

# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 29.]

OCTOBER, 1895.

[No. 10.

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

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VOL. XXIX.]

OCTOBER, 1895.

[No. 10.]

## I Shall Not Pass Again This Way.

The bread that bringeth strength I want to give,  
The water pure that bids the thirsty live;  
I want to help the fainting day by day,  
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

I want to give the oil of joy for tears,  
The faith to conquer crowding doubts and fears,  
Beauty for ashes may I give away,  
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

I want to give good measure running o'er,  
And into angry hearts I want to pour  
The answer soft that turneth wrath away.  
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

I want to give to others hope and faith;  
I want to do all that the Master saith;  
I want to live aright from day to day,  
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

—Author Unknown.

## "Here a Little, and There a Little."

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

AVOID sermonizing. Be willing to leave some things unsaid. Let the grown-up young people especially draw some of their own conclusions. "Don't drive a nail till you split the shingle." Better one earnest sentence carefully prepared than ten minutes of trite moralizing.

Some years ago there was a professor in Brown University who coveted for Christ and the Church a young man named Malcolm. He said to him one day as they parted, "My friend, make one honest effort for your soul's

salvation." He said this impressively, and went away. The student retired to his room with those words ringing in his ears, "Make one honest effort." He could not forget them. He resolved to try the advice. He was saved, and became a successful minister, through whose labors hundreds were saved.

An active Christian said to a friend, "I never can forget that single word which was once whispered to me in a prayer-meeting."

"What word was it?"

"The word 'eternity.' An associate who was anxious for my soul came up to my pew and simply whispered 'eternity' in my ear with solemn tenderness, and left me. That word drove me to the cross."

A young student in a famous Italian university came to Philip de Neri to tell him of his plans and ambitions. Philip said, "When you finish your studies, what will you do?"

"Take my doctor's degree."

"And then?" asked Philip.

"I shall attract attention with my learning and eloquence."

"And then?" persisted Philip.

"I shall be promoted to some high office and make money and grow rich."

"And then?" repeated Philip.

"I shall enjoy life."

"And then?" demanded Philip.

"And then—then, I suppose—why, I suppose I must die."

Philip looked at him earnestly, and said:

"What then?"

The young man could not answer. He was his own accuser. Two words had shown him his destiny.

The time for class study grows brief as other interests increase, and you must study to be terse if you want to impress the truth. One sentence may accomplish what a sermon would not.

Is there not significance in Paul's advice to Timothy about "rightly dividing the word of truth?"

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## Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1895.

### Suggestions to Sunday-school Teachers.

1. *As to the school.* Be prompt in attendance; then your scholars will be more likely to be so. Fill ranks at the opening exercises, promote devout interest.

Don't be absent without securing a substitute; if you cannot get one, notify the superintendent in time.

Attend every teachers' meeting. Cheerfully bear your part of the responsibility in planning for the good of the whole school.

2. *As to the study of the lesson.* Find out all you can about the particular book in the Bible from which the lesson is taken. Learn its author, the circumstances in which it was written, its general purpose and main divisions; keep in view the relation of each lesson to the whole book.

Begin to study early in the week. There must be time to become familiar with the passage. Read it in both Authorized and Revised Versions over and over. Look up the references. Consider the meaning and difficulties. Think for yourself as well as study the "helps." Consider the points applying to your own class, and how to enforce them in an interesting way.

The subject ought to be growing in your mind all the week. It will if you try to have it so.

Own a good reference Bible. Use the same one constantly. Own also, if possible, a concordance and a Bible dictionary, and use them.

Pray for the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to His Disciples: "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Try to cultivate a devout and earnest spirit. Live near to Christ yourself, that you may speak from an earnest heart. Remember your scholars at the Throne of Grace.

3. *As to the class.* Know each one as familiarly as possible. You cannot do this without calling on them. Know their occupations, surroundings, temptations; win their confidence.

Speak to each one occasionally on the subject of religion. Don't do this in the presence of others, but alone. Draw out the thoughts, the desires and longings of their hearts, and, if possible, pray with the one with whom you speak. Try thus to reap as well as sow.

Consider whether your own example day by day is such as to uphold before them the importance and value of religion. Actions often speak louder than words.

If a scholar is absent more than one Sunday, find out the reason. Go after such more than once if necessary. Win the absent one back by love and perseverance. If you find that irregular ones would prefer to be in another class, don't be sensitive about it. Cheerfully introduce them to the teacher or class they would probably like, and get others in their places. Each teacher has his own adaptation. Sometimes scholars outgrow the class they are in, or have preferences which it is well to gratify.

Constantly invite your scholars to attend the other means of grace. The Sunday-school is not a substitute for listening to preaching or for attendance on the prayer-meeting. See that they have seats shown them in church. If necessary, and if you can, invite them to your own pew. Be the pastor's helper in this way, and tell him of all cases of especial interest.

4. *As to the teaching.* Insist upon order and attention. Study to get these first of all. Don't go on without them. Cultivate tact, skill, winsomeness, patience.

Hasten to the main points of the lesson. Try to give a comprehensive view of them; but if one seems especially practical for your class, don't hesitate to dwell on it, even if you must therefore slight something else. Emphasize something to be remembered.

Don't bring "lesson helps" into the class. It looks as if you had not made careful preparation. Use the Bible, and teach the class to use it always. Bring a memorandum on paper, if you wish, of points to be noted, but never the "lesson helps."

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Don't let any part of the hour go to waste. Careful study beforehand will generally make it too short; but if there is time left, use it for religious and practical advice. Help to make the closing exercises earnest and impressive to your class. You may be giving to some of them all the religious instruction they will get for a week.

Don't let your teaching run into a mere expository lecture. Get the scholars to express their own thoughts. Draw them out; encourage conversation. Give each one something to look up in the next Sunday's lesson; then be sure to call for it.

Induce your scholars, if possible, to commit to memory the most striking verses in each lesson. Do it yourself. Call frequently for the repeating of these. It is storing up truth and enriching the mind.

Finally, be of good cheer. Let the scholars see that the Scriptures are to yourself a joy and comfort. Be hopeful of practical results. Look for them, but do not be discouraged if they do not at once appear. "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Lay this in your Bible. —Henry F. Colby, D.D.

## How She Filled the Old School-house.

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

"If"—

Annie Burton uttered this word and stopped. She said it while halting in a rough country road, facing the vast, restless ocean that tumbled along the shore. Her thoughts had not the least connection with that ocean, but with a little building behind her, a building shaped like a square box. It had one red, ragged chimney that projected from its roof. There was a stout wood-pile at one side of this box. In that school-box Annie Burton was the young teacher. She was at the head of the educational interests of this fishing village, known as "Deestric No. Three." The teacher was now at work on a problem. Because the ocean itself was a kind of imperfectly solved problem, a mystery partially known, she faced the sea as if seeking sympathy.

She said again, "If"—, and then completed the sentence forming in her thoughts,— "If I could have a Sunday-school I think it would be a good thing for the village."

But how get a Sunday-school?

"Well," she said resolutely, moving off toward her boarding-house, "the way seems hedged up, but one way to do a thing is to begin, and I'll begin."

When she invited her scholars to meet in the school-house Sunday afternoon, they stared at her and then smiled good-naturedly. Behind her back the most of them made fun of the project. Six came on Sunday.

"I will form a class of young ladies if they will come," she announced.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Samantha Tutherley, when she heard of it. "Ketch me a-join'!"

That settled it. Samantha, a loud-talking, boisterous girl, was a leader among her mates. The teacher in that rough education-box near the road that skirted the sea was disheartened.

"I'll go to see somebody wiser than I am," was her sensible resolution. She trudged off to see the old minister at the Centre, three miles away, Father Harris, a kind of Saint John in his spirit, rather slow in his methods, but his judgments had value.

"What have you done?" he inquired.

"Oh, I have begun," she replied.

"That is good, Miss Burton. 'A thing begun is half done,' you know the saying runs."

"But it ought not to stay half done, and I am sure I invited my scholars cordially enough to have them all there."

"Only gave an invitation in school? Then you believe in fishing at a distance."

"What, sir?"

"Why, you stood off, as the fishermen say, too far, and threw your line. Why didn't you—"

"Go round to the houses?"

"That's it. Take the line into their homes. You want the fathers and mothers to take hold of that line, though you only expect children in your school. There is a good deal in having a warm home-interest to back up your efforts."

"I see; I made a mistake."

"That is hopeful," thought Father Harris. "Next to mending a mistake comes the allowance that a mistake has been made."

"Have you any teachers?" he asked.

"I thought I would get up my classes first," she replied.

"Classes first? Yes, but it might help very much if it were known who your wife, though. There is a woman, Jones Harly's wife, that would make an excellent teacher. You get her and it would draw scholars," suggested the minister.

"I see. It would tote the fish into the net, as the fishermen say. I will speak to her. I thought if I could get up a class of the older girls"—

"Then you get Samantha Tutherley."

"Ah—she won't come near us."

"I was thinking if you got Samantha you might get her melodeon sometimes."

"Oh," said the young woman, enthusiastically clapping her hands, her brown eyes flashing out their magnetic sparks; "if—if I could get what the children call the 'organ' and do so admire!"

"Yes, children like to be interested; they like to be drawn by an attraction."

"But how can I draw that big girl and her melodeon across the road from her home to the school-house?"

"I don't know, but you must watch opportunities and wait. I have lived long enough to see that where God has a work for any one—and I think He has such for you—we must wait patiently and He will bring things about."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"I know so. One reason why we are in this world is to show that God has His plans, that we and other people are parts of them. God is working. He will make opportunities, and we must watch and step in as He opens a door."

After this interview with Father Harris, the Sunday-school effort, pushed along lines he had indicated, was more successful.

But there was that Samantha Tutherley! She was a big blocking boulder lying across these lines, and it seemed as if she never would be dislodged.

"What can I do?" Annie Burton often would wonder.

And Father Harris would seem to answer, three miles away, and cheerily counsel her: "Wait and watch!"

One day it was reported at school that Samantha Tutherley was "down sick."

"Perhaps it's my opportunity," thought the teacher, and she was soon at Samantha's door.

"Samanthy's poorly!" moaned her mother, in reply to the teacher's expression of sympathy.

"Won't you come in? Somehow she don't seem to git ahead. Got a slow run of suthin'—fever or suthin', the doctor says. You play? Somehow she's got the greatest notion to git to her orgin. I thought if you played it might sort of quiet her."

It was just before the shutting down of the night like a black cover on sea and land; an hour that may bring a feverish unrest to the patient. Annie was not a gifted musician, but she appreciated one quality of good music, that of expression. She sat down to the little instrument, gently touched its keys, and sang that verse:

"Should Thy mercy send me  
Sorrow, toil and woe,  
Or should pain attend me  
On my path below,  
Grant that I may never  
Fall Thy hand to see,  
Grant that I may ever  
Cast my care on Thee."

"Who's that?" said Samantha, tossing on her bed in an adjoining little room. "Tell her to sing it ag'in!"

Her mother hesitated. She had had previous orders from the patient "not to let that teacher in," if she should chance to come to the house. And there she was at Samantha's "orgin," swaying that magic sceptre of music which so controls and quiets many disturbed hearts.

"Tell her to come ag'in," was Samantha's direction when she knew who the caller was.

It was soon understood that if "old Dr. Beal" was Samantha's physician, the teacher was assistant nurse, and her music was medicine.

About a month after this, Father Harris, behind his old white horse, was slowly moving past the school-house.

"What's that?" he wondered. "Why, there's music in the school-house! What has that teacher got now? I must step out and see." He pushed ajar the creaking school-house door and cautiously peered in.

"My!" he softly said. "Got a Sunday-school concert or something! Lot of people, fathers and mothers! And children—just see them!—and that class of young ladies! And if there isn't Samantha presiding at her melodeon! I thought that teacher would do something. So much for waiting and watching and improving your opportunities! I told her so."

Father Harris was detected at the door, and was obliged to go in and pay for this inspection by making "some remarks."

## What Can We Do For the Boys?

BY A TEACHER.

THIS has been called the age of unrest, and the reason we seem to have a demand for all kinds of Sabbath desecration is because of the restlessness of human nature and a desire to be going somewhere. What shall we do to hold our young men and boys in our Sabbath-schools? This is the work of the individual teacher to a certain extent. Someone has said, to be a successful teacher you must first win the love of your class; but we may have much to do before even this is accomplished. In the first place, pray for them often; keep them in your mind. Be regular in attendance at all church services. One boy said when his mother came home from church, "I know one person who was present—my teacher." It has a good influence. Be punctual and set a good example. Study your lesson thoroughly, so that you can talk about the lesson without hunting for the answer when it is needed. If they ask you a question on the lesson you cannot answer, say so, and do not try to make them think you know more than you do, for if they are wide awake boys you cannot deceive them, and you might lose their respect.

If they are like most boys, you will have to ask the questions and give most of the answers too; but some seed may find good ground. If your boys are absent, find out why they are, and if they have been injured in any way, by which they are confined to the house, but have their senses, send or carry them something

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wholesome to read, but be sure it is interesting. Do not take anything solid and dry to a boy who is just aching to be out playing ball. If you cannot go personally to see him, be sure and inquire of some one who will tell him you have done so. Send flowers when convenient. I do not think any kindness is ever lost on boys, even if they do not make as much fuss about it as girls.

Another way to keep hold of boys is to write them letters when you are not sure of them. A few years ago, in one of our Sunday-schools, was a class of boys who were called the worst class in the school. They sat near the library door, and one Sunday the superintendent, hearing a noise, spoke to the boys openly and they were very indignant, and after the school closed they decided not to come any more. The teacher, hearing of it, felt very badly and sat down and wrote them each a letter, telling them of her feeling in the matter and her desire for their conversion. The result was they were all there the next Sabbath, and, with one exception, all are in Sunday-school work now. The same teacher has kept within the past two years three of her young men under her influence in the same way. If you have a scholar who is annoying in the class and undertake to lecture him, either during the lesson or at the close of the school, it does not amount to much, for the same spirit that annoyed you is predominant still; it is much better to wait until you get home, and after praying about it, write just as you feel. Tell him you pray for him every day and you hope to see him following Christ.

Do not take a class of boys if you do not like boys; they will detect it at once and your peace is at an end. If one of your boys gets his finger broken while playing football, or gets spiked while playing baseball, do not say, "Well, it is what you might expect," but tell him you are sorry he is so unfortunate.

Do not go anywhere that your boys think Christians ought not to go, unless they are unreasonable, and I do not think they will be. I wish every person who has anything to do with boys, either teachers or parents, would read, "What about Fred?" If you have any opportunity in Sunday-school or church work to make your boy useful, do so. Let us do our best.

The Buddhist priests of Japan are thoroughly aroused against the spread of Christianity. They are adopting Christian methods as far as possible. The temples are now often called "churches;" there are "Young Men's Buddhist Associations," "Young People's Societies of Buddhist Endeavor," and Sunday-schools for learning Buddhism, all in active operation. Some priests even use the Christian marriage service, ring and all, substituting the name of Buddha for God. Every sect has one or more journals as official organs.

## Opening and Closing Services.

### FOURTH QUARTER.

#### OPENING SERVICE.

##### I. Silence.

##### II. Responsive Sentences. [Psalm 84. 8-12.]

*Supt.* O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob.

*School.* Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

*Supt.* For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.

*School.* I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

*Supt.* For the Lord God is a sun and shield:

*School.* The Lord will give grace and glory:

*Supt.* No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

*School.* O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

##### III. Singing.

##### IV. The Ten Commandments, or the Apostles' Creed.

##### V. Prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.

##### VI. Scriptural Lesson.

##### VII. Singing.

#### LESSON SERVICE.

##### I. Class Study of the Lesson.

##### II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

##### III. Recitation of Title, Golden Text, Outline and Doctrinal Suggestion by the school in concert.

##### IV. Review and Application of the Lesson by Pastor or Superintendent.

##### V. Supplemental Lesson. [Special lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]

##### VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

#### CLOSING SERVICE.

##### I. Singing.

##### II. Responsive Sentences

*Supt.* My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

*School.* Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

##### III. Dismissal.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY.

B. C. 1427.]

LESSON I. THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.

[Oct. 6.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** The Lord raised up judges, which delivered them. Judg. 2, 16.**Authorized Version.****Judg. 2. 1-12, 16.** [Commit to memory verses 11, 12, 16.]

[Study connection in chap. 2.]

1 And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you;

2 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice; why have ye done this?

3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Is'ra-el, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

5 And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the Lord.

6 And when Josh'u-a had let the people go, the children of Is'ra-el went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served the Lord all the days of Josh'u-a, and all the days of the elders that outlived Josh'u-a, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Is'ra-el.

8 And Josh'u-a the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Tim'nath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Ga'ash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Is'ra-el.

11 And the children of Is'ra-el did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Ba'al-im:

12 And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

16 Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

**Revised Version.**

- 1 And the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you; and ye shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall break down their altars: but ye have not hearkened unto my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Is'ra-el, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the Lord.
- 6 Now when Josh'u-a had sent the people away, the children of Is'ra-el went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. And the people served the Lord all the days of Josh'u-a, and all the days of the elders that outlived Josh'u-a, who had seen all the great work of the Lord, that he had wrought for Is'ra-el. And Josh'u-a the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Tim'nath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Ga'ash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Is'ra-el.
- 11 And the children of Is'ra-el did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Ba'al-im: and they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked the Lord to anger.
- 16 And the Lord raised up judges, which saved them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

**TIME.**—This lesson contains a general statement of the condition of Israel from the death of Joshua, B. C. 1427, during the period of the judges, about three hundred and thirty years. **PLACE.**—The land of Israel; especially Shiloh,

where, doubtless, the Israelites were assembled, and Bochim, which we suppose to have been a locality in Shiloh. **RULERS.**—As yet the Hebrews had no definite government except that of the priesthood and the power accorded to the



"elders" of the tribes. **INTRODUCTORY.**—The tribes soon took a very dangerous course; they made terms with their idolatrous enemies, and permitted them to reside in the land on payment of tribute. Intern marriage followed and led to community of religious worship. The two religions were in some sort incorporated, and if the first commandment of the law was not generally broken, the second was. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The discipline of affliction.

### HOME READINGS.

- M.* The time of the judges. Judg. 2. 1-10.  
*Tu.* The time of the judges. Judg. 2. 11-17.  
*W.* A sad history. Judg. 2. 18-23.  
*Th.* Command and warning. Num. 33. 50-56.  
*F.* Forsaking God. Jer. 2. 4-13.  
*S.* Folly of disobedience. Psalm 81. 8-16.  
*S.* Unfaithfulness. Psalm 106. 34-45.

### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 287, New Canadian Hymnal.

Safely through another week.

No. 358, New Canadian Hymnal.

O God of Bethel, by whose hand.

No. 278, New Canadian Hymnal.

One more hymn we'll sing at parting.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

#### 1. A Faithful Rebuke, v. 1-5.

Who came up from Gilgal to Bochim?  
 What do you know about Gilgal? What about Bochim?

Where were the Hebrews accustomed to gather for religious and political purposes? (*Answer.* Shechem.)

How and where did God swear to the "fathers" that they should inherit Palestine?

What "leagues" had the Israelites made with the inhabitants of the land?

Had they thrown down their altars? Why not? How did the Hebrews act when the angel rebuked them?

What did they call the place where the angel spoke?

What does Bochim mean? (*Answer.* Weeping.)

#### 2. A Forgetful People, v. 6-12.

What followed Joshua's dismissal of the tribes? How long were they faithful to their covenant? Of what had they been witnesses?

What was Joshua's age at his death?

Where was he buried?

What is meant by "gathered to their fathers"?

What change in the people did time accomplish?

How did the new generation show their forgetfulness of God?

What was Baalim?

Of what had God especially warned his people? (*Deut.* 6. 14.)

Into what idolatry did they fall?

What was the consequence of their folly?

On what conditions had success been promised them? (*Deut.* 28. 1.)

What was fulfilled in the distresses of this people? (*Josh.* 23. 16.)

#### 3. A Gracious God, v. 16.

How did the Lord show his mercy toward the transgressors?

Had these judges anything like "constitutional rights," or were they what might be called providential dictators?

Did they each govern all the country?

### Practical Teachings.

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. That God secures to his people their inheritance?

2. That forgetfulness of God's promises leads to departure from his service?

3. That the threatenings and promises of God are alike sure?

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. A Faithful Rebuke, v. 1-5.

What visitor came to Bochim?

What had he done for Israel?

What had he promised to keep unbroken?

What alliance had he forbidden?

What duty had he enjoined?

What did he say of Israel's conduct?

What punishment would result from their disobedience?

How were the people affected by this rebuke?

What name did they give to the place? Why?

What did they offer to the Lord?

Of what are God's rebukes a proof? (*Rev.* 3. 19.)

#### 2. A Forgetful People, v. 6-12.

Where did the people go from Bochim?

How long did they remain true to God?

What was Joshua's age at his death?

Where was he buried?

What is said of the next generation?

What evil did Israel do before the Lord?

Whom did they forsake? Whom follow?

Name some of the gods whom they followed.

Which commandment did they break? Repeat it.

How did God punish them? (Verses 14, 15.)

**3. A Gracious God, v. 16.**

How did God show himself gracious? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

What was the source of power to the judges? (Verse 18.)

What happened when the judge died? (Verse 19.)

Why were not all the Canaanites driven out? (Verses 21, 22.)

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That God always keeps his promises?
2. That disobedience to God brings evil?
3. That God shows mercy to those who forget him?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

What kind of people lived in Canaan? **Idolaters.**

What did the Lord want the Israelites to do? **Drive them out of the land.**

What did they do after Joshua's death?

What ought they to have done?

Whom did the Lord send to reprove them?

What did he say the Lord would not do?

What were the heathen allowed to do?

What made the Israelites weep? **To hear that they must suffer.**

What should they have done? **Driven out their enemies.**

What did they do instead?

What awful sin were they soon led into?

What did the Lord send upon them?

What did they do?

Whom did he send to help them?

What does this lesson teach? **To keep away from sin.**

**Remember—**

That sin in the heart is sure to make trouble.  
That the only safe way is to drive it out.

**EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.**

BY ROBERT R. DOHERTY, PH.D.

**General Statement.**

The war is ended. The aged conqueror has sought retirement. The new nation has started on its history, with God as its King and the priests and elders as his vicegerents. Never did a people live among stranger conditions. They were removed by one generation from abject slavery. They were trying to conform to a law which touched every detail of their lives, and which was a novelty to them in many particulars. Without experience except as slaves, as shepherds, and of late years as warriors, they were to establish themselves in the rich plantations and cities of one of the wealthiest countries then known. Then their possession of this country was only partial. The mountain ranges were theirs, though even there exceptions must be made of notable fortresses like Jebus and Beth-el. In nearly every valley there still remained villages of the conquered peoples, worshipping false gods, indulging in vice, and ready to rise at any moment against their oppressors. Thorns in the sides of the nation indeed they were. From their heights the Jews could look down upon the Philistines of the southeastern plain, intrenched within their powerful cities, while the Jordan valley and the plain of Esdraelon and the valley of Sharon were still occupied by the Canaanites. These elements of peril were in their borders, while beyond them were Amalekites and Edomites on the south, Moabites, Ammonites, and Bashanites on the east. Israel stands alone amid the nations, and in equal danger from their enmity and their friendship. We begin to understand, when we realize the temptations around and the lusts within, how the people of God so soon forget their high vocation and their glorious history and sink into the embraces of sin. They long for a visible object of worship like the people about them; they are charmed with the splendid rites and are led astray by the seductive fascinations of idolatry. At last, after many half steps in the wrong, Israel turns from Jehovah and, like all sinners, suffers the consequences. No sooner did the chosen people bow the knee to Baal than enemies arose about them. Wave after wave of oppression sweeps over the land, each in turn rolled back by the deliverers whom God in mercy raises up. The history contained in the Book of Judges is, some of it, painful reading, but it is doubtful whether the history of mankind furnishes more instructive passages than these. Our lesson notes seven steps downward which Israel took, and which resulted at last in their enslavement. **Let us be warned by the faithless people of God.**

**Verse 1. An angel of the Lord.** Probably in this case a human messenger and prophet. We cannot speak with certainty, because the wisest scholars differ. Some commentators believe that this was the uncreated Angel of the

Covenant, the second person of the Trinity. The word translated "angel" is nearly always used in the Bible for a supernatural messenger. There are, however, notable exceptions to this usage, such as Hag. 1. 13; Judg. 11. 13; Isa. 42. 19;

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Ecdes. 5. 6; and Mal. 2. 7. The phrase **came up from Gilgal** seems to make it probable that this was a prophel sent with a special message from God. But happily the true meaning of the passage, and especially its message to us, is not affected by either understanding. **Gilgal** was the old camping ground where the Israelites had solemnly dedicated themselves to God on their entrance into the promised land. The very fact that the angel came from there would be profoundly suggestive to these sinners. **Bochim** cannot now be identified, though it was probably in or near Shiloh, where the tabernacle stood. It means "weepers," and received its name from the incident of this lesson. See verse 5. **I made you to go.** These are the words of God, whether the speaker was the Angel of the Covenant or a prophet. **Which I swear.** Made solemn covenant. See Gen. 12. 7; 17. 7, 8; and the entire history of the patriarchs.

