

Preparation for the Messiah

Golden Text—Repeat. The messenger, John the Baptist, shall come first, preparing the way, teaching about Jesus. Then the Lord Himself shall come suddenly and find them just as they are. Some will be ready for Him and some will not. He will "sit" very patiently while He "examines" them, as the refiners used to examine the silver, to see if He can behold Himself reflected in them.

Review—Do you remember Nehemiah? What did he do for the people of Jerusalem? Built and taught. He went away back to Persia, and after a while came again to Jerusalem.

Wrong Doing—The people had forgotten God's law, and had again fallen into **WRONG**.

They had promised to give one sheep out of every ten, and one bag of grain out of every ten they got, and one out of every ten of everything they owned, to be used for keeping up the services of God's house. And they did not do so. Malachi told them that they were robbing God. If we keep back what belongs to any one, we are robbing him as much as if we took something from him. If we get on a wrong road, what should we do? "Return," says God, "unto me, and I will return to you." These people must get back to the right way of serving God, and God promised that more blessings will come to them than they are

able to receive. This promise is also for us.

Robbing God—Do we ever rob God? Let us see! Do we give God

OUR	TIME	} These are God's. THOUGHTS?
	MONEY	
	LOVE	
	TALENTS	

Or are we only giving God a very small share of these, and using the rest for our own selfish pleasure? (Explain how little people keep back these sometimes.)

Preparation—If we were to go to meet a king or some other great person, we should prepare our clothing, our words, our manners. Here is what God wants us to prepare. Outline a heart. Ask Jesus to help you to make right all your rough ways and to cast out all **SIN** STONES, and fill up all the ruts full of love for Him. Then we shall be ready for His coming.

Sing (Hymn 529, Book of Praise, v. 2)—

"Christ is kind and gentle,
Christ is pure and true,
And His little children
'Must be holy too.'"

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a heart.

In it print PREPARE FOR JESUS.

Something to Remember—Jesus dwells in pure hearts.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

PREPARE YE THE WAY
OF THE LORD.

Point to the sentence printed on the blackboard. Ask who spoke these words. If the answer cannot be got, tell the scholars it was John the Baptist. Speak of his work of preparation for the coming of the Saviour. Illustrate by reference to the Eastern custom of having men go before a king on a journey, to make the road ready for him. The great forerunner of Christ is referred to in the Lesson. What is he called? Yes, "My messenger." Why were the Jews longing for the Messiah's (Christ's) coming? (See Exposition.) What was there in them that would hinder their enjoying the blessedness He was to bring? Make it clear that we cannot have the blessings Christ offers unless we give up all sin. This will lead to the question, How can we prepare for Christ's coming into our hearts, homes, country with all His rich and precious gifts? Just by putting away sin with all our might.