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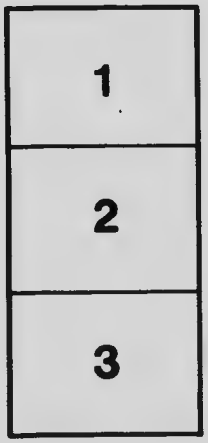


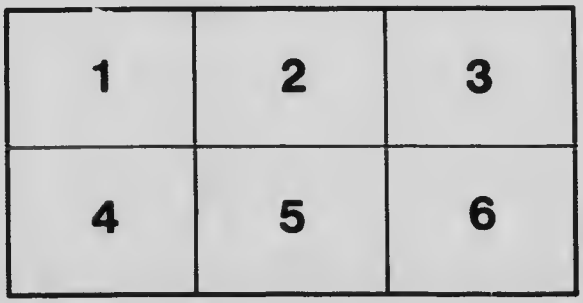

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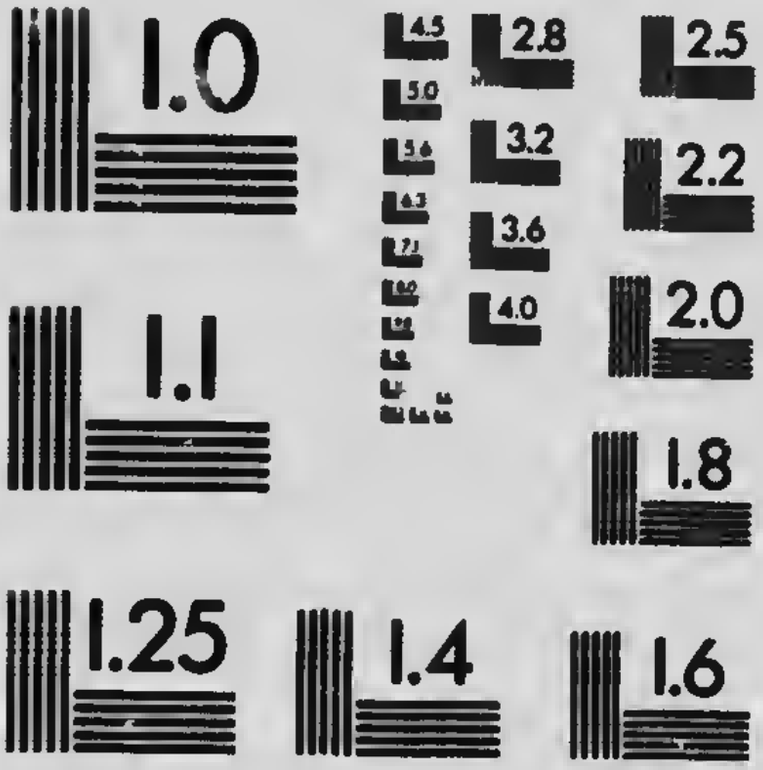


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ON

# "The Babylonian Period in Hebrew History"

BY

EBER CRUMMY, B.Sc., D.D.

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Prepared for use in connection with the Institutes for the Extension of University Teaching in Old and New Testament Literature and History, and the History and Institutions of the Christian Church, under the auspices of the Educational Society of the Methodist Church and the General S. S. and E. L. Board.

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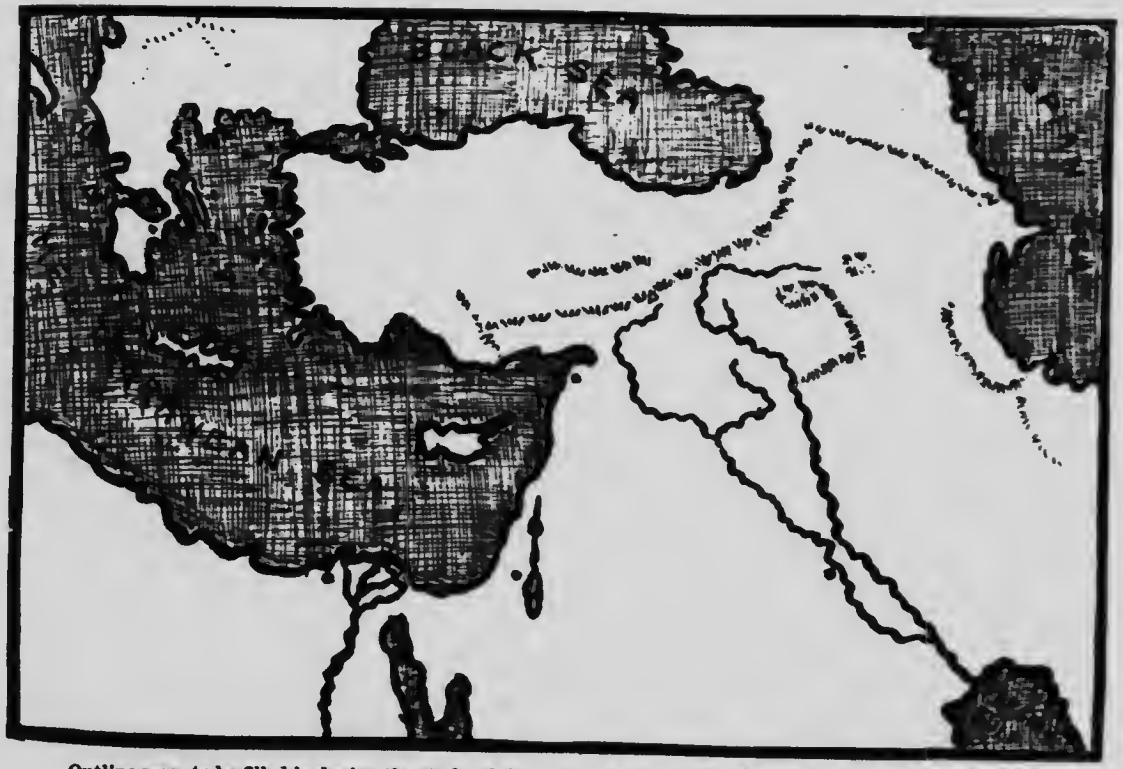


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# THE BABYLONIAN PERIOD IN HEBREW HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

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BY

REV. EBER CRUMMY, B.Sc., D.D.

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NOTES ON BOOKS FOR STUDY AND REFERENCE.

The Revised Version, and preferably the American edition, should be used in connection with the syllabus. For additional study of the period and Books of the course the following will be found serviceable and should be found in every Sunday School reference library and, where practicable, in private lists:

Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible.

Kent's History of the Hebrew People—The Divided Kingdom.

Kent's History of the Jewish People—The Babylonian, Persian and Greek Periods.

Zephaniah—George Adam Smith's Book of the Twelve, or Davidson's Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

Deuteronomy—Harper. The advanced student should use Driver.

Jeremiah—Streane, or Ball and Bennett.

Nahum and Habakkuk—Davidson.

Ezekiel—Davidson.

Where two works are named in connection with any book, the first is regarded the more valuable. The whole list, including only the first-named in each case and omitting Hastings, costs only $7.50, or, substituting Davidson for Smith, $6.00.

## LECTURE I.

### Prophecy and Persecution; or, A Half Century of Reaction.

B.C. 701 marked Isaiah's triumph and with him the triumph of the prophetic party. The king, however timidly, had dared to be guided by the prophet and the nation's great danger had been averted. The prophet's sanguine anticipations had been vindicated by Sennacherib's withdrawal from before Jerusalem and return to the East. The prophetic party followed up their advantage by instituting the religious reforms which Isaiah and his co-workers had long been advocating. Hezekiah, who felt that he owed everything to Isaiah, was a willing agent and the work was prosecuted with thoroughness.

In the meantime events were transpiring that prepared the way for reaction.

1. The popular mind measured the power of the god by the success of his people. The deliverance of Jerusalem and the defeat of the Assyrian's plans seemed to justify the prophet's contention that Jehovah was but using the Assyrians to chastise His disobedient people. For a time, then, opposition was silenced. But the Assyrian power had not been broken. Sennacherib, it is true, never again appeared in the West, but he crushed the Elamite-Kaldean league and centralized the power of the Empire, so that at his death, in 681, his son Esarhaddon was free to undertake an aggressive policy more vigorously than at any previous period of the nation's history. The result was that under Ashurbanipal (668), with Egypt subjugated, the Babylonian problem apparently solved and the traditional policy of the empire thus fully realized, Assyria, rather than having been crushed, had reached the zenith of its splendor. Tribute moreover had never ceased to be paid to the empire by Judah. This speedy recovery of Assyria from her temporary setback would, before the popular mind, turn the prophet's argument against himself and in favor of the syncretists.

2. The reformation had the concurrence of the more intelligent classes, who appreciated the principles of the prophetic teaching. The masses, whose religion was at the child stage and clung to sacred places and objects, would regard the movement as sacrilege.

3. Among those who opposed would largely be the women

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including the women of the court and harem. And the young prince would naturally be impressed with the bitter hostility toward the reformation of those about him. It is, moreover, a commonplace in history for the party worsted for the time lynx-eyed to possess itself of the heir to the throne, an advantage which the spirit of pride of power entertained by the successful party may very readily overlook.

4. The more drastic a movement the greater tendency toward reaction does it produce.

Manasseh came to the throne in 696. He seemed to have inherited the compromising spirit of Ahaz. Politically it seemed wise to conciliate Assyria. Jehovah, as taught by the prophetic party, was discredited and reaction was in the air. The masses turned back madly to the half-heathenish deity they had worshipped and sought to conciliate him by the multiplicity of their sacrifices, while the introduction of the gods of the nations, which could not be offensive to him, might secure advantage to the land. The completeness of the reaction is indicated (1) in the description of it in 2 Kings xxi., and (2) in the description of the reforms that followed in 2 Kings xxiii. Prophetic opposition was not tolerated. The martyrs were a multitude, and tradition places Isaiah himself amongst them.

The prophetic voice had often been neglected in Israel. Now, first, do we see it suppressed, and the phenomenon of a prophet silenced is full of interest. It was the nation's greatest crime, but even from this evil good was forthcoming. If the prophet might not speak in public, he could write in secret, and he did.

(1) The works of the prophets were carefully edited and prepared for effective use when they might be circulated. (2) The two great prophetic historic works that run through the Mosaic books and Joshua, and that were written in the reigns of Ahab and Jeroboam, respectively, were combined and edited. (3) But greater than these in the influence it was destined to exert, the law book, which afterward became the basis of Josiah's reformation and which embraces the bulk of our book of Deuteronomy, was written. Having in mind much that was learned from the failure of Hezekiah's reformation, the author aimed to be less abstract, to give to a sufficient extent concrete form of ritual, etc., to take the place of what, because of its morally evil influence, he sought to supersede.

