

we are doing God's will we need not fear the consequences. When we are walking in paths of His choosing He will not fail us. He is faithful.

God, however, often tests us. After a time the brook Cherith began to dry up. Was God failing His servant? When God is giving it is not hard to recognize His love, but when He begins to take away it is a different matter. It is not easy to see the divine providence in our losses. Yet the love of God is just as much present in what He withholds as in what He bestows. In the discipline of the drying brook there was probably a twofold purpose. First, it compelled Elijah to put his trust in God alone. He had naught else

now on which to lean. Secondly, through his own suffering, he came to understand the suffering of his people and so learned sympathy.

The God who leads us by the brook Cherith, never leaves us there. When Cherith has done its work we will receive a new command. And often we will be unable to understand the reason for Cherith until we are in Zarephath. It is only after we have passed through some bitter experience and stand on the other side that we are able to interpret its inner meaning and value. It is only in after years that the boy who rebels against the relentless routine of the school-room discipline comes to appreciate the priceless value of his early education.

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

The shaggy figure of Elijah the Tishbite emerges from obscurity, like a sudden apparition, and hurls a startling bolt into the court of Ahab, v. 1. Then he as suddenly disappears to receive needed training in two strange schools.

1. *In the trench*, vs. 2-7. Cherith literally means, "a trench." This rock-bound wady became not only the prophet's hiding-place, but his school. The lesson taught him was that "God provides." There is no mystery about his water-supply. The brook had its source in the south, which would not feel the effects of the drought in the north. Considerable mystery attaches, however, to Elijah's food supply. Boldly teach that the miraculous enters into our ordinary food supplies, no less than the extraordinary. In Elijah's case it matters little whether the miracle is one of supernatural direction or of natural coincidence. The miracle remains, even if the ravens simply followed their natural impulses and in this lonely spot laid up for themselves supplies which proved the means of sustaining the hunted prophet's life.

Point out that there is a miracle in every coincidence of life. When we "stumble" upon unexpected resources, the miracle of coincidence is there. The world's discovery

of coal, steam, electricity, radium, and ever so many forces of nature are illustrations of the divine foresight. God lays up supplies for us in reserve. Elijah in the trench learned the lesson of his creature dependence. But presently the inner voice called him to another school.

2. *In the smelting furnace*, vs. 8-16. Zarephath, literally means "a smelting furnace." Being the citadel of Baal-worship, it would be an unlikely place in which Ahab would look for Elijah. Just as safe there, as in solitude, he would learn a wider lesson when in touch with other sufferers. Personal dependence is a great factor to master: but social service is greater. Put a parabolical interpretation upon the story of the widow's cruse: as embalming the principle that we really help ourselves most when, without any direct thought of self, we help others best. When we use what we have, it grows in the using, as when the disciples put their little into Christ's hands and it became much—more than enough, Matt. 15: 34-37. If we share our meagre stores with others the mystical miracle of multiplication is sure to be performed.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

What do we know of Elijah's home land? Gilead was a wild and rugged mountainous country. Have the physical features of a country anything to do in moulding the character of the people? Is there anything