

LESSON VI—February 7th, 1897.

True and False Giving. ACTS 4: 32-5: 11.

(Commit to memory verses 33, 35).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. 16: 7.

PROVE THAT—God loves cheerful giving. 2 Cor. 9: 7.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 87. *What is repentance unto life?* A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 2, 8, 223, 85.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* True and false giving. Acts 4: 32-37. *Tuesday.* True and false giving. Acts 5: 1-11. *Wednesday.* Sacredness of vows. Eccl. 5: 1-6. *Thursday.* Warning against hypocrisy. Matt. 6: 1-8. *Friday.* Lying lips. Prov. 12: 13-22. *Saturday.* Insincere offerings. Mal. 1: 6-14. *Sabbath.* Blessing on true giving. Mal. 3: 8-12. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. A wonderful spirit of brotherliness seemed to possess the apostolic church. Their liberality was unbounded. They seemed to strive who should give most into the common fund. Hence arose a temptation to hypocrisy. Some wished to have a reputation for generosity without really possessing the grace itself. Ananias and Sapphira were not only liars, but hypocrites. Their sin was against the "Searcher of Hearts." They pretended to be what they were not.

LESSON PLAN. I. True Giving. vs. 32-37. II. False Giving. vs. 1-11.

32. Of one heart—Our Saviour's prayer was answered (John 17: 21). They fulfilled the "Royal Law" perfectly (Jas. 2: 8). **Neither said any one—**R. V. "and not one of them said." They felt that everything belonged to Christ and was to be used as he would wish. **33. With great power—**The Holy Spirit helped them in preaching and touched the hearts of those who heard them so that many believed. **Great grace—**God's blessing bestowed in spiritual gifts, peace, joy, love, holiness &c. (John 17: 17, 23; Luke 2: 40). **34. That lacked—**Everyone's wants were supplied out of the common store. **Sold them—**They did not sell all they owned, nor did everyone shew such self-sacrifice. Some went so far as to do this. **35. At the apostles' feet—**They were entrusted with the distribution of the common fund, and gave help to all who needed it. Doubtless many a one lost his situation by becoming a Christian. **36. Josès—**Same as "Joseph." He was the cousin of Mark (Col. 4: 10 R. V.) and afterwards Paul's companion in his first missionary journey (ch. 13: 2). **Son of exhortation (R. V.)—**He was an eloquent and earnest preacher. **37. Either his gift was an unusually large one, or it was the example which prompted Ananias and his wife to act as they did. 1. Ananias—"Grace of the Lord." Sapphira—"Beautiful." A possession—**A field (verses 3, 8). **2. Kept back—**literally "stole" (Tit. 2: 10, "pur-

joining.") They pretended that this was all they got for it. It was a deliberate falsehood planned between them. **3. Peter said—**The Holy Spirit told him what had been done. **Satan filled thine heart—**Satan could not have entered his heart if he had not yielded to the temptation (Luke 20: 3). **To lie to the Holy Ghost—**They practised dishonesty in a transaction between them and God. **4. Was it not thine own—**Nobody compelled him to sell it, and he need not have given any part of the price unless he chose. There was no compulsion in the matter. It was a wilful, contemptible, hypocritical lie. **5. Gave up the ghost—**Dropped down dead. Such a terrible warning was needed to check the evil which might ruin the church at the outset (Jude 4). **6. The young men—**Being active and strong they would naturally be asked to do this. Coffins were not used, the body was wrapped in his long loose robe for a winding sheet. Burial usually followed immediately after death in that warm climate. **7. Three hours after—**Perhaps she waited so long for her husband's return and now came seeking him. No one had the courage to tell her what had happened. **8. This was an opportunity given for repentance. 9-10. He did not curse her but sadly foretold the doom about to fall. 11. All the church—**This is the first time that the word "church" is used to denote the Christian community.

LESSONS. 1. What a beautiful thing it is when Christians live in brotherly love. 2. All we have belongs to Christ, we are but his stewards. 3. Never try to make others think you to be better than you really are. 4. All falsehood is mean and wicked. 5. Be sure your sin will find you out.