Thus was the Spirit of Jehovah brooding over the darkness and preparing for a new and brighter day.

## LECTURE II.

### The Precursors of the Reformation—Zephaniah.

The reign of Manasseh in its external aspect was largely without incident. It is possible that he once came into conflict with the Empire. Ashurbanipal's first solution of the Babylonian problem was to appoint his brother, Shamashshumukin, as king and vassal to himself. In 652 Shamashshumukin declared his independence. Preparatory to this step rebellion had been secretly fomented among the other vassal states, and Judah was probably included. The rising was suppressed by Assyria with great vigor and severity, and in 640 Shamashshumukin threw himself into the flames of his burning palace. Ashurbanipal reigned in Babylon himself under another name. It was while here that Manasseh was brought in chains to Babylon, likely for complicity in the rebellion. He was, however, restored to his rule, in accordance with the policy of Ashurbanipal, on giving assurances of loyalty.

The exhaustion of the Empire was becoming manifest toward the close of this great ruler's reign, especially in the policy of compromise adopted toward revolting vassals. Moreover, about 628 barbarous hordes of Scythians from north of the Black Sea swarmed through the passes of the Caucasus and overran the northern part of the empire. After the death of Ashurbanipal they played an important part in the confusion which resulted in the downfall of Assyria, but for the present, after overrunning the northern part of Assyria, they moved southward along the Mediterranean coast. Their cruelty surpassed even that common to Semitic warfare and their approach froze with terror the hearts of the peoples.

In 641 Manasseh was succeeded by his son Amon, a man of like spirit to his father, but not of equal strength. The reform party was already in the ascendant and not only was the young prince placed under its influence, but through a conspiracy, after a reign of two years, the king was assassinated. This premature attempt at reform was not wholly successful. There was sufficient strength with the party of reaction to punish those immediately responsible for Amon's death, but not to supersede the young prince Josiah, nor to withstand the gradual, if silent, progress of the spirit of reform. It was not, however, until 627, in the general terror inspired by the approach of the Scythians, that the movement found a spokesman in Zephaniah. The

prophets regarded this as *The Day of Jehovah* and the dreaded foe as His awful agents of judgment.

In reading the book it may be well to note the following suggestions: *a.* Exchange the places of the latter parts of verses 8 and 9 in chap. i. ("and all such as," etc., and "that fill the air," etc.). *b.* Omit ii. 8-10 and iii. 9-10 as out of place. *c.* Mark iii. 14-20 as a later addition. The book might then be summarized:

*The Day of Jehovah.*

Part I.—Judgment. (*a*) On Israel, beginning at Jerusalem and sweeping from section to section over the city (i. 2. to ii. 3). (*b*) The spreading to outside nations from Philistia to Assyria (ii. 4-15).

Part II.—Admonition and Promise. (*a*) The nations' doom suggests that of Jerusalem (iii. 1-7). (*b*) The way to escape is to wait on Jehovah (iii. 11-13).

Zephaniah has been classed as a reproductive prophet in contrast to the original prophets. This is marked by at least two characteristics: (*a*) A tendency to confound the temporary form in which truth is embodied and the permanent religious truth so embodied. (*b*) The absence of that inner conflict through which the original prophets became possessed of their message.

Still the book is of high value. While the Messianic conception, so far as explicit statement is concerned, is absent, it appears implicitly. Besides the prophet's earnest moral tone that has often been remarked, there is (*a*) his doctrine of the disciplinary value of suffering, and (*b*) the wide outlook of his philosophy of history—his doctrine of Providence—that enhances the value of the book. Perhaps he is amongst the first who regarded suffering as a sign of Divine favor, and as such he begins to grasp the idea that reached its fullest expression in the suffering Saviour as God's anointed type of the perfect man. Zephaniah's judgment against the outside nations does not reach the height of the other parts of his book. They are marked by a narrow nationalistic spirit. The finest passage in the book is iii. 11-13.

## LECTURE III.

### Deuteronomy and the Reformation.

The reformation of Josiah had its first impulse in the natural revulsion from the excesses of Manasseh's persecution and reaction. As before stated, a premature effort at reform which resulted in the death of Amon attained some desired end, though it was checked for the time. Zephaniah became the first exponent of the movement. The year his book was published Jeremiah began to preach. Nor were they alone. The needs of the time called forth other advocates of reform, as indicated by the presence of the prophetess Huldah, to whom Josiah referred the book of the law for an estimate of its value. Progress had, moreover, at least reached the point at which the repairs of the temple had begun. But the text-book of the reformation was the great book of the law, the product of the dark days of Manasseh, which was found in the temple during the progress of the repairs and which Hilkiah, the chief priest, possibly Jeremiah's father and friendly to the reform movement, introduced to the attention of the king. Its effect was magical. The people were assembled in the temple court, and the book read to them and its demands made the basis of a covenant with Jehovah.

The book has been identified as our book of Deuteronomy, chapters v. to xxvi. and xxviii. As Deuteronomy was for long supposed to be an integral part of the Pentateuch and written by Moses, the following indications of authorship and date, among others that may not be readily followed by the English reader, will be of value:

*Authorship.*—(1) The book itself does not claim to be written by Moses. (*a*) Moses is made to speak in the first person, but the author speaks of Moses in the third person (See i. 1, 5; iv. 41, 46, 47, 49). (*b*) "Beyond Jordan," when the author speaks of himself is Moab, when Moses speaks is Canaan.

It therefore clearly professes to be an account by another of what Moses did. But the style of both the author and Moses is the same. The whole book would thus appear to be by an author who does not claim to be Moses.

(2) The relation of the book to the other parts of the Hexateuch (Pentateuch and Joshua) point in the same direction. These books are now acknowledged to contain two strands interwoven, of about equal length. The first, an early historical work (JE), originated as two books in the ninth and eighth cen-

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turies, and were afterward combined. The second is a legal historical work which forms the matrix in which the earlier work is set to form the Mosaic books and Joshua, and was written during the exile. Deuteronomy bases both its laws and history on the earlier strand, in no case citing or making reference to the later work.

*Date.*—(1) After the early historical work (JE), as above. But Jeremiah (which includes Genesis xxxvi. 31) was clearly after the beginning of the kingdom. Again Jeremiah quotes the books of the wars of Jehovah (Num. xxi. 14-15; Joshua x. 12ff. But David's elegy on Saul and Jonathan is from this book. JE is therefore after David, and Deuteronomy after JE.

(2) A study of the place and agents appointed for sacrifice (Ex. xx. 24; Lev. xvii. 1ff.; Deut. xii.) will indicate that these laws were of gradual formation in the order—first, Jeremiah; second, Deuteronomy; third, Ezekiel; fourth, Leviticus. History will confirm this (Cp. Elijah in I. Kings xix. 10) and indicate date by connecting first effo c to centralize worship with the reforms of Hezekiah and Josi .

Note also, besides technical lines argument which must be omitted, 1st, the time taken to re d the law; 2nd, the evils, that prevailed at the time; 3rd, the reforms undertaken, and 4th, the effect produced by reading the book—all indicate the length, the laws, the programme and the concluding threatenings and promises of that part of the book of Deuteronomy indicated above as constituting the Book of the Law.

The book as we now have it may be summarized as follows: It consists of three discourses with a preface (i. 1-5) indicating time and place of discourse and an appendix of miscellaneous material.

*1st Discourse* (i. 6-iv. 43).—i. 6-iv. 40. Moses' first discourse, comprising (*a*) Historical retrospect from Horeb and pointing to providential guidance and protection, and (*b*) Practical conclusions—obligations to remember spirituality and sole godhead of Jehovah as taught at Horeb. iv. 41-43. The appendixed account of the appointment of the three trans-Jordanic cities of refuge.

*2nd Discourse* (iv. 44-xxvi. and xxviii.)—iv. 44-49. Superscription. v.-xxvi. Exposition of the law, comprising (*a*) Hortatory introduction, developing the first commandment of the decalogue and setting forth general theocratic principles that are to govern Israel (v.-xi.); (*b*) Code of special laws (xii.-xxvi.); (*c*) Blessings and curses that will follow the observance or neglect of the law (xxviii.). xxvii. A later appendix to (*b*): Ceremony to be observed at popular ratification of laws in Canaan.

*3rd Discourse* (xxix.-xxx.).—Supplementary exhortations, comprising (*a*) Renewed warning against idolatry (xxix.); (*b*) Promise of restoration conditional on repentance (xxx. 1-10); (*c*) Choice now set before Israel (xxx. 11-20).

Appendix xxxi.-xxxiii., embracing Moses' farewell and delivery of law to priests (xxxi. 1-13); Commission of Joshua (xxxi. 14-15, 23); Song of Moses and notices (xxxi. 16-xxxii. 44); Conclusion of the whole book (xxxii. 48-xxxiv. 12), containing the blessings of Moses (xxxiii.) and narrative of death.

It must be borne in mind that while this summary includes the whole book, which was afterward given unity in its present form, it is only with the single section which constitutes the 2nd Discourse that we are here dealing as the Book of the Law. This, then, is the book of Deuteronomy in its beginning. It is a prophetic endeavor in the spirit of Moses, and possibly employing a Mosaic tradition, to replace the evils that clustered about the popular religion of the day and made it their vehicle by a new system based upon the later prophetic teaching. The first attempt at reformation had failed by being too abstract. The masses could understand only if explicit laws were enacted. That Jehovah was a spirit could be understood only by the abolition of idols and the yielding him his people's entire homage. The teaching of the book might be summed up in—one God, one holy people, one place of worship, one priestly tribe. It was a sharp distinction between the secular and the sacred, a narrowing of religion from which evil results followed later, but it was this narrowing, nevertheless, that saved the religion of Israel at the time from the shallowness of heathenism.

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## LECTURE IV.

### Jeremiah and His Times.

Jeremiah was born at Anathoth one and one-half miles northeast of Jerusalem, of a priestly family, shortly after the middle of the seventh century. His earliest impressions were those of the darkest days of Manasseh. His father was Hilkiah, possibly the chief priest who afterward figured prominently in Josiah's reformation, and there is further evidence that he was of a family of influence in the state. He was called to the work of the prophet in the same year as Zephaniah, 627, and possibly through like influences. Josiah had already been king for twelve years and although, with excusable timidity, he had not effected much change in the outward aspect of affairs, yet really the spirit of reform was gaining ground, when the terrible approach of the Scythians aroused all classes to a sense of impending danger unprecedented in character.

