

THE ESCAPE OF THE SHUT-INS.

BY CHARLOTTE BREWSTER JORDAN.

Five little piggies so pink and so white
Were shut in a pen as dark as night.

Said the first little piggie, the twisty-twirly one,
"I must work my way out, and have some fun!"

Said the next lively piggie: "I'm a-coming, too!
Wait for me, little brother; I'll soon work through."

Said the next perky piggy: "I really must say
A feller can't stay here the livelong day!"

Said the next little piggie, with a sad little groan,
"I just will not be left in the dark here alone!"

Said his wee little brother: "Any room for me?
Just let me get out, then we'll all be free!"

So they scrambled out before it was night,
And wriggled about in the glad sunlight.

These five little piggies
Were Baby's pink toes.
Their pen was his stocking,
As you may suppose.
Five wrigglesome toe-pigs
Escaped from their pen,
Were glad when the night came
To crawl back again.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM
ISAIAH TO MALACHI.

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 3.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

2 Chron. 36. 11-21. Memorize vs. 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be sure your sin will find you out.—
Num. 32. 23.

THE LESSON STORY.

The story of the captivity of Judah is a very sad one. It is a picture of a human heart made a slave by sin until it is carried away into a way of living that it was never used to and in which it is very unhappy, yet is helpless to find its way back. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was lord over all the little nations around him, just as the emperor of Rome was later. He allowed them to have kings, but he

chose them. He took away from Judah a child-king, and put his brother, Zedekiah, in his place. Zedekiah was twenty-one when he began to reign, and he had none of the wisdom and goodness of his grandfather, Josiah. He was disrespectful to the Lord, who spoke to him through Jeremiah, and to the king of Babylon, who had conquered his armies and owned Judah. The leading princes and priests did what their king did, and though the Lord sent them many messages by his prophets, they mocked and misused the prophets until at last the Lord had to let them learn in a very hard way what they might have learned in an easier way.

Jerusalem was starved and ravaged and burned. Even their beautiful temple that Solomon built for them was spoiled of its gold and silver, and every precious thing carried away to Babylon, while the temple itself was burned with fire and its walls ruined. Also the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the beautiful palaces of David and Solomon burned. Many were killed and many taken away to Babylon to be servants in the king's palace. The fate of the king was a very sad one—too sad to talk about—but it all had to come to teach the people what they would not believe about the Lord God of Israel.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who had taken Judah captive? Nebuchadnezzar.
2. Who was he? King of Babylon.
3. Whom did he make king of Judah? Zedekiah.
4. Was he a good man? No, he was not like Josiah.
5. Who followed his example? Priests and people.
6. Did God turn from them? No, he sent messengers to them.
7. What did they do? Mocked the messengers, and despised God's word.
8. What came then? Jerusalem was taken.
9. What was carried away? The people and the treasures.
10. What was done to the temple? It was burned.
11. What did the princes become? Servants to the king of Babylon.
12. What became of Zedekiah? He was a prisoner for life.

LESSON XI.—SEPTEMBER 10.

THE LIFE-GIVING STREAM.

Ezek. 47. 1-12. Memorize verses 3-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.—Rev. 22. 17.

THE LESSON STORY.

At the beginning of God's World, and

in the middle and at the end, there hangs a beautiful picture of the garden of God, with his river of the water of life flowing through it. This picture teaches us that the life of God in the soul of man is full and free and healing, and wherever it flows the trees of life, the heavenly things planted within us, grow and bring forth fruit. They give good to others, and even the leaves are full of healing. In Ezekiel's story he makes much of the fact that the river flows out of God's sanctuary, and that it is a stream that grows deeper and broader and stronger as it flows. The angel of the Lord, who had been showing Ezekiel the holy city, measured the stream, and after each measurement he led the prophet through the waters. At first it was only to his ankles, the second time to the knees, then to the thighs, and after that it became "waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." The angel then showed him the banks of the river standing thick with trees—trees that bore fruit every month and did not fade or cease to bear. The fruit was for food and the leaves for healing. These waters, it is said, go down through a desert to the sea, "and everything shall live whither the river cometh."

Have you seen irrigated land that had once been a dry, lifeless desert? Then you know how wonderfully the land will spring up into life wherever the water comes. Water is like God's truth, and sunshine is like his love, and when they work together they bring forth life. Have we a little brook of the Lord's Spirit of truth flowing in our hearts, and do we feel the warmth of his love shining there? Then we shall live in the Lord's garden, and eat of the fruits, and drink of the water of life.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. What is God's Word full of? Pictures.
2. Why are they there? To teach us great lessons.
3. What picture is in three places? That of the garden and river of God.
4. Where is our picture of it to-day? In Ezekiel.
5. Where does the river flow from? From God's sanctuary.
6. Where does it flow? Through the desert to the sea.
7. What does it do? It makes all things live and grow.
8. How did the prophet know the depth of the river? By crossing it three times.
9. Could he cross it the fourth time? No, it was too deep.
10. What grew on the banks? All trees for fruit and medicine.
11. What is the river a picture of? The life of God in the soul of man.
12. What will grow where it flows? All heavenly thoughts and affections.