

JULY
1898

Vol. 32
No. 7



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Vol. XX

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for

TEACHERS

AND

YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXII.

JULY, 1898.

No. 7.

The Rooms in the House.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

In the Father's house there are many rooms,

Where his children come to stay,
And some are sombre in grays and glooms,

And some are light as day.
But a change comes over the staying guests,

And they never can be again
All that they were when they entered in,
Though they may not long remain.

One of the rooms is the place where each

Has to lay some treasure down;
However reluctant his hands may be,
He must part with the gold or the crown.

The door is not opened, the way is barred,

Till the offering has been made,
And then he may pass from the sombre room,

Hurt and poor and dismayed.

Lower the lights in the room of pain,

That the tired eyes may not see
The happy throngs that are young and strong,

Or the torturing things that be.
The child in the Father's room of pain

Wants but to see his face,

And feel his pity and know his love

And lie in his strong embrace.

Next to the pain is the room of peace,
Ah! happy are those who find
The entrance open, the welcoming host,
The friends who are true and kind;
This is the glad hope-lighted room,
With a prospect large and fair;
And the greatest gift of the truest rest
Waits for God's children there.

In the Father's house there are many rooms,
Where his children come to stay,
And some are sombre with grays and glooms,

And some are as bright as day;
But none need enter with fearful heart,
Since the rooms are his alone.
Oh, child, remember the Father's love;
He is "mindful of his own!"

—Christian World (London).

In The Methodist Magazine and Review for May there is a fine article on Japan and the work of the Canadian Methodist Church in that country, commemorating its semi-jubilee. Our young people of the Epworth Leagues will find it very helpful in preparing the programmes for their meetings when Japan is the subject for the evening. Indeed, the article itself divided and read by two persons, with some music between the reading of the first and second part, would make a pleasant and profitable evening's programme.—The Missionary Outlook.

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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, JULY, 1898.

Light on the Lessons.

It is, in many respects, a liberal education in itself to follow the course of the Sunday-school lessons from year to year. They come in close touch with very many points of sacred and secular history which are engaging the most earnest thought of scholars, explorers, and interpreters of ancient monuments and ancient tongues.

The recent lessons on the life of our Lord and of the early church treat the most important themes in the history of our world and the most important aspects of human development. The studies for the current half year on the history of the Hebrew monarchy are also full of sacred and secular interest. The Hebrew people were brought into intimate relations with the great monarchies of antiquity. Thus Hebrew thought and development receive a permanent impress, and "the Law, which is a school-

master to bring men to Christ," greatly influenced the mighty Medo-Persian monarchy of Cyrus. In our coming lessons the history of the Chaldeans, of Assyria, and Babylonia are brought directly under review. The labours of Layard and Rawlinson, Smith and Sayce, and other British explorers and investigators throw a flood of light upon some of the profoundest problems of Old Testament history.

We have thought it well, therefore, to treat in The Methodist Magazine and Review some of those themes in which the great body of our readers are so directly interested. We have not space in The Banner for a full treatment of these important themes, especially from their literary and historic side, nor have we the opportunity to illustrate with suitable engravings these very interesting and important topics. We are, however, preparing a series of illustrated articles on these subjects for the forty-eighth volume of The Methodist Magazine and Review, which begins with the July number.

One of these is an article on "Elijah, and the Lessons of his Life," by the able and eloquent Rev. S. Parkes Cadman, of the Metropolitan Temple, New York, whose recent visits to Montreal and Toronto made such a profound impression.

Another is a very graphic article by Canon Tristram on "Mount Carmel," the scene of Elijah's conflict with the priests of Baal, and "The Coasts of Tyre and Sidon," with seventeen illustrations of very superior merit.

Another handsomely illustrated article is upon the "Lost Empires of the East," treating the recent discoveries of those ancient civilizations with which the Hebrew monarchy came in contact, and by which it was so largely affected.

Still another article, by Robert E. Anderson, M.A., F.A.S., gives in condensed form the story, in the light of the most recent discoveries, of the Chaldean, Assyrian, and Babylonian monarchies. Every Sunday-school teacher and superintendent, and indeed every Bible student, will find these articles of special interest in connection with the lessons for the current year.

In addition to these the July number will be of special patriotic character with papers by Rev. Principal Grant on "The Relations of Canada to the Empire," by Prince Kropotkin on "Our National Inheritance," by the Rev. G. S. Payson on "The Future of the Anglo-Saxon Race." Other illustrated articles

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will be "The Spaniard at Home," "With the Canadian Fisher Folk," "Among the Gypsies," "Hampton Court and Its Memories," "The Royal Family of Denmark and the Danes," "Mary Stuart, Queen of Hearts," and articles by Prof. Wallace, Prof. Antliff, Dr. Rose, Prof. Paisley, Rev. A. Browning, and many character studies, serial stories, missionary articles, scientific papers, social and religious topics, and the like.

The Magazine has been enlarged in size, and by printing a considerable part in smaller type, has been greatly increased in capacity. It reports an increase of 226 numbers in the half year and a better outlook than it ever had before. Will you share its advantages and help its prosperity? Now is a good time to subscribe. Only \$1.00 for the half year, or two or more copies taken by schools only 80 cents

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The Advance of the Sunday School.

—

BY B. F. JACOBS, CHICAGO.

—

(This is a very telling reply to Mr. Bok's recent detraction of Sunday-schools.—Ed.)

I. Growth in numbers. The Sunday-schools reported by the International S. S. Association now number more than 150,000, with a membership of nearly 14,000,000. The annual gain for the three years ending June, '96, was 3,335 schools, with a total membership of nearly 450,000, or an average of nine schools and a membership of 1,200 for each day. The increase since the date mentioned is greater than for the previous years. This growth compares favourably with the increase in population, the attendance upon public schools, and the gain in church membership. All classes are reached.

II. Improvement in organization. One of the Chicago daily papers, having examined the work of S. S. organizations in Illinois, expressed the opinion that it fully equalled the organization of either of the political parties. The work is divided into departments as follows: (a) Department of organization. For the study of the whole field and the ingathering of all who will come. The

work among the coloured people of the South is a separate organization in each State and county, but is under the direction of the International Executive Committee. (b) Department of instruction. (c) The Primary department or council. For the formation of primary unions in cities and larger towns, 250 such unions now exist and the numbers are rapidly increasing. (d) The Home Class department. To reach and help those who cannot or do not regularly attend Sunday-school, including parents, railroad, telegraph, telephone and street car employees; travelling men when absent from home, the sick and infirm, and it will soon include the army. (e) Connected with the Home Department is the house-to-house visitation that none may be overlooked. (f) Many cities now have union teachers' meetings, held weekly, conducted by able leaders and attended by hundreds of teachers. Great musical festivals are held in several cities. Rally days are numerous, and in some instances the enthusiasm reaches the whole county. (g) At the great assemblies, like Chautauqua, a department of Sunday-school work is maintained—these are multiplying. (h) The American Sunday-school Union is actively engaged, employing many workers in the newer States and in the Territories, in organizing new schools and aiding those already existing. (i) All the larger denominations are extending and improving their Sunday-school work, employing hundreds of workers, organizing new schools, helping old ones, holding conventions, institutes and conferences, and one denomination has four railroad cars used to organize schools in the newer portions of the country. (j) Training schools. There is at Springfield, Massachusetts, a Bible Normal College, specially to teach and train Sunday-school workers, and at the Northfield and Chicago schools, of which Mr. Moody is president, and at the Baptist and Methodist training schools for Christian workers, at Chicago, special attention is given to Sunday-school work, and this is also true of all the great missionary organizations, of all the national and State organizations of Christian young people, and of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Theological seminaries and academies are giving prominence to Sunday-school work.

III. Improved Sunday-schools. The improvement in the schools is evidenced by better buildings, many erected for this purpose, with suitable rooms for

departments and larger classes. Better light and air, better furnishings and suitable appliances. Better officers and teachers, selected with more care. Some salaried, many specially trained. More graded schools, with teachers' meetings, and normal classes, some where supplemental work is done, and written examinations conducted. Improvement in singing, many special training classes in music. More intelligent and systematic giving. Correspondence with missionaries and discussion of plans. Better temperance work, with suitable instruction, and an effort to teach the children temperance and purity. Decided improvements in libraries, better books more carefully selected, covering a wider range, better methods of distribution, some special libraries for teachers and for primary scholars. The use of the Bible in the school-room, in place of lesson quarterlies and magazines. Better system of visitation, looking after absentees, letters of dismissal, making acquaintance of parents, meetings for mothers, vacation lesson slips, birthday letters, cradle rolls, etc. More co-operation from the church, church appropriations, special days for united service, children's day, anniversaries and patriotic days.

IV. Value of voluntariness. One million five hundred thousand officers and teachers who give time and thought to the work. A low estimate in money would be one dollar per week for each, or about \$75,000,000 per annum, but much more than money is the power of love and sympathy; the true teacher gives himself; this is known and appreciated by the scholars. Without undervaluing other work, where can we find a parallel?

V. Improved publications. The improvement in Bibles is very great, and it is acknowledged that the Sunday-school is largely responsible for it. The British and American Bible Societies publish millions of copies annually, and the number of societies and publishers who also publish Bibles is legion. One private publishing company sold 750,000 copies of a high-priced Bible in one year. Helps for teachers are constantly increasing and improving. Many bound volumes by great writers, specially prepared for Sunday-school teachers, are issued annually. These cover the latest and best explorations and investigations. All the denominations and many private publishers expend large sums to provide the best helps. Teachers' magazines, quarterlies in four grades for scholars,

the work of qualified writers, printed in modern style, on good paper, with excellent illustrations. The papers for young people and children are of the highest grade, and the circulation of all these is great even in these days of wonders. All of the larger denominations issue a million copies or more each month, the largest being about four and one-half millions, while one private publisher in the west issues nearly four million copies per month, and conducts a personal correspondence with 180,000 individuals, for their benefit, and at his own expense. The Sunday-school Times and The International Evangel are the equals of any secular papers, the writers being among the foremost scholars and teachers in the world.

VI. Plans for other lands. The Sunday-school workers of America and England are united in an effort to extend their plans and methods as far as applicable to other lands. The World's First S. S. Convention was held in London in '89. A ship was chartered to convey the delegates going from America. A second convention was held at St. Louis, in '93, and the third convention is to be held in London this year ('98). The convention in '89 sent a field worker to India. A field worker for Japan has been secured, and will (D. V.) go to the London Convention and thence to Japan. A tour of the world by a company of competent Sunday-school workers is under consideration.

