they been already fulfilled? What may we expect with regard to their complete fulfillment? What is our duty in this matter?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

1. All these blessings of the new covenant are offered to us.
2. The Lord will write his law upon our hearts and will incline us to obey him.
3. He will teach us by his word and Spirit and lead us into all truth.
4. He will pardon, sanctify and save us.
5. We should labor and pray that the saving knowledge of the Lord may fill the earth.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. What did the Lord promise his captive people? Ans. Restoration to their land, and his watchful care.
2. What will he make with them? Ans. A new covenant.
3. What is promised in this new covenant? Ans. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
4. What further promise is given? Ans. They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.
5. What is the source of all these promises of the new covenant? Ans. God's undeserved, forgiving love.

LESSON VIII.—FEBRUARY 21, 1892.

JEHOIAKIM'S WICKEDNESS.—Jeremiah 36: 19-31.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."—Heb. 3: 15.

HOME READINGS.

M. Jer. 36: 1-18.—Jeremiah's Prophecies Written.
T. Jer. 36: 19-32.—Jehoiakim's Wickedness.
W. 2 Kings 22: 8-20.—Josiah and the Book of the Law.
Th. 2 Kings 23: 31; 24: 7.—Jehoiakim's Reign and Death.
F. Heb. 2: 1-9.—"How shall we Escape?"
S. Heb. 3: 1-19.—"Harden not Your Hearts."
S. Luke 10: 1-16.—"He that Despisetht You, Despisetht Me."

LESSON PLAN.

I. God's Words Read to the King, vs. 19-21.
II. The Book Burnt by the King, vs. 22-26.
III. Judgment pronounced on the king, vs. 27-31.

TIME.—B. C. 605; Jehoiakim king of Judah; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; Pharaoh Nechoh king of Egypt.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.

OPENING WORDS.

Jeremiah caused Baruch to write out his prophecies and to read them to the people on a fast day. The princes were greatly alarmed when they heard them, and reported the matter to the king. The king sent for the roll, and, having heard a part of it read, cut it in pieces and burned it. Jeremiah was commanded to write it anew, and to denounce the judgments of God against Jehoiakim for his wickedness.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

20. *Into the court*—the inner court, in which the king's apartments were. Compare 1 Kings 7: 8.
22. *The winter house*—the part of the palace arranged for winter habitation. Compare Amos 3: 15. *Ninth month*—parts of November and December. *The hearth*—Revised Version, "the brasier," a vessel with live coals, placed in the centre of the room. 23. *Leaves*—columns. *Pen-knife*—literal, "scribe's knife." *Until all the roll was consumed*—a wicked and daring affront to God. 24. *Yet they were not afraid*—unlike Josiah (2 Kings 22: 11), and even Ahab (1 Kings 21: 27). 25. *The Lord hid them*—saved them from discovery. 30. *He shall have none*—he had successors, but none of his own posterity, except his son Jehoiachin, whose three months' reign is counted as nothing. 2 Kings 24: 8.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—To whom were the prophecies of Jeremiah read? How were the princes affected by them? Title of this lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. GOD'S WORDS READ TO THE KING, vs. 19-21.—What did the princes say to Baruch? Where did they then go? What had they done with the roll? What took place when they came into the king's presence? In whose hearing were the prophecies read?

II. THE BOOK BURNT BY THE KING, vs. 22-26.—Where was the king sitting? What did he do? How were the king and his servants affected? Who interceded with the king not to burn the roll? What command did the king give? What prevented its execution?

III. JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED ON THE KING, vs. 27-31.—What command did the Lord give to Jeremiah? What did he direct him to say to Jehoiakim? What judgment was pronounced on the king? What on Jerusalem and Judah?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.—

1. Wicked men hate the word of God because it condemns them.
2. It is the height of folly to fight against God.
3. Man's oppositions cannot change God's plans.
4. God's servants are safe in his care.
5. To escape the threatenings of God's word we must heed his warnings and obey his precepts.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. To whom was the book of Jeremiah's prophecies read? Ans. To Jehoiakim and his princes.
2. What was written in these prophecies? Ans. The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land.
3. What did the king do in his wrath? Ans. He cut the roll in pieces and burned it.
4. What did the king command? Ans. He commanded his servants to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; but the Lord hid them.
5. What judgment did the Lord pronounce on the king? Ans. He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; I will punish him and their iniquity.