**2. Make no league.** That is, no covenant, no treaty of peace. See Exod. 23. 22; Deut. 7. 23; Josh. 9. 7; 23. 12. The natives of Palestine and their false religions were inseparable, and no peace could be made between Jehovah and Baal. **Throw down their altars.** This command had been repeatedly given to the Israelites in the early days. See Exod. 34. 13; Deut. 7. 5; 12. 3. Lovers of beauty and antiquity cannot suppress a momentary regret when they think of the interesting monuments of ancient civilization thus destroyed; but the Israelites were prone both to idolatry and licentiousness, and the emblems of idolatry were fascinating in the extreme, so that this destruction was absolutely necessary. **Ye have not obeyed my voice.** The tendency of the Hebrew had never been toward war, and as soon as he was settled in his comfortable home in Canaan he made friends with his idolatrous neighbors—overreached them, doubtless, on many occasions—but subjected himself to the temptations that arose from their false religions. **Why have ye done this?** The exclamation is full of sharp grief.

**3. I also said.** God had plainly told them all along that the consequences of both sin and right doing were unavoidable. (1) "*It is not an innocent thing to smile on the presence of sin and give it equal rights.*"—Lange. **As thorns in your sides.** These people whom you have wickedly suffered to remain among you will haunt you through all your history, even though they be conquered. The word "thorns" is not in the original. Some people translate the word "sides," "enemies." **A snare.** The Israelites soon turned to hate the "inhabitants of the land," but it was centuries before they learned to hate their gods. The message of the angel reduced to its simplest form is this, "You have forgotten God's

covenant, but God will inviolably keep his promise."

**4. The people lifted up their voice, and wept.** Orientals are always demonstrative, and the Hebrews at least had never any more reason for weeping than now.

**5. They called the name of that place Bochim.** It is probable that the "angel" found Israel gathered together in Shiloh. The tabernacle was there, and great gatherings were frequent. The place that they called Bochim was, according to Lange and other scholars, some gateway or street or house where the angel stood, and which became the center of this outburst of penitence; some place in Shiloh. **They sacrificed there.** Shiloh was the regular place for sacrifice. They would have done better, however, if they had paid less attention to their own feelings and their own outward demonstrations of sorrow, and set forth at once to destroy the false gods and to break the national friendships which they had perversely formed and to cease the foul vices in which they had indulged.

**6. Let the people go.** As related at the close of the last lesson. **Went every man.** The tribes returned to their several borders, and the new epoch began, of rest in the land in place of war, and of tribal government in place of the personal rule of Joshua. **To possess the land.** To complete the work of conquest, since in many places the native races still had a foothold.

**7. Served the Lord.** Mindful of the promise made in the last lesson. **All the days of Joshua.** Those who had participated in the stirring events of the conquest and had grown up under the influence of Moses. **Who had seen.** Their personal experience strengthened their own faith, and their testimony the faith of others. (2) *See here the power of good example to guide in right ways.* (3) *See, too, the power of experience in religion.*

**8, 9. The son of Nun.** Nun was an unknown Ephraimite, born in bondage, and perhaps dying in the wilderness. **The servant of the Lord.** A noble title, and well deserved, for not even Moses was more earnest, uncompromising, loyal, and vigilant in God's service than Joshua. **Timnath-heres.** By the transposition of a letter elsewhere called Timnath-serah. At Kefr Iiuris, nine miles south of Shechem, is a place shown by the Samaritans as the tomb of Joshua, and supposed by the latest investigators to be really his burial place. **Hill Gaash.** A location well known when the book was written, but now forgotten.

**10. That generation.** The main body of those who participated in the conquest. **Were gathered unto their fathers.** In the grave with their ancestors. Though their fathers were buried

in the desert and their grandfathers in Egypt, yet all were regarded as together in the place of the departed. Some find here a hint of a belief in a state of departed spirits. **Another generation.** Dr. Steele remarks acutely, "The transition from that low faith, grounded on the senses, to that higher faith, grounded on testimony, is always a critical period." **Knew not the Lord.** Had not the personal acquaintance with God's workers in behalf of Israel and that sense of dependence upon God possessed by their fathers. **Nor yet the works which he had done.** They had not seen the fiery pillar nor the heaped-up waters of Jordan nor the falling walls of Jericho. (4) *Was there not a lack of early training of their children on the part of those who were so busy in war and in occupation?*

**11. Did evil in the sight of the Lord.** The set phrase so often repeated in this book, and expressive of the fact that, with God's eyes on them and the divine standards before them, Israel yet fell into sin. (5) *All sin is in God's sight, for God's law is the measure of righteousness.* **Served Baalim.** The plural form of the word *Baal*, which was the name of the chief male divinity worshipped by the nations surrounding Israel, and hence was used in its plural form as a general term for all idolatry.

**12. Forsook the Lord.** The word here is *Jehovah*, the lofty name of God, as if to mark the contrast with idols. **Of their fathers.** Thus by their backsliding they dishonored the memory of their noble ancestors, the patriarchs. **Brought them out.** They forsook the God that wrought their salvation, and followed the idols which could not save their own lands! **Followed other gods.** The motives of their idolatry were: 1. The craving of the human heart after a visible ob-

ject of worship; for example, see it in the Romanist adoring his crucifix. 2. The influence of association, "following the fashion." People dislike to be singular, and Israel was often taunted by other nations as having no gods. 3. The feasts and debaucheries connected with idol worship had a fascination for corrupt hearts, especially when drunkenness and licentiousness could be veiled under the name of religion. (6) *How many influences unite to lead hearts astray from God! The people that were round about.* On the shore of the Mediterranean on the south were the Philistines, newcomers like themselves; on the north, the Phœnicians, rich and cultured; in the Jordan valley, the still unconquered Canaanites; in the heart of the country, the Jebusites and the Hivites, under tribute, but existing as elements of danger; east of the Dead Sea were the Moabites, who had already corrupted their morals at Beth-peor; and on the south, their kinsmen, the Edomites. All these worshipped Baal under various names. (7) *Even yet God's people stand alone in a world whose enmity and whose friendship are equally dangerous.* **Provoked the Lord to anger.** Not an irregular passion, but a just indignation against wickedness. (8) *We must never forget the tender susceptibility of our God.*

**16. The Lord raised up.** By the promptings of his Spirit and the call of opportunity. **Judges.** These were not ordinary rulers nor dictators nor despots, but deliverers, divinely raised up as religious reformers, "judges" in disputed cases, and military leaders. They appeared generally in times of calamity; they ruled by force of character, and did not transmit their authority to successors. (9) *There is hope for a people when God still sends them leaders in righteousness!*

### CRITICAL NOTES.

BY PROFESSOR W. W. DAVIES, D.D.

Let every scholar read the entire Book of Judges, with a map before him and a Bible dictionary at his side. Whoever will do this may gain an intelligent view of the period of history now studied. The book takes up the story of the Hebrews at the death of Joshua and traces their victories and defeats, their apostasies and their deliverances, their rests and their wars down to the time of Eli and Samuel. Though the author, whoever he was, leads us through a long night of darkness and trial, of perjury and repentance, there is, on the whole, a steady growth toward national unity and greater piety. So that a disorganized horde of clans, of runaway slaves, is changed into a victorious nation of freemen, destined to be one of the greatest factors in the civilization of the race.

There is no reason for believing that the book

was written later than David's time. The author, evidently tired of the disorders prevailing under the judges, and anxious for a more centralized form of government, must have been a royalist in sentiment. This feeling crops out throughout the entire book. The names of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad have each been suggested as that of the author.

**Verse 1. And the angel of the Lord.** The word "angel" signifies messenger, one having a special mission to perform. It is generally used of superhuman messengers, sent from heaven. It is used of the priest or minister in Eccles. 5, 6 and Mal. 2, 7, of prophets in Hag. 1, 13 and Mal. 3, 1, and very often of men; especially is the plural form used in this way. It has been inferred, since the "angel" is said to have come from Gilgal to Bochim, that he was a prophet or some represen-

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tative of the sanctuary at the former place. But angels are spoken of elsewhere as traveling from place to place, as at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18. 16-23). Many, from the language used by the angel, think that he was the Angel of the Covenant, the second person in the Trinity, so prominent in Jewish history. At any rate the angel of the Lord in this verse seems to identify himself with Jehovah. **Gilgal.** The coming of the angel from Gilgal at this time is significant. Gilgal was the first encampment; it was especially sacred and dear to the Hebrews (Josh. 4. 19). It was in this vicinity that the angel of the Lord appeared to Joshua (5. 13). **Bochim.** This word means "weepers." The exact location is not known. **I will never break my covenant with you.** God on his part is always true. For the nature of this covenant, compare Exod. 3. 6, ff.

**2. And ye shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land.** This and the following clause are repeated almost verbatim from Deut. 7. 2, 3. It was necessary that they should have no communion with the Canaanites. The danger of associating with irreligious people has always threatened the church, and wherever the practice has been indulged in it has resulted in great spiritual loss. **Ye shall break down their altars.** Not only were they forbidden to associate with the Canaanites, but they were to be aggressive. They were to destroy heathenism out of the land. This command is quoted from Exod. 34. 13; Deut. 7. 5; 12. 3. **Ye have not hearkened unto my voice.** As was their duty to do, and as they faithfully promised. See Josh. 23. 11-13; 24. 21-23. **Why have ye done this? More literally,** "What is this that you have done?" This is a most searching question, and one everybody should ask himself when conscious of not having done right.

**3. Wherefore I also said.** See Num. 33. 55. **I will not drive them out.** The angel or speaker here identifies himself with Jehovah, the omnipotent God. It would not do any good for God to interpose in behalf of the Hebrews, unless they did all within their power. God helps those who are willing to help themselves and to do their whole duty. Why is it that there is a saloon in your city or village? It is as hurtful to your boy or yourself as the idol sanctuaries of Canaan were to the Hebrews. **They shall be as thorns in your sides.** There is no word corresponding to "thorns" in the original. The clause, literally rendered, reads, "They shall be sides to you." That is, they shall crowd you hard. Notice the marginal reading of the Revised Version, where "adversaries" is substituted for "thorns," as also in the Septuagint and Vulgate. To obtain this rendering one letter is changed. It is possible that the word "thorns," used in Num. 33. 55, has

been accidentally dropped out of the text here. **Their gods shall be a snare unto you.** Idolatry is a snare and a delusion. It leads away from the true God. So with all sin in our day. The more thoroughly we do our duty and obey God the fewer temptations we have to sin. Let us therefore put away everything which can estrange us from God.

**4. The people lifted up their voice, and wept.** Their weeping was caused by the dark picture which was painted before them. They must reap the fruit of their carelessness and disobedience.

**5. They sacrificed there unto the Lord.** They do this as an atonement for their sins, and with the hope of averting the impending calamities. It is not necessary to think that the ark was at Bochim or that Bochim was another name for Shiloh, for sacrifices could be offered, at least on special occasions, elsewhere. See Judg. 6. 20, 26, 28; 13. 16; 1 Sam. 13. 9, ff.; 2 Sam. 24. 25.

**6.** This begins another section, and the passage (6-9) is almost the same as that of Josh. 24. 28-31. The three verses are inserted to show that God had blessed the people while they obeyed his laws during the days of Joshua, and the elders who were his immediate successors. But though securely settled in Canaan and victorious over their enemies, their lack of faith in Jehovah and their disloyalty to him brought trouble.

**7. All the days of Joshua.** According to Jewish authorities, Joshua lived twenty-five years after the death of Moses. **The elders that outlived Joshua.** How long these outlived the great leader is not said, but possibly twenty to thirty years. Joshua and the elders had been living witnesses of God's power in the wilderness and in the overthrow of the Canaanites, and remained faithful to the worship of Jehovah. How much do we owe to the fathers and the mothers in Israel who have passed through great revivals and have fought the battles of the Lord!

**8. And Joshua . . . died.** The exact date is not given, but probably about 1425 B. C. **The servant of the Lord.** A noble title, a very common designation of Moses (Deut. 34. 5; Josh. 1. 1, 13, 15; and often). It is once applied to David (see title of Psalm 18), and frequently to the prophets.

**9. And they buried him . . . in Timnath-heres.** It is called Timnath-serah in Josh. 24. 30. The word means "portion of the sun," perhaps an old sanctuary devoted to the worship of the sun. Conder and others identify it with Kefr Haris, nine miles south of Shechem. Dr. Eli Smith thinks that modern Tibneh, five miles northeast of Lydda, is Timnath. One of the many graves in the rocks around the ruins of Tibneh is said to be that of Joshua. **Gaash.** Mentioned also in 2 Sam. 23. 30 and 1 Chron. 11. 32.

**10. All that generation were gathered unto their fathers.** The fathers of some of them had been buried in Egypt, of others in the wilderness, and of the rest in Canaan; thus the reference is plainly to some meeting place beyond the grave. How vain, therefore, to assert that the Hebrews had no hopes of a life beyond! **Another generation . . . which knew not the Lord.** What a sad picture! The sons and daughters of those so highly favored apostates from Jehovah! How often history has repeated itself in this particular. How careful parents ought to be in training their children in the fear of the Lord. Wealth is good, education is better, but obedience to Jehovah is the highest good.

**11. Did that which was evil.** Sinned openly, forsook Jehovah and indulged in idolatry. **And served the Baalim.** Baal denotes lord or possessor. Baalim is the plural form, denoting a plurality of gods, or more probably the so-called "plural of excellence," referring to the various attributes or forces united in one supreme god Baal or Baalim, when written with the definite article, refers to the chief god or gods of the Semites, as Bel of the Babylonians. He was the sun-god, the fructifying principle of nature, the source of life, and the king of heaven. Baal was worshiped in different localities under different names, like Zeus or Jupiter by the Greeks and Romans. Baal was the male god, and Ashtaroth (the moon) was the principal female divinity. The fatal thing about the worship of the Baalim was the gross immorality, lewdness, and open prostitution inseparably connected with the idolatrous rites. Any church or organization in our time which will wink at immorality, or even those things leading to immoral practices, is as dangerous as Baal worship was to the ancient Hebrews.

**12. Forsook the Lord.** There is no safety in association with idols or idolaters.

**16. The Lord raised up judges.** The judges were at once the judicial and the military or executive, the magistrate and the ruler. They were raised at intervals between the death of Joshua and the time of Saul. They were sometimes selected by the people (Judg. 4. 6; 11. 15), sometimes assumed control by force (Judg. 3. 9; 15. 3). Gideon and Samson were directly appointed by Jehovah. Deborah was the only woman, Eli the only high priest, Samuel the only prophet, who were made judges. Their jurisdiction was sometimes general, and sometimes only local. The office was not in all cases for life (Judg. 8. 23, 29); in some instances, however, it seems to have been hereditary (Judg. 9. 2; 1 Sam. 8. 1). They were generally men of prowess and military fame, but there are cases where a war record is entirely wanting.

The chronology of the period, being fragmentary, is very uncertain. See 1 Kings 6. 1.

## Analytical and Biblical Outline.

### The Relations of Israel and God.

#### I. ISRAEL'S WANDERING.

- 1. Disobedience.** *Not obeyed.* v. 2. Willing . . . refuse and rebel. Isa. 1. 19, 20.
- 2. Forgetfulness.** *Knew not.* v. 10. Beware lest thou forget. Deut. 6. 12.
- 3. Worldly Fellowship.** *About them.* v. 12. Enmity with God. James 4. 4.
- 4. Disloyalty.** *Other gods.* v. 12. Mingled among . . . heathen. Psalm 106. 35.
- 5. Helplessness.** *Not . . . stand.* v. 14. Without me . . . nothing. John 15. 5.

#### II. GOD'S GRACE.

- 1. Watchfulness.** *An angel.* v. 1. Rising up early . . . speaking. Jer. 7. 13.
- 2. Remembrance.** *And said.* v. 1, 2. His miracles and his acts. Deut. 11. 2-7.
- 3. Warning.** *Also said.* v. 3. No more a . . . brier. Ezek. 28. 24.
- 4. Discipline.** *Delivered them.* v. 14. Despise not . . . chastening. Heb. 12. 5-7.
- 5. Mercy.** *Nevertheless.* v. 16. Not always chide. Psalm 103. 9, 10.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### The Dangers of God's People.

1. God's people are in danger when the period of active and special work is followed by a period of rest and ease. (Verse 6.)
2. God's people are in danger from the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the enjoyment of earthly possessions. (Verses 6, 7.)
3. God's people are in danger when they depend upon men as leaders, without the power of direct, personal relation to God. (Verse 7.)
4. God's people are in danger when the age of faith proceeding from knowledge is succeeded by an age of faith dependent upon testimony. (Verse 10.)
5. God's people are in danger when parents who know God become so busy in worldly affairs as to fail to instruct their children diligently in the knowledge of God. (Verse 10.)
6. God's people are in danger from the association and friendship of the world leading them astray. (Verse 12.)
7. God's people are in danger when earthly and sensual objects come between them and their God. (Verse 12.)
8. God's people are in danger from the lusts of the fleshly nature in alliance with the influences of the world. (Verse 12.)

## Lesson Word-Pictures.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

Come, let us go through the land of promise. Take it in the spring, when the beauty of an emerald foliage is everywhere. Fair as ever! To one coming up from the wilderness it is like a garden of the Lord. The flowers are on the hill slopes, and the vineyards are everywhere. The song of the husbandman comes up from the furrowed fields. Along the roads wind the caravans of travel. In the market places of the towns echoes the hum of prolonged traffic.

Yes, fair and fortunate land, both beautiful and bountiful! The land of promise is a land of fulfillment. But—is everything satisfactory? Look at that green grove ahead. What is peeping out through the leafy meshes of its veil of foliage? It is not a peep, but a flash! It is fire on an altar! It is an altar to a god of Canaan! But step nearer, look within the grove. Sacrifice is on the altar, and before you is a ring of deluded devotees bowing to an idol! Some of these are Israelites!

And this in the land of promise! This among the people of God! How can they stay, the people of God, who sleep over this impiety, conniving at it, some joining in it? O land of promise, you will be the land of penalty!

There is another scene to be witnessed. It is a great gathering of the children of Israel at Bechim, and a messenger from the Lord speaks to the people. How full of rebuke his face, how searching his eyes, how plain his words! He goes back to a covenant between God and Israel. Do they remember? Yes, the words of the messenger are like swords pricking sleepy consciences. The people weep. They turn to God. They call upon his name. They sacrifice to him. There are tears of penitence shed.

The great gathering breaks up. The people are back in their homes. Do they remember the covenant renewed at Bechim? Amid the trees of the grove flash the altar fires of the gods of Canaan? The people of Israel worship Israel's God now. The procession of the generations steadily moves on. Joshua, leader of the war-worn host, who had seen the great works of the Lord, passes away. The generation that had known of Jehovah's marvels gradually, steadily moves on. It is a new generation in the land of promise, another people. And O, evil days! In the green groves flash the unhallowed fires. Israel is a slave bound to an idol's feet. Is the great Jehovah sleeping in the heavens?

Come to that battlefield. The warriors of Israel go out in numbers great as ever. Their weapons are as bright, their war cry is as vigorous. But O, where is the God of battles that went out with the fathers? He is not with the children, and here they come from the first shock of

the fight! They run like a flock of sheep. They scatter to homes of servitude. Israel, that has been sitting at the feet of Baal, now has its neck under the feet of the Canaanites.

But look! Who appear as Israel's deliverers? On the judgment seat are judges who are men of mind, men of battle, men of God. Down go the idols in the groves! To the front of Israel's columns go these captains of faith. God goes with them. Like lions in the combat are the warriors of Israel, while the idolaters now run like the sheep in the pastures. Honor to the judges, and salvation to Israel, and praise to Jehovah!

## Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

There are some few phrases in this lesson which require to be considered in their oriental setting to gain their proper force. In verse 11 God charges the people with worshipping Baalim, the plural form of Baal, "lord." The Baalim recognized were many, and named according to locality or special function, as "Baal of Sidon," "Baal of Tarsus," "Baal of Peor." Some think that all the gods of the Phœnicians were one and the same, varying only in name, except in the case of the Kabiri, who were the sons of Sadyk, and who were esteemed actual deities. The one supreme power recognized under all these various forms and names is supposed to have been Baal, lord of heaven, for which statement Rawlinson gives many able authorities in his story of Phœnicia. He says he was the great and only creative being, author of all life, and yet was sun-god as well. The whole pantheon of the Phœnicians was, however, limited compared with that of Egypt, being confined to about eighteen gods. A good deal of light is gradually coming through modern research on some of these idolatries of Phœnician order. Some coins and a few idols have been found in Cyprus which contain the names of some of these gods. New discoveries are constantly being made of Phœnician manners and customs. The tablet of Marseilles, discovered in 1845, fixes the price of various sacrificial offerings, such as the ox, sheep, lamb, birds, the firstborn of animals, offerings of meal, oil, and milk. The priest received a prescribed portion, with which he sustained the guardians of the temple and other *attachés* of the temple, all of which is shown on one of the tablets of Cyprus, "but the skin and the haunches and the feet and the rest of the flesh belonged to the offerer." The sacrifice was to be fat, not lean; healthy, not leprous nor scabby. No one must partake of the blood of the victim.

Verse 3 speaks of the Phœnician gods as "a snare" to the people of Israel. The Israelites were descended from an idolatrous people. Rachel

stole the "teraphim" of her father—images connected with the Magi's ritual, which were consulted as oracles. Laban called them his "gods," with which he said he had augured and foretold by observing signs. These survived as late as the time of Ezekiel. They usually had a man's head, though the bodies greatly varied in form. These people worshipped in turn nearly all the gods of the Phœnicians, Canaanites, Syrians, and Assyrians. Amulets and charms were worn, which were supposed to place them under the protection of the idol gods. The first chapter of Judges shows that they forsook the Lord and worshipped Baal and Ash-taroath, the latter being the female form of Baal. During the life of all the judges Israel worshipped these gods. Gideon stayed it a little, but they often carried on a double worship of Jehovah and Baal secretly. Moses's own son, Jothan, was the priest in the temple of the idol gods of the tribe of Dan. Verse 2 contains the prohibition to make any league with the inhabitants of the land, yet, strange to say, as if in mockery of the Jehovah of the covenant, the form of Baal worship which was popular with the Israelites was that of Baal-Berith, or "Baal of the Covenant." This was the form of Baal, or the impersonation of Baal, which presided over treaties of all kinds, whether of marriages, of alliances of tribes in peace and war, or of any form of agreement or obligation whatever. Jehovah specifies that they should not recognize any other god of "leagues" or "treaties" or formal binding obligations. He, and he alone, was to be to them the "God of Covenants." Especially does he prohibit not only the recognition of Baal-Berith as superintending their interests in formal obligations, but their making any league or compromise with idolatrous customs. They were to become iconoclasts and "throw down their altars." Nothing short of a complete abandonment of their abominable idolatry would satisfy Jehovah's just demands.

### By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

*Verse 1.* God would have a land for his people. As he guided the Israelites to Canaan, so he guided to this new world, America, the *Mayflower* colony that it might have a congenial place to unfold the truths of the Gospel. In both instances his providence watched over the growing nations, preparing them for the work to which he had called them. Bushnell writes: "A seed must have position, else it cannot grow. If it be laid in a rock, or buried in sand, or sunk in water, or frozen in ice, it will be inert as a stone; but in good warm soil and sun and rain and dew it will quicken, because it is in position. A tree will die out of position; a clock will stop; a compass wants setting."

*Verses 2 and 3.* God had commanded Israel to drive out from all the land all their enemies, but history records that they "did not utterly drive them out." The Earl of Bath, speaking in strong terms in the House of Lords against the administration of Fox and Pitt, was reminded that the latter was about to be dismissed, and that Fox only would remain in office. "This half-measure," said his lordship, "is the worst of all, and reminds me of the Gunpowder Plot. The lord chamberlain was sent to examine the vaults underneath the Parliament House, and returned with the report that he had found five and twenty barrels of gunpowder, but that he had removed ten of them and hoped the remainder would do no harm."—*Percy.*

*Verses 4 and 5.* A strange scene was witnessed by an English visitor at Odessa on the first day of the present Jewish year. Sixty thousand Jews living at Odessa went down to the sea for the purpose of throwing the last year's sins therein, to begin the new year with a clear conscience. They stood in groups closely packed together, looking toward the water reciting prayers. Some of the people turned their pockets inside out and shook them toward the sea. Others merely made a sign of throwing stones into it. This was a public act of confession and contrition. Whether or not it was followed by a better life would depend on how much of sincere penitence there was in the act.