VII. The value of teachers. Some of the great men of America and England are now engaged in Sunday-school work, and other men may learn the value such service will be to themselves, and to others whose lives they may influence for good.

VIII. Value of the Sunday-school to society and to the State. Formation is better than reformation, and the influence exerted upon the minds of nine millions of children must be great indeed. In a western city, the authorities declared that one mission Sunday-school was worth more to preserve peace and prevent crime in a given district than the police. Who can estimate the value of Sunday-school instruction in the families from which the children come? Who can calculate the influence of the Sunday-school on the teaching in the public schools where many Sunday-school teachers are employed? And at a recent visit of professional and business men, one of our most distinguished public men, speaking of the International S. S. work, said, "I challenge the gentle-

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men to mention any other work of equal importance in this nation." Some of the Presidents of the United States, including Mr. McKinley, the Chief Justice, and some associate justices, generals and admirals, senators and congressmen, presidents of colleges, and great business men, have been Sunday-school teachers. Compared with the growth in population, with the attendance on and improvement in secular schools, with the gain in church membership, with secular publications, the Sunday-school has kept pace with them all; in fact, Sunday-school workers have kept up with everything except their own ideals.—The International Evangel.

Methodist Magazine and Review for June.

This strong number completes the forty-seventh volume of this magazine. The timely article on Mr. Gladstone has eleven engravings of Hawarden Castle and park, portraits, etc. A well illustrated article on "A Great Canadian In-

dustry," describes the Massey-Harris factory, which turns out a complete machine every two minutes. Other articles are, "The Love Story of Elizabeth Barrett-Browning," with portrait and typical poems. "Famous Hymns and Their Authors," by Rev. Dr. Lambly. "Selby's Theology of Modern Fiction." "Joseph Chamberlain," a character study. "Methodism and the Irish Rebellion of 1798." "Reviews of George's 'Political Economy,'" Dante's "Divine Comedy," "Christian Life in Germany," and other important books are given. "Motor Carriages" is illustrated with five engravings, and the progress of the war with engravings and map.

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"When God intends to fill a soul, He first makes it empty; when He intends to enrich a soul, He first makes it poor; when He intends to exalt a soul, He first makes it humble; when He intends to save a soul, He makes it sensible of its own miseries and nothingness."

ORDER OF SERVICES—THIRD QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.
 - SUPT. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
 - SCHOOL. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.
 - SUPT. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.
 - SCHOOL. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.
 - SUPT. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.
 - SCHOOL. But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

- III. SINGING.
- IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.
- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.
- VI. SINGING.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.
- III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS [especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings.]

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.
 - SUPT. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.
 - SCHOOL. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE TEN TRIBES.

LESSON I. THE KINGDOM DIVIDED.

[July 3.]

GOLDEN TEXT. A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.
Prov. 15. 1.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 1 Kings 12. 1 to 14. 20.]

1 Kings 12. 16-25. [Commit to memory verses 16-19.]

16 So when all Is'ra-el saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jes'se: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Is'ra-el departed unto their tents.

17 But as for the children of Is'ra-el which dwelt in the cities of Ju'dah, Re-ho-bo'am reigned over them.

18 Then king Re-ho-bo'am sent A-do'ram, who was over the tribute: and all Is'ra-el stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Re-ho-bo'am made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Je-ru-sa-lem.

19 So Is'ra-el rebelled against the house of Da'vid unto this day.

20 And it came to pass, when all Is'ra-el heard that Jer-o-bo'am was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Is'ra-el: there was none that followed the house of Da'vid, but the tribe of Ju'dah only.

21 And when Re-ho-bo'am was come to Je-ru-sa-lem, he assembled all the house of Ju'dah, and the tribe of Ben'ja-min, a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Is'ra-el, to bring the kingdom again to Re-ho-bo'am the son of Sol'o-mon.

22 But the word of God came unto Shem-a-i'ah the man of God, saying,

23 Speak unto Re-ho-bo'am, the son of Sol'o-mon, king of Ju'dah, and unto all the house of Ju'dah and Ben'ja-min, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Is'ra-el: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

25 Then Jer-o-bo'am built She'chem in mount E'phra-im, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Pe-nu'el.

REVISED VERSION.

16 And when all Is'ra-el saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jes'se: to your tents, O Is'ra-el: now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Is'ra-el departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Is'ra-el which dwelt in the cities of Ju'dah,

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25 Then Jer-o-bo'am built She'chem in the hill country of E'phra-im, and dwelt therein; and he went out from thence, and built Pe-nu'el.

26 And when all Is'ra-el saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jes'se: to your tents, O Is'ra-el: now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Is'ra-el departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Is'ra-el which dwelt in the cities of Ju'dah,

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Time.—975 B. C. (?) **Place.**—Shechem, a very ancient town in central Palestine. **Introductory Note.**—Soon after Saul's death David was crowned king of Judah—that is, of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and most of Benjamin; seven

years later the "Ten Tribes" (Ephraim, Manasseh, part of Benjamin, Issachar, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, Gad, and Reuben) came of their own volition under his sway. Levi is not counted because, being set apart for the holy ministry, it

had no tribal inheritance. During most of the history of the rival kingdoms all of Benjamin, and probably Dan also, were included in the kingdom of Judah. The division thus marked between the group headed by the powerful tribe of Judah and the group headed by the equally powerful tribe of Ephraim had existed for centuries. Throughout the reigns of David and Solomon the nation was united very much as Scotland and England are now, and when Rehoboam succeeded Solomon he expected to be crowned king of Ephraim or Israel after he had been made king of Judah; but when he showed a disposition to ignore the terms by which the rule of David's family had been extended over the "Ten Tribes" they revolted. Thus Jeroboam took away from Solomon's son more than half of the Hebrew nation, and at the same time certain tributary monarchs rebelled. King Rezon was at this time establishing a new kingdom in Syria, with Damascus as its capital. Shishak was king of Egypt.

Home Readings.

- M. Wise counsel rejected. 1 Kings 12. 1-11.
 Tu. The Kingdom Divided. 1 Kings 12. 12-25.
 W. Idolatry established. 1 Kings 12. 26-33.
 Th. The event foretold. 1 Kings 11. 28-40.
 F. Despising counsel. Prov. 15. 1-14.
 S. Refusing to hear. Zech. 7. 8-14.
 S. Pride and destruction. Prov. 16. 16-33.

Lesson Hymns.

- No. 6, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Oh, worship the King all glorious above!
 Oh, gratefully sing his power and his love!
- No. 286, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Only a beam of sunshine,
 But oh, it was warm and bright.
- No. 181, New Canadian Hymnal.
 There are lonely hearts to cherish,
 While the days are going by.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Division, v. 16-19.**
 What demand and refusal led to the division?
 Whose counsel was rejected and whose followed?
 From whom should counsel have been sought?
 James 1. 5.
 What reply was made to the refusal?
 How does this illustrate the GOLDEN TEXT?
 Why are the two kingdoms thus designated?
 What act of violence furthered the division?
 How long did the division continue?

2. The Two Kingdoms, v. 20-25.

- Who became king of Israel?
 What tribes adhered to the house of David?
 How many warriors did they enroll?
 What armed project did Rehoboam propose?
 Who forbade this action? Why?
 What was the Lord's message?
 How was the message received?
 Where was Israel's capital established?
 What fear had Jeroboam for the loyalty of his people?
 What measure was devised to prevent their defection?
 Name two acts of sacrilege which Jeroboam did. Chap. 13.
 Name two judgments of the Lord against his evil ways.

Teachings of the Lesson.

- The folly of rash speech is here clearly shown. Pride and obstinacy cost Rehoboam four fifths of his kingdom. "Lean not to thine own understanding;" rather take counsel of the Lord.
- God's word is sure of accomplishment. The evidences are thickly strewn through history. The houses of Rehoboam and of Jeroboam attest God's fidelity to his promises.
- One sin leads to another. Every act of wrongdoing makes another easier. Beware of the first step.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Division, v. 16-19.**
 Who are meant by "all Israel"?
 Who was the king?
 What was the request that the people had made to which the king had not hearkened?
 Whose advice had he followed?
 Whose advice had been rejected?
 From whom should counsel have been sought?
 James 1. 5.
 What reply did the people make to the king's refusal?
 How does this illustrate the GOLDEN TEXT?
 Who was murdered in the early days of this division?
 How long did the division continue?
- 2. The Two Kingdoms, v. 20-25.**
 Tell all you know about Jeroboam.
 Where had he been? Why?
 What tribes were loyal to Rehoboam?
 What was the number of Rehoboam's army?
 What did he intend to do?
 Who forbade this action? Why?
 What was the Lord's message? Verse 24.
 How was this message received?
 Where was Israel's first capital?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That harshness provokes rebellion?
2. That God should be asked to guide us?
3. That God's providence works through men's follies.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who became king of Israel when Solomon died?

What did the people come to ask the new king?

To make their burdens lighter.

How did Rehoboam refuse? **Roughly and scornfully.**

What did his young friends advise him to do?

To show that he was master.

What does the GOLDEN TEXT say is the better way?

What did the people do when the king answered so roughly?

How many tribes stayed with Rehoboam?

Who became king over the other tribes?

What was Rehoboam's kingdom called? **The kingdom of Judah.**

What name was given to the ten tribes?

The kingdom of Israel.

What does this lesson teach us? **That sin leads to trouble.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. Why did Rehoboam claim the kingdom of Israel as his right? Because he was the son of his father.

2. On what terms did the ten tribes offer to let him govern them? Making their taxation lighter.

3. What answer did Rehoboam give to their request? "I will add to thy yoke."

4. How did the people receive this answer? The ten tribes revolted.

5. Whom did the ten tribes choose to be king? Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? A soft answer, etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

18. Into what estate did the fall of our first parents bring all mankind?

The fall of our first parents brought all mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Romans v. 18, 19. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.

The Rocks that Stranded the Ship of State.**I. FOOLISH COUNSELORS.**

Counsel of the young men. v. 13, 14.

Days should speak, Job 32, 7.

Well advised....wisdom. Prov. 13, 10.

II. HAUGHTY RULERS.

I will chastise you. v. 14.

Speak good words. 2 Chron. 10, 7.