We have echoes, but only echoes, of the part Jeremiah took in paving the way for the reformation which was inaugurated years later, and in disseminating the principles of the reformation or condemning its superficiality during the following twelve years. These were years of comparative quiet within the kingdom. Josiah proved to be one of the best of kings, while, as more than once in the past, the empire's decay gave the little kingdom practical independence.

Assyria had been showing signs of decay since shortly after the the middle of the century. It was not long after that date that the Medes attacked the empire, but were interrupted by the Scythian invasion. When this had spent itself, the Medes under Cyaxares and the Kaldeans under Nebopolassar, a Kaldean general of Ashurbanibal who on the death of his imperial master had seized the Babylonian throne, formed a coalition. Assyria had been exhausted by the campaigns of Ashurbanipal and Nineveh fell in 607. The approaching downfall of the great tyrant of nations was hailed by all peoples and the Hebrew prophet, Nahum, became the spokesman of their satisfaction and pointed the moral from the Hebrew point of view. Necho, of Egypt, saw in the dismemberment of the empire the goal of his nation's long-cherished ambitions and marched an army towards the Euphrates to claim as his share of the spoils all of western Asia. Josiah had by this time extended his sway so as to include what had been the northern kingdom and, possibly with the concurrence of the

prophets, disputed with Necho his right to cross Judæan territory. It is possible that the prophets' preference for Assyrian suzerainty may have influenced the prophetic king. A battle was fought at Megiddo and Josiah fell. This was perhaps the most tragic event in Hebrew history. It was a blow to the reform party, which was, however, still strong enough to choose Jehoahaz, who was in sympathy with Josiah's policy, as king, instead of his elder brother.

Necho succeeded in extending his rule to the Euphrates. On his return he held court at Riblah on the Orontes. When Jehoahaz who was invited thither presented himself, he was seized and sent a prisoner to Egypt and Jehoiachim raised to the throne in his stead as Necho's vassal. Jehoiachim was the ideal of a bad king, and with his reign began the troubles of Jeremiah, and his grandest work. The state at once fell into the hands of the reactionary party, whose political folly and religious crimes destroyed Judah in less than a quarter of a century.

The tribute imposed by Necho was not heavy, but it was extorted from the people, as well as further and heavier extortions necessary to gratify the vain king's desire to emulate the display of an Eastern court. Despotism and oppression were thus introduced. Among the ignorant the heathen practices became again the rule, while the enlightened had wrested Isaiah's idea of the inviolability of Zion into a dogma which substituted as the essential of religion formality for morality. Jeremiah alone stood against the error of the learned as well as the crimes of the ignorant and his opposition to the popular dogma early led to his imprisonment. Through the influence of his family he escaped the death sentence.

Necho's rule was short. Nebopolasser was able to turn toward the east in 605-4, when his son, Nebuchadrezzar met Necho at Carchemish on the Euphrates when the power of Egypt in Asia was completely crushed. This marked an epoch in the prophet's life. Not only was he justified before the people, but his outlook was broadened. All nations must serve Babylon, became henceforth his theme.

Immediately after the battle of Carchemish Nebopolasser died, and there was some little delay before Nebuchadrezzar could follow up his western campaign. When at last he was under way, Jeremiah declared the fate of Judah, while Habakkuk voiced the cry of anguish of the faithful. It may have been due to the influence of these prophets that Judah was ready to submit to Nebuchadrezzar when he arrived in 600.

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As the Kaldeans approached, a fast was proclaimed, and Jeremiah having collected his oracles, sent his scribe, Baruch, to the temple to read them to the people. Those who heard were deeply impressed, and, after Jeremiah and Baruch were out of reach, the nobles introduced the roll to the king. Jehoiachim, in spite of the remonstrances of many of his advisers, contemptuously destroyed the roll and then sent to apprehend the prophet.

The city, however, submitted to Nebuchadrezzar. Jehoiachim was permitted to retain his throne as a vassal of Babylon and the tribute was not oppressive. A spirit of madness, however, was rife, and in 597 Jehoiachim revolted. This the prophet opposed with all his energy. Jehoiachim died before the arrival of Nebuchadrezzar and was succeeded by Jehoiachin. When three months later the city was invested the king submitted. The best elements of the state, with the king, were carried away captive to the banks of the Chebar, near Babylon, and the temple was looted to pay the heavy tribute exacted.

Over the state thus denuded Nebuchadrezzar placed Zedekiah as his vassal. The circumstances called for strength, but Zedekiah was weak. The disaster only increased the people's fatalism, which was reflected in a deluge of heathenism, while "the siren voices of false prophets lured the nation to its ruin."

Soon after Zedekiah's accession emissaries from Moab, Ammon and Tyre visited Jerusalem to induce Judah to join a coalition against Babylon. Jeremiah opposed and the battle of the prophets ensued. Hananiah's death saved the situation for the time. Still both in Jerusalem and in the exile the fanatical hope of a miraculous restoration existed and withstood the work of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and finally in 587 resulted in another outbreak. The coalition looked to Egypt. Nebuchadrezzar invested the city in 587. In terror the people made a covenant with Jehovah and manumitted their slaves. Hophra of Egypt approached with an army and Nebuchadrezzar raised the siege to meet him. The people, feeling again safe, were guilty of the perfidy of re-enslaving their freed men. Jeremiah, seeking to visit Anathoth, was arrested on the charge of going over to the Kaldeans and was cast into a dungeon. The king removed him to the court prison that he might be able to consult with him. Here he repeatedly declared to the people, as he had to the king, that the city must fall. This was regarded by the nobles as traitorous and Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern to drown or to starve. Through the kind offices of Ebed-melech, an Ethio-

pian servant of the palace, his life was saved and the prophet was thereafter kept under a royal guard. Though he constantly advised the king that safety lay only in surrender, Zedekiah was too weak to follow his advice. The siege lasted one and a half years, during which the awful horrors incident to the sieges of the time prevailed in the city. In July, 586, the Kaldeans forced an entrance. Zedekiah and a few warriors fled under cover of night toward the Jordan. Captured near Jericho they were brought before Nebuchadrezzar at Riblah, when the king's sons were slain before his eyes and then his eyes put out. The chief officers and officials and sixty of the leading nobles were slain and Zedekiah led into captivity. The temple was looted by the Kaldean general Nebuzaradan, and then the walls and chief buildings of the city, including the temple, razed.

Nebuchadrezzar left in the land the lower classes of agriculturists and shepherds and a few trusted nobles under Gedaliah as governor to maintain order. Jeremiah was captured, but his record being regarded with favor, he was allowed to go with the exiles or to remain, as he chose. He remained, the character of Gedaliah probably inducing him to this choice. Mizpah was made the new capital. After two months of hopefulness Ishmael, a Jewish noble, instigated by the king of Ammon, slew Gedaliah and those immediately about him, and then succeeded in making his escape. Fearing the anger of Nebuchadrezzar, those who remained of Gedaliah's associates fled to Egypt against Jeremiah's advice, taking the prophet with them. Another small deportation did occur (Jeremiah liii. 30), leaving only peasants in the land with no form of self-government. The Judæans in Egypt lapsed into heathenism, and Jeremiah was probably early martyred by his fellow-countrymen. The life of the prophet, a life of martyrdom, soon became idealized by those who entered into his spiritual labors, and supplied a picture, through the Suffering Servant, first, of the Ideal Israel and second, of Israel's Messiah.

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## LECTURE V.

### Nahum and Habakkuk; or, The Crash of Empires.

The book of Nahum may be dated about 609, while Nineveh was in her death throes, and just before Megiddo. The weight of evidence favors the conclusion that Nahum was a native of Elkosh, a village north-east of Lachish. The breaking up of the Assyrian Empire was the occasion which impelled him to prophecy. It is little wonder that the prophet's mind was so absorbed with this great event that he forms a marked exception among the prophets of Israel by making no reference to his people's sins. A hundred years of profound mystery is about to be solved by the sudden collapse of a power that had combined in a marked degree conquest and crime. "Wanton bloodshed, inhuman cruelty, commercial immorality, bad faith in her political relations—in his denunciations of these Nahum gave voice less to his own personal convictions than to the outrage to the conscience of humanity. Assyria in his hands becomes an object lesson to the empires of the modern world, teaching as an eternal principle of the Divine Government the absolute necessity for a nation's continued vitality of that righteous personal, civic and national life which alone exalteth a nation."

In energy, power and vividness Nahum is equalled by few of the Biblical writers. The book consists of two poems on the fall of Nineveh (chapters ii. and iii., respectively) to which is prefixed another poem of later date on "The Vengeance of Jehovah." This may have absorbed in the latter half of it a brief introduction that formerly stood at the beginning of Nahum's two poems, but the little poem itself was properly regarded as a fitting introduction to those of the prophet. This introductory poem was possibly inspired by some of the subsequent experiences of the Jewish people, in which they suffered oppression at the hands of their political masters. The vividness with which the prophet has pictured the siege of Nineveh, which has led many to suppose that he himself was present, may be due to his early recollection of Scythian assaults upon towns in his neighborhood.

Habakkuk.—Habakkuk is known to us only through his book and that presents no biographical information except that he was recognized as a prophet. His book was written about 600 and embodied a brief oracle (i. 3-11) written by him some time previously. This was the year of the Kaldeans' first invasion of Judah. Like Nahum a few years before, he is absorbed

with one thought—the mystery of iniquity and its reconciliation with the justice of Jehovah. It is for this reason that he, too, gives secondary reattention to the sins of his country.

*Contents of Book.*

PART I.—The book opens with a dialogue between Jehovah and the prophet (i. 2–ii. 4).

i. 1-4. The prophet complains that Jehovah has not heeded his complaint against wrong-doing in Israel.

i. 5-11. Jehovah refers him to the Kaldeans, who are his avengers of the evil complained of.

i. 12–ii. 1. This aggravates the trouble. Can this be Jehovah's method of rectifying injustice, to raise up a nation as his rod who are more wicked yet than those they punish? He would stand upon his watch tower and see how Jehovah would answer.

ii. 2-4. Jehovah's answer. The prophet is directed to write the answer on tablets, that all may easily read it (2, 3).

*The Answer.*—The soul of the Kaldean is diseased with pride, but the righteous shall live by his faithfulness (4). Destruction is implicit in the condition of the one; life in that of the other.

