

Teacher Training.

TEXT-BOOK: HOLBORN'S "THE BIBLE, THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEXT-BOOK."

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CHAPTER IV.

(Continued.)

ON THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION AND SOME REMARKS ON SCRIPTURE DIFFICULTIES.

2. THE PROGRESS OF DIVINE REVELATION. This is often overlooked. As people individually have their periods of childhood and growth in knowledge, so have nations and the whole race. Each receives knowledge according to its capacity, both as regards quantity and manner of instruction. The patriarchs had no books, and their notions of God were crude. The Israelites led by Moses were degraded slaves, incapable of appreciating high teaching. The self-existent unity of God, the moral law, and the ritual, were not final declarations of the divine will, which only came in Christ, as partly set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. *There is progress, therefore, in the morality of the Bible. There is also progress in regard to the mode of worshipping and serving God.* At first the temple ritual, priesthood, and sacrifices, set forth in a kinder-garten way, the facts of sin and atonement. But the psalmists and prophets in many places declared the superior value of spiritual service. Gradually the prophet who ministered truth to the soul became more important than the mechanical priest. *There is also progress in the unfolding of God's own nature and character.* The revelation of God to the Israelites was far grander than that made to any other nation; and that to Moses was superior to the one made to the patriarchs. But the beauty and tenderness of the divine character were only learned by degrees. God's spirituality and omnipresence were only fully made known when Christ came. At first God was regarded as a judge, then as a sovereign, and later, as a father. In the N. T. He is revealed as the God and Father of all. *Thus gradually developed also the doctrine of the future life.*

3. THE TEACHER MUST STUDY HIS BIBLE HISTORICALLY. He may use the dates at the head of the columns in reference Bibles, and should have an outline of Bible history in his mind. *Epitome of Bible History epitomized.* Israel descended from Abraham, who came from Mesopotamia to Canaan, whence his descendants went to Egypt where they were enslaved. Moses led them out 1500 B. C., and, after 40 years in the desert, Joshua led them back to Canaan. Under judges they struggled 400 years with surrounding nations. About 1100 B. C. Saul laid the foundations of monarchy, and his successors, David and Solomon, extended it from the Euphrates to the borders of Egypt. In Rehoboam's time, ten northern tribes constituted the kingdom of Israel, and two southern that of Judah. These two kingdoms were often at war with each other and with the surrounding nations. Israel's dynasties were short, violent, idolatrous. In 720 B. C. the Assyrians carried Israel captive. Judah had only one dynasty in the time of David, and several kings were religious reformers. In 486 B. C. Judah was carried to Babylon. After 70 years the Persians conquered the Babylonians, and Cyrus set the Jews home. Their prince Zerubbabel built the temple, Ezra read the law, and Nehemiah set up the walls of Jerusalem. Here the O. T. History ends. Palestine was under Persia, till Alexander the Great acquired it, and Greek influences began to work. After his death, the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt fought over it for 140 years, when the Macabean priests