Grievous words stir up anger. Prov. 15, 1.

III. LACK OF HUMAN SYMPATHY.

Hearkened not....people. v. 15.

Blessed be ye poor. Luke 6, 20.

Love thy neighbor. Lev. 19, 18.

IV. SECTIONAL DIVISION.

What portion....in David? v. 16.

Hatred stirreth up strifes. Prov. 10, 12.

The envy of Ephraim. Isa. 11, 13.

V. RIOTOUS SPIRIT.

All Israel stoned him. v. 18, 19.

A city....broken down. Prov. 25, 28.

Slow to wrath. James 1, 19, 20.

VI. AMBITIOUS LEADERS.

Jeroboam was come again. v. 20.

Lifted up his hand. 1 Kings 11, 26.

Carnal mind....enmity. Rom. 8, 7.

VII. THE DIVINE PURPOSE.

This thing is from me. v. 21-24.

I will rend the kingdom. 1 Kings 11, 29-30.

The Lord directeth. Prov. 16, 9.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

With this lesson we begin three months of Studies in the History of the (so-called) Ten Tribes. Let us at the outset distinctly understand what these ten tribes were. Jacob (Israel) had twelve sons, and it is usual to say that they were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. But when Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness there were really *thirteen tribes*, for Jacob had shown his partiality to Joseph by giving him a "double portion" and recognizing Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh as on a level of dignity with their eleven uncles. Moses set apart the tribe of Levi for specifically religious duties; and so when Palestine was parted among the tribes the descendants of Levi were left without a tribal inheritance, their living being secured by the tithe which

other Israelites inherited the land (Levi), and pl... there was no Ephraim in the rivalry for national rights of the first rights of his succeeded in his dominance over pointed toward Saul nearly all and Manasseh Saul, however, half of David's became king of constitutional right scepter. Rehoboam recognized as a by another co-northern tribes to itself most of nine in number by Israel as well

Verse 16. A great divisions which were no David and Solomon recognized, me two thirds of king. Rehoboam them. Refuse to their request profit incident detakings in commerce, and from his court, remoter parts pay for Judah boam, turning wisest counsels youthful friend concessions, but contempt. They formally by their by turbulent out have we in Du... tinue between u They do not der... outset their right have we inher... his kingdom so But the ten tribe... inheritance. ' father Jesse was "That's what yo

other Israelites were expected to pay for tabernacle expenses. The twelve tribes of Israel which inherited the land of Palestine, therefore, were named after the twelve sons of Jacob, minus one (Levi), and plus one (Ephraim and Manasseh instead of Joseph). During the centuries when "there was no king in Israel" there was no strong centralized government. Judah in the south and Ephraim in the center of the land developed military strength far beyond any other tribes, and a rivalry for national control arose between them. This control would, according to custom, be the right of the firstborn. It was generally admitted that Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, had forfeited the rights of his tribe, and it was admitted that Joseph, whom Jacob recognized as firstborn, was succeeded in his rights by Ephraim. Accordingly early prophecies seem to promise to Ephraim dominance over the nation, and the tribe was quick to claim all the rights that such prophecies pointed toward. But Judah, also, had had a promise of the "scepter." Down to the time of King Saul nearly all the men who had effectively swayed either scepter or sword had come from Ephraim and Manasseh; for example, Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Abimelech, Jephthah, and Samuel. King Saul, however, was a Benjamite, and David was from Judah. During the first seven years and a half of David's rule the northern tribes had maintained a separate monarchy, and David eventually became king over them by a special compact, admitting what we would now call a charter, or constitutional rights. During his reign and that of Solomon the two kingdoms were united under one scepter. Rehoboam inherited the monarchy of Judah; this was undisputed; but he could not be recognized as king over the northerly tribes without a distinct agreement on their part, and probably another coronation. His refusal to admit the reasonable demands of the representatives of the northern tribes lost him the larger part of his kingdom. When the division came Judah gathered to itself most of Benjamin, Simeon, and Levi. What are called the ten tribes, therefore, were really nine in number, and the name "ten" was probably adopted because Benjamin was at first claimed by Israel as well as by Judah.

Verse 16. All Israel. Keep in mind the two great divisions of the Hebrew race, divisions which were not quite lost sight of even under David and Solomon. "When all Israel saw," or recognized, means, therefore, when the northern two thirds of the united kingdom saw. **The king, Rehoboam. Hearkened not unto them.** Refused to give proper consideration to their request for relief. Most of the financial profit incidental to Solomon's immense undertakings in architecture, armament, and commerce, and most of the glory reflected from his court, were limited to Judah; and the remoter parts of the nation refused longer to pay for Judah's aggrandizement. But Rehoboam, turning from the advice of his father's wisest counselors, and swayed by inexperienced youthful friends, had not only refused to make concessions, but had treated the petitioners with contempt. **The people answered.** Doubtless formally by their official representatives, but also by turbulent outcries of defiance. **What portion have we in David?** What mutual rights continue between us and the dynasty of Jerusalem? They do not deny that the young king was at the outset their rightful sovereign; but by trampling upon their rights he had forfeited his. **Neither have we inheritance.** Just as a king inherits his kingdom so the kingdom inherits its king. But the ten tribes were not thus either inheritors or inheritance. **The son of Jesse.** David, whose father Jesse was a shepherd. The taunt means "That's what your royalty comes from!" **To**

your tents, O Israel. Get ready to fight. **See to thine own house, David.** "House" here means family, including the royal dynasty and its belongings. The phrase has the meaning of "Mind your own business!" "Hands off!" "You rule your little Judah; we will care for ourselves." **So Israel departed unto their tents.** In modern English, the assemblage broke up. The multitudes returned to their various vocations in country and city.

17. The children of Israel which dwell in the cities of Judah. The natives of the north who had been led by business or family interests to settle in the south. **Rehoboam reigned over them.** They neither fled back to their homesteads nor made local disturbances in Judah. They were not foreign by blood or by prejudice, and it was easier not to change.

18. Adoram. Elsewhere called Adoniram and Hadoram. **Over the tribute.** In charge of the collection of taxes and assessments, which were the chief cause of complaint. **All Israel stoned him with stones.** Probably he was arrested, charged with treason, and executed in the name of all Israel. **Therefore.** In consideration of the fact that hostilities had begun, and that he was in the enemy's country. **Jerusalem** was the stronghold of Rehoboam's friends.

19. Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. By the blunder and crime of his grandson more than one half of the beneficent results of David's lifework were swept aside in a day.

20. When all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again. In that leisurely day events did not crowd each other as rapidly as now. It may have taken months for the news of Jeroboam's return to spread over "all Israel." They had none of our modern devices to lessen time and space. The great Ephraimite chief had under Solomon made reputation as at once serviceable to the king and kindly to the people. His conflict with Solomon endeared him to the masses. He was a nobleman in rank, an able executive, and a dexterous politician. **They sent and called him unto the congregation.** Probably another representative gathering was held, and Jeroboam was brought to the front. No one else had any chance for the throne so long as this friend of the common people lived. Doubtless he was asked the same questions that Rehoboam had been asked, whether he would maintain the rights and privileges of Israel, and doubtless he answered these questions satisfactorily, for the congregation presently made him king over all Israel. **There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.** In seeking the full meaning of this phrase we must not forget that "Israel" had come to mean the northern tribes and "Judah" the southern. The "tribe of Judah" included, in common phraseology, both the tribe of Simeon and most of that of Benjamin.

21. When Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem. Danger rapidly developed the worthier part of this rash young man's character. He had brought his troubles upon himself, but now that they were upon him he acts with promptitude and propriety. **He assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin.** He gathered the fighting men on whom he could count. **A hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men.** A formidable army—not "regulars," however. Arms were distributed by the government to men who were "chosen," who could be trusted as civil soldiers. Without the complete organization of our modern militia, the principle seems to have been nearly the same. **To fight against the house of Israel.** That is, against the dynasty of Jeroboam. **To bring the kingdom.** Jeroboam's kingdom. **Rehoboam the son of Solomon.** His descent from

Solomon made him king of Judah, and gave him his claim as king of Israel.

22. The word of God came unto Shemaiah. The manner in which prophetic messages came varied much at different times. Shemaiah may have had a dream, or a vision, or a deep impression made upon his mind. **The man of God.** God's man; the man who officially represented Him that kept Israel and never slumbered nor slept.

23. Son of Solomon, and therefore king of Judah. See note on verse 21. **The house of Judah and Benjamin.** The soldiers representing these two tribes. **The remnant of the people.** Made up in part of men who belonged to the other tribes, but were in official relation to the Davidic dynasty, and in part, doubtless, of representatives of subjugated kingdoms, from whom David, like other oriental monarchs, chose his guardsmen.

24. Thus saith the Lord. Here was a direct message from Jehovah. By the way in which this message was treated the people and kingdom of Judah showed their loyalty to God. **Your brethren the children of Israel.** A sentence which appealed to their old national feeling. **Return every man to his house.** Disband this army of volunteers. **This thing is from me.** This disruption of the kingdom. **They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord.** Recognized Shemaiah's inspiration, and submitted to the decision of the Lord. **Returned to depart.** Went from their gathering place to their homes.

25. Then. Just as soon as he could. Jeroboam never let time slip past. **Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim.** Shechem was already a well-known town. Jeroboam turned it into a great fortress. It was in Mount Ephraim—that is, in the mountainous region of the central part of Palestine. The kingdom of Israel was more exposed to enemies than that of Judah because of the open nature of the country around Shechem and Samaria. **Dwelt therein.** Made that the center of his government. **Went out from thence.** Shechem became the base of his operations. **Built Penuel.** Made a mighty fortress on the east side of the Jordan, so as to protect that part of his dominion.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

The most important event in the history of the Jewish nation "since it became an independent state" was the partition of the kingdom under Rehoboam. The immediate causes of the dissolution lie on the surface. An impulsive, stubborn,

and conceited king, departing from the higher path of his fathers, ignoring the counsels of the wiser and older men, and giving free rein to the suggestions of his thoughtless and prejudiced young companions, who inflated his already-

enlarged vanity, face with an event which needed only a lea- tion. The old a memory, my successor did Solomon, wedd- able indication was sure to arouse content of the certain to break were ripe for Rehoboam was dom that was strange gods.