*Verse 16.* Valiant "judges" have always appeared in the hour of need—Charlemagne, William of Orange, Gustavus, Cromwell, Washington, Lincoln. But the emergency passes, the providence grows dim, the salvation is forgotten, and the nation falls again amid the sharp goadings of its permitted foes, till in its "sore distresses" it remembers God and cries for help. As with Manasseh, when affliction befell he humbled himself greatly before God with the consequent rescue, so with communities and individuals. Chastisements are disguised mercies. The cutting off of a finger may be the saving of an endangered arm; the critical sickness, the healing of a diseased soul. And there was never, in the midst of overwhelming spiritual perils, a despairing call like that of the thief on the cross, of Augustine under the fig tree at Milan, of Newton in the ship's hold, of Finney alone in the woods at Adams; but there came in answer the vision and the fact of a rescuing Christ. The "judges" of our day are the ready-waiting realities of our holy religion.—*Dr. De Witt S. Clark.*

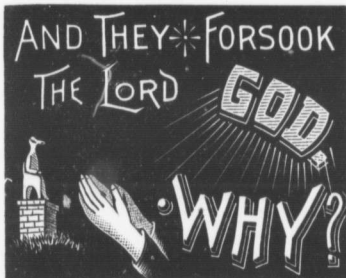
### References.

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK. Ver. 11: Babilim, 222. Ver. 13: Baal, 184; Ashtaroth, 304.



## Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



BY GEORGE W. PEASE, ESQ.

## RETRIBUTION.

ISRAEL'S | MAN'S  
WICKEDNESS AND WEAKNESS.

FORSAKING GOD  
FOLLOWING IDOLS  
BRING

DISTRESS AND DISASTER.

"The hand of the Lord was against them."

## DELIVERANCE.

• • GOD • •

RAISED UP

JUDGES, | JESUS,

WHO DELIVERED

THE ISRAELITES | THE WORLD

FROM THE

BONDAGE OF

SPOILERS. | SIN.

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart."

## The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw a map of Palestine; show the boundaries of the land as conquered and the heathen nations which surrounded the Israelites...Mark on the map in colored letters the locations of the heathen

natives and the places in the land which were held by the nations....Show the danger to which the Israelites, as God's people, were exposed.... To which of these perils is the Church of God now exposed, and how?...Why were the Israelites so constantly led into idolatry, and what were its dangers to them?...How did their sin show: (1) Forgetfulness? (2) Ingratitude? (3) Folly?...Notice the downward steps of Israel, and illustrate them by drawing stairs, with the names of sins on successive steps....What results followed Israel's sins?...Name the sins against which this lesson warns us.

## OPTIONAL HYMNS.

## No. 1.

Come, thou almighty King.  
How good thou art to me.  
The Love of God,  
When all thy mercies, O my God.  
There's a wideness in God's mercy.

## No. 2.

The praying spirit breathe.  
I bring my sins to thee.  
Saviour, I come to thee.  
Now Bless Me.  
By Faith Alone.

## The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. How long did the Israelites serve God? **While Joshua lived.**
2. What did they do after Joshua and the elders died? **They forgot God.**
3. What other sin did they commit? **They followed idols.**
4. How did they suffer for this? **They were oppressed by their enemies.**
5. How did God still show them mercy? **GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord," etc.**

## CATECHISM QUESTION.

55. In what is the Word of God contained?  
In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
56. In what sense are the Scriptures the Word of God? Because through them He declares to all men His will.
57. What do you mean by His will? What we must believe, what we should do, and what we may expect from Him.

B. C. 1249.]

## LESSON II. THE TRIUMPH OF GIDEON.

[Oct. 13.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Psalm 27. 3.

## Authorized Version.

Judg. 7. 13-23.

[Commit to memory verses 19, 20.]

[Study connection in chap. 7.]

13 And when Gid'e-on was come, behold, *there* *was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Mid'i-an, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else, save the sword of Gid'e-on the son of Jo'ash, a man of Is'ra-el: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Mid'i-an, and all the host.

15 And it was *so*, when Gid'e-on heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Is'ra-el, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Mid'i-an.

16 And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, *so* shall ye do.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword of the Lord, and of Gid'e-on.*

19 So Gid'e-on, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gid'e-on.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-sit'tah in Ze-re'rah, and to the border of A'bel-me-ho'lah, unto Tab'bath.

23 And the men of Is'ra-el gathered themselves together out of Naph'ta-li, and out of Ash'er, and out of all Ma-nas'seh, and pursued after the Mid'i-an-ites.

## Revised Version.

13 And when Gid'e-on was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Mid'i-an, and came unto the tent, and smote it that it fell, and turned it upside down, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gid'e-on the son of Jo'ash, a man of Is'ra-el: into his hand God hath delivered Mid'i-an, and all the host.

15 And it was so, when Gid'e-on heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped; and he returned into the camp of Is'ra-el, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Mid'i-an. And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put into the hands of all of them trumpets, and empty pitchers,

17 with torches within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outermost part of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, For the Lord and for Gid'e-on.

19 So Gid'e-on, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the

20 pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the

21 Lord and of Gid'e-on. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran; and they shouted, and put

22 them to flight. And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host: and the host fled as far as Beth-sit'tah toward Ze-re'rah, as far as the border of A'bel-me-ho'lah, by Tab'bath. And the men of Is'ra-el were gathered together out of Naph'ta-li, and out of Ash'er, and out of all Ma-nas'seh, and pursued after Mid'i-an.

**TIME.**—About B. C. 1249. **PLACE.**—The valley of Jezreel. **INTRODUCTORY.**—Read the whole story of Gideon from the Bible. The Israelites had again forgotten their God and turned to the worship of foul Syrian idols. As a punish-

ment God permitted an invasion of their land by the cruel Midianites. The desolation of Israel was complete and led to penitence. Then an "angel of the Lord" called forth Gideon to be the national deliverer. By repeated signs he fortified his heart.

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The government of God.

**HOME READINGS.**

- M.* Triumph of Gideon. Judg. 7. 13-23.  
*Tu.* Prayer in danger. Judg. 6. 1-10.  
*W.* Gideon's commission. Judg. 6. 11-21.  
*Th.* Gideon assured. Judg. 6. 33-40.  
*F.* Testing for service. Judg. 7. 1-12.  
*S.* Strength in weakness. 1 Cor. 1. 20-31.  
**S.** God the helper. Psalm 27.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

No. 193, New Canadian Hymnal.

Onward, Christian soldiers.

No. 143, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink.

No. 359, New Canadian Hymnal.

God be with you till we meet again.

**QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.**

**1. The Dream, v. 13-15.**

What tribe had reduced the Israelites to bondage and starvation?

Who was Gideon?

Who had called him to liberate the Israelites?

What had he done to show his loyalty to Jehovah?

What had God done to confirm Gideon's faith?

What did Gideon do on the eve of the battle?

Who accompanied Gideon on his trip to the Midianite tent?

What did they overhear?

Are dreams sure "signs" of what is to come?

Was barley bread regarded as luxurious or as poor food?

What happened to the tent of Midian when the barley loaf rolled against it?

How did the other soldiers interpret this dream?

Were the Midianites mostly afraid of Gideon?  
*(Answer. They were afraid of God, who had delivered Midian into his hand.)*

What did Gideon first do when he heard this dream and its interpretation? What did he do next?

**2. The Attack, v. 16-20.**

How many men were in Gideon's company?

How many had there been originally?

Who told him that his army was too large?

What two methods did he take to reduce his army?

What did he do with the three hundred men that were left?

What did he give to each?

What was his purpose in this act? (See verse 19.)

What was his instruction to his soldiers?

In what sense should every Christian say the same thing to all about him?

What does "when I come to the outside of the camp" mean?

Where did Gideon get all his trumpets? (Verses 8, 16, 18.)

What time of the night was the middle watch?

Were Gideon's soldiers able to obey his commands? (Verse 19.)

**3. The Victory, v. 21-23.**

After the battle cry did they march forward? (Verse 21.)

What did the Midianites do?

Who slew them?

In what direction did they fly?

Who pursued them?

What does the GOLDEN TEXT say?

**Practical Teachings.**

Where does this lesson show—

1. That God works by his providence on behalf of his saints?

2. That victory is wrought not by might nor by power, but by God's spirit?

3. That the more grace we have the more common sense we need and should have?

**QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.**

**1. The Dream, v. 13-15.**

Whose dream is here told?

What was the dream?

What explanation of the dream was given?

What did Gideon do when he heard the story?

What did he say to Israel?

How did Gideon know this to be true?

**2. The Attack, v. 16-20.**

How did Gideon divide his force?

How did he arm them?

Whose example were all bidden to follow?

At the signal what were all to do and say?

When did they come to the attack?

How did they begin the attack?

**3. The Victory, v. 21-23.**

What did the Israelites do?

What did the enemy do?

What did the Lord do?

Where did the Midianites go?

Who followed in pursuit?

Who guarded the fords of the Jordan? (Verse 24.)

What princes were taken and slain? (Verse 25.)

By what other name is Gideon known? (Verse 1.)

What confidence have all who confide in God?  
 (GOLDEN TEXT.)

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. A lesson of faith?
2. A lesson of obedience?
3. A lesson of self-reliance?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

- What heathen nation came against Israel?  
 Why did the Lord allow this?  
 To whom did the Israelites cry for help?  
 What kind of a man was Gideon?  
 What did an angel tell him?  
 Did Gideon feel strong and brave? (Chapter 6, verse 15.)

Upon whom did he depend for strength? **The Lord.**

- How large an army did he gather? (Verse 3.)  
 How many did he choose for his soldiers?  
 What did he hear before going to battle?  
 What did each soldier carry to the battle?  
 What did they do with the trumpets?  
 With the pitchers?  
 What shout did they raise?  
 What frightened the Midianites?  
 What did they do?  
 Who fought for Israel?

**Remember—**

- That every child has a battle to fight.  
 That God helps those who trust him.

**EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.****General Statement.**

The story of Gideon is one of the most picturesque of the entire sacred history. The Israelites had again forgotten their God and turned to the foul worship of Syrian idols. Again had bondage and misery come to remind them of him who alone can save. The strong warriors of Midian pour over the land, robbing the people of grain and sheep and cattle and domestic treasures, even of the maidens who were the joy of their homes. Sometimes they seemed to be more intent on destroying harvests than on gathering them. They were men very much like the modern Bedouins have shown in recent centuries. In the midst of the prevailing misery and repentance a traveler, with his staff in his hand, appeared in larger numbers and with greater military power than the Bedouins have shown in recent centuries. In the midst of the prevailing misery and repentance a traveler, with his staff in his hand, came to Ophrah, where Gideon, the son of Joash, a brave but modest man, was threshing wheat; not, however, with oxen on a threshing floor, as might have been expected, but in a wine press, where his industry might be unmolested, and probably working with a stick. Like all his countrymen, he was afraid of the marauders. This stranger, who was an angel of the Lord, said, "Jehovah is with thee, thou valiant hero." We can imagine the blush of shame that flew over Gideon's face as he confessed, "No, my lord; Jehovah is not with me. If he were with us, would I be driven to thresh wheat in a wine press?" The conversation that follows shows as much as any of his more famous deeds the noble character of Gideon. Directed by the Lord, he that very night tore down Baal's altar and built an altar to Jehovah in its stead. To make sure that he had not been excited by fevered fancy he asks God for a miraculous sign to confirm his confidence, and receives it. The first night the fleece of wool which he left on the earth was saturated with dew, while all around it was dry. On the next night the fleece was dry, while the ground about was wet with dew. This was the final test, and Gideon, now sure that God was with him, was ready for battle. With the vigor of a great general Gideon gathered an army, which arranged itself near the valley of Jezreel, in which the Midianites had drawn themselves up in battle array. But Gideon's army was too large and contained too many cowardly and distrustful soldiers to do effective work, so the proclamation was made by divine authority, "Whosoever is fearful let him return, and depart early!" Twenty-two thousand returned, and only ten thousand remained. God said, "The people are yet too many." And by a strange, arbitrary test three hundred were selected from the ten thousand. That night Jehovah ordered Gideon, with Phurah, his servant, to go down in disguise into the camp of Midian, and here our lesson begins.

**Verse 13. When Gideon was come.** Better, "As he walked along." He was now within the Midianite encampment, and overheard what was to follow as he passed between the tents. We are to think of the encampment as a great disorderly mass of nomadic warriors, who had their women and children, and their household goods and cattle, all with them. While military discipline was resorted to very early in the history of the world, there have been repeatedly in the East instances of huge armies like that of Midian, which included in

the company a whole nation—men, women, and children. **There was a man that told a dream.** Dreams are not, and never were, infallible messengers from on high, but God has often used them to influence men under his guidance, just as he has often used all other sorts of incidents in ordinary life. **A cake of barley bread** was an article of food which the Midianites at that time, with the wealth of Israel within their grasp, would look upon with distaste. Only the poor and beasts eat barley in the East. **Tumbled**

into the host. The whole phrase might better be translated, "A round barley loaf rolled itself over the army." **Came unto a tent.** It should be the tent, and specifies the tent of the king or general. The loaf rolled straight on over all other tents till it came to that of the chieftain. We must remember that everything that the Midianite had was in his tent—his garments and jewels, his cattle and provisions, his wives, his children, all his wealth and all his dear ones. In the rest of the sentence words are heaped up with a vigorous repetition that indicates how complete was the overthrow that this little barley loaf seemed to make. The tent was knocked and turned over and over until the final collapse.

**14. His fellow.** His comrade. **The sword of Gideon.** Sword is here used by a figure of speech for valor, military prowess. The barley loaf would be an apt symbol to the Arab of an insignificant person such as Gideon must have appeared; but doubtless the uprising of Gideon had already been discussed in the camp of Midian, and caused much fear. The desertion of two thirds of Gideon's men must have made his earlier efforts appear contemptible, while his mysterious later movements may have aroused the superstitions of the Arabs. **Into his hand hath God delivered Midian.** Why did this Arab think so? Doubtless he had an evil conscience.

**15. Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof.** And it is hard to tell which helped him the more. The dream itself must have seemed to him to be a direct help from Almighty God. The interpretation showed that the dream was thoroughly effective, and had struck panic into the hearts of his enemies. **He worshipped.** Bowed in adoring gratitude. **Returned into the host of Israel.** The sooner he got back the better now. **Arise.** Up, and be quick about it. **The Lord hath delivered into your hand the host.** Here is holy confidence. He had good reason for it, to be sure, but not any better than you have to trust in God.

**16. He divided the three hundred men into three companies** to make the impression of great numbers, and to add to the confusion which he foresaw. **A trumpet.** These had been collected from the large army which he commanded at first. Read verse 8. **Pitchers.** Earthen jars for drawing water. **Lamps.** Torches. The breaking of the pitchers and the sudden flaring of the torches must have been terrifying. In Egypt, even to-day, torches in pitchers are used as we would use dark lanterns.

**17. Look on me, and do likewise.** Watch me. The night was dark, but they could easily observe their commander, especially when he broke his pitcher. The Christian teacher

should always be able to say, **As I do, so shall ye do.**

**18. Blow ye the trumpets.** Armies from the earliest days have had their trumpeters, or buglers, but an army of soldiers everyone of whom blew a trumpet was a new thing in warfare, and their united blare doubtless added greatly to the terror of the Midianites. **The sword** is not in the original. The war cry was, "For Jehovah and for Gideon."

**19. The beginning of the middle watch.** At midnight. **Newly set the watch.** Military forms were gone through, but evidently this encampment was very badly prepared for an attack. See note on verse 13.

**20. The distracting noise,** the sudden flash of so many lanterns, the evident presence of enemies in the midst of the Midianite army, and the shrill war cry bewildered and confounded the Midianites; but we cannot wonder when we regard them not as an army, but as a horde, with women, children, and cattle within the encampment.

**21. They stood . . . all the host ran.** Undisciplined troops, especially undisciplined orientals, are liable to be thus thrown into a panic. The great destruction was wrought not by the sword of Gideon, not by any miraculous interposition, but by the Midianites upon themselves, in the darkness, through confusion and terror. **Cried, and fled.** And as each one fled, his comrade mistook him for a pursuing Israelite and fell upon him to slay him. Disordered armies of the ancients made such mistakes frequently.

**22. The Lord set.** Notice that here was the natural result of natural causes, but God gets the credit for it; so he should get the credit for all providences, whether or not individual men become the immediate cause. **Throughout all the host.** There was no wing or reserved battalion which was free from panic. **Fled to Beth-shittah.** Possibly the modern Shutta, between Jezreel and the Jordan, for near this the Midianites must have passed in their flight toward the Jordan. **Zererath.** Mentioned under somewhat different names in 1 Kings 7. 46; 2 Chron. 4. 17, which was in the Jordan valley. **Abel-meholah.** A place which became more famous still as the birthplace of the prophet Elisha.

**23. The men of Israel gathered themselves together.** This means not the three hundred, but the host of warriors who had been dismissed, many of whom had hardly yet reached their homes. They now eagerly joined in the pursuit of their nation's enemies. **Naphthali . . . Asher . . . Manasseh.** The boundary lines of these three tribes come nearly together, and doubtless fleet runners were sent out by Gideon in all directions to notify these people, so that they were all ready to respond to the notification.

## CRITICAL NOTES.

No one should attempt to teach, or even study, this lesson without first having read carefully the story of Gideon as told in the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of Judges.

**Verse 13. Gideon was come.** Gideon, according to Keil, was judge forty years, B. C. 1222-1182. Usher places the beginning of his rule in B. C. 1249, while others make it a hundred years earlier. **There was a man that told a dream.** The ancients in all countries placed a great stress upon dreams. This was one way in Bible times in which God communicated with men. See Gen. 20. 3; 28. 8-12; Num. 12. 6; 1 Kings 3. 5; Matt. 1. 20; Acts 2. 17. Wonderful dreams, prophetic in their nature, are recorded in the history of many nations. It was not accidental that Gideon heard the dream just at this time; it was providential, and was intended to encourage him for his great work. **A cake.** This word, used only here, denotes anything circular. **Barley bread.** Barley formed the food of the very poor; most often it was eaten by beasts. This despised barley cake, the emblem of poverty and wretchedness, was to represent Israel, or, rather, the army of Gideon. **Came unto the tent.** Not "a tent," as in the Authorized Version. The word tent is made definite, as referring to the principal tent, that of the king or commander in chief, or, as others think, to the Midianite encampment collectively. The accumulation of terms, or the repetition of words of similar import, as "tumbled," "smote," "fell," "turned upside down," and "lay along," is pure Hebrew style, and expresses complete demolition.

**14. This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon.** These enemies of Israel, conscious of the injustice of their course, were conscience-stricken and troubled. The recital of this dream, revealing their terror and apprehension, along with many other favorable omens, would naturally strengthen Gideon for his dangerous undertaking.

**15. When Gideon heard the telling of the dream.** The voice in which the dream was related and the way it was interpreted convinced Gideon of the low spirits and discouragement of the Midianites, and helped to fill him with new inspiration. Strong indeed is he who believes the commands of God and tries to execute them. **That he worshiped.** Filled with gratitude to God and full of faith in his promises, he turns aside to invoke the divine blessing. The man who works for God in the spirit of Gideon is bound to succeed. Let us therefore put on our armor to drive out the spiritual Midianites who may be around us, devastating the Lord's heritage. **Returned into the camp.** There is a time for worship and a time for fighting for God, for home, and native land.

**16. He divided the three hundred men**

**into three companies.** He had two objects in so doing—to attack the foe at three different points, and to make it appear that he commanded a much larger force. Saul practiced the same tactics (1 Sam. 11. 11; 2 Sam. 18. 2), and so have generals in all ages and countries even to this day. The highest morality must not be sought for in the times of the judges or in the abnormal times of war. **Trumpets.** Ordinarily not every soldier carried a trumpet, but one in each company. Thus the blowing of three hundred trumpets would lead the Midianites to believe that there were that many companies, or an exceeding large army. **Empty pitchers.** These pitchers, at a given signal, were to be broken (verse 19), so as to add to the confusion. The word "torches," or "firebrands," as in Revised Version, and also in Judg. 15. 4, 5, is better than "lamps."

**17. Look on me, and do likewise.** Pay strict attention and follow me in every particular. There is nothing like trust in and obedience to the commander in chief. Would we succeed in the Christian warfare, we must look to Christ.

**18. For the Lord and for Gideon.** It is not necessary with the Authorized Version to supply the word "sword," for it is not in the original. Why used in verse 20 and omitted here cannot be explained.

**19. In the beginning of the middle watch.** This was toward midnight, for the Hebrews at this time divided the night into three watches. See Exod. 14. 24; 1 Sam. 11. 11; and Lam. 2. 19. In New Testament times the Jews followed the Romans, and divided the night into four watches. See Matt. 14. 25. **Blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers.** The effect of breaking so many pitchers, the sudden glare of so many torches, carefully concealed to that moment, and the shrill noise of three hundred trumpets would be terrible in the darkness of the night, especially upon a vast horde of men, women, and children suddenly aroused from profound sleep. Both Keil and Niebuhr furnish several instances of similar stratagems.

**20. Held the torches in their left hands.** No arms of any kind are mentioned. This shows the profound faith exhibited by Gideon and his faithful band.

**21. They stood.** The panic was so great that it required no effort on the part of the Hebrews. **All the host ran.** In the darkness of the night and in the great confusion which followed the Midianites could not distinguish the friend from the foe, so that "every man's sword was turned against his brother." Compare 1 Sam. 14. 16, *f*; 2 Kings 7. 6, *f*; 2 Chron. 20. 23.

**22. Beth-shittah.** This word means "house of acacias." The location of the place is unknown. Robinson suggests Shutta, in the valley of Jezreel, but Keil thinks this place too far north. **Zere-rah.** There is no agreement among commentators either as to the location or the orthography of this place. The letters *z* *d* *l* *e* *t* *h* and *r* *e* *s* *h* are so similar in Hebrew that one could be written very easily for the other. Thus, many read "Zere-dah," identifying it with Zeredatha, another name for Zarthan (2 Chron. 4. 17), near Succoth. Now Zarthan is supposed to be identical with modern Kum Sartabel. **Abel-meholah.** This place, the birthplace of Elisha (1 Kings 19. 16), signifying "meadow of the dance," is supposed to have been a valley some four miles south of Beth-shean. None of the places mentioned in this verse have been positively identified.

**23. The men of Israel were gathered together.** Or, more literally, "were summoned together." When the Israelites saw the disorderly flight of the frightened Midianites, they at once followed in hot pursuit, and now the very men who a short time ago had been rejected by Gideon were glad to join in the general attack. **Out of Naphtali.** This tribe was settled along the west side of the Jordan from the Sea of Galilee to the river Leontes. **Asher.** This was west of Naphtali, extending along the Mediterranean from Carmel to Zidon. **And out of all Manasseh.** That is, on both sides of the river Jordan. It is well known that one half of this tribe had settled on the east side of the Jordan previous to the invasion under Joshua.

### Analytical and Biblical Outline. Gideon's Sword.

- I. THE SWORD OF FAITH.  
*He worshipped.... and said.* v. 15.  
Trust in the Lord. Psalm 37. 3.  
If God be for us. Rom. 8. 31.
- II. THE SWORD OF DISCIPLINE.  
*Divided the three hundred.* v. 16.  
By the three hundred. Judg. 7. 7.  
The weak things of the world. 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.
- III. THE SWORD OF TACT.  
*Look on me.... do likewise.* v. 17, 18.  
Walk circumspectly. Eph. 5. 15.  
Wise as serpents. Matt. 10. 16.
- IV. THE SWORD OF COURAGE.  
*Every man in his place.* v. 19-21.  
Fear thou not. Isa. 41. 10.  
Be strong, fear not. Isa. 35. 4.
- V. THE SWORD OF ENERGY.  
*Sent messengers.* v. 24.  
Earnestly contend. Jude 3.  
Be strong in the Lord. Eph. 6. 10.

### Thoughts for Young People.

**1. When a great question confronts God's cause on earth, he surely raises up a great leader.** Since the first revelation of God in the dim early ages there have not been lacking faithful souls ready to follow holy leadership when it asserted itself. The great men of Bible history and of later Church history were heroes; so in the sight of God were the unnamed men that followed them, and the leader could no more have done without his army than could the army have done without the leader.

**2. When God makes a great man, it is for the purpose of getting rid of some difficulty which threatens his Church.** There have been many great men, great in ability and great in opportunity, whose lives have been evil forces, tremendous evil forces—men like Nero and Alva and Napoleon. The saddest fact about such characters as these is not the simple fact that they were bad, and that their influence weakened the cause of right, but that their exceptional abilities and opportunities had been given them by God for the express purpose of helping on God's cause. A great bad man is not simply a great bad man; he is also a great traitor to God and his own high ideals.

**3. The greatest need in the Church to-day is the need of sanctified ingenuity.** How many swords and how much of bloodshed did the simple breaking of the pitchers and the flashing of the torches save! If active young men and women gave to the cause of Christ as much of their natural ingenuity as they give to their ordinary occupation, the Church would receive an impulse forward such as it has never had.

### Lesson Word-Pictures.

Ho, Gideon, why do you look so excited? Are you thinking of going home—you and your three hundred? Some people think it is the best thing you can do.

Look at Midian and Amalek and all the children of the East arrayed against Israel. Why, you would think the grasshoppers had come, so vast is the multitude. If you want to know the number of their camels, count the sand on the seashore. Go home, Gideon; go home, you and your three hundred!