PART II.—A taunting song of five woes upon the evil traits and deeds of the Kaldeans, sung by the nations whom their insatiable lust of conquest, compared to Sheol (5), has outraged (ii. 5-20). (*a*) On their insatiable lust of conquest; (*b*) On their suicidal rapacity (9-11); (*c*) On the dishonesty and cruelty by which their pride was gratified (12-14); (*d*) On their wild and barbarous triumphs over nations that fell under their sway (15-17); (*e*) On their irrational idolatry (18-20).

PART III.—A lyric ode of a later time appended to the oracles of Habakkuk, chapter iii. The theme (ver. 2) is a prayer that Jehovah would repeat the great work of deliverance wrought of old. A theophany is then pictured in which Jehovah appears for the deliverance of his people and the discomfiture of his foes.

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# LECTURE VI.

## The Oracles of Jeremiah.

| Historical Occasion. | Date. | Oracles. | Subject. |
|---|---|---|---|
| The advance of the Scythians. | 627 | i. | The prophet commissioned (4-10) instructed and encouraged by visions, (a) of an almond rod (11, 12), (b) of a boiling cauldron (13-19). |
| | 627-4 | ii.-vi. | ii.-vi. 4. Unfaithfulness of Jerusalem portrayed under figure of husband and wife.<br>Israel a faithless wife (ii. 1-13).<br>Shown in seeking the nations and their gods instead of Jehovah (14-30).<br>Assyria as well as Egypt has shamed them (31-37).<br>Israel has forfeited her privileges (iii. 1-5).<br>Judah is still worse (6-11).<br>Still Jehovah will forgive if they return (12-20).<br>Confession of sin put in Israel's mouth (21-25).<br>Jehovah's forgiveness assured (iv. 1-4).<br>iv. 5-vi. Hence Jerusalem's destruction inevitable.<br>Trumpet sounds danger (5-11).<br>The attack described and desolation portrayed (ii. 26).<br>On account of general apostacy disaster cannot be averted (iv. 27-v. 9).<br>The foe approaching—seek Jehovah even now (vi. 1-8).<br>Sin with formal worship is bringing this foe (9-30). |
| The Reformation. | 621 | xi. 1-8. | The covenant is not being obeyed (probably time of the prophet's preaching for a dozen years). |
| Battle of Megiddo, Josiah dead, Jehoahaz a captive. | 609 | xxii. 10-12. | A dirge and statement on the nation's loss. |
| Jehoiachim king and Egypt suzerain. Wickedness and oppression rife, and the land deluged with the practices of heathenism. | 609-5 | vii.-ix. and xxvi. | Oracles against the temple. The temple inviolable only through obedience (vii. 1-28). Therefore the place of their wickedness shall be the place of their punishment (vii. 29-viii. 17). A lament for the disaster from which none shall escape (viii. 18-ix. 26). |
| Jeremiah arrested and tried for preaching against the temple. | | | Occasion of oracle and result described—prophet arrested and tried on charge of death but set free (xxvi). |

| Historical Occasion. | Date. | Oracles. | Subject. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conspiracy against the prophet's life. | | xi. 9-xii. 6. | Judah charged with conspiracy against Jehovah, and conspires against the prophet. Jeremiah bewails his fate, but must see greater suffering. |
| Battle of Carchemish. The power of Egypt in Asia crushed. | 605-4 | xxv. | Judah and surrounding nations shall fall at the hand of Babylon, when the victor also shall perish (1-14). Cup of wrath for the nations (15-38). |
| Nebuchadnezzar advances toward the West. | 603 | xxxvi. and xiv.-xlix. 33. | Jeremiah writes his oracles (xxxvi. 1-8). Oracles against the nations (the nucleus from Jeremiah) (xlv.-xlix. 33). Oracles read, destroyed by king, and rewritten. |
| Jehoiachim submits to Nebuchadnezzar. | 600-598 | xiv.-xx. | Oracles against Judah: The drought (xiv. 1-6); the prophet intercedes for the people and complains against false prophets, Jehovah's reply (7-17); lament and renewed appeal (17-22); impending woes described (xv. 1-9); prophet laments his fate and appeals to Jehovah, Jehovah replies (10-21); the prophet to enforce warnings by self-denial (xvi. 1-13); the punishment so painful to announce will be remedial (14-21); and is necessary as the sin is indelible (xvii. 1-11); the prophet pleads for himself (12-18); obedience to law the way to prosperity (19-27). The Divine Potter (xviii.-xx.). The Potter's Clay: Its meaning (xviii. 1-17), (Jehovah can alter the destinies of a people at any moment). The prophet pleads against his enemies (18-23). The potter's broken vessel (xix. 1-13) (a time in a nation's history may come when obduracy shall demand destruction). Pashur's vengeance and the prophet's reply (xix. 14-xx. 6); the prophet laments his sorrows (xx. 7-18). |
| Rebellion being fomented. | | xxxv. | Judah condemned by example of Rechabites. |
| First siege. | 597 | xii. 7-xiii. 27 and xxii. 13-30. | Oracles against Jerusalem and Jeroboam — Judah shall be devastated (xii. 7-13); Judah's enemies also pardoned if penitent (14-17); Judah's condemnation presented under symbols of girdle and bottles (xiii. 1-14); Jehoiachim condemned (xxii. 13-23); Judah |

| Historical Occasion. | Date. | Oracles. | Subject. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jehoiachim dies. Jehoiachin reigns. | | | again appealed to, is obdurate and will be destroyed (xiii. 15-27); Jehoiachin condemned (xxii. 24-30.). |
| Jehoiachin submits. First deportation. | 597-6 | xxiv., xxvii.-xxix. | The two baskets of figs (xxiv.). Opposing the spirit of revolt. Advice to submit to Babylon (xxvii.). Dispute with Hananiah on length of exile (xxviii.). |
| | 593 (?) | l. and li. | Letters to the exiles (xxix.). On the destruction of Babylon, possibly by a disciple (cir. 538). |
| Second siege. | 587 | xxi. 1-10; xxiii., xxxiv., xxxvii., xxxviii., xxxxxxiii. | Oracles during siege. Zedekiah's inquiry and the prophet's reply (xxi. 1-10); the wicked shepherds (xxiii.); against Zedekiah and Jerusalem (xxxiv. 1-10); manumission, perfidy condemned (8-20); narrative of siege (xxxvii., xxxviii.); restoration with rightcousness and joy after punishment (xxx-xxxiii.). |
| Jerusalem falls. Gedaliah slain. Jeremiah in Egypt. | 586 | xxxix.-xliv. and lii. | Historical section relating the fall of the city and the prophet's after fortunes. |

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## LECTURE VII.

### Ezekiel and the Captivity.

Ezekiel properly belongs to the period we are studying, though he forms the link of connection with the next period of Hebrew literature—the exile.

After the destruction of Jerusalem there were three centres of Jewish population, Babylon, Palestine and Egypt. The three deportations to Babylon had consisted of 10,000, 3,855 and 745 respectively, which numbers, of course, include men only. Including the other members of the families, the total exiled population would reach 50,000. Owing to the contiguity of Egypt and to the fact that in all the risings that invited the wrath of the Empire, Egypt was ally of the Palestinian states, and that further, the subjects of these states would the more readily find an asylum in Egypt since that country had, in her wars against Assyria, largely to depend upon mercenary troops, we are safe in estimating the Jewish population of Egypt at the beginning of the exile as exceeding in numbers those in Babylon

and Palestine together. Those who remained in Palestine would also be very considerable in number.

Those who were left in the land were of the lowest class of the population and without the capacity or perhaps any strong desire for self-government, while those in Egypt speedily lapsed into idolatry and were thus lost as a moral or religious force. It was therefore with the exiles in Babylon that the hope of Israel lay, and Ezekiel, as their prophet, thus filled a place of the highest importance in the history of revelation.

It is possible that those carried away in the two later deportations were obliged to purchase their lives at the price of their liberty. References occur in the later exilic literature that would suggest the hardships of slavery as the lot of some of those before the prophet's mind. It was different, however, with the first exiles. They were as a class valuable to the Empire and in no way were made to suffer more than colonists of other nationalities. They were settled on the Chebar canal, not far from the city of Babylon, in a fertile plain. They were permitted local self-government, and the fact that Jehoiachin was afterward recognized at court as a person of distinction, as well as the facts that lie at the foundation of the story in the Book of Daniel, would indicate that facilities existed by which the Jewish colonists might rise to places of importance and influence in the Empire. It was during this period, too, that the genius for trade, which has ever since distinguished the Jewish people, had its beginnings.

During the whole period that comes under our present survey Nebuchadrezzar reigned in Babylon. That great ruler had none of the love for war for its own sake that formed so striking and dark a feature in the Assyrian monarchs. His master passion was building, and he studiously fostered his resources for the constructive ends of his wise policy.

It was under conditions such as these that the exiles lived amongst whom Ezekiel conducted his prophetic activity.

## Sketch of the Prophet's Life.

Ezekiel was born of a priestly family some time before the call of Jeremiah. One of the outstanding impressions of his childhood would be the Scythian terror, which, as we have seen, played so conspicuous a part in the prophetic activity of the time. The impress it left upon his mind never faded, and more than fifty years later it formed the basis of his great picture of

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the assault upon the kingdom of God by the nations led by Gog, the king of Magog. Another of his boyhood's impressions would be the early ministry of Jeremiah, and this, too, never vanished. Jeremiah remained his master through life, as Deuteronomy remained the model of his prophetic programme.

He had reached manhood and had served in the temple in the capacity of priest before the first captivity, when he was one of the first body of exiles deported to Babylon. It was five years later, in 592, that he was called to the prophetic office.

A singular feature of his book is the symbolical figures and actions and visions of which he makes use. There is the suggestion at least that these are based on fact. If so, they reflect a state of nervous tension on the part of the prophet bordering on insanity, and a corresponding degree of suffering as the medium through which he became cognizant of his message, a characteristic of experience and life that would certainly place him among the original prophets. There are indications, too, which would confirm this, that he was a man of passionate eloquence.

During the first five years of his ministry, until the fall of the city and state in 587, he was, as Jeremiah in Jerusalem, out of sympathy with his fellow-exiles, and was not only subject to much pain in consequence, but to much persecution. Here, too, as in the home land, the fanatical hope was entertained of a miraculous restoration. Here, too, the false prophet found popularity by fanning the false hope, and added to the prophet's sorrows and to the people's dangers, since a rising would surely deprive them of the privileges they enjoyed.