Verse 16. A must be taken tribes were lo- Judah; while disloyalty agai- the son of Sol- an Ammonite t- that he was fo- his accession t- evidence seems one. In 2 Chr- as "young ar- men, the child- selves against- form in the He- was held and- word to the p- made the ang- the king. **Wh- is described a- of rebellion. I- against the h- David was lon- that of his h- the lineal desc- ready to repu- **Son of Jesse-** out a tauntin- origin, just a- carpenter's s- tents. This " sign of imper- **own house.** deeply-rooted- strongly expre- potent cause f- oppression of**

17. Childr- the ten tribes remained ther- gists that the- Judah chose R- to be king,"

enlarged vanity, suddenly finds himself face to face with an enraged and outraged people, who need only a leader to incite them to open revolution. The old hero-king, David, was now only a memory, which the events in the reign of his successor did little to keep green and fresh. Solomon, wedded to his idols, was an unmistakable indication of the inevitable result. Idolatry was sure to arouse the wrath of God and the discontent of the people, and that discontent was certain to break out in revolution when the times were ripe for it. The divided kingdom under Rehoboam was clearly foreshadowed in the kingdom that was divided when Solomon went after strange gods.

Verse 16. All Israel. In this case "Israel" must be taken as antithetical to "Judah." Two tribes were loyal to Rehoboam—Benjamin and Judah; while the other ten raised the outcry of disloyalty against him. **Rehoboam.** He was the son of Solomon, his mother being Naamah, an Ammonite princess. Some authorities state that he was forty-one years old at the time of his accession to the throne, but the weight of evidence seems to favor an earlier age—twenty-one. In 2 Chron. 13. 7 Rehoboam is referred to as "young and tender-hearted," when "vain men, the children of Belial," strengthened themselves against him. **Answered back.** The form in the Hebrew suggests that a consultation was held and that messengers brought back word to the people, and that they (the people) made the angry response of disappointment to the king. **What portion . . . in David.** This is described as the old Ephraimite watchword of rebellion. It is the same as Sheba uttered against the house of David (2 Sam. 20. 1). David was long dead, but his name was put for that of his house, of which Rehoboam was the lineal descendant. The enraged people were ready to repudiate the royal house altogether. **Son of Jesse.** In this expression they flung out a taunting allusion to David's humble origin, just as Jesus was referred to as "the carpenter's son" (Matt. 13. 55). **To your tents.** This "Marseillais of Israel" was a sure sign of impending revolution. **See to thine own house.** In this cry of discontent "the deeply-rooted dislike to David's royal house is strongly expressed, and we can perceive a more potent cause for the partition than the alleged oppression of Solomon."—*Keil*.

17. Children of Israel. Some families of the ten tribes were dwelling in Judea, and they remained there under Rehoboam. Ewald suggests that the verse means that "the tribe of Judah chose Rehoboam, who was one of them, to be king," whereas Judah had already ac-

knowledged him such before he went to Shechem.

18. Adoram. There is a difference of opinion as to the identity of Adoram. Bahr claims that he is Adoniram, mentioned in the list of Solomon's chief officers. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions refer to him as Adoniram in this place. He is thought by others to be the son of Adoram, chief of the tribute officers, mentioned in the list of David's officials. If this be so, he must have been an aged man. His errand to the rebels was to appease them; and his position as tribute officer probably gave him authority and influence, especially as the matter at issue had reference to tribute.

20. Jeroboam. He was the son of Nebat and Zeruah, and of the tribe of Ephraim. He helped to repair the fortifications of Jerusalem under Solomon, pleased the king, and was appointed superintendent of taxes for his tribe. The prophecies of Ahijah made him ambitious, and aroused the suspicions of the king. Jeroboam fled to Egypt for his life, and took refuge at the court of Shishak, the ruling Pharaoh. Upon the death of Solomon he returned, and was called upon to lead the people in their rebellion against Rehoboam. Jerome has a tradition which identifies Nebat with Shimei, David's reviler, who was of the house of Saul. This would ally Jeroboam with the earliest royal house of Israel, and create in his heart a natural antipathy against the reigning family.

21. Assembled all the house of Judah. It is calculated that the twelve tribes occupied a territory covering 12,810 square miles at the time of Solomon's death. Of this territory Israel had about 9,375 square miles, and Judah about 3,435 square miles. As there were no "standing armies," in the modern sense, in those days, it must have taken quite a while to assemble and organize so large an army as Rehoboam gathered. But this great number, 180,000, need not cause surprise, since, according to the census of David, the tribe of Judah alone had 500,000 men of war.

22. Shemaiah. He probably belonged to the tribe of Judah, and it is likely that he was a dweller in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 12. 5); he wrote a history against Rehoboam (2 Chron. 12. 5-8, 15), and had great influence through his preaching when Shishak of Egypt made war against Rehoboam.

24. This thing is from me. This prophet emphatically declared that the dissolution was not a human affair solely, but that the separation of the tribes was a divine dispensation. It may have been distasteful and humiliating to the king and his followers, but they should not interfere with it in any way. The die had been

cast, and they had to abide by the result. The prospect of war with a greater army than they could command may have had a soothing influence upon their wrath also, and their readiness to "hearken to the word of the Lord" and to return "every man to his house" was doubtless accelerated thereby.

25. Built Shechem. Jeroboam began to erect defenses. Shechem and Penuel were built long before this time. The word rendered "built" really means "fortified" in this place. Shechem was in the mountain regions of Ephraim, and Penuel was in Gad, beyond Jordan, whether northward or southward is not definitely known. Keil is inclined to think that Jeroboam fortified Penuel because the caravan road to Damascus passed it; Duncker thinks it was to subdue the Ammonites and Moabites, but it is more likely that he prepared himself for any attack that Judah might suddenly make upon him.

Thoughts for Young People.

1. Do not rashly reject the advice of experienced men. "Youth for action, age for wisdom." It is not possible for any young person to be as judicious as every old person should be, but it is possible for any young person to be as wise in his practice as the aggregated wisdom of the best books and the wisest counselors.

2. Never be contemptuous. It was not Rehoboam's refusal, but the manner of refusal, which infuriated the Israelite chieftains. Gentle manners and a tender consideration for the feelings of others will help us pass many of the most serious troubles of life.

3. Hearken unto the word of the Lord. Rehoboam was a weak man, but this at least can be said for him, that after his blunders and sins he turned humbly to God and followed the direction of God's prophet. "When I fall, then shall I rise." Because one has committed one sin or made one blunder is no reason for continuing in the downward path. God calls upward. Hearken.

4. Imitate Jeroboam in the qualities that brought him to the front: Tremendous energy, faithful service, kind-heartedness, promptitude, astuteness.

5. Do not imitate Jeroboam in the qualities that led to the overthrow of his dynasty. He was a great deal stronger man in every way than was Rehoboam; a king by nature, not by family; but he failed in this, that, having received his kingdom from God, he did not dare to trust God to keep it for him, but sinned at Bethel, and caused all Israel to sin.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

The reign of Solomon was a turning point in the life of Israel. Under his government there grew up an internal trade in agricultural products and also a foreign market. Solomon had a commercial treaty with the Tyrians and also with Egypt which was confirmed by his marrying one of Pharaoh's daughters. All this brought a great increase of wealth and general prosperity, and an aristocracy of wealth succeeded to the old tribal aristocracy, thus developing lavish expenditure and senseless luxury. There was imported a class of skilled laborers; the old bronze smiths were taught to be skilled workers in metals. The potters and the smiths and the engravers and the masons and the bakers and the weavers and the barbers were developed as new orders of the industrial classes to meet this demand for luxurious living. The ancient tribal organization of Israel gave way and kings were obliged to make a covenant with the elders of the people before they ascended the throne, and the violation of these covenants was always considered just ground for revolt. Civil and criminal cases came to be brought before the king, being taken out of the hands of the local judges. A body of officials to collect the revenues grew up, were chosen from the family of the king or from the ranks of his favorites. All this throws light on many passages in these lessons, as in verse 18, where the king sent Adoram, who was "over the tribute," and the revolt itself against Rehoboam, because he would not consent to make a reasonable contract with the people in regard to the measure of their taxation. Corruption spread through all classes; the rich became oppressive, and the poor were crushed in the dust. It became almost impossible to secure redress for wrongs at the hands of the government, while the right came to be acknowledged of a creditor to sell a debtor into slavery for debt. The very judges were open to venal bribes, and gave their judgments in favor of the man who presented the largest. Amos says, 2, 6, "They have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for the price of a pair of shoes."

Jeroboam set up one political capital at Shechem and another at Penuel. Shechem became the base of operations in the building and fortifying of the cities. Penuel, near the ford Jabbok, furnished a strong outpost among the trans-Jordanic tribes. It was usual to select the tops of hills for the sites of cities and villages because of their adaptability to defense, but Shechem was in a deep hollow, between Ebal and Gerazim, and had no military advantage. It is possible that the

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main reason for selecting it as a capital was that it was central and near the chief sanctuary of the Samaritans, as great emphasis was put on the religious sentiment in all the history of Oriental politics. Penuel had its chief interest as the spot where Jacob wrestled until the angel touched his thigh and caused him to become lame, an incident which is perpetuated in the fact that the Jews to this day do not eat the sinew of any animal. A Jewish community has been discovered recently in the provincial capital of Honan. The residence of this Jewish community in this remote region has been known in Europe since the seventeenth century. The pope at one time sent to them to obtain copies of the Hebrew inscriptions on their synagogue. What is peculiar in this connection is the name by which they are known among the Chinese, "Tiao-Kin-Kiao," which, strictly translated, is, "Sect-which-picks-out-the-sinew."

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

The King's folly. Rehoboam was like Richard II, whose weakness and show of authority were matched only by his conceit. When his friends told him that his folly would lead to his being deposed, he declared that all the water of the sea could not wash the balm from an anointed king, and that for every man who had lifted sword against his crown God had brought to his (Richard's) side a glorious angel. Nevertheless he was dethroned and put to death.

We talk sometimes of men who dance on the edge of a volcano, and we have read of Nero fiddling while Rome was burning, but it may be questioned whether history affords a more pitiable instance of folly than Rehoboam's.—*Pulpit Commentary.*

A turning point. Rehoboam did not consider how much depended upon his decision. When traveling in the Alps one often sees a small iron cross planted at a steep turn in the road or on the verge of some immense precipice. Each cross marks the spot where a too careless tourist was lost.

The European nations that espoused the Reformation have prospered, while those that rejected it have had centuries of darkness.