But this is not what Gideon is meditating. Somebody has had a dream. In the night—the black, silent night—he saw a cake of barley bread, and it was in motion. It kept turning over and over, turning and rolling right among Midian's host, and, this barley wheel striking a tent, over went the tent! The dreamer had a companion, who heard the dream and saw in the cake of barley bread the sword of Gideon!

Is it any wonder that Gideon is excited, that he says his hour has come? First, he bows in prayer

to Jehovah. O, man of the sword, you are a man of God, and you shall be a man of victory!

"Arise!" now shouts Gideon to Israel. He tells them God will give them the battle. They look very few in numbers, those three hundred, by the side of the grasshoppers from the East, but every man under Gideon will be a barley cake in terrible motion.

He makes three companies. Every man has a trumpet. Every man has a pitcher. Every pitcher has a lamp. People must have smiled at the size of Gideon's band in the first place, and then how strange their equipment of trumpets and pitchers and lamps! Where are spears and lances and bows and arrows? But Gideon thinks of the barley cake that went rolling and rolling and struck a tent of Midian, and Gideon takes courage.

Gideon now gives his orders. When he and his three hundred reach the enemy, then let them blow and shout, blow and shout. Anything else? We shall see; but don't forget the barley cake, and be hopeful.

The night has come. It is the beginning of the middle watch. Gideon steals out of his camp, and his three companies steal after him. Each man has a trumpet and a pitcher that carries a lighted lamp. Gideon stations his three hundred barley cakes along the outer rim of the enemy's great camp.

All is quiet in the tents of Midian and his allies. There is only the sound of the step of the watch—the watch "newly set." The old watch has gone to bed, and it is dreaming of a battle with Israel and an easy victory. "All is well!" All is well!" murmurs the night wind about the tents of the invader. Rest and sleep and security!

Suddenly there is a trumpet peal echoing in the camp, and then what a blast! What a shout—"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!"

The invaders stir in their sleep. They awake! They turn over, sit up, and look out of their tents!

What a sight!

What sounds also!

A horrible trumpet blast!

How loud!

A crashing of earthenware they have caught!

A flashing of lamps!

Lights everywhere, dazzling and bewildering!

More trumpet peals, shouts, trumpet peals—a bedlam!

Lights everywhere! More flashing of lights! trumpets and shouts! O, it is awful! And amid the confusion of sights and sounds rise up the stalwart forms of Israel's warriors, looking like illuminated demons.

In the tents of the invaders is hopeless confusion. An awful fear crazes them! They smite down one another! They flee before that shout—"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!" They are pursued. They are conquered. The barley

cake that struck the camp of the enemy has leveled its haughty power to the earth.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Lamps have from time immemorial been of greatly varied pattern in the oriental world. At Naples the museum contains perhaps the finest variety of specimens to be found anywhere. These were recovered from the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Some lamps were hung from the ceiling, some supported by brackets. The terra cotta and bronze hand lamps recovered from Nimrud and Kouyunjik give a good idea of the lamp commonly referred to in the Bible. The common lamp of Egypt is a small glass vessel, with a tube in the bottom, in which is stuck a wick of cotton twisted around straw. Tin has now become so cheap that it is in quite general use in Palestine. There are also paper lanterns, with a candle inside. The poor only now use lamps made of earthenware. In India the common lamp is only a little earthen saucer, with a bit of raw cotton twisted for a wick. In ancient times also the poor were restricted to the use of earthenware lamps. The common lamp of Bible lands is a small earthenware plate turned up at the edges, holding a spoonful or two of oil.

The Egyptians used a traveling lamp of "waxed cloth strained over a cylinder of wire rings, and a top and bottom of perforated copper." Smith's Dictionary says this would, in form at least, answer to the lamps within pitchers of Gideon. The term used here may be a lamp-torch; hence the lamp may have been a flambeau. If composed as the ordinary traveler's torch in India is, it would be a bundle of strips of rags or flax on the end of a stick, on which oil is poured. Inside the earthen jar it would continue burning in a smothered way without flame enough to break the pitcher, but would instantly flame out with the swinging in the air when the pitcher was broken.

"Pitcher" is the word used for the common water jar, with one or two handles, carried on the shoulder. The forms of the water jars have varied extremely little throughout many centuries. The ruins reveal ancient water jars of the precise pattern of those now made throughout all Asia. The ancient jars, however, were not of so coarse material as those of the present, and were often much more ornamental. The pitchers or jars vary in size from that of a small cruse to that of a great bin holding twenty-five gallons, which is buried in the earth for storing grain or holding wine. The "barrel" of the widow of Sarepta and Elijah's "barrels" of water on Mount Carmel are expressed by the same word as that of Gideon's "pitchers." These were probably earthen jars large enough to inclose the smoldering torch.

*Trumpets.*—The blare of three hundred trumpets and the shouting of three hundred men sud-



denly out of the darkness of the night is in full character of an oriental battle surprise. A recent lecturer on the Thibetans recounts their custom of using bows and arrows in battle, the arrows having a whistle attached, that the shriek as it flies through the air may at once terrify their human enemies and scare away the demons and devils, who are supposed to love war. This, accompanied by the necromancer's drum and the emblem of the thunderbolt—the *dorje*—are sufficient, presumably, to strike terror to the whole spiritual and natural evil forces. Surprises are common in all warfare, but the use of means to terrify an enemy is peculiarly oriental. The Chinese in the recent Chino-Japanese war, both in Korea and Manchuria, were again and again terror-stricken and scattered like chaff before the wind before even the Japanese army got within danger distance of them.

The war cry which Gideon ordered added to the terror, as it included his own name. In the terrible massacre of Cawnpore, India, in the Sepoy rebellion, four hundred men, women, and children were hurled—the living with the dead—into a great well. In all succeeding battles the British soldiers rushed into the contest shouting, "Boys, remember Cawnpore!" This war cry of Gideon has been compared with that of Cyrus. Many instances are recorded in the history of the Romans and Greeks of successful strategy similar to that of Gideon, and Niebuhr gives instances from the history of the Moslems in his *Description of Arabia*—one of an Arab chief who extricated his army when surrounded in a fortress by means which remind one of Gideon's device.

Trumpets, according to a high authority, of the order of our cornet seem to antedate all other musical instruments. They appear on the bas-reliefs of Egypt. Those of the Romans were both straight and crooked.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 13-15.* "The Lord hath delivered into your hand," Napoleon said, "God is on the side of the heaviest artillery." At Waterloo he learned that his words were untrue, for the one hundred and sixty guns of the English overcame the two hundred and fifty guns of the French. "God and one make a majority." Luther proved this. God is on the side of right, however weak it may seem to be, and with him is ultimate triumph. "One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." How helpless seemed the Israelites against the Egyptians! But God was with the Israelites! How helpless seemed William of Orange and the Protestant Hollanders against Spain and the political and religious

forces of Rome! But God was with William of Orange. How helpless seemed the preacher Parkhurst against the combined moneyed wickedness of the great city! But God was with him. During the antislavery struggle a company of people were talking together of the hopelessness of the cause, when one said, "Gentlemen, it looks dark, but God is on our side, and how much do you count him for?" We forget that the chariots of God are twenty thousand.

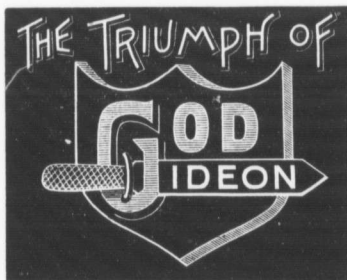
*Verses 16-23.* "God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty." A writer observes that when visiting Kenilworth he was noticing the ruins of solid masonry, and found that in one place the swelling root of a creeper had lifted one arch from its base, and the protruding branch of a chance spring tree (sown perhaps by a field sparrow) had unseated the keystone of the next. And so perish castles and nations, not by strength which they feared, but by the weakness of trifling things which they despised. Little did the famous architect think, when these great stone blocks were hoisted into their place by his giant workmen, that, after resisting fire and foe, they would be sapped and overthrown at last by a vine tendril and a sparrow.—*Bowes.*

*Verses 16-23.* *The man is more than the equipment.* It is always pathetic to read of that experience of Agassiz, when as a young man he was summoned to Paris to be associated with a great naturalist. He was too poor to provide himself with the appropriate instruments for the conduct of his work; so poor he could not procure a decent coat in which he might present certain letters of introduction. He was no mean man in the esteem of the world even then, but he was poor. He had a meager equipment, but he rose to be our greatest naturalist. What did Gideon's men have? Trumpets, lights, pitchers! What did the Midianites have? Spears, shields, bows, camels! A man righteously endowed in his own soul with courage and fortitude has at command that which makes a task both easy and successful.—*Dr. N. Boynton.*

Years ago I was to summer in the Adirondaeks, and my wealthy friend, who was a great hunter and fisherman, said, "You can take my equipment." And I did. It was a splendid outfit, costing many hundreds of dollars. Such guns and reels and torches and baskets, and many things that I could not even guess the use of! Well, I am no hunter, and not a deer or fish did I catch. There were hunters there that season who had nothing but a plain gun and a coil of fishing line, who came in ever and anon with as many captives of forest and stream as they and two or three attendants could carry. Now I fear that

many Christian workers, who have most elaborate educational and theological equipment and most wonderful weaponry, sufficient, one would think, to capture a whole community or nation for God, will in the last day have but little except their fine tackling to show; while some who had small advantages, except that which they got in prayer and consecration, will prove that they have been gloriously successful as fishers of men.—*Tuinogae.*

### Blackboard.



### WARFARE FOR GOD.

GIDEON'S | THE LORD'S  
ARMY

TESTED. | HUMBLE.  
RUE. | HOPEFUL.

BELIEVING IN THE  
POWER OF GOD  
VICTORIOUS.

### VICTORY OVER SIN

GAINED BY  
OBEDIENCE TO . . .  
DEPENDENCE UPON **GOD**

AND BY  
WATCHING  
THE **H**EART.  
EAD. | MY { THOUGHTS.  
HAND. | FEELINGS.  
DEEDS.

"Take heed to thyself."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

The attention of the teacher is called by the *Illustrative Notes* to three distinct themes brought forward in this lesson, and still more elaborately brought forward in the three chapters 6-8. I. The commander, Gideon, born leader, statesman, and general. 1. Had intimate fellowship with God. 2. Uncompromising fidelity to God. 3. Prompt and energetic action. 4. Exact and unhesitating obedience. 5. Tact and gentleness with men. 6. Strong faith in God's promise. II. The warriors whom God chooses for his servants. 1. Humble. 2. Fearless. 3. Single-hearted; this was the test of character by the brook. 4. Believers in God's promises. 5. Obedient. III. What God does for his warriors. 1. He chooses them. 2. He encourages them. 3. He directs them. 4. He opens the way. 5. He gives to them complete triumph.

### References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 16: Torches, 230. Ver. 18: The trumpet (*shophar*), 447. Ver. 19: The "middle watch," 121. Ver. 20: The broken pitchers, 32.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

#### No. 1.

Praise, for his excellent greatness.  
Though troubles assail.  
Deep are the wounds.  
Depth of mercy!  
Keep thou my way.

#### No. 2.

Sing His Praise.  
A mighty fortress is our God.  
Praise, my soul, the King of heaven.  
Here on earth, where foes surround us.  
Jesus, let thy pitying eye.

### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who had overcome the Hebrew nation?  
**The Midianites.**
2. Whom did God raise up to liberate them?  
**Gideon.**
3. What greatly encouraged his heart? **The dream of the Midianite.**
4. What was the battle cry of the Hebrews?  
**"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."**
5. What destroyed the Midianite army? **A deadly panic.**

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? "Though a host should encamp," etc.

**CATECHISM QUESTIONS.** Oct 13

58. To what keeping has God committed His Word?

To the keeping of His Church, for public and private use.

59. what is the private use?

To be our daily and constant teacher and companion.

**LESSON III. RUTH'S CHOICE.**

[Oct. 20.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Ruth 1. 16.

**Authorized Version.**

**Revised Version.**

**Ruth 1. 14-22.** [Commit to memory verses 16, 17.]

[Read the Book of Ruth.]

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: in the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Beth'le-hem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth'le-hem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Na-o'mi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Na-o'mi, call me Ma'ra: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Na-o'mi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Na-o'mi returned, and Ruth the Mo'ab-ites, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Mo'ab: and they came to Beth'le-hem in the beginning of barley harvest.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law;

15 but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god: return thou after thy

16 sister-in-law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also,

18 if aught but death part thee and me. And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to

19 go with her, she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to Beth'le-hem.

And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth'le-hem, that all the city was moved about them, and the women said, Is this Na-o'mi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Na-o'mi, call me Ma'ra: for the Almighty hath dealt

21 very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why call ye me Na-o'mi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted

22 me? So Na-o'mi returned, and Ruth the Mo'ab-ites, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Mo'ab: and they came to Beth'le-hem in the beginning of barley harvest.

**TIME.**—This incident occurred in "the time of the judges," two centuries or so before the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy. Possibly Gideon was judge, but the dates are exceedingly uncertain.

**PLACES.**—The land of Moab, east of the Dead Sea; and Bethlehlem, in the tribe of Judah.

**INTRODUCTORY.**—Ruth was a Moabitess, a descendant, therefore, of Lot, and probably a worshiper of idols till her friendship with a godly woman brought her to a knowledge of the true God.

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The true catholic Church.

**HOME READINGS.**

M. Ruth's choice. Ruth 1. 14-22.

Tu. Preceding events. Ruth 1. 1-10.

W. Finding favor. Ruth 2. 1-12.

Th. Kindness of Boaz. Ruth 2. 13-23.

F. Christ's friends. John 15. 12-19.

S. The greatest love. Eph. 3. 14-21.

S. Inseparable love. Rom. 8. 33-39.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

No. 229, New Canadian Hymnal.

Again we meet with one accord.

No. 131, New Canadian Hymnal.

Blest be the tie that binds.

No. 210, New Canadian Hymnal.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty;  
Hold me with thy powerful hand.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

#### 1. Ruth, v. 14-18.

Read the whole Book of Ruth.  
Study this particular chapter with care.  
Commit to memory Ruth's words.  
Trace the journey of these people.  
Study the ancestry of the Moabites, and find how they were related to the Jews.

Where is the scene of the story laid?  
To what period of Bible history does it belong?

Where was the country in which this Jewish family had been living?

Why were these women sorrowful?  
Of what was Orpah's kiss the token?  
What kind of character is displayed by Ruth's language?

What must Ruth leave in joining Naomi?  
What was her petition?  
What prophet refused to leave his master?  
(2 Kings 2. 6.)

What reason for her request did Ruth urge?  
What silenced Naomi's objections?  
Why is Ruth of special interest to every Bible student? (Ruth 4. 17.)

#### 2. Naomi, v. 19-22.

Why did they journey to Bethlehem?  
How were the two travelers received when they reached Bethlehem?

How did the change of name express Naomi's experience?

Was Naomi's speech true?  
What great blessing had God in store for her?

Was she grateful to Ruth?  
What was the attitude of Naomi toward God and the world?

Give an analysis of her character.  
Was she not acting just as many of us act now?

### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That choosing a lot with God's people means abandonment of the world?
2. That true love does not stop at sacrifice?
3. That fixedness of purpose is essential to success?
4. That what begins in sacrifice ends in blessing?

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. Ruth, v. 14-18.

To what nation did Ruth belong? (Verse 4.)

Of what people was her mother-in-law? (Verse 2.)

Where had the women started to go? (Verse 7.)

What had Naomi urged her daughters to do? (Verse 8.)

What did they each do?  
What did Naomi urge Ruth to do?

What was Ruth's reply?  
What supreme choice did Ruth make? (GOLDEN

TEXT.)  
What people did she thus choose?  
Who was the God whom she chose?

#### 2. Naomi, v. 19-22.

To what place did the women come?  
How long had Naomi been away from Bethlehem? (Verse 4.)

What effect had their coming on the people?

What did Naomi say about her name?  
How had she gone out and how returned?  
What is God's design in affliction? (2 Cor. 4. 17.)

At what time of year was this return?

### Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. True love illustrated?
2. True devotion shown?
3. True faith declared?

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is the meaning of Ruth? "Beauty," or "Friendship."

Where was the land of Moab?  
Who went there to live?

Why did they go?  
Where had they been living? **In Canaan, at Bethlehem.**

Who died in Moab?  
Whom did the sons marry?

Why was the home a happy one?  
What new trouble came to it?

What did Naomi begin to long for then?  
Why were the daughters sad?

Why did they go with her on the way?  
Why did Naomi tell them to return?

What did Orpah do? (Verse 14.)  
What did Ruth do?

Which showed self-forgetful love?  
What did Ruth become?

### Remember—

That true love makes unselfish choices.  
That God loves and rewards the heart that cleaves to him.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

## General Statement.

The Book of Ruth opens a picture of peace in the midst of centuries of war. While Gideon's triumphs are in progress in the north, quiet reigns in the south of Israel. In the peaceful relations between Moab and Israel a family of Bethlehem remove from their ancestral home to the land on the east of the Dead Sea. Here the sons marry the daughters of the land, but after a few brief years of happiness death enters, and the widowed and childless Naomi, left alone of her family, prepares to return to her own home. Her two daughters-in-law, the widows of her sons, go forth to see her on her way. At the borders of Moab are tears and embraces—one daughter giving the kiss of farewell; the other, clasping her hand, resolves to become her companion. Together they journey to Israel, and Ruth the Moabitess becomes Ruth the Israelite, having chosen Jehovah for her God and Israel for her people. At Bethlehem she enters upon a life of poverty and toil, gleaning in the fields for her daily supply of food. But her faith is rewarded by the care of God, by the fellowship of God's people, and by her honor in after years as the ancestress of David the king, and of David's greater Son, the King of kings.

**Verse 14. And they.** The three women on the borders of Moab, Naomi and her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. **Wept again.** In the unwillingness to part after ten years of life together. **Orpah kissed.** She kissed in token of farewell, as is customary in the East. Her kiss showed that her affection for Moab was stronger than her love for Naomi and for Israel. She went back to her country and her gods. (1) *How many love God's cause, yet not enough to forsake all for it!* **Ruth clave.** Showing her resolve to accompany Naomi into her own land—a choice of Naomi's God as well as of her people. One sister showed a kind heart, the other a self-sacrificing purpose.

**15. And she said.** Naomi's words show a clear conception of the religious choice involved in the decision. **Unto her people.** The Moabites, descended from Lot, and living east of the Dead Sea and south of the brook Arnon. At this period their relations with Israel were friendly, but afterward they became enemies, and Moab was made subject. **Unto her gods.** Religion was generally regarded as national rather than individual. Jehovah was the God of Israel, and Chemosh (to whom afterward the Moabite stone was inscribed) was the divinity of Moab. **Return thou.** This was spoken, not from lack of love or of desire to have Ruth among her people, but to make her choice free and voluntary. We are to remember also that the age for making conversions among the Gentile nations had not yet come.

**16. Ruth said.** Showing in her answer a mingling of love, decision, whole-heartedness, and self-sacrifice. For the very reason that Orpah had left, because Naomi was old, poor, and childless, Ruth clung to her. (2) *We should choose for the good we can do, not the gain we can get.* **Entreat me not.** This was in reply to the entreaties of the verses preceding the lesson. **I will go.** To a land which she had never seen, and against which there was a prejudice among her people. **Where thou lodgest.** Naomi was poor and

could promise no worthy home to her adopted daughter, yet for her sake Ruth would dwell in the lowliest cottage. **Thy people shall be my people.** She would renounce citizenship in Moab and become an Israelite. (3) *Such should be the resolution of every young disciple, to possess full fellowship with the people of God.* **Thy God my God.** Probably this did not mean the same fullness of experience with Ruth as with us; yet it was a renunciation of the idolatries of Moab and a putting on of Jehovah, of whom she had undoubtedly received much knowledge during the ten years of married life in an Israelite family. (4) *We should seek God above every earthly possession.* (5) *How many are won to the service of God by the character of God's people!*

**17. Will I be buried.** Most people desired a burial place in their own land, as did Jacob and Joseph; but Ruth renounces all ties that bound her to her native country. (6) *Let us break every band that attaches us to Moab, and fasten every link uniting us to Israel.* **The Lord do so to me.** An ancient form of imprecation frequently found in the Books of Samuel and Kings, invoking the severest penalties upon the nonfulfillment of a vow. It may have been spoken with some expressive gesture.

**18. When she saw.** Naomi's advice was in a measure sincere, for she knew the hardships awaiting Ruth in her land from poverty, toil, and the scorn of narrow-minded Israelites. Yet she was, no doubt, more glad at her refusal than at Orpah's obedience. **She left speaking.** (7) *A firm resolution puts temptation to silence.*

**19. Bethlehem.** At that time, and all through Bible history, a village of a few hundred inhabitants. It is six miles southeast of Jerusalem, among the hills of Judah; and famous as the birthplace of David and of Jesus Christ. It is still a prosperous town, of much better appearance than most in Palestine. **When they were come.** Their journey was around the north of the Dead Sea, crossing the Jordan at the

ford opposite Jericho, and up the mountains to Bethlehem. **The city.** This term is applied in the Bible to all places, large and small, having walls. **Moved about them.** Their coming attracted attention, as the family had once been prosperous and of noble position. **They said.** In the Hebrew, "the women said." **Is this Naomi?** In surprise at her altered appearance and lonely state.

**20. Call me not Naomi.** A name meaning pleasant, beautiful. **Call me Mara.** A word meaning bitter; in allusion to her troubles, widowhood, bereavement, and poverty. **The Almighty.** She had a measure of faith to see that God ruled in her afflictions, but a small measure, since she could not trust him, though she called him the Almighty. **Dealt very bitterly.** The word is from Mara, bitterness. (8) *How fleeting are earthly blessings, when ten years turn*

*Naomi to Mara! (9) How great our need of faith to trust God at all times!*

**21. I went out full.** With husband and children, in happiness. **The Lord hath brought me.** The going was by her own will, the returning by God's constraint. (10) *Often sorrow brings home those who in enjoyment have wandered from God.* **Testified against me.** God had borne witness against her by his dispensations, and in appearance was turned to be her enemy.

**22. Ruth the Moabitess.** This is the name by which she was generally known among the people of Bethlehem, and a name of honor, as it represents the first fruits of the Gentile world brought into God's true Israel, the Church of Christ. **Barley harvest.** Named to introduce the events of the next chapter. The barley harvest is in the middle of April in southern Palestine.

#### CRITICAL NOTES.

The best preparation for the study of this lesson is a careful reading of the eighty-five verses comprising the Book of Ruth. It is one of the most charming stories in any literature, a little oasis in the barren wastes of the wilderness of war, rapine, carnage, and desolation—a veritable garden of the most beautiful and fragrant flowers. It gives us a "peaceful glimpse of the quiet life" of two or three families in those times of disorder or discord. The narrative is full of sorrow, bereavement, pathos, and simple trust in Jehovah, "the Friend, the Protector, yet also the Sovereign Judge and Lord—demanding obedience and heavily punishing sin."—*Geikie*.

The Book of Ruth, really a part of the Judges, was probably written during the reign of David, though the events therein recorded took place "in the days when the judges judged," that is, between the death of Joshua and the accession of Saul—between B. C. 1426-1095. The question has been asked often, Why was this little book written? The answers have been various. Some say that the author had no special object besides that of preserving such an exquisite account of the gentleness and devotion of a young foreign girl to her mother-in-law. The Hebrews, however, it must be remembered, never wrote for the sake of writing, but always had some special object in view—a special lesson or lessons to be taught. We think there are at least four points which the author of the book desired to impress upon his readers:

1. *The danger of forsaking God's people.* Elimelech left God's heritage to escape hunger, but found death in a foreign land. It is better to suffer want with the people of God than to fare sumptuously with those hostile to Jehovah. It is never necessary to forego religious privileges and opportunities in order to better our temporal affairs.

2. *The danger of associating with those who do not love God.* Once in Moab, it is not easy to avoid intercourse with the Moabites; it is still less easy to associate with godless people without imbibing their ideas, without becoming like them. The Hebrews went to Canaan in order to be separated from the nations around. Why then should Elimelech reverse the divine command? The Hebrews were not to intermarry with the neighboring nations (Deut. 7. 1-3). Though marriages with the women of Moab are not directly forbidden, it is but reasonable to infer that they were displeasing to Jehovah, since the Moabites were excluded from the congregation of Israel. See Neh. 13. 1-3 and Ezra 9. 1. This indeed has been the view taken by most Jewish interpreters. The Targum on this verse comments as follows: "And they transgressed the edict of the word of the Lord, and took to themselves alien wives of the daughters of Moab." It is evident that the author did not regard such marriages with favor, and thus records the death of both sons. Whether or not our position be correct, one thing is certain: it is always risky to be "unequally yoked with unbelievers." This is as true to-day as ever. Many a boat has been shattered on this rock.

3. *The duty of returning to God.* Naomi, being a woman, had little to say, but had to follow her husband to Moab. The husband dead, the sons assume control and have charge of affairs. These having passed away, she is free to return to her people, to her beloved Bethlehem. She hastens back, and the blessing of God is upon her. The hands of God are ever open to welcome prodigals, no matter how they strayed.