The fall of the city vindicated the prophet and added greatly to his prestige and influence, and he used it to the best advantage, addressing himself in the spirit of Deuteronomy to the preparation of a new Israel. His book scarcely presents the oracles as they were delivered. Its arrangement is very clearly for literary effect. He may properly be distinguished as the literary prophet.

The pastoral idea appears first in Ezekiel. On the destruction of the nation he was driven back to the individual as the vindication of Jehovah's justice, and this involved the pastoral conception. He ever had in mind two audiences—the one the exile, the other the ideal Israel—and this larger audience influenced him in two ways. On the one hand, the fact that this new Israel was to be constructed out of the individual fragments of the old, gave added emphasis to the individual. On the other hand, it tended to another new conception, prophetic activity

without an audience, that is to literary activity. He never ceased, however, to be a very keen observer of all about him.

The last touches were given to his book a little before 570. After this date nothing is known of him. Tradition gives him a martyr's death at the hands of a prince of his people whom he had reproved for idolatry.

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## LECTURE VIII.

### The Book of Ezekiel.

The study of this book presents fewer difficulties than are connected with any other of the longer books of the prophets. Isaiah, as we have seen, uttered his oracles at points of time extending over a long ministry, and these were collected only at a later date by his disciples who were influenced in the matter of arrangement largely by subject matter. Moreover, as the prophet's statements are closely connected with the events which occasion them they have to be rearranged in their historical order before their significance becomes apparent. The same difficulty appears in the case of Jeremiah, only to a far less degree. He and his scribe undertook, as we have seen, the collecting of his oracles, but the vicissitudes, through which the record of his work passed, have introduced some degree of confusion into the arrangement. In the case of Ezekiel, however, the book was prepared by himself and with a great deal of literary skill. The oracles are thus placed in their chronological order, and for the most part with the dates prefixed.

The book falls into two great divisions of equal length, each consisting of twenty-four chapters and dealing respectively with the destruction and reconstruction of the nation. With the aid of the following summary the reader will be able with little difficulty to follow the prophet's meaning.

*Part I.*—Chaps. i.–xxiv.—Prophecies on the destruction of the nation, uttered before the fall of Jerusalem and, no doubt, amplified later.

1. Chaps. i.–iii.—Experiences accompanying call, July, 592 B.C. i.: Vision of Jehovah, who calls and sends him. ii.–iii. 9: Commission and inspiration under symbol of eating the roll presented by Jehovah. iii. 10-21: A clearer view of his mission

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gained when he went to the exiles. iii. 16-21: A more precise definition of his office as watchman received seven days later; since, iii. 22-27: The office of reprover is denied him.

2. Chaps. iv.-vii.—The fate of the nation and city declared in symbolic prophecies, 592. iv.-v. 4: Siege of Jerusalem and captivity of the two branches of Israel represented simultaneously. v. 5ff.; vi., vii: Three impassioned orations—first, to the city; second, to the land; third, to the people (in iv. captivity of Judah is fixed at forty years, Israel at one hundred and ninety years).

3. Chap. viii.-xi.—More precise prophecies of destruction in Jerusalem because of the pollution of the temple, Aug., 591. viii.: Abominations in the temple. ix.: Slaughter of the people (symbol). x.: Burning of city. xi.: Departure of Jehovah from sanctuary.

4. Chaps. xii.-xix.—The same theme elaborated, 591. C. xii. 1-20, xvii., xix.: Fate of Zedekiah, who by perfidy had brought ruin on himself and country (xix., a beautiful dirge over the princes of Judah); xii. 21.-xiv. 11.: False prophets a cause of unbelief; xv.: Israel a charred vine branch; xvi.: Israel's character presented under parable of faithless wife; xviii.: Jehovah's absolute righteousness refutes the idea of the nation's solidarity.

5. Chaps. xx.-xxiv.—Prophecies proving the necessity of Israel's destruction, Aug., 590. Cc. xx., xxii., xxiii.: Three oracles as formal arraignments of Israel—first, idolatrous tendencies of the people which Jehovah would yet expel; second, enumeration of the corruptions prevalent in Jerusalem; third, allegory exhibiting immoralities of two profligate sisters, Aholah (Samaria), Aholibah (Jerusalem); xxi.: Containing Song of the Sword (9-17); refers to march of Nebuchadrezzar's army against Jerusalem; xxiv.: Records dramatic close of the first period of Ezekiel's activity. On the very day the Kaldean army invested Jerusalem the prophet announced the city's fate. The death of his wife the same evening becomes occasion of symbol of despair that will seize upon the exiles on the fall of the city.

*Part II.*—Chaps. xxv.-xlviii.—Prophecies on the reconstruction of the nation. This is divided into three sections. First, xxv.-xxxii.: prophecies against foreign nations contiguous to Palestine. Of various dates, but inserted in the two-year period of silence, 587-585, for literary and theological reasons. Jehovah must remove these evil influences before He restores Israel. Second, discourses on hearing of the fall of Jerusalem, when the prophet's mouth was again opened, 585, uttered during

this and the following year. Third, appendix, chaps. xl.–xlviii., a vision of the ideal theocracy with institutions which shall express and maintain the holiness of the redeemed people, 572.

First Section.—xxv.: Against Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia. xxvi.–xxviii. 19: Against Tyre for her pride of heart. xxviii. 20-26.: Against Sidon. It shall no more be a pricking briar to Israel. xxix.–xxxii.: Against Egypt. She shall no more seduce Israel from trust in Jehovah alone.

Second Section.—xxxiii. 1-20: Preface restating the office of prophet as watchman. C. xxxiii. 21-33: Account of meeting with messenger of ill-tidings from Jerusalem. This was followed by three pictures of redemption and restoration of Israel. (*a*) xxxiv. The ideal monarchy contrasted with the corrupt pre-exilic monarchy. (*b*) xxxv., xxxvi.: The land, reclaimed from Edom and newly blessed, given to Israel forever. (*c*) xxxvii.: The people now scattered like dry bones shall live anew, Ephraim and Judah under one sceptre forever. C. xxxviii.: Final assault on the kingdom of God by distant nations under Gog. The Scythian onslaught seems to be in the prophet's mind as the model for this picture.

Third Section.—xl.–xliii.: Sanctuary described; xliv.–xlvi.: Regulations governing temple—officials and ritual; xlvii.–xlviii.: The promised land delimited by miraculous river issuing from sanctuary.

The outstanding teaching of the book may be summed up in the following: First, the value of the individual and the office repentance. Second, a deep sense of the sin of ingratitude. Third, the need of a new heart to fulfil the law of God, and fourth, God vindicated as merciful and eager to forgive.

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## SUGGESTED EXERCISES FOR BIBLE CLASS WORK.

*Extending over one term (15 weeks).*

### Exercise I.—Period of Reaction.

1. Forces that culminated in Hezekiah's reformation.
2. General characteristics of Hezekiah's reformation.
3. Historical events immediately following Hezekiah.
4. Forces that made for reaction.
5. "Truth will prevail" illustrated by period.
6. Influences that prepared for a better day.

### Exercise II.—Zephaniah.

1. Indications of reform in early part of Josiah's reign.
2. Immediate occasion of Zephaniah's work.
3. Indications that he represented revival of prophetic activity.
4. The "Day of Jehovah" in Zephaniah and Amos.
5. The prophet and his book—details.
6. Characteristics and importance of Zephaniah's teaching.

### Exercise III.—Josiah's Reformation.

1. Steps that led to the reformation.
2. Josiah's reformation contrasted with Hezekiah's.
3. Functions of prophet and priest contrasted.
4. The prophetic and priestly elements in Deuteronomy.
5. Structure, authorship and date of Deuteronomy.
6. Relation of the book to the reformation.

### Exercise IV.—Deuteronomy, First and Third Discourses and Appendix.

1. Jehovah and His people.
2. Jehovah and the nations.
3. Place and character of chap. xxvii.
4. The exile reflected in third discourse.
5. History reflected in Song and Blessing of Moses.
6. Character of Moses.

### Exercise V.—Deuteronomy, Second Discourse.

1. Love to God the law of life.
2. The bread of the soul.
3. Israel's election.
4. Laws of sacrifice.
5. Idolatrous modes of seeking God.
6. God's true spokesmen—the king, the priest and the prophet.

### Exercise VI.—The Book of Deuteronomy—Teaching and Characteristics.

1. The immediate aim of the book.
2. The date and purpose of the book as a contribution to our knowledge of the character of God.
3. Summary of teaching of Deuteronomy.
4. Influence of Deuteronomy upon religion, directly.
5. Indirectly, upon the literature of the period.
6. Place of Deuteronomy in the development of Hebrew worship.

### Exercise VII.—Jeremiah the Prophet and the Man.

1. Conditions in empire in Jeremiah's youth.
2. Conditions in Judah.
3. His immediate formative influences.
4. His relation to his people and to his times.
5. The prophet, a study in dual consciousness.
6. Jeremiah and the Messiah.

### Exercise VIII.—Nahum and Habakkuk.

1. The relation of the two prophets to their times.
2. Points of similarity and dissimilarity.
3. Structure and contents of Book of Nahum.
4. The prophet's characteristic teaching and its value.
5. Structure and contents of the Book of Habakkuk.
6. Its teaching and value.

### Exercise IX.—Oracles of Jeremiah—to Jehoiachim.

1. The prophet's call.
2. The foe from the North.

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3. Jehovah and Israel under figure of husband and wife.
4. Jeremiah and Hosea.
5. Jeremiah and the reformation.
6. Jeremiah and Megiddo.

### Exercise X.—Oracles of Jeremiah—Jehoiachim to Carchemish.

1. Inviolability of the temple.
2. Jeremiah and Isaiah.
3. Characteristics of the greater or original prophets.
4. The prophet and the temple.
5. The suffering servant.
6. Jeremiah and Carchemish.

### Exercise XI.—Oracles of Jeremiah—Carchemish to First Siege.

1. Jeremiah writes his oracles.
2. Oracles against the nations.
3. Enlarged edition of the oracles.
4. Jeremiah and revolt.
5. The Divine Potter.
6. The Rechabites.

### Exercise XII.—Jeremiah's Remaining Oracles.

1. The first siege.
2. The two baskets of figs.
3. Jeremiah and the exiles.
4. Jeremiah and the false prophets.
5. The second siege.
6. The fate of the city and the prophet.

### Exercise XIII.—The Prophet Ezekiel.

1. Jewish communities during the period of the exile.
2. Condition of exiles in Babylon.
3. Ezekiel and the Deuteronomic school.
4. A literary prophet.
5. Ezekiel's characteristic teachings.
6. Ezekiel's contribution to religion.