A State's prison convict said, "I can look back now and see just where the turning point of my life was. It was the day when I first deliberately chose the wrong and said to myself, 'I'll risk the consequences.'"

Israel punished for rebellion. The best and most religious people left the kingdom. The Levites, refusing to take part in the forbidden worship

set up by Jeroboam, went over to the kingdom of Judah. So the King of France banished the Huguenots, and it is said that a number of the best German officers of the army which gained the victory over France in 1871 were the descendants of the Huguenots, the best blood of France, who were driven from their country by the Roman Catholic leaders on account of their religion.—*Select Notes.*

God brings good out of evil. The Scriptures speak plainly concerning the sinfulness that culminated in the disruption of the nation. And any good that may have resulted is to be attributed to the tender providence that takes up the crippled body, from which the right eye may have been plucked out and the right hand cut off for their offenses, and yet enables it, disfigured and maimed by its sin, to "enter into life."—*Monday Club.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

We are beginning now a series of most instructive lessons in Old Testament history. "I am the Lord, I change not," is written upon every page of human experience all the way from Adam and Eve to you and to me. Moral principles are eternal as God is. Spiritual laws are as exact as those which govern nature. According to law every star in the great host of the sky finds its never-varying place in the vast revolutions of the ages. Every soul according to fixed law will find its own place in the moral government of God-law, and like its Author, is "without variability, neither shadow of turning," and works for the present and eternal felicity of all who regard it; and with equal certainty it works for the destruction of all who set it at defiance or lightly pass it by. You read in this twelfth chapter of first Kings that the breaking up of the kingdom of Israel and the disasters which followed were "from the Lord," and you may perhaps say, "If God ordered it, it had to be; the people were not responsible." So those judge who look only on the surface of things. They say God rules the affairs of men; he is responsible for all the sin and the suffering. Why does he not put an end to it since he is almighty? The study of to-day's lesson in the light of the Holy Spirit shows us how unreasoning and misleading this is. The kingdom was not broken because of God's arbitrary will; the people brought war and disunion upon themselves by disobedience to his commands and disregard of his covenant. You must read from the third to the twelfth chapters. When Solomon was king at first he asked for "an understanding heart,"

and as long as he kept a teachable spirit, loyal to God, he was guided so that he prospered in all that he did. But he forgot God—became selfish, self-indulgent, and “did evil in the sight of the Lord.” From that time things went wrong, until Solomon died. Then his son, Rehoboam, began his reign, and you have only to read the story to know why he fell into dire trouble. He was proud-spirited, imperious, self-willed. He got good advice from men of experience, but he followed the advice of the young people who grew up with him, which suited him better. Human nature is the same in old Israel and young Canada. It is easy to take advice which accords with our own inclination. The fatal snare of many a boy and girl is the influence of associates who think it fine to be independent of the “slow” opinions of their elders. Rehoboam’s smart “little finger” proved a scorpion to himself as well as to the people. Neither God nor circumstances made the reign of Rehoboam tumultuous and bloody, but the character of the man himself. “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” Jeroboam’s story illustrates the same invariable law. Jealousy, selfishness, self-will, led him to set up false gods in Dan and Bethel, causing Israel “to sin a great sin,” resulting in untold suffering and disaster.

It is always so. Follow the course of any person, and you will see the outworking of the moral law of cause and effect. Over and over the Bible teaches this by precept and illustration. God’s laws are good, their outcome good; for God is love. “Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.”

The Teachers’ Meeting.

I. An outline map of the empire of David drawn over an outline map of the original territory of the twelve tribes will be found serviceable. Draw on blackboard or trace on thin paper a map of the tribes, only allow a large framework so as to carry out the lines of David’s conquests (perhaps in another color of lead or ink or chalk); then draw the line of division which Jeroboam and “all Israel” made, with Benjamin and Judah on the south, and the other tribes on the north. Recall the fact that Levi, whose descendants had been living in all parts of the land, hastened southward, and by their numbers and zeal strengthened the southern kingdom....II. Judah is mountainous, sterile, rocky, a country for fortifications. Its capital city could never have become wealthy but by the national festivals or the plunder of subjugated capitals. Not rich in minerals, not rich in agriculture, and, except under

pressure, not rich in commerce. The ten tribes, or, as we are now to call them, the kingdom of Israel, was, on the contrary, a fertile and beautiful country. It included what was known in New Testament times as Samaria, Galilee, and Perea beyond the Jordan. It was easy of approach from all sides, and that is the (human) reason why Israel was so easily and so frequently conquered.

...III. Show the elements of weakness under the apparent strength of Solomon’s rule, which elements come forward at the accession of the weak and immature Rehoboam: (1) Rivalry between Ephraim and Judah. (2) Corrupting influence of idolatry. (3) Extravagance of the court, causing heavy taxation and financial distress. (4) Want of assimilation among the conquered lands and the tribes of Israel....IV.

Shechem. Its early history. An event in the life of Christ which occurred near it. Why Rehoboam went thither to be crowned....V. Character studies: (1) Rehoboam—immature, self-conceited, injudicious, but easily swayed by good men, and striving in his weak way to make a good king. (2) Jeroboam, a capable, vigorous official, a true patriot, perhaps a demagogue; also unwilling to trust God for the permanence of the kingdom that he could not have gotten without God, and making shipwreck at last because of his connivance with wrong....VI.

The rights and wrongs of the people: (1) They were misgoverned. (2) They had a right to protest, and, so far as we can understand, they protested in an orderly and judicious manner. Nevertheless (3) They lacked self-control, and sectional prejudices misguided them....VI. Take the same outline map, and with another colored pencil trace the five kingdoms into which Solomon’s empire was broken up: (1) Israel, (2) Syria, (3) Moab, (4) Edom, (5) Judah....VIII. Show the divine purpose in all these events. God’s plan was for a Church rather an empire. The greatest blessing that could come to the cause of religion at this time was entire severance from worldly kingdoms, and in the holy zeal developed in Judah during the succeeding centuries we see at least one wholesome result of this division.

Before the Class.

BY GEORGE W. PEASE.

Introduction. Draw an outline map upon the board, showing the kingdoms of David and Solomon and also the old tribal divisions. Simeon had been practically absorbed in Judah, and Benjamin had united with Judah and was not usually named separately. The commercial and religious conditions of the kingdom under Solomon, the

wealth of taxes of Solomon, labor, should stand. De Shechem, esting and Rehoboam the relation.

Developm the subject ice,” and developed ferred; 2. T opportunity

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wealth of part of the people, the burdensome taxes of others, and the building operations of Solomon, which required great drafts of forced labor, should be clearly brought to view, that the demands of the ten tribes may be clearly understood. Describe the place of the lesson scene, Shechem, and give a little of its intensely interesting and important history. Short sketches of Rehoboam and Jeroboam should be given, and the relation of the latter with Solomon shown.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject of the lesson, "Opportunity for Service," and the following subdivisions as they are developed in the class: 1. The opportunity offered; 2. The opportunity considered; 3. The opportunity rejected; 4. The opportunity lost.

1. *The opportunity offered.* All Israel, under the leadership of Jeroboam, assembled at Shechem to make Rehoboam king if he would comply with certain conditions. Note (a) The great opportunity presented—a kingship. How much that might have meant for Israel and for Rehoboam! What a field for service was here presented to the young man! (b) The conditions—the lightning of the burdensome yoke of the past. Question the class whether these conditions were reasonable or not. Lead the class to see that this is the cry of the people to-day, and that men have offered them to-day positions of leadership upon similar conditions.

2. *The opportunity considered.* We have here the two kinds of advice which from that time to this have been offered in similar cases. Note concerning the counsel of the old men, that it was (a) Sound—there was danger in any other course; (b) Reasonable—the nation was in a condition to have taxes lightened; (c) Broadly politic—thereby the people would be bound to Rehoboam and the prosperity of the kingdom assured. Note second the advice of the young men, that it was (a) Rash—no thought was given to possible consequences; (b) Selfish—no thought was given to the rights of others; (c) Ruinous—as the results clearly showed. "Old men for counsel, young men for action," is a good maxim for us to remember to-day when opportunities for service are offered and these two kinds of advice are given.

3. *The opportunity rejected.* The young men's advice was accepted and acted upon, and the great opportunity for service, of serving a people as king (see verse 7), was rejected. Everything but self was lost sight of; folly and rashness rather than wisdom and experience were followed, and pride and selfishness gained the day.

4. *The opportunity lost.* "To your tents, O Israel." With this cry the ten tribes were lost to the king, a new kingdom sprang into existence,

and the opportunity for serving a united people was forever lost to Rehoboam. Note (a) The flight of Rehoboam to Jerusalem; (b) The assembling of the army; (c) The message from God through the prophet Shemaiah; (d) The respect paid to the word of the Lord and the disbanding of the army.

Specific application. Greatness is dependent upon service. (See Matt. 20, 26-27.) Every opportunity to serve others is an opportunity to be great after the standard of Jesus. Many desire to use a great opportunity, as Rehoboam did, purely for selfish ends, and those who thus reject an opportunity to serve will just so surely suffer loss. The advice of the world to-day is like unto the advice of the young men; the advice of the Christ is like unto that of the old men. The motto of the Prince of Wales, "Ich dien" (I serve), should be the motto of every young person to-day. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," self or others, and thus decide whether you will grow or not.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.
There's a wideness.
All hail the power of Jesus' name.
Come, Holy Ghost, in love.
From every stormy wind.

Lord of the worlds above.
Light of life.
Awake, my soul.
Jesus, thou everlasting King.
The praying spirit breathe.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

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Blackboard.

BY T. J. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



LESSON II. ELIJAH THE PROPHET.

[July 10.]

GOLDEN TEXT. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17. 13.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the whole chapter.]

1 Kings 17. 1-16. [*Commit to memory verses 2-6.*]

1 And E-li-jah the Tish-bite, who was of the inhabitants of Gil'e-ad, said unto A'hab, As the LORD God of Is-ra-el liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Che'rith, that is before Jor'dan.