4. *The blessing attending those who forsake false gods and come to Jehovah.* Poor Orpah! What be-

came of her? We simply know she returned to her people and to her gods; but as to Ruth, blessings covered her every effort from the moment she turned her back on the gods of Moab. Not only did she find a home for herself, but also for her mother-in-law, whom she loved so well. She became the ancestress of not only David, but of great David's greater Son. It is always wise to put our trust in Jehovah.

**Verse 14. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law.** This was the most common salutation in the East, and is often referred to in the Bible. What were the real motives which decided Orpah's course can never be more than guessed at. Whatever these were, she turned her back on Naomi and Ruth and disappears from the scene forever. **But Ruth clave unto her.** Ruth's character was essentially different; her attachment for her mother-in-law was love personified. It is a pure matter of conjecture to say that Ruth had no home or friends to whom she might return, or that Orpah was more happily situated. Ruth and Orpah have been compared to Mary and Martha. See Luke 10, 38-42.

**15. Back unto her people.** Her immediate relations in Moab. **And unto her gods.** The Moabites worshiped Chemosh (Num. 21, 29) and Baal-peor (Judg. 11, 24). Chemosh is mentioned repeatedly on the Moabite stone. The word Elohim, rendered "gods" above, is a plural form; but when referring to Jehovah, the God of Israel, it is always given in the singular, and, indeed, may refer here simply to one god, the chief god of Moab. **Return thou after thy sister-in-law.** This advice, regarded from a religious standpoint, cannot be justified. Either there was but little difference between the religion of Moab and Israel, or Naomi was not thoroughly consecrated. Others think, as Fuller, that this was only to try Ruth's faith. "God wrestled with Jacob with desire to be conquered; so Naomi no doubt opposed Ruth, hoping and wishing that she herself might be foiled."

**16. Entreat me not to leave thee.** "Urge" or "insist" would more nearly express the Hebrew than "entreat." What pathetic eloquence in this short speech of Ruth! **Thy people shall be my people.** Her love for Naomi was so great as to compel her to give up everything, even native land and the nearest human ties. **Thy God my God.** We are not to think of Ruth as being of shallow religious convictions. The Israelites and Moabites were of common origin, and must therefore have had many religious ideas in common. At the most her adoption of Mosaism would be something like the conversion of a Roman Catholic to Protestantism.

**17. There will I be buried.** Orientals make more of the place of burial than we do, though even in our land and times bodies are carried across the continent, and even oceans, in

order that they might rest with the remains of those they once loved. Jacob was taken from Egypt to Canaan (Gen. 49, 29, f.), and Joseph's bones were transferred to the same country (50, 25). **The Lord do so to me.** A very common form of asseveration among the Hebrews. As much as to say, "If I violate my pledge, if I do not keep my promise, then let the curses of God come upon me." **And more also.** Literally, "may he add to"—that is, let his punishment be still heavier. **If aught but death part thee and me.** The particle translated "if" might be rendered "only" or "alone."

**18. Steadfastly minded.** Ruth was firmly resolved and could not be dissuaded. It was not sentiment, but genuine love. **She left speaking.** She no longer remonstrated with her, since she saw it would avail nothing.

**19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.** The exact starting point is not given, the length of the journey from Moab to Bethlehem or the route taken cannot be determined. Bethlehem denotes "house of bread," doubtless from the extreme fertility of the land around. This very ancient town, so dear as the birthplace of our blessed Lord, still has a population of over three thousand. **All the city.** Naomi, descended from one of the leading families, was well known in Bethlehem and, though she had been away for many years, the elder people recognized her at once, and there was quite a stir when she returned. **They said.** The form of the verb in Hebrew is feminine, thus we know that "they" refers to her women friends. **Is this Naomi?** How changed! How bowed down with grief, how forlorn-looking and sad! How does she happen to come without Elimelech and the two sons, and who is this foreign girl? Such, without doubt, were some of the questions asked by the women of Bethlehem.

**20. Call me not Naomi.** Naomi means pleasant. Mara means bitter. The afflictions of Naomi had even touched her soul. **The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.** According to her belief, God was the direct cause of all her trouble; for was he not displeased with the conduct of her husband and sons?

**21. I went out full.** "I" is emphatic. Went out with husband and sons. **Empty.** Without anything—property, sons, husband, all gone. **The Lord hath testified against me.** The figure is that of a judge presiding over a court, and acting the part of witness and prosecutor at the same time. See 2 Sam. 1, 16; 1 Kings 17, 18. Job often speaks of God as testifying against him, and even challenges Jehovah to appear as witness in open court against him. **The Almighty hath afflicted me.** The ancient Hebrews regarded most suffering as punitive in its nature, inflicted as the direct penalty for sin. Naomi fully shared in

this belief (see also verse 13). The Book of Job was written to show the untenability of such a doctrine, to counteract such a belief.

**22. In the beginning of barley harvest.** Barley is harvested in Bethlehem about the middle of April, and sometimes earlier.

### Analytical and Biblical Outline.

#### The Choice of Ruth.

##### I. AN INDEPENDENT CHOICE.

*Entreat me not to leave.* v. 16.

As for me . . . serve. Josh. 24. 15.

##### II. A PERSONAL CHOICE.

*Whither thou goest, I.* v. 16.

Whosoever thou goest. Matt. 8. 19.

##### III. A CHOICE OF FELLOWSHIP.

*Thy people . . . my people.* v. 16.

We love the brethren. 1 John 3. 14.

##### IV. A CHOICE OF GOD.

*Thy God my God.* v. 16.

Fellowship . . . with the Father. 1 John 1. 3.

##### V. A RESOLUTE CHOICE.

*Steadfastly minded.* v. 18.

No man . . . looking back. Luke 9. 62.

##### VI. AN UNSELFISH CHOICE.

*Home again empty.* v. 21.

Affliction with the people. Heb. 11. 25.

##### VII. A GENTLE CHOICE.

*Ruth the Moabitess.* v. 22.

Gentiles shall come. Isa. 60. 3.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### The Example of Ruth.

**1.** Ruth gives the example of self-forgetting affection, renouncing all for the sake of love. (Verse 14.)

**2.** Ruth shows firm decision in the face of many difficulties and hindrances. (Verses 15, 16.)

**3.** Ruth shows whole-heartedness in her choice, not looking back to Moab when she had chosen Israel. (Verses 16, 17.)

**4.** Ruth shows a love for God as the result of acquaintance with God's people. (Verses 16, 17.)

**5.** Ruth shows a spirit of faith, having insight into the relations of God and his people. (Verses 16, 17.)

**6.** Ruth shows a spirit of helpfulness, willing to bear burdens and toil for the support of Naomi.

**7.** Ruth shows the rewards which God has in store for those who give up all for his service.

#### Lesson Word-Pictures.

All through the fields the barley had grown golden for the harvest, and among the slender stalks, as if harp strings, the wind makes pleasant music. It is time for the reapers to go out with sickle and song. All the land is full of hope. This

scene, though, at a corner in the winding road is not hopeful.

These three women that you see have come from the land of Moab. The gray-haired woman is Naomi. Years ago she went from Israel to Moab, and a husband and two sons went with her. She now leaves behind her in Moab three graves, and is on her way to Bethlehem. Her two daughters-in-law stand in the road with her. They are women of Moab, Orpah and Ruth. Will they go with Naomi to Bethlehem? The way is weary and bread will be scanty and life may be long. Still the wind amid the barley sings of hope.

The gray-haired Naomi has told each daughter-in-law to turn back to the home of her mother in Moab.

She loves them. She blesses them. She kisses them.

They weep and say surely they will go back with her to her people.

Nay, "turn again," cries Naomi. What can she do for them? She has no more sons for them. She cannot stand in their way, and their better way lies over toward the land of Moab.

Still they sob and wail and weep. Orpah kisses Naomi, how tenderly, affectionately, again and again.

Where are Ruth's kisses?

How cold she is!

One more loud kiss from Orpah, an energetic embrace, a flood of tears, and Orpah turns back to the blue mountains of Moab. She turns and looks back fondly, and sheds another flood of tears, and waves her hand passionately, turns three or four times, and returns to Moab.

How lonely Naomi feels! Did she do right to leave the blue mountains of Moab? She had heard that there was bread among the people of the Lord, and so started home. Had she done right? The way is weary, the harvest days will be full of toil, and the sunset may be far off. The wind, though, keeps on singing among the barley stalks. Orpah has gone down the road.

Ruth still lingers with Naomi.

Ruth has not kissed her mother-in-law yet. You watch the scene. You can see Naomi pointing at Orpah retreating at a brisk rate. Naomi says Orpah has gone back to her people and her gods; now would not Ruth better go back?

O voice of Ruth, voice of deep, sincere affection!

Is the way long and weary?

"Whither thou goest, I will go," she says to Naomi.

Will Naomi's home be poor, its door humble, its beds mean?

"Where thou lodgest, I will lodge."

Did Naomi bid Ruth go back to her people and Moab's gods?

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."



The time is coming when Naomi must die. In some little God's acre the body will be laid to rest. "Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried."

And death, death, great-hearted Ruth declares, alone shall part Naomi and Ruth.

Naomi can say nothing more.

Two women now walk together in the road leading to the land of the people of God. O blessed is the choice of Ruth! What a loud song of hope the wind sings in the barley fields!

At last the two women come to Bethlehem. They pass along the streets so well known to Naomi. But what a stir the coming makes! This gray-haired woman, weary and worn, her face seamed with care, is this Naomi? "Call me not Naomi," she tells the old-time friends. Her name is Mara. Bitter is the cup she has drained.

"Poor Naomi!" I hear them saying.

Then they look at the beautiful stranger with Naomi. They watch the two going to their humble home. They see day by day Ruth and Naomi going out into harvest fields. How scanty the gleanings! How far off is the sunset! But one day Ruth goes into the fields of Boaz. O what a sweet song of hope the wind sings as the fair gleaner from Moab stands amid the barley stalks!

And now, looking away, what do I see afar? There are shepherds in the Christmas fields, perhaps near the fields once belonging to Boaz, and they hear the angels' song from heaven, and in a Bethlehem stable they find the Christ-child. Ah, not in vain was Ruth a gleaner, becoming by marriage with Boaz a link in the golden Messianic line leading on to the shepherds' watch and the angels' song and the Babe in the manger. Not in vain did the wind amid the barley stalks sing of hope.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Geikie, in describing a harvest scene, says, "The sickle is still in use for reaping, as it was in Bible times—the reaper gathering the grain into his left arm as he cuts it. Following him comes the binder, who makes up into large bundles—not as with us into sheaves—the little heaps of the reaper. During his toil the peasant refreshes himself with a poor meal of roasted wheat and pieces of bread dipped in vinegar and water, just as they did of old. The bundles of cut grain are carried on asses, or sometimes on camels, to the open-air threshing floor, near the village—one of the huge bundles, nearly as large as the camel itself, being hung on each side of the patient beast in a rough netting of rope."—Geikie, *Holy Land and the Bible*, vol. 1, pages 147, 148. The harvest in Palestine lasts for weeks, one kind of grain ripening after another. Legally it began on the second day of passover week and continued seven weeks, till the feast of Pentecost. Barley was gathered first, fol-

lowed by the wheat, almost confined to the Jordan valley. Naomi and Ruth (verse 22) returned "in the beginning of barley harvest," which would be in the hot plains of the Jordan in the end of March, but not till April in the upland and hilly regions.

An understanding of verses 11-13 is essential to an appreciation of this lesson. In the ancient society of eastern Asia a widow was expected to become the wife of the nearest relative of her deceased husband, provided she were not past the prime of life. Naomi says she was "too old to have a husband" under this custom, and she was too old, even if married, to have "hope" of children being born to her, and, even if all this were not impossible, these already adult daughters could not wait to be married to sons which might be born of her in a second marriage. On this hypothesis it was allowable for daughters to marry "stepbrothers." To this day in Egypt, Arabia, and Syria the marriage of blood relatives is preferred. Among ancient Hebrews marriage with close kin was allowable, and always preferable with relatives as against strangers. Dr. Trumbull reminds us that among ancient Egyptians and Assyrians marriage of brothers and sisters, and even of fathers and daughters, was an approved custom, just as it was among Peruvians in the Western world. It was in accord with widespread oriental usage that Naomi suggests to her daughter Ruth that her sister had taken what would be an approved course in returning to her relatives to secure her future marriage to relatives.

When Naomi advised her sons' wives to go back to their own people they wept aloud and kissed her, probably after thoroughly Eastern fashion throwing the right arm over her left shoulder and weeping on her neck, kissing it, and then the left arm over her right shoulder in the same manner. This form of embrace and kissing is not that of daily greeting, but of special occasions, specially after long absence. The form of the commoner salutation was first to join right hands, then each kiss his own hand and put it to his lips and forehead or breast. In case of more formal greeting the element of rank controls the ceremony, as indicating condescension on the one hand and veneration on the other. In Egypt superiors were suffered to kiss the back of the hand of a sovereign or, by greater favor, the palm also. In Lane's *Modern Egypt* it is said the custom in that country was for the son to kiss the hand of the father, the wife that of her husband, the free servant, and sometimes the slave, that of the master. Between persons of the same sex, or within prescribed limitations between those of different sexes, to kiss the cheek as a mark of respect or in salutation has been customary in all the East from the earliest times between parents and children, between brothers and near male relatives. Kissing

as a mode of salutation among men is so common in the East as to attract no more attention there than does the common greeting by kissing between women in Western lands.

Ruth declares that she desires to be buried where her mother shall be buried. This great desire of burial with ancestors is far stronger among the older peoples of the globe than among modern people, among whom the necessities and facilities for wide colonization, by making this impossible, gradually wear down this natural instinct. The Chinese for many special reasons exhibit this passion in the extreme, as in case of migration to any other country they provide for the return of their dead bodies for burial with their ancestors, and when they go away under contract of service this is made a condition. In case of war or riot the first thing nearly that is attempted is to destroy the ancestral graves of an enemy. This desire of Ruth to have her bones receive ancestral burial on the mother-in-law's side of descent was an accentuation of her absolute and inseparable devotion to her.

#### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 14 and 15.* "Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her." Orpah was attracted to the new religious faith, but when it came to the test of giving up all she turned back. She is an illustration of the Gospel hearer, who, in the parable, is like the seed which fell into a stony place. He receives the word with joy, but, having no root, believes "for a while," and in time of testing falls away. Guthrie says: "Paul had such hearers, whom he addresses, saying, 'Ye did run well, what did hinder you?'" John Baptist had many such, and in Herod a distinguished one. Our Lord had these hearers. The day was once when ten thousand tongues would have spoken and ten thousand swords would have flashed in his defense, and the day arrived when, enduring for a while, they fell away, and of the crowds that swelled his jubilant train all deserted him. Impression must pass out into expression.

*Verses 16 and 17.* When Franklin read the Book of Ruth to those French scholars, ignorant of its origin, though informed it was a part of holy writ, they were charmed with its beauty and simplicity. Voltaire, no friend of the Bible, regarded Ruth's reply to her mother-in-law as surpassing any passage in Homer or Herodotus. Goethe, well versed in Eastern literature, styles it "the loveliest specimen of epic and idyllic poetry which we possess."—*Professor W. W. Davies.*

*Verses 18.* "Steadfastly minded." In *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian put his fingers into his ears,

turned his back on the City of Destruction, and "steadfastly minded" ran toward the Heavenly City. Pliable was persuaded to start with him, but he turned back in the Slough of Despond. Frequently has it happened in our mission fields that converts have turned away from their heathen faith and joined themselves to the mission, and this has meant giving up their family and friends as truly as though they went to another country. They have proved their steadfastness by persecution and sometimes martyrdom.

Anastasius, a martyr of the first century, being offered by the King of Persia, first, liberal gifts, and then threats if he would not abandon the Christian faith, replied: "Do not give yourself so much trouble about me; by the grace of Christ, I am not to be moved."

*Verses 19-22.* A friend of mine had been very unfortunate in business; and in consequence was very much discouraged. I dropped in to see him in August, just before I went to Europe, and he said that his business had gone down so far that it could never come up again. I did not return to this country until the next year, and calling on this friend found him very cheerful. He said, "Business took a turn in September, and I found, when I came to strike a balance, that I was several thousand dollars in. You can never tell how things are until you strike a balance." There are some Christians who say that they are very far down, and it seems as if they could never be happy again. Wait a little till a balance is struck, and remember God has two worlds in which to make his promises good.—*Pentecost.*

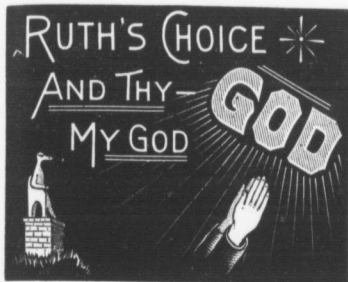
"I never let bairns or fools see my pictures until they are done," said a Scotch artist once, quoting a familiar proverb of his countrymen. With childlike impatience we often demand to know why we pass through this experience or endure that bereavement; we are never willing to wait until God's work is complete. As no artist is willing to have judgment passed upon a painting or statue until the work is finished, so our heavenly Teacher bids us in patience possess our souls. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." The half finished marble cannot tell the grandeur of the sculptor's conception. The canvas but half completed has no tongue to describe the ideal in the artist's mind. The beginnings of our experiences cannot exhibit the fullness of God's plans toward us.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

#### The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw an outline map, showing Judah and Moab, and mark the line of journey around the Dead Sea, across Jordan, to Bethlehem....The story of Naomi's emigration; life in Moab; return.

....The kiss of Orpah. What did it show?....  
 The spirit of Ruth. What were its elements?....  
 The choice of Ruth. What was involved in it?  
 What motives led to her choice?....What exam-  
 ples do we here find?....How was Ruth rewarded  
 for her choice?

Blackboard.



A GREAT CHOICE.

RUTH | . . . I . . .  
 AN ALIEN  
 BY  
 BIRTH, CHOOSING SIN, CHOOSING  
 GOD PEOPLE of ISRAEL GOD COMPANY of CHRISTIANS  
 LAND HEAVEN

"Thy God my God."

DECISION.

THE TIME. | THE PLACE.  
 NOW. | HERE.  
 THE OBJECTS.  
 CHRIST OR THE WORLD.  
 THE RESULT.  
 ETERNITY  
 OF  
 LIFE. | DEATH.

"Now is the day of salvation."

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

No. 1.

The Lord's my Shepherd.  
 Who'll be the next?  
 Jesus, my portion.  
 All for thee.  
 I heard the voice of Jesus say.

No. 2.

Hark! the voice of Jesus calling.  
 I will follow thee.  
 And can I yet delay?  
 My body, soul, and spirit.  
 Perfect peace.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Whose story is told by the Book of Ruth?  
**The story of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.**
2. Who was Ruth? **A heathen girl of Moab.**
3. What was her destiny in Jewish history?  
**To be an ancestress of Christ.**
4. What was the moving principle of her life?  
**Fidelity to her loved ones.**
5. In what words did she express her loving purpose? **GOLDEN TEXT: "Thy people shall be my people," etc.**

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

60. How may we best use the Word of God for private benefit?

By using all the helps that may enable us to understand it, with prayer that the Holy Spirit may show us its meaning, and apply it to our hearts.

John v. 39.

Acts vii. 17. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.

2 Timothy iii. 15-17.

61. What is the public use of God's word?  
 For teaching and preaching in public.

B. C. 1160.]

## LESSON IV. THE CHILD SAMUEL.

[Oct. 27.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. 1 Sam. 3. 9.

## Authorized Version.

1 Sam. 3. 1-13. [*Commit to memory verses 1-4.*]

[Observe connection with verses 14-21.]

1 And the child Sam'u-el ministered unto the Lord before E'li. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; *there was no open vision.*

2 And it came to pass at that time, when E'li was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that he could not see;*

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Sam'u-el was laid down to sleep;

4 That the Lord called Sam'u-el: and he answered, *Here am I.*

5 And he ran unto E'li, and said, *Here am I;* for thou calledst me. And he said, *I called not; lie down again.* And he went and lay down.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Sam'u-el: and Sam'u-el arose and went to E'li, and said, *Here am I;* for thou didst call me. And he answered, *I called not, my son; lie down again.*

7 Now Sam'u-el did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Sam'u-el again the third time. And he arose and went to E'li, and said, *Here am I;* for thou didst call me. And E'li perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9 Therefore E'li said unto Sam'u-el, *Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.* So Sam'u-el went and lay down in his place.

10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Sam'u-el, Sam'u-el. Then Sam'u-el answered, *Speak; for thy servant heareth.*

11 And the Lord said to Sam'u-el, *Behold, I will do a thing in Is'ra-el, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.*

12 In that day I will perform against E'li all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

**TIME.**—B. C. 1160. **PLACE.**—Shiloh, in central Palestine. **INTRODUCTORY.**—Eli was at once high priest and judge. His sin lay in his indulgence of his sons' sins. These men took advantage of their position to corrupt the whole nation. There was no strong central government. The tabernacle stood in Shiloh, and the priests' apartments were attached to it. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The divine revelation.

## HOME READINGS.

*M.* The child Samuel. 1 Sam. 3. 1-13.

*Tu.* Growing in favor. 1 Sam. 3. 15-21.

## Revised Version.

- 1 And the child Sam'u-el ministered unto the Lord before E'li. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no
- 2 open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when E'li was laid down in his place, (now his eyes had begun to wax dim, that he could not
- 3 see,) and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Sam'u-el was laid down to sleep, in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was;
- 4 that the Lord called Sam'u-el: and he said,
- 5 Here am I. And he ran unto E'li, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he
- 6 went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Sam'u-el. And Sam'u-el arose and went to E'li, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he answered, I called not,
- 7 my son; lie down again. Now Sam'u-el did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word
- 8 of the Lord yet revealed unto him. And the Lord called Sam'u-el again the third time. And he arose and went to E'li, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And E'li perceived that the Lord had called the child.
- 9 Therefore E'li said unto Sam'u-el, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Sam'u-el went and lay down in
- 10 his place. And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Sam'u-el, Sam'u-el. Then Sam'u-el said, Speak; for thy servant
- 11 heareth. And the Lord said to Sam'u-el, Behold, I will do a thing in Is'ra-el, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall
- 12 tingle. In that day I will perform against E'li all that I have spoken concerning his house,
- 13 from the beginning even unto the end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever, for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons did bring a curse upon themselves, and he restrained them not.

*W.* Lent to the Lord. 1 Sam. 1. 21-28.

*Tu.* His mother's joy. 1 Sam. 2. 1-11.

*F.* Judgment on Eli. 1 Sam. 2. 30-36.

*S.* Judgment completed. 1 Sam. 4. 10-18.

*S.* Youthful knowledge of Scripture. 2 Tim. 3. 10-17.

## LESSON HYMNS.

No. 267, New Canadian Hymnal.

Happy the child whose youngest years.

No. 261, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, happy is the child who hears.

No. 73, New Canadian Hymnal.

God calling yet! shall I not hear?

**QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.****1. A Voice in the Night, v. 1-10.**

Who was Samuel? Read chapter 1 and learn all about his parentage and previous history.

How came he to be ministering unto the Lord?

Where was the tabernacle of Israel at this time located? Recall all you have learned about the tabernacle and its priesthood.

Why was it that God seemed to be so distant from men at this time?

Who was Eli? Search all the references concerning him in the Scriptures.

During what time were the lamps in the tabernacle kept burning? (Exod. 27. 21.)

What awakened Samuel from his sleep?

What is meant by the assertion that Samuel did not know the Lord?

Find indication of the beginning of the prophetic order before this. (See 1 Sam. 2.)

Do you believe that God calls men now as certainly as then?

Give a reason for your answer.

How does God call men now?

What is essential now to hearing God's call?

Why were not other boys in Israel called as well as Samuel?

What had led to this special call?

Who besides had been called by name by the Lord? (Gen. 22. 11; Exod. 3. 4.)

What was Samuel's answer to God's call?

Write a parallel or a contrast between yourself and Samuel.

**2. The Judgment of the Lord, v. 11-18.**

What evil tidings did the Lord reveal?

Why was not the message given directly to Eli?

What law concerning parental duty is here implicitly stated?

Was the message new?

Why was not the manner of the punishment revealed?

**Practical Teachings.**

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. That God's revelations of his will and grace are open to children?

2. That parental inattention begins parental sorrow?

3. That God knows and calls his children by name?

**QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.****1. A Voice in the Night, v. 1-10.**

What youthful servant and service are here named?

What precious gift was then rare?

What signs of old age appeared in Eli?

Where was Samuel at night?

What call came, and what answer was given?

To whom did Samuel go?

What was he bidden to do?

What did Samuel say a second time?

Of what was Samuel then ignorant?

What did Eli perceive at the third call?

What did he bid Samuel to do?

What call then came? How did Samuel answer? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

When God speaks to us what answer should we make? (Acts 9. 6.)

**2. The Judgment of the Lord, v. 11-18.**

Who would be startled by the Lord's judgment?