### Exercise XIV.—Book of the Prophet Ezekiel—First Half.

1. Subject and occasion.
2. The prophet's call.
3. The prophet's methods of work.
4. An impure temple and a city's destruction.
5. Israel a charred vine.
6. Israel's destruction a necessity.

### Exercise XV.—The Book of Ezekiel—Second Half.

1. Subject and dates.
2. Oracles against the nations.
3. The watchman and the messenger of ill-tidings.
4. The new Israel.
5. The final assault on the kingdom of God.
6. The theocracy of Ezekiel and Christ's Kingdom of God compared and contrasted.

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THE INSTITUTES FOR THE EXTENSION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING IN

# Old and New Testament Literature and History

## and the History and Institutions of the Christian Church

under the Auspices of

*The Educational Society of the Methodist Church and the General S. S. and E. L. Board.*

Directed by a Committee of the General S. S. and E. L. Board.
Secretary-Treasurer of the Committee, ALFRED E. LAVELL, Waterloo, Ontario.

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## SEASON 1905-6

### OFFICIAL CENTRES

OTTAWA, Oct. 9-13, 1905.
KINGSTON, Oct. 16-20, 1905.
WOODSTOCK, Feb. 5-9, 1906.
LONDON, Feb. 12-16, 1906.
Each of these begin Monday at 8 p.m.

### INSTRUCTORS

Old Testament Literature and History—
REV. EBER CRUMMY, B.Sc., D.D.

New Testament Literature and History—
REV. A. J. IRWIN, B.A., B.D.

Church History—
REV. ALFRED E. LAVELL, B.A.

### COURSES

**Old Testament Literature and History:**

(1) The Babylonian Period—the History.
(2) The Babylonian Period—the Literature.

**New Testament Literature and History:**

(1) The Jewish Church.
(2) St. Paul and his letter to the Galatians.

**Church History and Institutions:**

(1) Mediæval Revivals.
(2) The Sunday School Teacher.

A valuable copyright Syllabus of the courses in each department, interleaved for notes and with map (free to Members), may be obtained from the Secretary for 10 cents. A set of three for 25 cents, postpaid. The complete set of last year's courses may be obtained for 15 cents, postpaid.

### TIME TABLE

10 a.m. to 11 a.m.—Course No 3.
11 a.m. to 12 a.m.—Course No. 2.
3 p.m. to 4 p.m.—Course No. 3.
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.—Course No. 1.
8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.—Courses Nos. 1 and 2

Discussion and questions by members invited at all sessions.

### MEMBERSHIP

Everyone, whether Member or not, is welcome to attend the sessions of the Institute without charge.

No collections or subscriptions are taken.

Membership is open to everyone.

The only literary qualification is ability to read, and honest desire to learn.

The annual Membership Fee is $1.00. This is the only source of revenue. It gives to each Member all the privileges of this University Extension work—

(1) The copyright Syllabi of the Courses.
(2) The opportunity of question and discussion at the sessions of the Institute
(3) If desired, correspondence with the Instructors upon the Courses during the year, exercises, and examination.
(4) The satisfaction of supporting this movement financially by payment of the annual fee.

No opportunity equal to this is to be found anywhere else.

Every Sunday School Teacher, Member of Young People's Society, Church Official, Church Worker, Church Member, Seeker after Truth, should take advantage of it.

At each Institute there will be an exhibit illustrating the scope and work of every Department of the Methodist Church. This will be an educational feature well worth taking in.

# THE POPULARIZATION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND HISTORY, AND THE HISTORY AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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**Do the people need instruction in these subjects?**
**What agencies seek to give this instruction?**
**Could our Colleges make these agencies more efficient?**
**Does this work really belong to the Colleges?**

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## I. Do the People Need Instruction in These Subjects?

### *Bible and Church.*

A word as to the linking of these two subjects together. Always putting the Scriptures first, and as the essential base; a knowledge of the history of the Church, to the effective member of the Church, stands to the former somewhat as applied mathematics does to pure mathematics in the training of a civil engineer, and has the same effect upon him as the study of history has upon the student of philosophy. The hand of the same living God who did the deeds recorded in the Scriptures built the Christian Church and is building it now.

Since the Church of the present faces the same fundamental problems as the Church of the past in the application of the principles of the Gospel to the world, how can we efficiently do our work to-day and properly cope with the practical problems of the present, no matter how exact our knowledge of Scripture, unless we have some intelligent grasp of the mistakes, the successes, the defeats, and the victories, the methods, defects, and experiments of the fathers. Given a knowledge of Scripture, the necessity for a knowledge of the Church's history follows inevitably, and is an essential condition to progress.

This has not always been held, but in proportion as this knowledge has been lacking in those in control of the Church, who will say that the Church has not lost tremendously? And in these democratic times the people increasingly control the Church. Is knowledge of Scripture and Church History by the people not imperative, then, and its neglect more fraught with danger than ever?

*Vital and Accurate Knowledge of these Essential to an Intelligent and Stable Faith.*

The knowledge of these two subjects is essential to an intelligent and stable faith. An unintelligent faith is a very unstable affair. The progress of the Church has ever been due to men who have desired a more intelligent and rational religion. The most troublesome heresies, on the other hand, which have retarded the progress of dogma, have been those resulting from lack of knowledge or intelligence, and as in the past, so in the present.

How is it that our people, often good, sincere people, leave the Church of their fathers, and bow the knee to the high prophetess of Christian Science, or flock to the temple of the second Elijah in Chicago, or are convinced by the involved logic of the Antinomian, or the highly Scriptural and detailed facts, figures, and glittering generalities of the pre-millennialist? Many an attractive and manifestly earnest teacher of the Bible may teach the most irrational theories and dogmas, and proceed on the most unscientific methods and the most unwarranted and unsupported assumption, and yet if he be clever, well-intentioned, and especially if heralded as "undenominational," many good people, innocently thinking that all Bible teaching—especially of a certain sort—must be true, take him as the exponent of final and absolute truth. "A little learning is a dangerous thing," and their very little learning, often superficial and undigested, has been a too great danger to them? They have lacked an intelligent faith, and were ready to be carried away by any wind of doctrine.

*Let Knowledge Grow.*

And in these days we cannot curb knowledge. Our only course, then, as a Church, is to "let knowledge grow from more to more," and answer our prayers by changing the dangerously little knowledge and many false conceptions of our people re-

arding our Scriptures and the Church into an adequate knowledge and an intelligent faith, as of those who have been persuaded. And then, upon a membership who, in proportion to capacity, have been reasonably convinced upon the basis of sound knowledge, the Church can build without fear in the midst of all sorts of abnormal conditions.

### *Are we Protestants?*

The Roman Catholic does not have our problem. He can take the other road, and hold his people back—a hard matter—from prying too closely into either Scripture or the Church's history and institutions. I have met some Protestants, some Methodists, who quite unconsciously took up this same thoroughgoing Roman Catholic position. Let us remember that liberty, knowledge, and progress are three essential planks of Protestantism. They are essential planks, and this being so, surely the progress of the Protestant Churches, instead of being smaller is rather far greater than could have been expected in the light of our appalling ignorance. Can we wonder that we have not done more, that we have been so often in error, that we have been so often timid, so often over-rigid, so blind to opportunity?

### *Vital and Accurate Knowledge of these Essential to the Success of Christian Missions.*

The knowledge of these things gives us, too, our only basis for the proper understanding and support of missions. Appeals for missions are ineffective in proportion as the people lack either knowledge of the Scriptures or of the history of the expansion of the kingdom of Christ. Arguments based on loyalty to "the Church," or upon a few general principles or particular texts may bring some response, but this response is neither adequate nor permanent. But given the spiritual life resulting from an intelligent, vital and consecrated study of the Scriptures, and a knowledge of the facts, of the problems, and battles and triumphs of the Church in the past, and one has only to add to that a knowledge of present conditions and needs to bring forth an adequate response, a response which will be made whenever needed, because it is the result of intelligent conviction based upon knowledge.

*Facts, the Fuel of Missions.*

A word of caution should be added here. Facts, it is said, are the fuel of missions. There is certainly much truth in this, but two modifications should be noted in the statement. The facts for the best fire are not all modern or recent facts, nor are they facts, by any means, which all have an easily seen bearing upon the task facing the present firing line in the Church's advance. Then, too, the facts are not the fire. The most convincing and clearest statement of facts, the most exhaustive and logical array of the world's needs are only effective in proportion to the spiritual life in the person hearing them. If the spirit of devotion, of service, of Christ, be there, then in proportion to its presence will the facts draw action. And, as we shall notice in a moment, there is nothing which takes the place of the earnest, open, vital study of the Bible in arousing and developing spiritual life, and on this the cause of missions is essentially based.

*Vital and Accurate Knowledge of These Subjects by the People, Essential to Church Union and All Other Such Movements.*

Again, without a proper knowledge of these two subjects by the people how can we ever hope for a lasting union of any of the denominations now composing the visible Church of Christ?

Church leaders may come together and negotiate union with the very best intent, but without the seal of the intelligent, popular conviction of the bodies concerned, based upon a deep and sympathetic knowledge of Scripture and Church, the cat tied to the dog gives a truer picture of peace.

But with the spread of a true conception and knowledge of Scripture and biblical theology (no dry thing) by our people, and with the study by the best of the membership of all the churches, of the great trends and periods and men of the whole Church, what would be the inevitable result but a gradual coming together and uniting of the various sections of the Christian Church? No power on earth, if they be Christian, could hold them apart. They would find not merely a basis of union, but a wise and rational basis, and of a lasting union.

*Vital and Accurate Knowledge of These Subjects by the People the Essential Basis for Real Revival of True Religion.*

Nay, may we not go farther and deeper and say that a sane, scientific, clear, sympathetic knowledge of the Scriptures by the people, not merely the ministry, is essential for a true revival

in the Church; and the knowledge of the Church's history is essential if this spiritual power thus gained is to be used most effectively for the furtherance of the kingdom. Many earnest Christian people in every age, whose spirituality could not be questioned, have learned, all too late, lessons from their own mistakes, which they should have learned from those of their fathers, and have failed to grasp the meaning of their times or to use them to advantage, because they knew not the history of the Church and how its present had come from its past.