4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Che'rith, that is before Jor'dan.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to Zar'e-phath, which belongeth to Zi'don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose and went to Zar'e-phath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And E-li-jah the Tish-bite, who was of the sojourners of Gil'e-ad, said unto A'hab, As the LORD, the God of Is-ra-el, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.
- 2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Che'rith, that is before Jor'dan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.
- 3 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Che'rith, that is before Jor'dan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
- 4 Arise, get thee to Zar'e-phath, which belongeth to Zi'don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zar'e-phath; and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow woman was there gathering sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to

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he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13 And E-li'jah said unto her, Fear not: go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Is-ra-el, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and did according to the saying of E-li'jah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by E-li'jah.

fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And E-li'jah said unto her, Fear not: go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it forth unto me, and afterward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD, the God of Is-ra-el, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of E-li'jah: and she, and he, and 16 her house, did eat many days. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by E-li'jah.

Time.—About B. C. 910 or 908. **Places.**—

1. Samaria, a city built by King Omri, Ahab's father, and made the capital of his kingdom.
2. The brook Cherith, a rocky ravine running down to the Jordan, which is turned into a brook in every rainy season.
3. Zarephath, a Phœnician town between Tyre and Sidon, the same as Sarepta of the New Testament.

Home Readings.

- M.* Hardened in sin. 1 Kings 16. 25-33.
Tu. Elijah the Prophet. 1 Kings 17. 1-7.
W. Elijah the Prophet. 1 Kings 17. 8-16.
Th. Sorrow and joy. 1 Kings 17. 17-24.
F. The famine. 1 Kings 18. 1-16.
S. Power of prayer. James 5. 13-20.
S. Kept by God. Psalm 37. 12-24.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 143, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
 Though pressed by every foe!

No. 146, New Canadian Hymnal.

God of my life, thro' all my days,
 My grateful powers shall sound thy praise.

No. 145, New Canadian Hymnal.

My God, and Father, while I stray
 Far from my home, in life's rough way.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. A Prophet's Faith, v. 1-7.

What prophet is referred to? Give his history.

What message declared his faith? To whom?

How long did the drought continue? Luke 4. 25.

Where was the prophet bidden to hide? From whom?

What promise was made to him?

How did he show his faith in God?

How was God's faithfulness shown?

What trial then came to the prophet's faith?

2. A Woman's Faith, v. 8-16.

What journey was the prophet bidden to take?

What promise of support had he?

What request did he make of a woman at Zarephath?

What further did he ask?

To what straits was the woman reduced?

What strange command tested the woman's faith?

How promise was made to her?

How did she show her faith?

What was the result of thus trusting God?

GOLDEN TEXT.

What sorrow soon came to the woman? Verses 17, 18.

How was her sorrow removed? Verses 19-23.

Of what was she then convinced?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Sin brings trouble. Wrongdoing and suffering walk hand in hand. The "wages" of this taskmaster are death.

2. Obey God's commandments. That course is always safe. Where he is guide none need fear to go.

3. Trust God for daily bread. Worry never relieves want. God feeds the ravens; why should his children have any fear?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Prophet's Faith, v. 1-7.

- What king is here referred to?
 Who appeared before him?
 To what country did Elijah belong?
 What message did he bear to the king?
 On account of what sin had God threatened to withhold rain? See Deut. 11, 16, 17.
 From whom did Elijah receive a message?
 Where was he told to go?
 What was said about his food and drink?
 What did the prophet do?
 What service did the ravens render?
 Who feeds the ravens? Luke 12, 24.
 Who, then, really fed Elijah?
 What happened, after a while, to the brook? Why?

2. A Woman's Faith, v. 8-16.

- Where next was Elijah told to go?
 Who would there provide for him?
 Whom did he meet near the city?
 What request did he make of her?
 As she went, what did he further ask?
 What did the woman say about her supply?
 What was Elijah's answer?
 What promise did he give her?
 What, then, did the woman do?
 When did the meal and oil fail?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. To fear God?
2. To obey God?
3. To trust God?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Whom did the Lord send to King Ahab with a message?

- Why was he not afraid to go?
 What was the message he carried?

- What does lack of rain and dew often cause?
 Of what had God warned them years before?
 Where did the Lord tell Elijah to hide?
 What did he say should feed him?
 Where was he sent next?
 Was this woman able to care for the prophet?
 What did Elijah promise her?
 How long did the oil and meal last?
 How did she dare give away the last food she had? **She trusted the God of Elijah.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did Elijah tell Ahab? "**There shall not be dew nor rain.**"
2. What fed Elijah when he hid near the brook Cherith? **Ravens.**
3. Where did God send him when the brook dried up? **To Zarephath.**
4. Whom had God commanded to sustain him? **A widow woman.**
5. What was her entire wealth? **A handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse.**
6. What wonderful thing did God cause? **GOLDEN TEXT: "And the barrel," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

19. Wherein consists the sinfulness of our fallen estate?

The sinfulness of our fallen estate consists in the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of our whole nature, commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions which flow from it.

Romans vii. 14.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Reward of True Character.

I. TRUE CHARACTER.

1. **Bold.** *Said unto Ahab.* v. 1.
 Be thou strong. Josh. 1, 7.
 Strong in the Lord. Eph. 6, 10.
2. **Believing.** *Saith the Lord.* v. 1.
 Evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11, 1.
 Staggered not. Rom. 4, 20.
3. **Obedient.** *Did according.* v. 5.
 By faith Abraham... obeyed. Heb. 11, 8.
 Do... I command you. John 15, 14.
4. **Trusting.** *Dwelt by the brook.* v. 5.
 Trust in the Lord. Psalm 37, 3.
 Careful for nothing. Phil. 4, 6.

II. ITS REWARDS.

1. **Insight.** *Word of the Lord.* v. 2.
 Secret of the Lord. Psalm 25, 14.
 Spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. 2, 14.
2. **Guidance.** *Turn... hide.* v. 3.
 Guide thee with mine eye. Psalm 32, 8.
 Thine ears shall hear. Isa. 30, 21.
3. **Care.** *Ravens brought.* v. 6.
 Thou shalt be fed. Psalm 37, 3.
 God shall supply. Phil. 4, 19.
4. **Helpfulness.** *She... her house.* v. 15.
 Be a blessing. Zech. 8, 13.
 Salt of the earth. Matt. 5, 13.

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EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

In the hour when the cause of God seemed at its lowest ebb, when the worst of kings was on the throne and the bitterest foe of Jehovah sat as queen beside him, when Baal was in full power and the ministers of God were persecuted to death—in that hour arose the mightiest of the Old Testament prophets, Elijah the Tishbite. We know nothing of his family, his ancestry, or his training, except that he had grown up in the free air of Gilead and far from the corrupting influence of the court. He came to stand as uncompromisingly for Jehovah as Jezebel stood for Baal, to match his force and will against hers, and to answer her persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by his own slaughter of the priests of Baal. Unheralded he bursts upon the scene, and uninvited he stands in presence of the king, his rough mantle and unshorn hair contrasting strangely with the jeweled and robed courtiers. His message is brief and terrible; no good tidings of mercy, but warning of wrath. He does not even call to repentance nor invite to faith. He simply forewarns of coming doom, and then stalks forth from the royal presence as suddenly as he came. It is as if a bolt of lightning had shot forth from the sky and then folded itself away; so suddenly did the rough prophet drop out of sight. We see him later communing with God by the brook, feeding upon the slender store brought by his winged servitors, bearing comfort and support to the widow of Zarephath, and everywhere he appears as the man of fellowship with God, of faith, and of obedience.

Verse 1. Elijah. His name means "Jehovah is my God," and the name expressed his character, which was uncompromising and radical in fidelity to the God of Israel. We know very little of his history and nothing of his ancestry. (1) Not "who" a man is, but "what" he is, is the important question. **The Tishbite.** Perhaps indicating that he was a native of a place called Tishbi, or Tishbeh, of which nothing is known. **Gilead.** The country on the east side of the Jordan, a lofty tableland stretching to the Syrian desert, the home of a rough, uncultivated people. It is noteworthy that the greatest prophets of the past and the greatest preachers of the present began life in the free life of the country. **Said unto Ahab.** For once the wicked king heard the voice of a man, and not of flattering courtiers. **As the Lord God of Israel liveth.** His mission was to proclaim Jehovah as against Baal, a living God against dead idols. **Before whom I stand.** He stood before God as his servant, and in an age of persecution made a bold confession. (2) *Why should any follower of the living God be ashamed to own his service? There shall not be dew nor rain.* Perhaps not absolutely none, for then the country would become a desert, but a drought sufficient to convince king and people that it came directly from the hand of God. **But according to my word.** This would prove that he spoke by a divine authority. "How big doth he speak when he speaks in God's name."—*Bishop Hall.* (3) *See in this the fidelity, courage, faith, and obedience of God's prophet.*

2. The word of the Lord. How it came we know not.

3. Turn thee eastward. From Samaria, where he had met the king. **Hide thyself.**

(4) *There are times when God's servants must stand and times when they may fly.* **The brook Cherith.** An unknown torrent running into the river Jordan from the mountain region. It has been supposed by some to be the Wady Kelt, near Jericho.

4. Thou shalt drink of the brook. Keep running longer than others to supply his needs. **I have commanded the ravens.** Birds of prey were to bring food to God's servant. Some would change the Hebrew *orebin* into *arabin*, "Arabians," and say that he was fed by wandering Arabs; but if we believe in miracles at all, why not accept the plain statement of Scripture here? (5) *See how precisely God directs the ways of a servant who trusts him.*

5. So he went and did. With absolute, unquestioning obedience. **According unto the word of the Lord.** This was the rule of Elijah's actions. He had no elaborate creed, no national constitution, no social proprieties to fence his daily conduct, but in all things sought to adjust his life to "the word of the Lord." **Dwelt by the brook Cherith.** How long we know not. The temptation, doubtless, came to him that the time there spent was uselessly spent, but he must learn that (6) *There are times for patient waiting as well as for actual working.*

6. The ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening. Where they got this food, in what condition of preservation it was, in what quantities, and with what regularity it came—none of these things are recorded for us. The simple fact is given by the historian that such food as Elijah had, including both flesh meat and other food, was brought by these birds of prey.

7. After a while. Some have supposed this

"while" to have been about a year; we do not know. **The brook dried up.** Little by little. (7) *To observe earthly resources steadily diminish and retain undiminished faith in God—this is the height of Christian heroism. Because there had been no rain.* It was Elijah's God that had withheld the rain, and it was Elijah's voice that had foretold the drought, so that the very test of his faith became an inspiration of faith.