Against whom would the judgment be?

What had the Lord told Eli?

What evil now invited judgment?

To whom did Samuel tell the message? (Verses 16-18.)

What was Eli's answer? (Verse 18.)

What three marks of favor did the Lord show to Samuel? (Verses 19-21.)

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

Where have we in this lesson—

1. An example of youthful piety?

2. A lesson in prompt obedience?

3. A warning against God's judgment?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

Who was Eli?

What work had he to do?

How many sons had he?

What were their names?

What kind of men were they?

Who is grieved by evil doing?

Who was Samuel?

Why did he stay with Eli?

What is a minister?

Do you know any child minister?

Who gave Samuel to the Lord?

What kind of a coat did he wear? (See 1 Sam. 2. 18, 19.)

Who called Samuel one night?

How did he call him?

Does God know us by name?

Who did Samuel think called him?

How many times did he make the mistake?

What did Eli perceive?  
 What did he tell Samuel?  
 Did the Lord really speak to Samuel?  
 What did he tell him?

**Remember—**  
 That you may be a little "minister" to the Lord.  
 That the Lord still speaks to those who listen.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

#### General Statement.

Amid the disorder in the era of the judges, in the general neglect of religion, the hollow forms of service by wicked priests, and the idolatry of the people, there is one picture upon which we love to linger—the child Samuel in the house of God. We may well believe that his thoughtful eyes early began to see more in the ritual than its outward form. As he filled the lamps, he may have dimly recognized something of the divine light within; as he saw with childlike pain the sacrifice slain and laid on the altar, he may have apprehended some of the deeper truths of the atonement, and so grown into nearer fellowship with God and a fitness to receive the message from on high. The hour comes when Samuel is to learn at once the solemn joy of communion with the Almighty and the solemn responsibility of the prophetic mission. He hears the Voice breaking the stillness of his chamber once and again. His light footfalls sound on the floor as he runs to the aged priest, eager to fulfill his service. How deep the feeling in his throbbing heart when the third time he waits to hear once more what he now knows is the voice of Israel's God! How heavy the pain as the prophet's burden thus early rests upon him, and he is compelled to break the sad message to one who has been to him a father and a friend! And when the news flies through the land that the silence of the centuries is broken, that a prophet has arisen to deliver God's message to his chosen people, how great the gladness in that mother's heart among the mountains at Ramah as the word comes to her that the child of her prayers has been chosen as the prophet of God!

**Verse 1. The child Samuel.** He was at this time twelve years old, according to Jewish tradition. **Ministered.** Lighting the lamps, opening the doors, and generally helping the high priest, who was now blind and infirm. (1) *A thoughtful child can do much to help others.* **Before Eli.** Under his direction and care, taking in his heart the place of his own unworthy sons. **The word of the Lord.** God's message through inspired prophets. **Was precious.** "Was rare." We read of but few prophets in the period of the judges, on account of the sinfulness of the priesthood and the neglect of religion. **No open vision.** No direct revelation through a prophet whose word was given abroad to the people. (2) *How grateful should we be for the revelation of God's will in his written word!*

**2, 3. At that time.** That special time is here referred to when the vision to be related took place. **Eli was laid down.** At night, while the aged priest was sleeping in one of the chambers around the tabernacle. **Eyes began.** The dimness of Eli's sight is mentioned as a reason why Samuel ran so promptly to his assistance. **The lamp of God.** The seven-branched candlestick in the holy place. **Went out.** Most of the lamps went out near morning, but one was filled later, so that at no time would all be extinguished. **Temple of the Lord.** The general name for the tabernacle and all the outbuildings which had grown up around it, which were retained in the temple of Solomon. **Where the ark of God was.** The ark is named as the

most important object in the temple, not as in the room where Samuel was sleeping.

**4, 5. The Lord called Samuel.** Pronouncing his name with an audible voice, as was fitting at the call of one who was to usher in a new period in the political history of Israel and found a new order of prophets which was to last till the close of Bible times. **He answered.** Supposing that the voice was Eli calling him. **He ran unto Eli.** Showing a spirit of prompt obedience, for not every boy suddenly waked out of sleep would be as ready to answer a summons. (3) *Let us hold up the example of Samuel to the children as their model in cheerful submission to authority.* (4) "God calls us by his word, and we take it to be only the call of his minister."—*M. Henry.* **I called not.** Eli may have thought that Samuel had been dreaming.

**6-8. Called yet again.** (5) *God calls until the hearer has an opportunity of obeying or refusing by his own free will.* **I called not.** The voice was individual, addressed to Samuel, not Eli; so the priest heard it not. **Did not yet know the Lord.** Had not yet received any direct revelation, and therefore was not able to recognize the signs of its coming. **The third time.** One cannot help noticing the patience and gentleness of Samuel, rising again and again when he thinks that Eli is calling him. **Eli perceived.** At last it dawned upon his mind that God had spoken. The feeling with which he realized it must have been of mingled pleasure in knowing that God was speaking to his people, and mortification in that he

himself, the anointed high priest, was not chosen as the voice of communication.

**9, 10. Thou shalt say.** Showing that he was not envious of the honor given to another. (6) *Let the older ever teach the younger how to address God. Went and lay down.* How solemn the moment, while the child lay with throbbing heart, waiting for the voice of God! **The Lord came, and stood.** This was not a voice merely, but a personal presence, unseen in the darkness, yet manifestly a reality. It was the "Angel-Jehovah" of the Old Testament, the preincarnate Christ. **Speak; for thy servant heareth.** In the excitement of the moment he may have forgotten the word "Lord," yet he showed that submissive spirit which befits one to whom God speaks. (7) *When God talks to us through his spirit, his messenger, or his word, let us be ready to hear.*

**11, 12. I will do.** This was to be the ruin of Eli's family, the loss of the ark, and the destruction of Shiloh, thus making an end of the entire tabernacle worship. **Ears . . . shall tingle.** The news would come like a thrill of woe to every heart, and shock all Israel. **All things**

**which I have spoken.** He had already forewarned Eli by the mouth of the unknown "man of God," whose prophecy is given in 1 Sam. 2, 27-36. **When I begin.** The course of judgment was to go on until completed in the destruction of Eli's house. His sons were slain, himself died, his line lost the priesthood, though the latter event was not accomplished until after the death of David, when Abiathar, Eli's descendant, was deposed.

**13. Will judge his house.** The privilege of approach to God as high priest was to be taken forever from his family. But the personal salvation of his descendants was another matter, which each was to settle for himself. (8) *Parents may have much influence over the religious privileges of their children for generations. Iniquity which he knoweth.* The crimes of his sons, as stated in 1 Sam. 2, which he but faintly rebuked and did not at all punish, failing thereby in his duty as father, judge, and priest. **Made themselves vile.** Rather, "have cursed themselves." **Restrained them not.** (9) *God holds parents responsible for omissions as well as for actual misdeeds.*

#### CRITICAL NOTES.

**Verse 1. The child Samuel.** Samuel, son of Elkanah and Hannah, though born in Ephraim, was really a Levite (1 Sam. 1. 1; 1 Chron. 6. 27, f.). It is well known that the tribe of Levi had no regular portion in Israel, but that the priests and Levites were distributed in the priestly cities. The Levite mentioned in Judg. 17. 7 was "of the family of Judah." Samuel was a Nazarite, dedicated to the service of God from birth (1 Sam. 1. 11), and grew up as an assistant of Eli in the tabernacle. After the defeat of the Philistines at Ebenezer, he was made judge, and with this office he united that of prophet, just as Eli had been judge and high priest. Though Ramah was his regular home, "he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el and Gilgal and Mizpeh" (1 Sam. 7. 15, 16). He anointed both Saul and David as kings. He was by far the most influential of any of the judges, a man of great courage, unmix'd patriotism, and genuine piety, always working for the glory of God and the good of his fellow-countrymen. The age of Samuel, or the dates of important events in his life, can only be guessed at. There is a singular silence in the Bible on these points. Compare 1 Sam. 1. 24; 2. 18; 7. 15; 28. 3. **Ministered.** The exact work is not given, but we may infer that he assisted Eli in various ways. See 1 Sam. 2. 18; 3. 15. **The word of the Lord was precious in those days.** The lawless times of the judges had crowded religion and sacred things into the background. There were few who cared for communion with heaven, and still fewer to transmit the message. And yet God was not without wit-

nesses, for there were some choice spirits like Boaz and others here and there throughout this entire period, and even some religious leaders. See Judg. 4. 4; 6. 8; 1 Sam. 2. 27. Besides, we read of angelic visitations (Judg. 6. 11, ff.; 13. 3, ff.). Moreover, the judges were men who were more or less moved and influenced by the Spirit of the Lord. **No open vision.** There was no recognized leader whose business it was to promulgate the truth. The people, divided into small cliques, jealous of each other, neglected the sanctuary. It was a time of general degeneracy, of groaning for a better state of things. God never forsakes his people, though they be few, but in the darkest hour brings forth some mighty leaders.

**2. At that time.** At night, when all was quiet, in the stillness of the hour, a voice from God came to young Samuel. This parenthetical allusion to Eli's old age and poor eyesight is inserted here to account for the mistake of Samuel, who thought that Eli, whose attendant he was, needed his help.

**3. The lamp of God.** The sacred candelabrum, or the golden candlestick, so often mentioned in the history of the tabernacle (Exod. 35. 14). **Was not yet gone out.** Thus it must have been toward daylight. From the language here employed it seems that these lamps, owing to a lack of oil, went out toward morning. Be that as it may, we read that they were trimmed and replenished with oil every day (Lev. 24. 3). We also read (Exod. 30. 8) that Aaron was to light the lamps at even. The word "continually," in Exod. 27. 20,

probably means nothing more than that they were to be attended to regularly. Some conjecture that six of the seven lamps were put out during the day, while one was left burning. **In the temple.** The word "temple" here does not point to a late authorship; for the tabernacle could be called very appropriately the temple, that is, the place or residence of the great King. **Where the ark of God was.** We are not to suppose that Samuel or Eli slept in the same room with the ark, but rather in some apartments in close proximity to the holy place.

**4. The Lord called Samuel.** In an audible voice. This is clear, since Samuel mistook it for that of Eli. Abraham (Gen. 22. 1), Moses (Exod. 3. 4), and others (Isa. 6. 8) were called in a similar way.

**7. Samuel did not yet know the Lord.** This cannot possibly mean that Samuel was not a worshiper of Jehovah, but simply that this was the first direct message from God to Samuel. It was his initiation to the prophetic office. Alas, how often do we also fail to recognize the voice of God when calling to us! **Neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.**

"It was a gloomy time, poor in revelation as in exemplary religious life. For Eli, the high priest, was weak, his sons defiled the sanctuary, the people served idols (1 Sam. 7. 3), and the Philistines ruled oppressively."—*Nagelbach*.

**8. Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.** How, we know not. The fact that Samuel obeyed the first two calls, as far as he understood them, prepared him for the third and insured him direct communion with Jehovah. Those who live up to the light they have will receive more.

**10. The Lord came, and stood.** This was not simply an impression upon the mind of Samuel, not a vision, but an objective appearance, perhaps in the form of a man (see Gen. 18. 2, 33; Josh. 5. 13, *ff.*), or that of an angel, as in Judg. 6. 14. There was a real presence no less than a voice. **Speak; for thy servant heareth.** Eli tells Samuel to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Samuel, however, perhaps out of embarrassment, omits the word "Lord."

**11. I will do.** The pronoun subject of the verb is not often used in Hebrew. The "I" is employed here for emphasis, showing that God is fearfully in earnest. **Both the ears.** Not one, but both, shall tingle. The phrase is evidently a proverbial expression. We find it again in 2 Kings 21. 12 and Jer. 19. 3, where the destruction of Jerusalem, for the sins of Manasseh and his contemporaries, is foretold. The capture of the ark by the Philistines at the close of Eli's administration was a calamity comparable to the spoliation and desecration of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 7. 12, *ff.*; 26. 6).

**12. All that I have spoken.** This refers to the message of the man of God (1 Sam. 2. 27-36). If any further warning had been given, it has not been preserved. **From the beginning even unto the end.** This clause, literally translated, reads, "To begin and to end." It is a Hebraism, meaning "fully" or "thoroughly." The whole verse, freely rendered, would read, "I will utterly destroy the house of Eli, and thoroughly execute every threat pronounced against it."

**13. I have told him.** The new German translation has "thou" instead of "I." There is no need of the change, especially as it could not be made without violence to the text; moreover, there is no evidence that Samuel was at this time commissioned to speak to Eli. **I will judge.** The word "judge" is used in the sense of "to punish." I will pronounce sentence of death upon his family and will wipe it out forever, will transfer the priesthood and judgeship to another branch. **For the iniquity which he knew.** His sins were sins of omission; nevertheless, they were sins. He knew the wickedness of his sons and remonstrated with them (1 Sam. 2. 23). His fatal mistake was to stop here; he should have gone farther, for though he might not have been able to reform his sons, he as priest and judge of God might have deposed them. See Deut. 17. 12; 21. 18. When a father neglects to do his duty by his children, the state is often called to punish them. **His sons did bring a curse upon themselves.** This clause is very difficult. Notice the marginal reading of the Revised Version, where we read, "His sons did speak evil of God;" that is, they spoke slightly or disrespectfully. The actions of his sons were such as to bring upon themselves the curse of God. Sin in many instances is self-inflicting. For the crimes of Eli's sons see 1 Sam. 2. 12-17, 22.

## Analytical and Biblical Outline.

### The Child Samuel.

#### I. A HELPFUL CHILD.

*Ministered unto the Lord.* v. 1.

Opened the doors. Verse 15.

A doorkeeper in the house. Psalm 84. 10.

#### II. A HOLY CHILD.

*The Lord called Samuel.* v. 4.

Samuel among them. Psalm 99. 6.

Diversities of gifts. 1 Cor. 12. 4.

#### III. A WILLING CHILD.

*Here am I.* v. 4.

Here am I, send me. Isa. 6. 8.

What wilt thou? Acts 9. 6.

#### IV. A PROMPT CHILD.

*He ran unto Eli.* v. 5.

Do it with thy might. Eccles. 9. 10.

Wait on our ministering. Rom. 12. 7.



## V. A PATIENT CHILD.

*The third time....he arose.* v. 8.

Of the Spirit....gentleness. Gal. 5. 22.

Trying of...faith, patience. James 1. 3.

## VI. A SUBMISSIVE CHILD.

*Speak....servant heareth.* v. 10.

To do the will....sent me. John 4. 34.

I delight to do thy will. Psalm 40. 8.

## Thoughts for Young People.

## The Call of God.

1. The voice of God is but rarely heard in a time of wickedness and neglect of God's ordinances. (Verse 1.)
2. The call of God comes in his tabernacle, the place where God meets man. (Verses 3, 4.)
3. The call of God comes to young as well as to old, when the young are living in fellowship with God. (Verse 4.)
4. The call of God is sometimes mistaken, even by those who are willing to obey it. (Verse 5.)
5. The call of God is repeated until the heart addressed by it clearly understands it. (Verse 10.)
6. The call of God should be answered promptly, and in the spirit of lowly submission. (Verse 10.)

## Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is to be a message from heaven to-night, and where will it be delivered? At the house of some notable one, like a prince of Israel, you would suppose. No, none will be left there.

What person whose office is so worthy of notice as Eli's? He is the high priest. The message, though, will not come to him.

Will it not go to some great scholar or great captain, to wisdom or prowess of many years? To no one of this sort. We must wait.

The shadows of the night are deepening all about the house of the Lord. All is still, and the lamp of God burns quietly.

Within the tabernacle is no sound of a footstep. No one is at the great altar without. Eli is asleep. Those that may watch watch silently.

So still is it!

Hark!

A solemn, impressive voice is sounding overhead. Only one person hears it. It is the—boy Samuel; just a boy! Perhaps he is dreaming of his home, of his sweet mother, of his kind father, of the sheep on the hills and the corn in the valley. Suddenly that echoing voice says, "Samuel!"

The tones are dying away, slowly, softly dying, and a boy's face stares into the shadows. His heart beats faster.

"It is Eli!" he says.

"Here am I!" he answers the voice.

His feet patter across the floor, he gains Eli's room, and he says, "Here am I, for thou calledst me."

The drowsy priest wonders, then murmurs, "I called not; lie down again."  
Eli turns over to his sleep again.

"That is strange," thinks Samuel, as in his bed he recalls the voice that spoke to him.

Was it a dream?

Suddenly the mysterious voice breaks the stillness again, "Samuel!"

A boy's face is turned upward, listening and wondering. Then a boy's feet patter away from his little room, and he murmurs, "It is Eli!"

He steals into the old priest's room and cries, "Here am I!" He insists upon it. "For thou didst call me."

The old priest is quieting the lad. "I called not, my son; lie down again."

Eli tries to sleep, and Samuel goes back to his bed.

Again it is still all about the house of the Lord. The lamp of God burns quietly. I do not believe, though, Samuel's heart is going quietly. He must wonder what that strange voice means.

Ah, there it is again!

"Samuel!"

A third time boyish feet patter to the old priest's bedside.

He insists upon it that Eli did call him. He does not realize that possibly God's voice might have sounded in his hearing. Eli appreciates the fact, though. He says to himself, "It is God!"

O, how blind he has been all this time! God calling, and he deaf to it and trying to sleep! God speaking to a child in the service of God's house, God making a temple of that child's heart, and he, Eli, the high priest, asleep to the fact!

"Go lie down," Eli says now to Samuel; "and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

Slowly Samuel returns to his bed, and how seriously he is thinking! Then it was God speaking to Samuel. And does God want Samuel?

There must have been a faster beating of the heart. Is Samuel willing to do what God bids?

He says if God speaks to him again he will surely answer as Eli has taught him. Samuel is ready.

Samuel lies down again. It is so still, and his heart is beating fast. I wonder if the lamp of God could in any way have shone out of the tabernacle so as to have sent a comforting beam in a boy's room. It is so still, still, still, and Samuel lies anxiously listening, his face turned upward.

There it is, that solemn voice calling! It calls twice now, "Samuel! Samuel!"

But Samuel is ready.

There is no hesitation.

"Speak," he cries; "for thy servant heareth."

And God speaks, and he makes a solemn declaration concerning the house of Eli. Samuel heard the voice as God's voice at last. I wonder if God may be speaking to any child's heart near us, and we be deaf to the sound of the wonderful call and fail to give the needed help!

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Polygamy was not common among the Israelites, but Samuel's father furnishes an instance of it. He may have been a Levite, but he was not a priest; hence Samuel as a lad was not in the tabernacle to be trained as a priest. There were many things he could do as a lad, such as opening and shutting the door and watching when the candles needed trimming or to be substituted. The priests furnished him, however, with a sacred garment of white linen, made like the ephod which they wore, and his mother once a year gave him a little mantle to be worn over the other dress. He seems to have been shut up in the tabernacle, and to have slept there even within the holiest place.

He was a child of a vow, his mother having made a vow long before he was born that he should be dedicated to God's service. Many sorts of vows were very common in those days, and among Hindoos it is not at all uncommon for women to seek special blessings of their gods, and to vow to dedicate their children in some specific way if some calamity be averted or some good bestowed on them. The vow was a voluntary obligation to do some act not already included in ceremonial or other religious duty. Jacob's vow is the earliest on record (Gen. 28. 18), though, if the Book of Job be earlier than Genesis, that would antedate the instance of Jacob (Job 22. 27). Vows were of several classes, as vows of devotion, vows of abstinence, or vows of destruction. There was no legal requirement that anybody should make vows. It did, however, restrict the making of them. No man could secure the credit of a voluntary vow to dedicate to holy uses the firstborn either of man or beast, for these were devoted already by law (Lev. 27. 26). A man might devote his child or slave, except the firstborn. If not redeemed, which was provided for by a fixed scale of values, he became a slave of the sanctuary. Vows once made, though voluntary in origin, were compulsory. A wife's vow, like this of Hannah, was void if her husband disallowed it when he first heard of it. Afterward he could not veto it. Eli's sons had sinned by extorting too much from the temple offerings, and, as is common to-day in heathen temples in India, though they were priests, they had committed iniquity with women who came to the tabernacle to bring offerings.

"The Lord revealed himself to Samuel" is a

phrase which indicates the divine origin of the communications. This is emphatically a Semitic phase of thought. The Hindoos generally accept their Puranas and other Scriptures as sacred books, without any thought of seeking evidence of their divine authority. The Veda, the Rig Veda, the first and greatest of their sacred books, the foundation of the whole vast sacred literature, alone can lay claim to being supernatural, but that is not a revelation after the Semitic order. The Veda is held to be eternal and uncreated, and brought down in its entirety by a process not attempted to be explained. The Moslems have the idea of revelation. The Koran is held to be uncreated and eternal, and Gabriel is supposed to have communicated it at various times in parts to Mohammed. But the Moslem mind is positively Semitic, and the concept may be easily assigned to Arab corruption of the original Hebrew idea.

The oriental world was full of the element of oracular utterance. Soothsayers and fortune tellers were a feature for the direction of personal conduct. Some told fortunes by the marks on the palms of the hands, some by fire, some by cracks in the earth. Multitudes were misled and deceived by these deceivers. Kings and warriors consulted them. In later times the temples of certain gods became famous as oracles. God chose now to provide for this feature in the political control of Israel, but the marked distinction between this and other oracles and fortune tellers was that it was always based on moral principles, and was used to educate the people to righteous conduct. The very commencement of this order is found in this lesson, when in verse 13 God says to the people through Samuel that judgments are to come upon the house of Eli forever, because of their iniquity and because Eli had not trained his family along moral lines. The oriental religions, of whatever date, have no such ethical line connected with the element of prophecy.

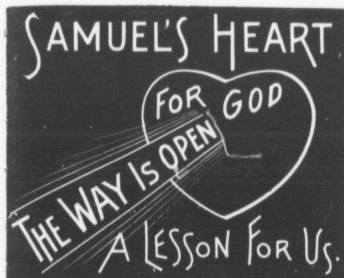
### The Teachers' Meeting.

Review briefly the last lesson. . . . Show Samuel's circumstances in the tabernacle: (1) The evil surroundings, formality, wickedness of priests, decline of religion, etc. (2) The good surroundings, example, and instruction of Eli; lessons from the sacrifices, etc. . . . Describe the tabernacle, its surroundings and contents. . . . Samuel's character while a boy an example to childhood. . . . The call of God: (1) To whom it comes. (2) What is it? (3) What are its results? . . . What God expects of his people as shown in this lesson. . . . How may a child minister to the Lord?

### References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 3: The ark of the covenant, 142.

## Blackboard.



**THE CALL OF GOD**  
COMES TO  
**SAMUEL | . . . ME . . .**  
BY

<p style="text-align: center;">THE DIVINE VOICE.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NATURE. REVELATION. INNER VOICE.</p>
<b>THE MESSAGE.</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;">JUDGMENT UPON ELI.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L EARN. O V E. I V E.</p>

"Thy servant heareth."

**THE CALL TO DUTY.**

"THE MASTER  
CALLETH FOR THEE."

<p style="text-align: center;">THE CALL.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE ANSWER.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">"FOLLOW ME."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"HERE AM I."</p>

What answer shall I give?

## By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 1.* "There was no open vision." It was an age of priestly corruption and spiritual dryness. God cannot speak to men who seal their lips to him. Communication from God to the prophets well-nigh ceased. When the heart is closed against him, whatever he may desire, God cannot impart to it his heavenly visions. It was Abram, not Lot, to whom came the visions of God's purposes. Abram's heart was open to God, Lot's to Egypt and her voices. Christ could not reveal to

Judas, as he did to John, the mysteries of his mission and the glorious future of his kingdom. John's soul turned Christward, Judas was of the earth. It was not to Saul of Tarsus, but to Paul the apostle, that the revelations of the Christian faith were made. The vision of Christ in the eighth chapter of Romans was one he simply could not see until the scales fell from his eyes in the blaze of glory on the Damascus road. Prodigal in his giving, even to the giving of his only begotten Son, he wastes no visions on the blind, no songs on the deaf. To worshipping shepherds, to praying Johns, to kneeling Stephens, to clinging Jacobs, to repentant Davids, to obedient Samuels God communicates his truths.—*Dr. J. E. Tuttle.*

*The child Samuel.* We cannot consider the child apart from his mother, to whom he owed so much.

Rev. Dr. Stevens, the veteran missionary to Burmah, made a visit to his birthplace in Georgia a short time before his death. He met there an aged lady who told him how in his infancy his mother had sent for her pastor and, folding the child in her arms, requested him to dedicate the child in solemn prayer to the work of foreign missions. Of this act of his mother Dr. Stevens learned for the first time, after nearly forty years of missionary labor. "I now see," he said, "why I was drawn so irresistibly to the missionary work. It was the answer to my mother's prayers."

"Multiply the Hannahs," said Dr. Howard Henderson, when pleading for more missionaries. "Multiply the Hannahs, and many a coming Samuel will say, as did the young man in my State recently, 'Put the collection plate a little lower; I want to step into it myself.'"