But first must come revival of spiritual life, and the basis of this is not hard to find. Whence have come the greatest revivals of history? Whence came the revival of the last fifty years of the first century? The publishing of the good tidings of Jesus and His teachings, the "examining of the Scriptures whether these things were so," the teaching, the "disputing daily," the faithful and painful searching for the truth with mind and heart; these led the true leaders of that great age to the intelligent conviction in spite of prejudice, formalism and immorality that here was the Truth, and this vital, rational, enthusiastic faith of the people, based on knowledge and experience, expressed in humble but mighty service, was the great revival. Whence came the Protestant Reformation? At the basis of that great outburst there lies the Renaissance. The New Learning, as it came up through Italy and Europe; the study of the Greek, especially by students anxious to know; the study of the Greek Scriptures; the thoughtful comparison of the things that exist with the things they found, according to the Scriptures, ought to be; all these led directly to the Reformation.

Earnest literary study, by men who in ignorance thirsted for knowledge, when directed to the best literature, resulted in ideals which burst the bonds of tradition and custom and smug contentment and churchly pretension and moral death.

And that which has been shall be again. Surely there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that this marvellous popular thirsting after knowledge that we see to-day, this desire of the people to investigate Bible and Church, if it be but directed in the right way, will result, and at no great distance of time, in the most glorious and substantial revival of spiritual life and high ethical and godly principles of conduct that the Church has yet seen.

### *But is Not This a Dangerous Step?*

Of course, there will always be those who, with a touch of cynicism and pessimism, pronounce the popularization of knowledge

ledge to be impossible. They point out the dangers. People may get wrong views. They have them now; and anyway, is it not far preferable to see the people with erroneous views resulting from a real thirst for knowledge which that same continued thirst would correct, than have them with no ideas of their own whatever? The dangers of an attempt to acquire knowledge are far to be preferred to the safety of a contented ignorance. It was the holding of the reverse of this which well nigh suffocated the Church in the Dark Ages.

### *And Will It Not Mean Superficiality?*

There is one danger, however, in the popularization of knowledge which must be noted, that of superficiality, which, of course, goes hand-in-hand with narrow dogmatism. This is all the worse when linked with earnestness. But to assert that the attempt to popularize Bible or other study is to be necessarily superficial is, I think, to show great ignorance of the problem. Let us understand our terms. If you mean by the popularization of any study that everybody is to be certainly and at once aroused, instructed and inspired, then the thing is practically impossible, and to succeed is to but reach a shallow mediocrity.

But by popularization of study I mean the bringing of opportunity attractively, inspiringly and comprehensively to every one who desires knowledge and whose desire to know is sufficiently strong that he will make a reasonable effort to acquire.

And there are many of our workers—and these our best—who would make use of opportunities of knowledge which it would be useless to expect the majority of our people to appreciate. There are a few of these in every social grade, in country and in city, in every church, whom no earthly wisdom could select from the general crowd, but who would gladly come forward to make use of an opportunity for the literary and historical study of the English Bible and the history of the Church and the discussion of living, present topics arising from this.

### *The Saving Remnant.*

The remnant is the salvation of the people now as in old Hebrew days. But we are apt to think this remnant too small and to be content with too low a standard. You say most people do not seriously wish to know? I answer that a great

many people do wish to know, and these are of the salt of the Church. They read; they think; they puzzle over problems of Scriptures, of dogma, of the relations of the churches, of the reason for this or that. They are not sheep to be led. They are so comparatively few in each church, and are so often misunderstood, that the pastors, with their regular work, and for other reasons, pay little attention to them. The only way to get this remnant, larger than it seems to be, these our people—young men and women especially—who are puzzling and wondering and thinking, focussed for the best work, is by taking them seriously.

It is to reach this class of people, this large class, large in the aggregate, who will be found among our brightest workers or among those who might be such, that we should bend our energies.

*Let us Take the People Seriously.*

Let us take them seriously. Do we believe in the intrinsic merit of the Scriptures? Surely we do, and look upon it as the Church's first business to open them to the people. The historical and literary work that has been applied to the Scriptures in the last quarter century, together with the archæological investigations, have combined to give the Church an opportunity to this end which she has never before possessed.

As I have said, so far as the study of the Scriptures and the history of the Church is concerned, I would pay little direct attention to those who manifestly have no desire to know more or whose desire is simply for varnish. There is surely a large enough number who do not desire superficial but real knowledge. I would have the Church reach to even the humblest and most ignorant of these. I would take him seriously. If he reject or neglect it, the responsibility is upon him, not upon the Church (where it rests now), whose business is to publish and teach the good tidings to all.

*To Sum Up.*

If it be desirable that all read the Bible, it is just as desirable that all read it intelligently.

The incorrect interpretation and the misunderstanding of the Bible are a great hindrance to the advance of the Kingdom of God in the world to-day. They make many earnest people fanatics. They make many intelligent people put the Bible aside, the more devout revering but not reading it, the less devout doubting and not reading it.

Some people—to put it with extreme caution—in every community, are searching, consciously or unconsciously, for a reasonable faith, and their number increases with the growth of knowledge.

The intelligent study of the Bible is one of the surest and safest paths to a reasonable faith, and the careful study of the history and institutions of the Church is essential to the working out of that faith in the most effective Christian service.

The Christian Church, as the exponent of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, should put forth every effort to attract human souls to this quest, and to assist those on this quest, and to these ends it should in every possible way strive to bring about the open-minded, God-fearing, truth-loving, intelligent study of the Bible and Church by all.

## II. What Agencies Seek to Give this Instruction?

It is impossible to speak of all, but among the many agencies seeking to give instruction in these subjects directly to the people, let the two greatest be mentioned, the Pastor and the Sunday School. But in working to this end these have at present certain great limitations.

### *The Pastor.*

The Pastor who most zealously endeavors to effectively do the work is the one most conscious of these limitations. His work, with its vast object, the salvation of men, is many-sided. He more than any layman can appreciate, sees his task loom so large, feels the claims, the pressure, the important and urgent call of so many interests, each of which has some part to play in the working out of the programme of Jesus, that he cries with Jeremiah, "Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot." He feels at times as would a farmer who was set to work a thousand-acre farm single-handed. This work of instruction may be supremely important, but so are the other tasks before him. Then, too, his talents, temperament and training may lead him to naturally emphasize other features of the great work, and since he sees that apparently but few are interested in this he may largely neglect it. Even in his preaching the demands of his heterogeneous congregation limit him often in his attempts to do solid work in this direction. Finally, the multifarious calls upon him at all hours and on all hands strongly, and sometimes success-

fully, tempt him away from close study; and if he study not, he grows not, and if so, how can he teach?

### *The Sunday School.*

The Sunday School is the greatest department of the Church. Its aim frankly is to carry out the principles we have laid down. Its staff of teachers and officers is composed of all sorts and conditions of men and women with this one thing in common. They desire to help in the good work. Sometimes with a very strong and intelligent desire, sometimes with a very weak and inadequate one; sometimes with a clear perception of what is implied in the aim of the Sunday School, sometimes quite ignorant, sometimes quite careless or half-hearted concerning these. One dare not make too sweeping a statement in the face of great work done, but that generally the staff is handicapped by lack of knowledge and training, and lack of real opportunity to gain these, will be most quickly acknowledged by the best workers.

### *Literature.*

The work of both Pastor and Sunday School is inestimably assisted by books and other literature. Some think that if these were taken sufficient advantage of, these two agencies could do complete work. The fact remains, however, that in spite of the immense quantity of helpful literature, the point has not at all been attained; and for many reasons. Books are good, bad, and indifferent, and sometimes, through advertising, the two last are placed more prominently before the people than the first. They cannot read all the books alleged to be worth while. What are they to read? And, after all, books, though great, are not all (even though grouped in excellent "reading courses"), or if so, where is the need of schools and colleges? Direction and discussion and the personal individual touch are needed.

### *Denominational Assemblies.*

Conventions are, and will be, of much value. Their natural tendency and possibly their greatest value is, however, to deal mainly with methods and thereupon to have discussion among the members with little outside expert direction. Summer and winter "schools" are a laudable attempt to make the "convention" count for more and to induce study, especially of the facts

concerning modern missions, and some Bible study with this end in view. No summer schools (because of the season), however, can give at all complete and satisfactory answer to the problem raised. The "winter schools" promise much more and the plan outlined below contains all the most proven and successful features of these schools.

*The Interdenominational Convention.*

This has some of the best features of the denominational convention and some others added, but the inevitable limitation of the interdenominational convention is that compromise must necessarily shut out all theological and biblical subjects which might offend denominational susceptibilities; and the officers and speakers generally, no matter how excellent, feel constrained to be so guarded and politic as to be colorless on many really vital matters.

## III. Could Our Colleges Make These Agencies More Efficient?

Among other agencies in the Church which have the same high aim as controls the Sunday-School is the Theological College. Free, revered, independent, cautious, progressive, scientific, handicapped by none of the limitations of the Sunday School, it stands out pre-eminently for the accurate, reasonable and vital instruction of the people in knowledge scriptural and ecclesiastical.

This it accomplishes largely through the ministry who have in its halls been educated for this work. In other words, it has to do its work indirectly and through an agency handicapped, as we have noted above. This is the one grand limitation of the College.

If all could come to it, it could reach all directly; but to attend it means a sacrifice of time, an expenditure of money, a journey, which, to the great majority of people, make attendance an absolute impossibility.

Here, then, is the College with all its strength and possibilities of helpfulness; yonder are most of the people and most of its allies in sore need of its assistance; between them is a great gulf. Is there no way of bridging this? Is there no way by which the College could at least to some extent come into closer

touch with the people outside its present direct reach, the ministry after college attendance is past, the Sunday School and other workers and students of the Church, all the seekers after an intelligent faith, to the end of better progress in the advance of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ?

*What can the College do for the Pastor in this direction?*

But even supposing there were, you ask, what could the College do for the ministry? A thought as to what the College is should make answer to this unnecessary. It could help far more directly than it does to keep the minister a student after he leaves College. It could help him keep in touch with the literature, movements, thought and methods, which would give him greatest effectiveness in his great work. By direct work done among those of his congregation who would appreciate the opportunity, the College would assist the pastor to do or arrange for the accomplishment of a work which he now finds, for reasons given above, largely out of his reach.

*What for the Sunday School?*

What could the College do for the Sunday School? The two institutions have the same fundamental aim. One is handicapped by lack of efficiency, but is directly in touch with the people, the other is efficient in men and equipment, but is out of the reach of most of the people. If one could be brought into co-operation with the other the College could certainly aid the teachers and officers of the Sunday School to greater efficiency and at the same time the Sunday School—or better, this together with the full Quarterly Board—supplies the local means through which the work now outside the reach of the college could be carried on.