8, 9. The word of the Lord. It came to him from above; it comes to us from the written word, and ours is the more sure word of prophecy. **Get thee to Zarephath.** An ancient city midway between Tyre and Zidon, in the New Testament called Sarepta, now called *Sarafend*. **Belongeth to Zidon.** Zidon, on the seacoast, was the very headquarters of Baal worship, and the home of Jezebel. (8) *God's commands are not to be measured by worldly standards of expediency. Dwell there.* Note how directly under Baal's shadow God was raising up and preserving Baal's destroyer! **A widow woman.** The condition of the widows in the East is helpless in the extreme, so that to receive support from such a source was another trial to Elijah's faith. But then Ahab would never search for the prophet in such quarters. **To sustain thee.** Yet in so doing she was herself sustained and blessed. (9) *They who contribute to God's cause receive more than they give.*

10. He arose and went. Notice throughout Elijah's history the promptness with which he obeyed the commands of God's Spirit. **The gate of the city.** An old tradition locates the very spot of this meeting south of the city. **The widow woman was there.** An unpropitious prospect, not encouraging to the fleshly nature—a support from a starving widow! But Elijah knew that the threat of God's purpose, how soever frail it seems, is a cable that human strength can never break. **A little water.** He was thirsty from his journey; she was famished with hunger. (10) *Two atoms with omnipotence behind them are mightier than two kingdoms in Baal's name.*

11. She was going. In her own need she was mindful of another's need, and was ready to help to the limit of her power. **A morsel of bread.** It was not a selfish request, but was made under divine direction, to show the widow's want and awaken her faith. Perhaps, also, Elijah was not quite sure whether she was the one to whom God had directed him, and spoke to her as a test.

12. As the Lord thy God liveth. Among the Hebrews this was the most solemn of oaths or invocations. That a pagan woman adopted it shows simply that she knew that Elijah was a devout believer in God—that is, Jehovah. She

used the words that would be most impressive on him; it does not follow that she herself worshipped Jehovah. **I have not a cake.** Or, as we might say, a biscuit. **A handful of meal.** Probably barley, the cheapest grain food. **A barrel.** An earthenware jar. **Oil.** Olive oil, sweet oil, used in Southern Europe and Asia Minor as we use butter. **A cruse.** A bottle. **Two sticks.** A couple of sticks; not meaning exactly two, but a very few. **Dress it.** Cook it. **That we may eat it, and die.** Words of the most pathetic despair.

13. Fear not. It would be a helpful task to set the scholars on a search for repetitions of this little sentence in the Bible. It and its equivalents are repeated more frequently than any other injunction, except, perhaps, "Praise the Lord." **Make me thereof a little cake first.** Astonishing as this demand is to us, it was in accordance with oriental feelings. Today in India a fakir or holy man might make a similar demand of a starving Hindu, and, stranger still, would probably receive the food. In the case of Elijah and the widow woman the prevalent superstition and reverence for the holy orders are ennobled into an act of living faith in the prophet's God.

14. The Lord God of Israel. He appeals to the same power to which she had reverently alluded. **Shall not waste.** The stock shall not be lessened. **The Lord sendeth rain.** Here is a lesson, often ignored, that we should impress on our pupils; whenever the rain falls it is the Lord that sends it; whenever the stock of provisions at home is renewed it is the Lord that renews it. (11) *He gives us day by day our daily bread, and to the truly devout heart this thought should be as constantly present in times of prosperity as in extremities.*

15. She went and did. And received the reward of her faith. If men and women were made of the same stuff in those days as in these there were many others who had as clear belief in the Lord God of Israel as she, but dared not go and do. The Lord Jesus found no scarcity of people to applaud the story of the Good Samaritan, but when he said, "Go thou and do likewise," not many obeyed him. One secret of Christian effectiveness is to do as well as we know. **According to the saying of Elijah.** Elijah went according to the word of the Lord; this woman goes according to the word of the Lord's servant. Whether Christians will or not they are treated in the same way now. (12) *We are God's epistles, read and known of all men.* **Many days.** Very likely more than two years. Our authorities for the three and a half years' duration of the famine are Luke 4. 25, James 5. 17.

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Verse 1 him proper tic charac is known o ly upon us records of duce them triumphan suddenly o prophet, b man; he h plain, brie ing was a mantle, or bite. Wh a place ca mentions a this is the evidence to and that, But what d man of the was—but I message in All honor t nationality ful prophe ple, must i the nation. the policy more wick people; G had been o he was stil spite of roy ways been is the Lor disregard d **3. Cher** definitely

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

There is an interval of sixty-six years between the dates of this lesson and of the last. Many changes had taken place in the two kingdoms. Judah's kings had been Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat, and the kingdom was prosperous. Israel's kings were Jeroboam, Baasha, Elah, Omri, and Ahab, and the religion and morals of the people had reached a very low level. Ahab, the infamous, had undertaken to make the worship of Baal the national religion, and to supplant and stamp out the worship of Jehovah. A crisis was reached in the history of Israel, and the man of the hour—Elijah, the Tishbite—steps forth to vindicate the religion of the fathers, and to rescue it from the oppression of the debased king and his vicious queen.

Verse 1. Elijah. Dean Stanley referred to him properly as "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced." Little is known of his antecedents. He bursts suddenly upon us like a meteor. Other prophets have records of family, country, or exploits to introduce them, but this weird, courageous, fiery, triumphant man stalks suddenly in and then as suddenly out. He was in some respects a typical prophet, being "above the common height of man; he had long, wild hair; his language was plain, brief, rude."—*Milman*. "His only clothing was a girdle of skin around his loins and the mantle, or cape, of sheepskin."—*Smith*. **Tishbite.** Whether this is the name of a family or of a place cannot yet be determined. Tobit 1. 2 mentions a town, Tishbe, and some claim that this is the place of his birth, but there is sufficient evidence to show that this is a mistranslation, and that, therefore, no such place is known. But what does it matter? The Tishbite was the man of the hour; he had a message—terrible it was—but he had sufficient courage to flash the message in the flushed face of the wicked king. All honor to such a man, whatever his lineage or nationality or rank. **Dew nor rain.** This awful prophecy, with its dire results to all the people, must have spread consternation throughout the nation. But it was the legitimate outcome of the policy formed by the wicked king and his still more wicked queen. Idolatry had debased the people; God was repudiated. The God of Israel had been dethroned by the edicts of Ahab; but he was still supreme, and Baal was impotent in spite of royal power and authority. So it has always been that that nation is blessed whose God is the Lord, and those nations that have shown disregard of him have fallen upon evil ways.

3. Cherith. This brook has not yet been definitely identified. As "before" sometimes

means "to the east of," as in Josh. 18. 14, and sometimes "toward," as in Gen. 18. 16, it is difficult to locate it. Robinson and Potter incline to identify it with Wady-el-Kelt, west of the Jordan, while Eusebius and Jerome place it in the region east of the Jordan. But wherever it was, there God had prepared a place of refuge for his faithful prophet. Many a devoted servant of God since the days of Elijah has found the word true that says, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

6. Ravens. There is the cleverest evidence of a miracle. There was nothing miraculous about supplying the prophet with water from the brook, but there was in supplying him with "bread or flesh" by means of the ravens. As was to be expected, some "scholars" have invented an alleged explanation of this on rationalistic grounds. They claim that the word "ravens" here really means "Arabians," and the inference is that the prophet was provisioned by passing caravans of merchants. Another ingenious effort to escape the necessity of acknowledging the miraculous is found in the claim that "there was a town near by called Orbo or Oreb, whose inhabitants, the Orebim (the same word as that rendered 'ravens'), fed the prophet." There is something amusing as well as pathetic in this "nibbling criticism." To acknowledge a miracle does not make quite as heavy a draft on one's imagination and intellectual conscientiousness as to accept the results of these studied attempts to evade the miraculous.

9. Zarephath. This means in Hebrew "smelting house," and is identified as the modern village of Surafend. The Crusaders built a chapel on the traditional site of the widow's house. **Zidon.** This was the headquarters of Baal-worship and the home of Ahab's queen, Jezebel. To pass through drought-stricken Israel must have been dangerous to the prophet, and its purpose strange, but to be ordered to the very heart of the idolatrous region must have been a trial to his faith. But he does not falter. The order is given, and he obeys. Ahab might search for him, Jezebel might seek his death, but the command of the Lord is law to his prophet, and is obeyed without question, for "he arose and went."

12. As the Lord thy God liveth. Elijah's meeting with the woman must have strengthened his confidence in God's ability to do according to his word. She was a faithful worshiper of the true God, but with a heavy load on her heart; he was God's prophet, with a bur-

den on his heart. In their adversity they approached a ground of mutual sympathy. In receiving this stranger she was relieving her own distresses and honoring Jehovah.

14. The barrel of meal. Whether this was a miracle of multiplication or of actual creation does not matter. It may be claimed that the conditions did not call for so extraordinary an exhibition of divine power, but it is only necessary to compare the conditions under which certain other well-authenticated miracles were performed to show the hollowness of the assumption. Zarephath may have presented a forbidden aspect to the heroic prophet when he entered it, but it was a place of triumph and great blessing. It often happens that God's richest and most permanent benedictions lie at the end of a difficult road, and are secured only through entire dependence upon God and loyalty to his commandments.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Honors of God's Follower.

We see in Elijah a man who stood forth openly, bravely, uncompromisingly, as a follower of God. He received for this great privileges, which we can have on the same terms.

1. *There is the honor of sight into the divine purposes.* He knew what others knew not, because, living in communion with God, the divine secret was with him. Verse 1.

2. *There is the honor of divine guidance.* Every step was under God's direction, whether to Samaria, Cherith, or Zarephath. Verses 2, 8, 14.

3. *There is the honor of divine care.* God's child is safe, for his Father's arm is around him. While others famish he has food, even though birds may bring it. Verse 6.

4. *There is the honor of becoming a blessing to others.* Not only is his own life preserved, but he becomes the means of preserving other lives. Verses 13-16.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The peasants, or "fellahin," of Palestine today are Canaanites by descent, and still retain their ancient religion, mixed with a few Mohammedan usages, and they still worship local divinities. Rawlinson says: "Their worship was one of the lowest and most debasing of the forms of belief and worship prevalent in the ancient world, combining impurity with cruelty, the sanction of licentiousness with a requirement of bloody rites revolting to the conscience and destructive to any right apprehension of the true idea of God."