*Verses 2-10. Willing obedience.* An early message to Isaiah was, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." And when God said to him, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah answered promptly, "Here am I; send me." This was Samuel's spirit. A young woman was reading about the raising of Lazarus, and was impressed by the words, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." It came to her as a direct message, and when she read in the next verse that Mary, "as soon as she heard that, rose quickly and came unto him," this young woman resolved to answer her Master's call and give herself to Christian work, which she did.

A young man who was a carpenter received at his bench a call to preach. After a severe struggle he said, "Here am I." He left his bench to study, went into the ministry, and came to highest honor in the Church of his choice.

*Verses 11-13. An unwelcome message.* "Go,"

said the Lord to Jonah, "and preach the preaching that I bid thee." He was not to preach his theories, nor what he thought would certainly please the people of Nineveh. We hear a great deal nowadays about adapting the Gospel to the times. Far better would it be to adapt the times to the Gospel. Not what men would like to hear, but what they need to hear—this is the thing to be preached and taught.—*Epworth Herald*.

*Verse 13.* "He restrained them not." Those parents are called "indulgent" who allow their children to persist in habits which will bring them everlasting sorrow and shame. I call those parents cruel to their children.—*Susannah Wesley*.

#### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

##### No. 1.

Saviour, like a shepherd.  
Keep thou my way.  
O God, my youth is thine.  
Father, lead thy little children.  
Growing up for Jesus.

##### No. 2.

Hark, my soul! it is the Lord.  
Ever looking upward.  
Our Heavenly Guide.  
Little One, Come to Me.  
Ready for Labor.

#### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did the child Samuel do in the temple? **He ministered unto the Lord.**
2. What took place one night in the temple? **The Lord called Samuel.**
3. Who did Samuel suppose was calling him? **Eli the priest.**
4. What did he say when he knew it was the Lord? **GOLDEN TEXT: "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."**
5. What did God tell Samuel that he was about to do? **To punish the wickedness of Eli's sons.**
6. How did Eli receive the message when Samuel told it to him? **He was submissive to God's will.**

#### CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

62. With what disposition of mind ought we to read or hear God's Holy Word?

With a meek and teachable disposition, with faith, and an intention to practise it by God's grace.

Romans x. 17. Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

James i. 21. Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Hebrews iv. 2.

63. What is our further duty after hearing or reading it?

To meditate upon what we have heard, and seek God's help that we may put it in practice.

John xiii. 17.

#### The Library.

SAID the teacher of a young men's class to the Librarian: "Last Sunday, it being the first of the new Conference year, I asked my pupils how many of them desired library cards. There was a dead silence, which was at length broken by someone asking whether any new books were to be added. That I could not promise. Then someone asked whether the present system might be modified so that patrons of the library could get the volumes which they wanted. A little inquiry disclosed the fact that our library is run on the antiquated printed card plan. The volumes are numbered and each patron has a card with corresponding numbers printed on it. There is no catalogue of books. Nobody can tell what book his card will draw. Certainly the inventor of that system was at great pains to suppress the circulation of books. No, of course my boys don't want to patronize any book-lottery. I wouldn't if I were in their place." This is not an imaginary case, nor is it one of rare occurrence. The library must fail if (1) it is seldom replenished, and (2) its contents are not freely advertised to the school by catalogue, by frequent bulletins and platform announcements, etc. Add a book a week, or four books a fortnight; add only good books, and let the pupils know what they are and how good they are. These are the secrets of success in this department.—*S. S. Journal*.

WHEN the home is ruled according to God's word angels might be asked to spend the night with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element.—*Spurgeon*.

## PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

### Primary Miscellany.

**FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.**—A cultured Christian lady of gifts and graces, writing to a friend whom she had not seen for many years, said: "The silver is in my hair, and I am thinking often and happily of the day when I shall lay down the delightful work and opportunities of this life to enter upon the larger life just beyond. I ask nothing better than to be borne to my last resting place by noble Christian men whom I have trained in the infant class—my lifelong, precious work, which I hope to lay down only with my life."

The writer of "One Class Reunion" says: "This story is true in every particular, and was told me by one of the six men who took the body of their former teacher to the grave."

**MAKE THE CHILD HAPPY.**—Happiness belongs to childhood. Light-heartedness and mirth are spontaneous. Frolic and laughter are absolutely necessary to the little ones.

Do not try to suppress the tendency, only to direct it. Teach that God loves to see his little ones happy, and that the purest happiness comes through thoughtful love for others. Guide the joyous gladness in the classroom. Let the little hands clap as merrily as they will to sweet music, and under your direction. Rest the busy feet by a joyous march, and let a motion song or exercise of some kind work off the extra energy. Time? You can do all these pleasant things in the time that it would take to secure order without such aids, and as your reward have eager attention given to your earnest lesson teaching.

**A SUMMER SCHOOL.**—This is the day of summer schools and conventions, and among them the "Summer School of Primary Methods" may well claim a place.

A very pleasant and profitable one was held this season from July 15 to 20 at Asbury Park, N. J., under the able direction of Rev. E. M. Ferguson, General Secretary of the Sunday School Association of the State.

With such instructors as Mrs. S. W. Clark, Miss Juliet E. Dimock, Miss Annie S. Harlow, Mrs. J. W. Barnes, and others, the school could not fail to be one of interest and profit. Lectures,

addresses, model lessons, lessons in blackboard art, and practical work, including lessons in molding the sand maps, making objects, lettering, etc., filled the week with varied and interesting work, which must have been a delight and stimulus to everyone present.

The enthusiastic secretary deserves commendation for his earnest efforts to improve the foundation work of the Sunday schools of the State. A practical effort like this straightway becomes "a city set on a hill," and its blessings reach far beyond the limits of a single State. Another year there will be other schools of the kind, because this secretary had the grace and courage and faith to attempt this in the face of difficulties.

And so the new education gains ground and the new day comes on apace.

### Everyday Working Suggestions.

"Your eyes look just like new ones," said a little child looking up into her teacher's eyes—eyes that were old enough to wear spectacles. What made the teacher's eyes so bright? The teaching of little children was to her a passion. How could it help but illumine her face? Dr. Talmage said, "Enthusiasm puts a lantern behind the face." Teachers whose faces and manner remain passive have very little power with children. Cultivate sprightliness. It belongs to youth, and will vanish if not cherished. When we are old we must put away childish things, but not childlikeness; that is a quality that belongs to eternity.

MRS. W. F. CRAFTS.

"Lend me your ears," may be all a speaker needs to borrow of an adult audience, but a primary teacher will want the ears, eyes, and hands of her class. Something will occupy these gates to the child soul if the teacher does not. The kindergarten is most suggestive of how to do this. It takes hold of the instinct of imitation, and gives to the fingers and hands a language that is different from that used by deaf mutes, but equally expressive in its way. Under its spell fingers may represent tossing leaves, flying clouds, mountains, swimming fish, flying birds, flitting insects, fish nets, prison bars, church steeples, etc. Such

exercise as this will be found more attractive than pinching, pushing, or any kind of mischief making. When all the powers of the child are thus brought into exercise, there is not only more enjoyment of the lesson, but a clearer understanding of it.

Mrs. W. F. CRAFTS.

#### THE BIBLE IN THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Always teach the lesson from the Bible, leaving all lesson helps at home. One of the most impressive memories to follow the child through life will be that of its first Sabbath school teacher unfolding God's great truths, an open Bible in her hand.

See that the pupils are supplied with Bibles. Some primary departments furnish copies of the Scriptures for all their pupils. If this is not practicable, see if parents will not furnish Bibles for their children. As soon as the little people begin to attend the public schools they begin to clamor for books from which to learn their lessons. Why should not the same desire be fostered in connection with the Sabbath school? No matter if some of them cannot read, let them bring their own Bibles to the class. Let them show teacher the very place where mother found the verse they have just learned. We wish that all denominations would call their Sunday schools "Bible schools," as do the Friends.

Before teaching the lesson ask all who have brought their Bibles to hold them up and to repeat in concert:

"Holy Bible, book divine,  
Precious treasure, thou art mine;  
Mine to tell me whence I came,  
Mine to tell me what I am."

ALICE M. DOUGLAS.

#### CARDS IN THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Notwithstanding the fact that children receive so many attractive cards from all quarters, they highly prize those they receive at Sunday school, as every teacher who is entertained by the cards she has given out whenever she calls upon her pupils can testify. Lesson helps are quickly gone, picture papers are soon destroyed, but the beautiful Scripture cards, safely preserved in scrap-books, will remain to remind the young owners of the great lessons they have learned in their infant days.

In distributing cards I sometimes tell the children that I have a number of cards I will place in their Bibles as bookmarks, to note some verse I want them to learn during the week. I find that

this keeps them on the alert to always bring their Bibles, for if they have no book how can they expect me to furnish them with a bookmark?

A. M. D.

#### TAKING THE COLLECTION.

No matter how carefully the collection is taken, I find that there are generally several children who have not quite finished exploring the deep mines of their pockets for their coined silver or copper, or who have not yet fished their pennies from between their gloves and their chubby hands, or are in the midst of a struggle to untie the corners of the handkerchiefs in which their cents have been safely lodged, and so cannot drop their money into the box at the proper time. Formerly, after these operations were ended and the box had gone the rounds, there would be a great shaking of hands, while the new scholars would exclaim, "O, you haven't got my cent," "You haven't got my sister's," and the tiniest ones would sometimes run forward with their contributions.

Now, to obviate this confusion, I ask as soon as the collection has been taken, and before the children have an opportunity to call attention to any omission, "Now, let's see who has a penny to hold up." The truant cents are immediately presented to view and easily gathered. It does not do to put this request in the form of a question. If so put, it would receive a dozen vocal responses.

A. M. D.

[Time, confusion, and much anxiety on the part of the little ones are saved by taking the "offering" as the children enter the room.—Ed.]

#### One Class Reunion.

BY MRS. GEORGE ARCHIBALD.

A CLASS reunion, now so long past that you must count back to the last year of the civil war for its date. To attend it the colonel of a regiment stationed not far from Washington got a leave of absence. On his way North he had for a companion a private soldier going home on a furlough. Both these men, of about the same age, were bound for the same place—a country village of New York, lying fresh and sweet under June skies.

At the village they found four other men—a clergyman, eminent in the pulpit and peculiarly blessed as a helper to repentant sinners; a lawyer, who wore new honors as a judge; a physician, skillful beyond the average of his profession; and

a mechanic of bluff, honest ways and reliable countenance. These six men were once the members of a Sunday school class in the village that saw their reunion, and were long before self-appointed and mutually agreed to bear to its last resting place the worn body of one whose early influence as their Sunday school teacher had so touched their boyish lives as to hold fast the grateful affection of their manhood. Besides the colonel, one other had made a journey of more than two hundred miles solely for this service, and each had left for it a busy life of many claims.

The dead woman had not been one of wide experience in worldly ways. She had lived simply, inconspicuously, and uneventfully the solitary life of one not set in a family as wife and mother, and had devoted herself to good deeds and near duties. One of those duties, and of the dearest, had been, years before, the care of a Sunday school class of six boys—bright, restless, difficult to control, to interest, to influence. And somehow, by force of patience, love, discernment, and that personal attraction which goes with sincere, intelligent Christian character, she had won them at last to a loyalty of love which time could not lessen.

When this class had grown and scattered, as Sunday school classes must, the teacher had affectionately followed their progress and kept herself alive to their trials and successes. Nor had she ever forgotten to send messages of sympathy or congratulation at those times important to them in personal life and experience. She who had never gone in the flesh beyond a narrow horizon had followed in spirit and shared in heart and mind the varying and widening activities of those who had passed out of her daily associations.

At her funeral the church of her life's choice was crowded beyond its capacity, and its overflow was not owing to the fact that it was set in the midst of a community which, having few opportunities for assembling, improved them all, but to the fact that for miles around the people had an interest in, and a love for, the dead. There were countless tears shed for her as the simple-hearted folk listened to the affectionate and sincere words of their pastor and to the faltering tribute of that minister who in his boyhood had been guided in spiritual things by her now gone to rest.

It was in all its appointments a country funeral, and the graveyard but a short walk from the church. Thither, when those who would had

looked for the last time upon the delicate, tranquil face, the coffin was borne by the colonel, the private soldier, the physician, the new judge, the mechanic, and the minister from the city. As they walked their faces were wet with tears, and when they reached the spot where the dead was to lie beside her father and mother, each with a reverent hand laid a bit of green upon the coffin lid, and then with bowed heads listened to the words of the burial service.

Afterward the people of the village used to tell how it did not seem half so hard that the dead had no near relatives to mourn her, for those men were like six stalwart sons to stand above her lifeless body.

They lingered, when the crowd had gone its way, to talk together before they separated, each to return to his own life. Not one but felt the old ties strong within him and was loath to say good-by. Probably never again would they all come from their widely parted ways to be again an unbroken band. So for the little time left them together they spoke of their common past, of the friend they had buried, of their present and future. And then they walked away, with the manner of those whose hearts, full of the simple loyalty of great natures unspoiled, cling to old loves and places. And the class reunion was over; the dead was left alone.

Not all who go bravely into battle achieve prominent success. Yet every faithful, patriotic soldier helps to win the glorious victories which are heralded around the world.

Not every patient, praying teacher in the Sunday school so remarkably proves the power of personal service as did she to whose burial came those six men with extraordinary fidelity to an early association. But wherever wisdom and Christian love and service work together, though directed by the humblest of us all, there is good wrought for coming men, there is an influence begun which shall reach out into the lives of some who will look back one day to say, "To that devoted soul I owe the debt of one whose life she touched and moved upward in its beginnings."

We tell the tale of the great soldier to those who will only be of the rank and file, and the rank and file are nerved to steadier purpose. We tell the tale of the exceptional worker to those who perhaps may never see the certain fruit of their labors. Perchance they may find in it inspiration in the midst of perplexity.

*Elmira, N. Y.*

## Ways Busy Teachers Prepare Lessons.

BY BERTHA F. VELLA.

They plan and prepare by degrees.  
They read the lesson verses the Sunday previous.

They follow the "daily readings" in their daily devotions.

They think of the lesson, even when about their daily occupations.

They talk over the lesson with teachers they meet.

They use lesson "helps" each day, as they find time.

They find illustrations familiar to the class.

They recall something in their own lives as children which may be used as illustrations.

They seek for stories and object lessons in their general reading.

They keep clippings in scrapbooks or in envelopes, so marked that it is easy to find those relating to particular subjects.

They index a list of illustrations to be found in books and periodicals they do not wish to cut.

They make illustrations. If they read a suitable story, they decide to picture it by a drawing or by using objects mentioned in it.

They gather incidents in the kitchen, sewing room, parlor, street, school, store, or cars.

They take "notes" when reading, observing, or thinking, having a notebook for the purpose near at hand.

They give one hour a week to attend a primary teachers' class, if possible.

They question parents for suggestions or about results of their work.

They ask God for wisdom to know the message for their classes from that lesson.

They select the best illustrations they have at hand for that one message or application.

They pray in spirit while teaching.

They review their teaching upon their return from their classes and see ways to do better "next time."

It is helpful to have a pocket notebook with the titles and Golden Texts at the tops of blank pages. Such notebooks for the year can be purchased at some of the bookstores. A teacher can easily prepare a "homemade" one from time to time.

*Boston, Mass.*

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. THIRD QUARTER.

### LESSON I. (October 6.)

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES. Judg. 2.  
1-12, 16.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The Lord raised up judges, which delivered them" (Judg. 2. 16).

### Primary Notes.

BY MRS. J. H. POLHEMUS.



Who knows what the man at the head of the Canadian Government is called? The Governor-General. In England there is a queen, Germany an emperor; in every country there is some kind of a ruler. Why? To govern

the people and tell them what to do.

For three months we have been learning about what people? In what land had they come to live? Who were their rulers? Moses and Joshua had been their leaders, but they only did and said what their real Leader and Ruler told them. God was their Ruler. You remember that God always spoke to Moses and Joshua, and they repeated to the people what God had said. What had happened to Moses and Joshua? After Joshua was buried, God still told the people what to do through some person chosen by him. [Tell how, although the Israelites were in possession of Canaan, some of the old inhabitants still lived there, and of God's command that all should be driven out.]

You see there was still some fighting to be done, and when Israel did exactly as God said they were victorious. And now we come to a sad part of our story. Some of the tribes did not obey God perfectly, and this brought them into great trouble.

Six of the tribes let part of the people with whom they fought stay in Canaan, and did not drive them out (Judg. 1. 21, 27, 29, 30-33). I wonder if you can think why God did not want the Israelites and these people to live together? Because they were people who worshiped idols and were very wicked. God knew that they would lead his people astray and away from him; so he commanded that the Israelites should have nothing to do with them, but should drive them entirely away.

But there was no Joshua now to remind them of what God said. Many years had passed, and all the men and women who had known Joshua and who could remember the wonderful things God had done for the Israelites were dead too. The men and women now were the little children grown



up, and the Bible tells us a very sad thing about them (Judg. 2. 10-13). You see, they did just what God knew they would if the heathen were left in Canaan. "They forsook," or left, "the Lord and served idols." Doesn't it seem strange that this could happen? How would it make God feel toward them? What would he do? He let the people whom the Israelites had left in Canaan conquer them and take away their possessions, and they were brought into great trouble and distress (Judg. 2. 14, 15).

What could they do? Who would help them? I wonder to whom you go when you have been naughty, and when your naughtiness has brought you into trouble? I wonder who is always ready to find some way to help you? I am sure your mamma. Can you think why? Because she loves you. Was there anyone to help the Israelites? Who? Why was God willing to help them? Because he loved them, and so the Bible says [repeat the Golden Text].

God didn't give Israel a leader like Joshua or a king, but "the Lord sent judges" [print] who led them against their enemies "to deliver" [print] them out of their hands. After this, for many years, "Israel" [print at left of "deliver"] was ruled by judges; so this time is called "The Time of the Judges." We will learn about one of these judges next Sunday, but to-day I want you to think of how many there are now who behave like the Israelites.

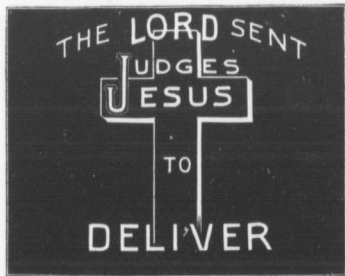
There was once a little lamb that strayed away from the flock. It wandered into a mountain and was torn by the thorns on the bushes, and all tired and wounded it lay helpless in the thicket, but it did not die; no, the good shepherd left the other sheep and lambs safely folded, and hunted till he found the foolish little lamb, and, putting it on his shoulder, delivered it from its danger and carried it home. The lamb is just a picture of many boys and girls who forget, as did Israel, what God tells them, who forget God and follow their own way. All who do this will surely get into trouble.

Do you know of whom the good shepherd reminds us? Of Jesus [print], who came himself to deliver us from the punishment of our sins. [Draw a cross around "Jesus."] Why did he do this? Because he loved us so.

By the side of the Golden Text, let us put another verse (John 3. 16). The Lord sent Jesus to deliver "me" [print at right of "deliver"]. Has he found you? Has he saved you?

Sing first and second verses of "I am so glad."

**SUGGESTIONS FOR COLORING.** Cross, white; "The Lord sent judges," red outlined with white; "to deliver," yellow; "Jesus," white outlined with red.



### Kindergarten Hints.

BY MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

**KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT.** The Time of the Judges. Judg. 2. 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "God is love" (1 John 4. 8).

**AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER.** Holy Bible, Heb. 11; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, vol. ii.; *Bible Work*, vol. iii.; *The Jewish Church* (Stanley); *How to Know the Wild Flowers* (Mrs. W. S. Dana); *Lands of the Bible* (McGarvey); *Hours with the Bible* (Geikie), vol. iii.

#### ATTENTION STORY.

After the minister, Joshua, let the people go to their own homes, they all served God and loved him and lived very peacefully. By and by, when Joshua became very old, he went away from this earth to the beautiful heavenly land. Many of the people lived to be old, and then they too went to that better country. Their cities, towns, and homes were then given to other people. These people did not know much about God, and neither Moses nor Joshua was with them to tell them how to live and how to be good. They heard of two false gods; so they prayed to them and forgot the true God. He did not forget, and when he saw that they needed teachers he sent some good people to them. They were called judges, and they were very helpful. When the people were naughty, the judges talked to them and persuaded them to be good. They were very patient with the people, and when one finished his work another came to take his place. The people were not left alone, for God loved them so much that he gave them a good faithful man to lead them and help them all the time. Do not the little people like to hear of God's loving care of everyone? We will read some verses which give us this story. [Read Judg. 2. 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16.]

Explain unusual words: "Inheritance," "possession," "served," "elders," "outlived," "generation," "gathered," "nevertheless."

#### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

*Monday.* Talk of what inheritance means, and explain as simply as possible how land and houses

are given by one person to another. Should a man give some land to his son, he cannot hand it to him as he would give him an apple, but he says, "I give you this land to be your own." Then the son does what he pleases with it. The father also gives to his son a paper in which he tells him the land is his to keep or to sell, just as he wishes to do with it.

**Tuesday.** Explain ownership—that it means to have a right to anything bought or given to one; and tell the little people what it is to possess the land. Show them that, although the man owns the land, he is not able to take it away to another place. Let them know that he pays some money to the town or the city every year because he is a landowner.

**Wednesday.** Just as Joshua and the other people left their land when they went to their heavenly home, so must everybody else. We cannot take things with us when we leave this world, but we can take love and character, for our thoughts and our real selves are with us always.

**Thursday.** This shows us that we should care more for what we are than for what we have.

**Friday.** Talk of the Golden Text. God shows his love for us in many ways. He has given to us our friends who love us, and he has given to us the grains and fruits we use for food; also the beautiful heavens, full of stars and sunlight—all to make our life pleasant and joyful.

**NATURE WORK.** Talk of the darkness which comes so early these autumn days, and explain that while the days have not quite so much light in them for us as they had in June and July, yet somebody else on this beautiful earth is having the long days while ours are shorter.

"The dark is a curtain, so warm and so close,  
God folds it around us at even."

**ART WORK.** Get an autumn scene and show to the children, letting them name the objects they see.

**HAND WORK.** The children may sew crescents on their cards, and they may make moons on the blackboard. The latter will be good practice in drawing curves.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may sew the words under the picture on the card.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** Talk of the enjoyment which we may have in the things which other people own. We may look at the field which another person owns. We may enjoy looking at a beautiful house in which someone else lives, even though it is not ours. We may see the beauty of it and have great pleasure in it without having the care and expense of it. If the house in which any of the little people live is beautiful and has that which gives pleasure, then in some way pleasure and joy ought to be carried by such to those little people who do not have these things.

Any one may make other people happy by a word pleasantly spoken, or the gift of flowers, or any such simple thing.

### Primary Notes.

#### LESSON II. (October 13.)

#### THE TRIUMPH OF GIDEON. Judg. 7. 13-23.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear" (Psalm 27. 3).



[Show a Canadian flag, tell briefly the story of the battle of Queenston Heights, impressing the thought that the Canadian flag placed on the Heights after the battle represented Brock's triumph over victory. Have "The triumph of" printed at top of board,

and point to the words when illustrating by story. Now show a pitcher, and have the children tell how pitchers are used at home.]

To-day we have a wonderful story about a man named Gideon and his triumph over a great army. You will see soon why I showed you a pitcher, for I am sure you are wondering what it has to do with Gideon and a battle.

Who did we learn last Sunday were sent by God to rule and deliver Israel? To deliver from whom? Why did they have trouble with these people?

The Midianites [show on the map where they lived] fought and conquered the Israelites, and took so much away from them that they became very poor. Although all this came to them because they did evil, yet, when in their trouble they called upon God for help, he sent a judge, who was Gideon, to deliver them. [Tell briefly the story of Gideon's call and first act (Judg. 6. 11-29).] Soon after this the Midianites, with a great host, pitched in a valley near the Israelites. Gideon blew a trumpet to gather Israel, and sent messengers to four of the tribes to tell them to come and help fight.

Do you think Gideon was afraid? I don't know, but the Bible tells us he wanted to be sure God was going to help him triumph over the Midianites; so he asked the Lord to give him a sign that he would conquer. [Tell the story of the fleece (Judg. 6. 36-45).] I am sure now Gideon was not afraid.

Early in the morning he and his men pitched on the side of the valley opposite the Midianites and their army. [Tell how Gideon's army was reduced, and why, and how God encouraged his heart by letting him overhear the Midianite's dream (Judg. 7. 2-14).] Gideon thanked God, and came back to his own camp brave and glad, feeling as David did when he said [repeat Golden

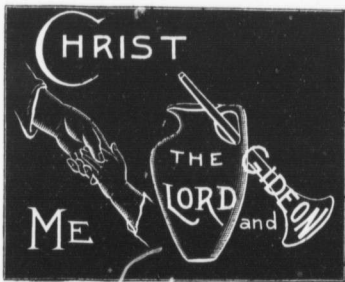
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Text]. No wonder he said to his soldiers [Judg. 7. 15]. And now it was time to prepare for the battle. Gideon divided his men into three companies. How many would be in each? What do you suppose they had to fight with? Gideon gave each man a trumpet and a pitcher, with a torch to hold inside. [Uncover picture of pitcher and trumpet, explaining that the torch was held inside the pitcher to prevent its being extinguished, and repeat Gideon's orders. Tell the words of the "shout" and describe what was done, with results (Judg. 7. 17-23).] I am sure you never heard of such a battle and such a triumph. Why was it that Gideon and his little band overcame such a host? Because it was not Gideon alone, but "the Lord and Gideon" [point to words on the picture] that gave the triumph. Gideon did his part and the Lord made him victorious.

