

OUR COLUMN FOR PREACHERS AND TEACHERS.

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[Feb. 21.] **The Second Temple.** (Ezra 1:1-4;
3:8-13)

Do not fail, in preparing or teaching this lesson, to grasp the connection between it and Jer. 25:12-14; 29:10-14, because this lesson shows the Word of God fulfilled after a period of seventy years. In the first twenty years we have notices of Daniel and his three companions, and their fidelity; of the fifty we know nothing, but the fact of a great change in the spirit of the people; from being infatuated worshippers of Baal, they have become contrite captives by the river of Babylon, eager to return to their own land, and re-build their ruined Temple.

The lesson has two parts, each bristling with stirring lessons.

I. THE EXODUS FROM BABYLON. 1:1-4.

The time of this fulfilment. How it was brought about. The glad proclamation, and who made it. Notice those who went and those who remained.

II. THE SECOND TEMPLE BUILT. 3:8-13.

Notice, 1. How the original sacred vessels of the first Temple are minutely identified.

2. How the tribe and family registers have been preserved and continued—prominently, that of Judah.

3. How the work of re-building is begun with the Altar. chap. 3:2. From this outward, they proceeded with the enclosure. Progress is to be made in the order of importance—first, worship is appointed by God in His Word. All is sanctified by the Altar and the blood of atonement. Gal. 6:14.

1. "The work of God's church requires that somebody be stirred up.

2. "The work of God's church requires self-denial.

3. "The claim of God's church is the very highest.

4. "Those who labour in God's cause need encouragement and moral support

5. "God's work is gladsome, grateful and joyous."

[Feb. 28.] **Nehemiah's Prayer.** [Neh. 1:1-11.]

This lesson brings us back to Jerusalem whither the captives have come. The incidents are nearly a century later than those of last lesson. The early hopes of new found joys and restored privileges had not been realized, and the cause of God in Israel was very discouraging. Two men are raised up in the providence of God to help the cause forward: EZRA, a teacher restored it to more than its ancient authority; NEHEMIAH, a nobleman of high position in the Persian court, IN SHUSHAN THE PALACE. To these two men the renewed prosperity and consolidated condition of the Jewish people is due.

THE CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF NEHEMIAH is seen in his prayer. His deep interest in, and fidelity to the God of his fathers, is worthy of all imitation.

THE EARNESTNESS OF HIS PURPOSE

seen in the minute inquiries about his people, vs. 1-3. The purpose is put into his prayer in order to get at the true remedy, vs. 4-11

Purpose leads to investigation—investigation deepens conviction—healthy and religious conviction leads to God and prayer. These are the conditions of true success. These points are worthy of being wrought into the judgment of adult scholars.

AN INSTRUCTIVE MODEL PRAYER.

Adoration and acknowledgment v. 5.

Supplication and confession. vs. 6, 7.

Special and direct petitions. v. 8.

The argument used is: These are Thy servants. Remember Thy word to Moses. Deut. 28:45-52

The prayer was persevering. Read chap. 2:1-9.

How much ABIDING, CONTROLLING, SUBMISSIVE, DEVOUT purpose do we put into our religious life.

How God answered Nehemiah's prayer.

[For OUR MISSION.]

The Five Steps of St. Jude's Epistle.

CALLED—PRESERVED—KEPT—SANCTIFIED, AND
PRESENTED FAULTLESS.—Jude vs. 1-24.

"Called" by the Father to endless life,
From the world of sin and earthly strife,

Called to be heirs of God.

Called pilgrims here, to a home above,
Through a dying Saviour's boundless love,
And all-atoning blood.

"Preserved in Jesus," all safe from harm,
Protected by His strong right arm,

Naught from His love can sever.

"Preserved in Jesus"—how truly blest
Are all who find in Him their rest,
All sure and safe for ever.

"Kept"—the good Shepherd's care will keep
Each of His frail and trembling sheep;

His love can never die.

Through desert drear or flowery mead,
Their weary, wandering steps He'll lead,
And every need supply.

"Sanctified"—kept by the Spirit's power—
Preserved from sinning—held safe each hour—
Abiding in Jesu's love.

Beneath the shadow of Calvary's Cross,
The gold is purified from dross,
Made meet for the world above.

"Presented faultless" before God's throne.
Robed in Christ's righteousness alone,

All trials and warfare o'er.

"Complete in Him"—a glorious throng—
Unite to sing the grand, new song,
And praise Him evermore.

KATIE.

AS the Dead Sea drinks in the river Jordan, and is never the sweeter, and the ocean all other rivers, and is never the fresher, so we are apt to receive daily mercies from God, and still remain insensible to them, unthankful for them.