*Methods and Matter.*

The College should be able to increase the effectiveness of all our local educational agencies in regard to methods. It should do more. The trouble lies not so much in the *how*, but in the *what*. If our Sunday School and other workers had intelligent knowledge of the Bible, loving it with all their mind as well as all their heart, there would be an enthusiasm for the teaching of it which is often sadly lacking now, and which would speedily mean a demand for and a gaining of the best methods of pre-

sentation. The College cannot change elm to maple. It cannot give brains or a new heart even to those attending its classes at headquarters, much less can it do this by any machinery to those outside. But in proportion as it comes into touch helpfully and vitally with souls desiring knowledge it should be able to inestimably increase their enthusiasm, interest and effectiveness in the spread of the kingdom of God.

### *The University Extension Movement.*

Based on a belief in the wisdom and feasibility of extending the culture of the university to those outside as well as inside the college walls, the University Extension Movement has had its rise, and for a quarter of a century in Europe and America, has made its way. It has taken various forms adapted to various situations. Its essential difficulties have been as follows:

### *Difficulties Great.*

1. The short time in which instructor and pupil meet, the inadequate time for study, and the brevity of the courses, which have necessarily to be short and simply arranged in order to attract the busy yet worth-while citizen.

2. The small percentage of people which the study of subjects like English literature, music, history, etc., appeals to in any one community, and consequently the difficulties of organizing a "centre" in any place for a course of lectures. Subjects in which the people will take an adequate interest, and instructors capable of attracting, interesting and instructing, are the two strategic points in all University extension work, and it is no easy task to secure them.

3. The cost, especially in the absence of endowment, or when the work is not definitely connected with a University.

4. Correspondence has given valuable assistance, and where this is relied on *solely* the absence of the personal meeting of the instructor and pupil face to face for question and explanation constitutes a grave defect.

### *A Great Success, Nevertheless.*

These are great difficulties, but in spite of them the movement has had, on the whole, wonderful success and has shown great stability. This is largely because of the fundamental truth upon

which it is founded, and the wisdom, energy and faith of its promoters, and it has been proven that the culture of the University is desired by the people in sufficient numbers to make it possible and worth while to give it to them.

*Can this Method be Applied to the Solution of Our Problem?*

The Institutes being held at Ottawa, Kingston, Woodstock and London, under the auspices of the General E. L. and S. S. Board and the Educational Society of the Methodist Church are an experiment to see whether the *proven* results of this University work cannot be applied to the problem of encouraging the spread of the knowledge of the Scriptures and the Church among the people. There is no reason to doubt the complete success of the experiment in all essential features, and this being so, its application is possible on a very wide scale. If the staffs of our colleges were sufficiently large to permit some of them to be available at all times through the season to conduct University Extension Institute work for the study of Bible and Church, there is every reason to believe that the movement thus applied would be a success in every way.

*The Difficulties.*

The University Extension Movement where rightly carried on is a success in spite of the difficulties. Most of these difficulties do not exist when the idea is applied to the question in hand. Of course, the first does and must exist, the time is short and the courses must be brief. But life, too, is short, and all courses of study are relatively brief; yet there is time for much excellent and permanent work to be done.

A number of short courses make one longer course. It is a case of doing the best we can, and we can really do no small thing. THE OTHER DIFFICULTIES DO NOT HERE EXIST. The "centres" are already there—the churches, their Quarterly Boards and Sunday Schools. The subjects are of fundamental interest to all —no fanatic's narrow and futile dream, no transient value. Every church member ought to be interested. Ten per cent of these surely ought to be heartily and actively in sympathy, and would make it well worth while to church and college to undertake the work.

*Financial.*

Even less than this small percentage paying an annual fee of one dollar solves the financial problem of having every year in

each district at least an institute or other arrangement for courses of lectures, etc., in which the correspondence or independent work of the year could centre. Whether it would completely pay its way is, of course, open to doubt, but it would come more nearly doing this than does any other department of College work.

*Distinctive Features.*

Attractive courses, short enough to attract even those who humbly stand in most fearsome awe of "University work," with printed syllabus of each, other literature, correspondence where necessary, with added features of the personal meeting of instructors and pupils for helpful question and discussion, and all at a minimum cost and within the intellectual reach of the humblest reader who desires knowledge, as well as stimulating and helpful to men and women of scholarship, the instruction being brought to the very doors of the people, and the instructors being professors or lecturers of the regular College staff. These are the prominent features of the University Extension Movement as applied to the problem in hand.

## IV. Does this Work Really Belong to the College?

That it is desirable for the College to serve the people through the Sunday School and Quarterly Board, as representing the whole Church, has been proven above; that it is a feasible proposition has now also been demonstrated. All that is necessary now is the co-operation of the substantial "saving remnant" of the people who desire knowledge that they may have a reasonable faith, and that they may be effective servants of Christ, with the College. The advantage to the people and Church would be inestimable. So, also, the advantage to the College. To systematically bring out the College staff into touch with the rank and file church-worker would have a broadening and healthy effect on all concerned. But is it possible that though the people might be willing the College might not? This surely need not be considered. The ideal, as expressed some time ago by Principal Gordon, is that of the true University.

"There is a certain type that some regard as the perfect product of University life and training, the man who is well informed, but exclusive, critical, reserved, oracular, a conciously superior person. But, instead of aiming at producing this kind of scholar, is it not rather the true aim of the University to stretch out its hand to the representatives of many classes, to help them climb

the heights from whence they can get clearer, truer views of life and its manifold interests, to lead them along lines where they shall find their own life unfolding into greater fulness and perfection to fit them for larger and ever-increasing service to their fellows? The production of a narrow and exclusive circle of scholars is not the main achievement of the University; rather it is the wider extension of learning, the broadening of intellectual privilege, the enrichment of the nation at every point at which, by means of its great variety of students, it can reach the life of the people. The University recognizes that true wisdom does not sit solitary, that she is not exclusive, cut off in fancied superiority from fellow men, but that she 'rejoices in the habitable parts of the earth and her delights are with the sons of men.'"

*University Extension Preceded the University.*

It is worth while, too, to note that the great modern universities of Europe had their birth in just such work. What would now be called University Extension work—and that, too, in the theological realm—was the seed from which sprang the University. Wherever the wandering scholar-teacher taught, there was the College. The University has, no doubt, developed far beyond the dream of these scholars, but let it not forget its humble, precarious and daring beginning — to put learning *within reach* of all who sought it.

There is the same need now as ever. In some way the attempt ought to be made to meet it. This method seems to be feasible through existing agencies and to the great betterment of these agencies. It is the noblest task to which our Colleges can turn their energies, not to the neglect of their present work, the direct inspiration and instruction of the few for the sake of the many—but rather for its more efficient accomplishment. The present method of reaching the people is indirect, let them also take the direct method. There is no clashing between the two. There would be much mutual advantage and far better accomplishment of the fundamental task of the College.

*The College Alone can Cope with the Problem.*

The work proposed does not call unnecessarily upon the College as the only power which can properly cope with it.

It is a strange idea that though it takes experts to teach students at college, any one can teach "the people." Strange fallacy.

If by the people we mean those of the great mass who, though never able to come within sight of a College building, desire better knowledge of things relating to our faith and Church, I say that the very best instructors we have are none too good. I do not mean to throw books of philosophy and syntax at them, but let our ablest educators tax their best energies to satisfy these people. They will never find higher or more fruitful work.

Let our ministry do this. Let the Department of Homiletics in our colleges be understood to include the training to teach. And, then, perhaps, through some such scheme as we have outlined, we may do some work on a large scale through our conferences, through short courses in English Bible and Church history and institutions, with printed outlines, conducted by the best instructors, who will be able to offer our people, including our ministers—and the best of these would most quickly take advantage of the opportunity—instruction in the Bible and the records of the Church as high and effective as our young people can now get in any of our educational institutions in Shakespeare or in ancient history.

Three or four days' meeting of instructors and students is a very short time. But let us not think it so short as to be ineffective. So far as we can gather from past experience in partly similar work, the proposed institute will be surprisingly effective.

But will it pay its way? You do not ask that question of our colleges. If so, they would stand condemned at once. It is utterly aside to argue against such an educational proposal on such grounds. But, if we can get even five per cent. of our membership—which hardly equals half our Sunday School teachers alone—to take the matter up, the plan will pay its way.

This scheme is only a small part of the great work of the popularization of the study of the English Bible, and the Church's history and institutions. But it may do great things. It adds no machinery. It increases the output and efficiency of present machinery. It is on safer financial basis—more nearly self-supporting—than any other educational scheme of the Church. It deals with no transient subjects, but the most fundamental. It duplicates no other existing machinery. It takes the people seriously. It is being begun on but a small scale and will grow as its effectiveness and value are seen.

Some points in it may need to be modified, but it has no feature which has not in practical working elsewhere been proven a success. The only experiment is the combination, but

the fundamental success of this is a foregone conclusion. It goes on the assumption that the growth of knowledge through the public school and similar agencies have made certain problems of church and Sunday School so great as to demand an immediate answer. This is one among many answers, some in harmony, some out of harmony with it. God alone can rightly weigh and sanction them. "We see dimly in the present what is small and what is great," but all that has been written and proven above makes us believe that beyond doubt this movement is sanctioned of God, and that the work it will accomplish for the advance of the Kingdom of our Lord and Master is incalculable.

### *Other Effects.*

Without doubt such University extension work in the world would have many other beneficial effects.

Certainly it would be an ADVERTISEMENT of the colleges doing such work and advertisement of the very best kind. If their influence be extended for good, the consciousness of good received by the people will gain for them the interest and sympathy of the people financial and otherwise.

INCREASED ATTENDANCE may ensue. There are doubtless many who have financial ability and time to take at least some extended work in College or to send othres, but who have no real knowledge of what the College is. A taste of this as given in these University extension courses may easily mean the attraction of many to a College course.

THE AUGMENTING OF THE NUMBER OF THOSE OFFERING THEMSELVES FOR THE MINISTRY may easily be the direct result of this work. Men designed by God for the ministry are sometimes, because of inadequate knowledge and the misunderstanding of the facts, lost to this service, and their gifts are used in other less effective directions. This University extension work, with its large outlook on Church and Bible and Gospel, its grasp of problems, its reasonableness, its culture combined with its deep spirituality and intense Christian enthusiasm, is sure not only to arouse the laity to better service as laymen, but also to bring not a few to the consecration of their lives to the glorious toil of the Christian ministry.

A. E. L.