I am glad we know this story, for it helps us to have hearts that need not fear. We have enemies and difficulties we could never overcome alone, but we needn't try alone; if we do our part and trust in God, he will make us triumph over every hard thing.

There was once a boy who couldn't do an example in his arithmetic lesson. He was going to give up, when his mother said, "Have you asked God to help you?" He hadn't thought of that, but he stopped studying and asked God to be with him and help him to see how to do the example, and then, beginning again, he was able to understand and conquer the difficult lesson. It was the Lord and the boy together that triumphed. Next



time you have a hard lesson to learn try this boy's way.

You and I have some enemies we cannot overcome alone. For you perhaps it is selfishness; for you, a bad temper; for you, untruthfulness. Well, the Lord and you can overcome even these. Try with him and see, and though you don't need a pitcher and trumpet, you do need and have the Bible, which is like a light to show you the way.

Paul found out how good it was to work and fight with God. He said: "I can do all," etc.

(Phil. 4. 13). It was Christ and Paul, and so it may be Christ and you. It is like joining your hand with God's hand to make you strong. [Uncover the clasped hands and print Paul's words below.] Will you give him your hand to-day?

SUGGESTIONS FOR COLORING. Pitcher, brown, outlined with yellow; trumpet, white; "Gideon," red; "the Lord," white, outlined with yellow; clasped hands, white.

### Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Triumph of Gideon. Judg. 7. 13, 15-21.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear" (Psalm 27. 3).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Psalm 27; *Illustrative Notes* (Drs. Hurbit and Doherty), pages 278-284; *The Jewish Church* (Stanley); *Old Testament History* (Smith), pages 344-351.

### ATTENTION STORY.

Once upon a time these people needed some one to lead them, some one to be a captain for them, and God sent a good and strong man for that purpose. His name was Gideon. One day this man was threshing wheat for his father, and he saw an angel sitting under an oak tree. The angel spoke to him and told him that God's people needed him to go and help them. At first Gideon was a little bit afraid, but those two little words we have found so often in God's word were spoken to him. They are, "Fear not," and then he became brave. He prayed, and afterward took ten of his servants and went to work ruttling away the false gods which the people had been worshipping. When Gideon went to the people a man told him a dream. This man dreamed that a cake of barley fell upon a tent and threw it over. How funny that was! Gideon thought this meant that he should be able to take God's people into the camp of the other people. So he took many men with him, and each one had a lamp and a pitcher and a trumpet. When Gideon told them to blow the trumpet, they did so, and then they broke their pitchers, which had been used to shade the lamps, and this made such a noise, and the lamps burned out so brightly, that the people ran off, and Gideon and his men had the camp. This reminds us somewhat of Joshua and his men taking Jericho. Let us read about Gideon in Judg. 7. 13, 15-21.

Explain unusual words: "Barley," "smote," "overtumed," "interpretation," "worshipped," "delivered," "likewise," "watch."

### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

*Monday.* Talk of the dream, and explain verses 13, 15, and refer to Joseph's dream of seeing the sheaves (Gen. 37. 7).

*Tuesday.* These men followed their leader. He said, "Do as I do;" that is what "likewise" means. If we are to do good work in this world

we must follow our Leader. Who is he? Let us follow him every day.

*Wednesday.* Let us repeat to-day some of the words of our Leader. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Do we really love him, and are we obeying his words? We may help each other to remember his words, and if we love him we will be glad to show the love of our hearts in two ways: First, by being obedient to our parents and teachers; second, in being gentle and helpful to them and to our playmates.

*Thursday.* Repeat the Golden Rule and the great commandment, and talk about these, for they are the words of Jesus. It is not just what others do to us that we are to do, but "what ye would." That means what we would like them to do and to say to us. If we would like to have people gentle and helpful to us, let us treat them in this same way. Let us sing together the Golden Rule song, beginning:

"To do to others as I would  
That they should do to me,  
Will make me always kind and good,  
As children ought to be."

*Friday.* The Golden Text says that David thought he would never be afraid, no matter what happened, even though crowds of people were camping all around him, for his heart would still trust in God.

**NATURE WORK.** Talk of wheat and name its uses. Explain how it is harvested, and how Gideon was working at his threshing. Nature does her work with the grain, then men and women and children must do their part of the work. God leaves something for us to do, because nature and people, even little boys and girls, all work together.

**ART WORK.** Study harvest fields and fruit-gathering scenes. Encourage the children to name objects which they see in a picture.

**HAND WORK.** Model pitchers and trumpets in clay, and upon the network slates the children may outline both forms, thus having practice in curved lines.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may outline the word on the card, and following this pattern may try (on different pieces of paper) to draw a pitcher.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** Talk of barley and of the different grains which are harvested from time to time. No one in this world could get along without other people. Even things we do not like work together for our good if we love God. See Rom. 8: 28: "All things work together for good to them that love God." Gideon was busy working for his father when he saw the angel. If he had been lazy and asleep he would have missed that. It is when we are busy at our work that we see beauty and find happiness. A lesson of industry may be taught here.

## Primary Notes.

### LESSON III. (October 20.)

#### RUTH'S CHOICE. Ruth 1. 14-22.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1. 16).



Suppose I put on the table this picture paper and a card, and tell Johnnie he can have one of them. What is he doing while he thinks which he will take? Choosing. If he takes the card, we say the card is his choice [print]. I suppose many of you have big brothers. When these brothers become men they have to choose what they will be. Perhaps yours will choose to be a carpenter, and yours a painter, and yours a doctor or a minister. Whichever it is, it will be his choice.

How many have had a sister get married? What did she do after the wedding? Did your father say she must marry the man she did, and leave home to go away and live with him? No; she chose to go—it was her choice. I know a dear girl, with many friends and a good home, who will soon leave all and go to a strange land and strange people to live with and tell them about Jesus. Does anyone make her go? No; it is her choice "to leave all for [print at right of the picture of Bethlehem] Jesus's sake." I could tell you of many others and what they chose to do; but there is a beautiful story of a young girl and her choice that you must not wait longer to hear.

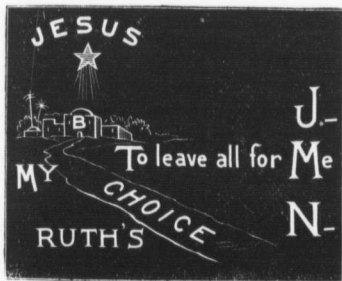
During "the time of the judges" there came a year when the barley and wheat did not grow in Canaan, and there was a famine. What is a famine? Because of it a man named Elimelech, who lived in Bethlehem [uncover or make a city], took his wife Naomi and their two sons and went to Moab to live [show on the map and print the name at the bottom of the board]. Elimelech died soon after, but Naomi and her sons still stayed in Moab, and in time the sons chose wives for themselves of the women of Moab. Their names were Orpah and Ruth. For ten years Naomi with her sons and their wives lived together in Moab, and then trouble came again. Both sons died, and there must have been three sorrowful women in that household. But the trouble made Naomi think of her old home in Bethlehem, and she longed to go back to her own land and her own people, where she heard the famine was over. [Tell of her starting and what she said to her daughters-in-law (Ruth 1. 7-9).] Now, you see these two had a choice to make—either to stay in a heathen country or go to Canaan, where they would learn to know and love the true God; either to leave Naomi or go

with her. [Tell of Orpah's choice and then of Ruth's (Ruth 1. 10-18).] Which was best? Ruth's [print]. [Tell of the arrival at Bethlehem, and finish the story through to Ruth's marriage.] Why was Ruth's a wise choice? What was it? To leave all for whose sake? [Print Naomi to right, but a little below "to leave all."'] What did she find in Canaan? A good home, a good husband, and, best of all, a good God. But she was more blessed than she knew then.

Long years afterward there came a night when a beautiful star [make] shone over Bethlehem. Why? Because Jesus [print above star] was born there. [Now tell how Ruth's son was David's grandfather, and how many belonged to David's family. Ruth and Mary were relatives (Ruth 4. 16, 17).] If Ruth had chosen as did Orpah, she would never have belonged to the family into which Jesus was born.

Do you know, the star over Bethlehem makes me think of something I want you always to remember. We talk and think a great deal about Jesus when he was on earth, but to-day I want you to think of him in heaven, before he came as a baby to Bethlehem. [Picture what he was there, the love and homage given him, and the joys of heaven.] Can you tell me what Jesus chose to do? He left all for whom? [Print "me" above Naomi.]

And now I am going to ask you to make a choice. Jesus is right in our class to-day, and I think each of you can hear him speaking in your heart, and saying: "Will you choose to follow me? Will you leave your ways and go in mine? Will you take my friends for your friends, and my Father for your Father?" What will you answer? All who think they can truly say, "My [print] choice is to leave all for Jesus" [print above "me"], may rise and repeat our Golden Text.



SUGGESTIONS FOR COLORING. Star, yellow; "Jesus," white; road, white and brown; "Choice," yellow; "Ruth's," white, outlined with yellow; "my" and "to leave all," red, outlined with white; "B," "J.," "Me," "N.," white.

### Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Ruth's Choice. Ruth 1. 14-19, 22.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1. 16).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Ruth 2, 3, 4; *The Land and the Book* (Thomson); *Land of Israel* (Tristram); *Farm Ballads* (Will Carleton); *The Rich Kinsman* (Stephen Tyng); *Six Lectures on Ruth* (Aubrey Price); *Lectures on Ruth* (George Lawson).

### ATTENTION STORY.

Our lesson to-day is a beautiful one about a woman named Ruth, who loved her mother very, very much. They lived in Bethlehem many years before Jesus lived there, and as they were very poor the whole family went away once to another town, where there was plenty of food to eat, for in Bethlehem there was not enough for the people. After a time they heard that the people of Bethlehem had bread again; so the mother decided to go home. One of her daughters kissed her good-bye, but the other one, named Ruth, said she hoped that her mother would not ask her to stay in this town, but would let her go home with her, for she wanted to go wherever the mother would go, and she slept just where the mother slept, and she wanted to pray to the same God, and to stay with her always. The mother's name was Naomi, and this name means "pleasant." When she saw that Ruth wanted to stay with her always, and that they could live together and pray to God, she let her stay, and they went to Bethlehem together. All Naomi's neighbors, the people of the city, were very glad to see her again, and gave her welcome. You know, dear children, what it is to welcome a person. It is both to say you are glad and to act glad, for we can show gladness as well as speak it. It was just the time when the people were gathering the barley, which is a grain known to people many, many years ago, and it grows out in a broad field, not in a garden. When Ruth knew that the harvest time had come she must have been glad to be able to glean after the reapers. This wonderful story book, God's word, tells us about it. [Read Ruth 1. 14-19, 22.]

Explain unusual words: "Glean," "behold," "whither," "lodgest," "steadfastly," "Moabites," "daughter-in-law."

### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

*Monday.* These two sisters and the mother were very sorry to leave each other. One begged that she might stay. She loved her mother so dearly that she was willing to help her, and she worked in the field so as to earn bread for them.

*Tuesday.* Ruth had lived for a long time in that place they were leaving, and the mother thought that perhaps she would not like to be in Bethlehem; so she wanted Ruth to be happy and stay

where she was. Mothers are always thinking of the happiness of their children. The teacher should talk faithfully of the self-sacrificing love of a mother. Let us all try to make our dear mothers happy every day!

*Wednesday.* Ruth was so sure that she wanted to go and help her mother that they decided she might go. So the mother and daughter started, and when they reached home everybody was glad to see them. Naomi had been a kind neighbor and helpful to the people, and they remembered it. Teach a lesson of neighborly love and kindness to each other.

*Thursday.* Ruth worked in the field gathering barley. Other women, and even little children, worked in the fields, as you see in the picture on your card. Children can help in everything, and, when they cannot with their hands, they can with their love and with their gentle words.

*Friday.* Talk of the Golden Text, and teach a lesson of fellowship with each other and of the delight of all praying to God, who is our Father. Let us love all people and be helpful whenever we can.

**NATURE WORK.** Talk of harvesting, and refer to the seed-sowing time months ago, explaining the action of the sun, the air, and the rain upon the soil. Also, God's care, which is "over all his works." And this care is shown in the way he has provided for all the needs of man. Barley is one of the very first and oldest grains. Many years ago people thought that it was sacred; that means one of the choicest and best things. When people called Greeks wished to train their young men to have great strength for their games they gave them barley to eat. A good medicine tea is made from barley.

**ART WORK.** If possible, get an illustrated copy of *Farm Ballads*, and show pictures of the reapers and explain them.

**HAND WORK.** Sew or draw a picture of a sickle, and, with sticks, outline harvest fields. With paper folds make barns with single and double doors, and imagine them full of wheat and barley.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may color the picture in whichever colored crayon they choose. This is a lesson in taste and also of judgment in the use of colors.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** Ruth picked up the barley which the reapers left, and she was as glad to take it home to her mother as you are to take home the berries you pick. If nothing is wasted, we must be careful of all the leavings. Talk of the need of industry. If people should not do their part after the God of love has sent the sun and the showers to make the wheat and barley grow, it would spoil in the field. We must do our work when the time comes. Talk of the joys and the rewards of labor.

#### LESSON IV. (October 27.)

#### THE CHILD SAMUEL. 1 Sam. 3. 1-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3. 9).

#### Primary Notes.



If you wanted mamma to do something for you, how would you make her understand? You would have to speak [print]. If mamma asked you to do an errand for her, how would you know it? You would hear [print] her speak. How would she know you heard? By seeing you obey [print]. What do you speak with? What do you hear with? Can you tell me how deaf and dumb people speak? How do they hear? Not with tongues and ears, but with fingers and eyes. You see there can be more than one way of speaking and hearing.

Can you think how God speaks to us? Some of you will say by the Bible, and that is right, but I know another way. I am sure you have all heard his voice. Sometimes when you want to be naughty there is something in your heart that is like a "still small voice" speaking to you and telling you not to do the naughty thing; that is God's voice speaking by his Spirit. How do you hear it? With your mind. How do you show you hear the voice? By obeying. God has been speaking in this way to boys and girls, as well as to grown-up people, a long time, but many, many years ago he spoke in a different way—with his voice.

You remember he spoke in this way to Moses on Mount Sinai, and to Joshua after Moses died. To what kind of people would he love to speak best? To those, I think, who were ready [print] to hear and obey.

There is a beautiful story in the Bible of how God once spoke to a child [print "The Child" at the top of the board] who was not only ready to hear, but ready to obey. This little boy's home was in a strange place for a child; it was in what we would now call a church, but when he lived it was called the tabernacle. Who worshiped in the tabernacle?

To understand how this boy came to live there we must go back to our story of the Israelites. We must skip over a good many years in their lives and come to a time when the priest who served in the tabernacle was named Eli. He and his two sons lived there, and though Eli was a good man, he didn't teach his sons to be obedient, and they grew up to be wicked men (1 Sam. 1. 12, 17, 20-25).

Not very far away from Shiloh, where the tabernacle was, lived Elkanah, and Hannah, his wife. Every year Elkanah would go to Shiloh to worship in the tabernacle and make an offering to God,

and Hannah used to go with him. But Hannah had one trouble that made her very sad. [Tell briefly what is found in 1 Sam. 1. 5-15.] You know now why Samuel [finish printing title] came to live in the tabernacle. Let us make a picture of the tabernacle on the board. What do you suppose Samuel did there (1 Sam. 2. 18-20)? He must have been a lovely child and faithful in all his work, because the Bible says—(1 Sam. 2. 26). These words make me think of another child, of whom it was said, "He increased in wisdom and in favor, with God and man." Who was that child (Luke 2. 52)?

God had a message for Eli, and he chose Samuel for his messenger. I will tell you how God spoke to Samuel. [Tell lesson story.] When Samuel knew it was God who was speaking, what did he say? [Repeat the tenth verse, "Speak; for thy servant heareth," and print it on the board.]

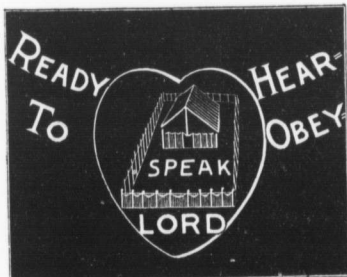
Was the tabernacle a quiet or a noisy place? It was so quiet it must have been easy to hear God's voice. Where did we say, in the beginning of this lesson, that God spoke to us? In our hearts [make heart around tabernacle]. I think we should often keep our hearts quiet that we may better hear God's voice.

Sometimes his voice warns us not to do wrong; sometimes it tells of something we may do for others; often it gives us a message for some one. If you listen you will hear the voice say, "Tell somebody about the Saviour who died to save all who will trust and obey him."

Whatever God's voice says to you, be ready to hear and obey; be ready to say, as did Samuel, "Speak; for thy servant heareth."

[Close by repeating,

"Jesus, my hands I lift to thee;  
I look above, thy light to see;  
I list to hear thy whisper low;  
I wait that I thy will may know;  
I pray thee take me as I am  
And make me, Lord, thy little lamb."]



SUGGESTIONS FOR COLORING. Heart, white; tabernacle, white, outlined with yellow; "Speak, Lord," red, outlined with white; "Ready to," yellow; "hear," "obey," blue.

### Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Child Samuel. 1 Sam. 3. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3. 9).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTEN. Holy Bible, 1 Sam. 2. 1-11; *Wild Flowers and How to Know Them* (Mrs. Dana); Robertson's *Sermons*, "The Character of Eli;" *A Child's Dream of a Star* (Charles Dickens); *Oratorio of the Creation* (Haydn), "The Heavens are Telling the Glory of God."

#### ATTENTION STORY.

It is wonderful that everybody can help somebody else in this world! Our very last lesson was about Ruth working for her mother because she loved her, and the lesson for this week is about a little boy who helped an aged minister in the temple. The minister was nearly blind, for he had lived so many years that his eyes had become tired. The little boy helped him in the temple service, for this man was a priest. If you would like to know how a priest dressed, you may look at a lesson card you had last summer. You will know which card, for you lettered the words "A High Priest" under the picture. The little boy's name was Samuel, and his mother loved God so much that she had given Samuel to him to serve in his church. He was very little when he was taken to the church, smaller than most of the children here. How old do you think he was? At that time little children three years old helped in the church service. Samuel's mother talked to him of good things, and he was very obedient to all she taught him. He loved his mother very dearly, and also learned to love God and pray to him. How beautiful it is for little people to pray to God and tell their heavenly Father all their thoughts. Although Samuel was a little boy, he learned to do work in the church, such as a little boy might do. His mother said he might stay and help the minister just as long as he lived. Once every year she went to see him and took a little new coat to him. The little boy slept near the minister's room, and one night he awoke thinking some one had called him. He ran in to ask Eli, the minister, if he had called him; but the minister said no, and the little boy went to sleep again. Three times he thought that Eli called him, and each time he was polite enough to answer right off and run right to Eli's room. Then the minister thought that God must be speaking to the boy, and told Samuel if he was called again to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Let us read about it. [Read 1 Sam. 3. 1-10.]

Explain unusual words: "Ministered," "vision," "wax," "dim," "calledst," "revealed," "arose," "heareth."

#### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

*Monday.* Talk of the willing spirit of Samuel. Here was a little boy who got right up as soon as he was called. That is the first thing to do, and that is the way to begin each day. You dear little boys and girls do not live with the minister, but in your own homes you can begin each day by obeying your father's voice when he calls you. In this

way, by the parents' voices, God speaks to children now. Repeat the fifth commandment.

*Tuesday.* Samuel had a helpful spirit. The love he had in his heart made him wish to help the aged man, and his bright young eyes and his willing hands and feet were helpful to others. His work in the temple was to light the lamps, and open the doors, and to do whatever would be helpful to others. He was so willing that he must have been tired at night, just as other little helpful boys are.

*Wednesday.* He was a brave boy, and did not fear when he heard a sound in the night. He trusted God, and he knew that nothing could hurt him.

*Thursday.* We have seen that Samuel was willing, helpful, and brave, but he was obedient too. He did just what Eli told him to do; so we may be sure that when God's voice told him what to do he obeyed.

*Friday.* Let the teacher talk of the Golden Text. One word here tells that Samuel did obey God, for he says, "thy servant." A servant is one who serves, and we all are servants serving some one. Let us love and serve God, and then we will be glad to serve others. Explain the bliss of service, and speak of Mark 10. 44.

**NATURE WORK.** Let the teacher talk of the stars, which are brighter now than in the summer, and some day you may sing the song, "Do you know how many stars?" for it will remind you of God's care. The little fringed blue gentian and the purple aster are two beautiful October flowers you may see in the country, especially if you live near to mountain brooks.

**ART WORK.** Study the lesson card, and talk of night scenes mentioned in the Bible, and some of the stories of Galilee. The little people should never be afraid at night, for it is as beautiful as the day.

**HAND WORK.** The kindergarten children may make pictures of stars with sticks and with interlacing slats. They may draw them upon the blackboard also, and sew them on their cards.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may practice making pictures of stars, and then make one, "best one," in the lower corner of this lesson card.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** When troubles and little things that annoy us come to our life, then the blessings and lights are more numerous and brighter, just as the thousands of stars are clearer now than they were when we had the long days of sunshine. But we must look up if we would see them, for as we could not see the starry sky if we were looking downward always or staying shut up in a dark house, so we must go out of ourselves and look up if we would see the brightness and forget the dark ways.

## Whisper Songs for October.

### FIRST LESSON.

LITTLE children, watch and pray;  
Watch to drive the sin away;  
Pray that you may be so true,  
God will always fight for you.

### SECOND LESSON.

O how safe, and O how strong  
Those who to the Lord belong!  
Love him, trust him; he defends  
From the foes that Satan sends.

### THIRD LESSON.

Love will follow every where,  
Love is quick a grief to share,  
Love is wise to choose the right,  
Living always in God's sight.

### FOURTH LESSON.

Speak, O Master, speak to me,  
Though a little child I be;  
In the darkness or the day  
Help me hear thee and obey.

## Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

### Fourth Quarter.

RISING, all repeat, "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

SING, or REPEAT IN CONCERT,

"Jesus, Master, we do love thee,  
And to prove our love would lay  
Fruit of lips which thou wilt open,  
At thy blessed feet to-day."

SONG OF PRAISE.

*Teacher.* O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee.

*Class.* O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

ECHO PRAYER, closing with the Lord's Prayer.

HYMN, adapted to lesson.

APOSTLES' CREED.

OFFERINGS, followed by singing.

COMMANDMENTS, PSALM, or BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.

BIRTHDAY SERVICE. (A beautiful service may be found in *Song and Study for God's Little Ones*, page 146.)

REVIEW, from blackboard.

MOTION SONG. "Two Little Eyes," No. 52, *Melodies for Little People*, Hunt & Eaton, New York.

LESSONS TEACHING, followed by CONCERT PRAYER.

"Shepherd of thy little flock,  
Lead me by the shadowing rock,  
Where the richest pasture grows,  
Where the living water flows.

"By that pure and silent stream,  
Sheltered from the scorching beam,  
Shepherd, Saviour, Guardian, Guide,  
Keep me ever near thy side."

CLOSING HYMN.

MIZPAH.



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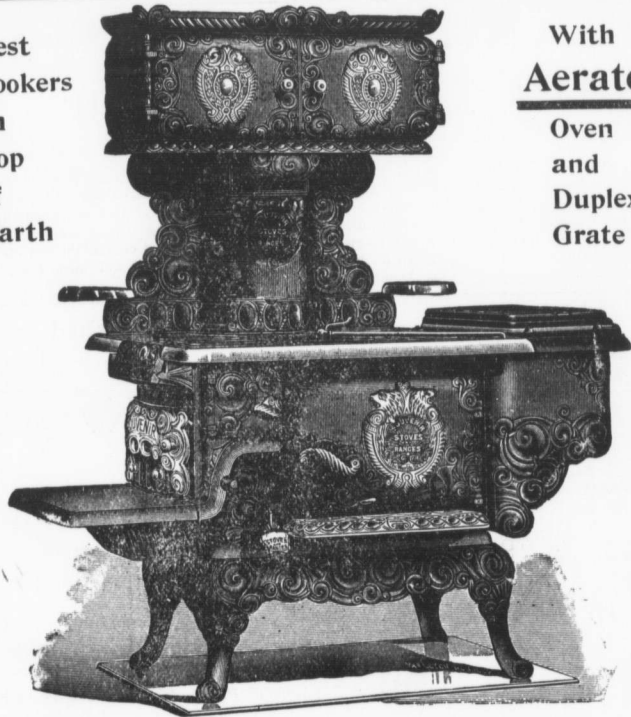
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