We must always picture to ourselves Elijah

facing such a religious fanaticism as this, crying out, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth;" whom he now declares is the God who controls the elements, sending rain or withholding it. Palestine was and is absolutely dependent on the rains which, falling on the hills, descend in great volumes of water to the plains and make the eastern portion of the country a great marsh. If it fail, the soil soon becomes baked and hard, so that it cannot be penetrated with the implements known to the people, and no seed can be kept alive. There is no system of irrigation, no great river supplying a steady source of relief; the springs dry up; there is no water in cisterns that can fully supply man and beast. To paraphrase the language of the prophet Joel: "The harvest perished, the vine withered, the fig wilted, and all the trees of the field with it; the seed shriveled below the clods, the threshing floors were empty, the barns were broken down, for the corn had come to nothing; the beasts groan; the herds of cattle are perplexed because they have no pasture, the flocks of sheep are made desolate, the rivers of water are dried up and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." There are three divisions of the rainy season: the early rain, which softens the ground after the summer for seeding; the long winter rains, which fill the cisterns and springs, and the spring rains, which swell the seeds and bulbs. It seldom rains more than seven or eight days at a time, however. There is no rainfall from May to October. The sea winds which blow each night from the Mediterranean furnish a moisture like a mist, and this is what Elijah said should fall also; it is called "dew," but there is properly no dewfall in Palestine, for there is no moisture in the hot summer air to be chilled into dew. The burning skies would devastate vegetation in the summer months but for this moisture which rose from the sea, which is seen from Mount Carmel, where Elijah went to look for the rain coming.

The ravens were commanded to feed the prophet, not that he was to eat them, for they were "unclean" to Hebrews. The ravens and all such scavenger birds are wont to carry to their nests far more than they can eat, and they sometimes carry what they do not eat themselves or can eat. The writer has known birds of this species, though not strictly ravens, to seize spoons and other shining objects from the hands of little children or the trays of butlers. Elijah could find great numbers of the nests of the ravens in the caves which abounded in the region where he was hidden. He might find opportunities to take what they had gathered without fighting with them, which might be a perilous undertaking, as they fight by attacking the eyes.

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The woman who fed Elijah doubtless observed that he was a holy prophet, and in all the Eastern world "holy men" are allowed to subsist by the small contributions of the people for their daily needs. A Hindu holy man or fakir will go from shop to shop or house to house and solicit a contribution of meal or vegetable or whatever happens to come into his pathway, in his "bowl," and then prepare it for himself. The widow gave him from her cruse of oil, probably like the vessels still made at Gaza—a blue clay porous globular vessel about nine inches wide, a neck three inches long, a handle below the neck, and a straight spout with an opening the size of a straw.

By Way of Illustration.

Elijah the prophet. It is said of Elijah that he stood before the Lord continually, and so it is not strange that he could with authority give a message from the Lord. Some kings have what are called "throne-room attendants." Being always with the king, they have a part in the royal councils and know perfectly his mind. Elijah was a throne-room attendant of the King of kings. Two men were discussing their pastor. One said, "How is it that he tells us so many new truths?" To which the other answered, "He lives so much nearer God than the rest of us I think he hears many things which others farther away never hear at all."

Spurgeon says, "A peasant on his knees sees further than a philosopher on his tiptoes."

Ravens as food carriers. A missionary in India writes: "While I do not claim to know where the ravens got the bread and meat, a residence of thirty years in the East helps me to guess where they got it. My own little children have often come crying into the house, their hands scratched and bleeding from the claws of kites and crows that had snatched from them the food they were eating. Our nurse one day prepared a fowl to be grilled for my sick wife, and standing in the doorway, plate in hand, called the cook to come for the fowl. When the man came the nurse discovered that her plate was empty. A kite or crow had carried away the fowl without her knowledge. Meat sellers are obliged to be continually on the alert to prevent great birds from robbing them. It is my firm conviction that those ravens stole the food from the bazaars of Jerusalem or Jericho."

Providential supplies. Mr. Spurgeon said he could no more doubt providential supplies than Elijah while receiving his daily rations from ravens. His orphanage cost \$50,000 annually,

and only \$7,000 of it was provided by endowment. The rest came in answer to prayer.

A mother who was very poor and whom God had wonderfully helped was reassured by her little boy, who said, "Mother, I think God always hears when we scrape the bottom of the barrel."

God saves the widow. In giving, loving, and serving we have to put God first. This is the soil where blessings root. Barreled corn never touched so high a quotation in the world markets before or since. No oil well or pipe line ever ran so precious a product or brought such a price as that of the widow's cruse. What would those mere morsels have been worth for food, or to make a contest about, compared with the reward which came of obedience? Yet many people will strive with God over some trifle in the heart for long years. Yes, and be beaten in life's struggle by the clutching of handfals when they might have heaven. The son who was apparently sacrificed was raised to life by the prophet who had shared the mother's hospitality.—*W. R. Campbell.*

A successful business man, noted for his generosity, says: "If I had waited until I was rich to give, I am sure I would never have begun to give, and so would have missed the richest blessing of life. When I received my first monthly salary of \$10 I gave \$1 of it to the Lord, and from that day to this I have been blessed. Encourage gifts from the poor. They will be blessed in giving."

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Suddenly as he disappeared from mortal vision when he ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire Elijah appears upon the scene of history. It was in troublous times. Jeroboam's sin was still working its consequence in Israel. Every succeeding king "walked in the ways of Jeroboam" until Ahab, who "did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him." How terrible is the responsibility of perpetuating character from generation to generation! Jezebel, the beautiful, wicked wife of Ahab, came from heathen Tyre, and introduced in Israel the hideous rites of her religion. Her name stands as the synonym for the influence, beauty, strength, and personality of a woman turned for evil against all that is good. It is a face no words can measure. In the midst of prevailing disorder and sin God's messenger suddenly appears to rebuke the wrong. Strangely we forget God is a sovereign ruler, and will bring nations as well as men to judgment. Reading in Deuteronomy, eleventh chapter, we find God had said the withholding of rain

should be the punishment for idolatry, and in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple he refers to this.

Elijah, like all who give attention to the word of God, remembered what he had said; the majority had quite forgotten. And in order to bring the far-astroy people back to God he prayed that this token of displeasure might be given. "He prayed earnestly that it might not rain." Suppose in all Israel there had been not one left to pray! Sin would have gone on unchecked to its final catastrophe. Suppose in all this sinful earth there was none to restrain by prayer the powers of evil. Suppose there was no one left to pray for you! It is a blessed thing to have some one who "stands before God"—father, mother, Christian friend, teacher, or minister—to plead for us until he hears. But see how Elijah himself fared while God answered his prayer. He asked that there might be no rain, and as he sat alone beside the brook Cherith, from which the Lord had said he should drink, day by day he saw the waters dry away, until not a drop was left in the parched sand. Had God forgotten? Elijah would have thought so had his faith been no better than ours sometimes is. Then the Lord sent him to Zarephath, and he found the widow, whom God had commanded to sustain him, without sufficient food to keep herself and her son alive. There was no meal, because there had been no rain, in answer to Elijah's prayer. What a trial of faith. So it often is with us. We pray for certain blessings. Sorrows, disappointments, adverse circumstances befall us and those for whom we pray. But all the while God is answering, and answering in these very things which seem so utterly against us. A drying brook, a hopelessly little bit of meal and oil, may lie in the direct path of God's faithfulness as his hearer and answerer of prayer.

The circumstances were very depressing, but faith said, "Fear not, for thus saith the Lord God of Israel." From Cherith to Zarephath Elijah went, "according to the word of the Lord." If his faith had failed at either place, he would not have had the glorious victory on Carmel.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Picture the times when Elijah appeared: Baal-worship, Ahab, Jezebel, Hiel (1 Kings 16. 34), persecution (1 Kings 18. 4), few worshippers of God, altars destroyed, etc.... The reformer—his coming, acts, traits, etc.... Draw a map, and trace Elijah's journeys: 1. Gilead to Samaria, and the meeting with Ahab. 2. Samaria to Cherith, near Jericho, and the lessons of faith and God's care. 3. Cherith to Zarephath, and the meeting

with the widow.... Two aspects of the lesson are the human and divine; one the trait of character shown by Elijah: 1. Fidelity to God; 2. Faith in his word; 3. Boldness; 4. Communion with God; 5. Obedience; 6. Trust in divine care. The other is the privileges which he enjoyed as a follower of God: 1. Insight; 2. Divine guidance; 3. Providential care; 4. Made a blessing.... The widow of Zarephath shows: 1. Maternal love; 2. Faith in God; 3. Self-denial; 4. Generous giving; 5. Rewards which she enjoyed.

Before the Class.

Introduction. Briefly present the national life of Israel, the new kingdom, from the accession of Jeroboam to the time of the present lesson, noting (a) The idolatry of Israel led by Jeroboam; (b) The succession of kings, Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri and Ahab; (c) The religious degeneracy of the people, finally ending in the worship of Baal. Note on the outline map the places of the lesson, Samaria, Zarephath, and the brook Cherith. Draw from the class so far as possible information concerning the two chief characters of the lesson, Elijah and Ahab.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "God's Providing Care," and the following divisions: 1. The manifest need, 2. The faithful disciple, 3. The humble instruments, 4. The ample supply.

1. *The manifest need.* Elijah had suddenly appeared to Ahab and pronounced the judgment of the Lord against the land because of its idolatry, "There shall not be dew nor rain these years." Famine more or less severe would follow such a withholding of moisture. From the results of this Elijah was not to escape, but was to be provided for by the Lord. Note here (a) That the forces of nature are held to be under God's direct control; (b) That he uses these forces at times for punitive purposes. Question the class whether the same be true to-day.

2. *The faithful disciple.* Elijah obeyed the word of the Lord in delivering a message of punishment, which delivery might have been, probably was, attended with danger. Compare the similar conduct of John the Baptist before Herod. He also obeyed the word when it came to him with a message concerning himself. Note concerning this obedience that it was (a) Unquestioning—faith reigned supreme; (b) Prompt—"and he went;" (c) Complete—"he did according to the word of the Lord." Impress the thought that this is the only kind of obedience that deserves the name. There is but one ques-

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tion to be settled, Is this the word of the Lord to me? and then the unquestioning, prompt, complete obedience must be rendered.

3. *The humble instruments.* In the one case the ravens were used to bring food to the prophet; in the other case a poor widow of Phœnicia supplied his needs. God at this time, although using very humble means in sustaining his prophet, used his divine power in such manner as to make these means effective. So today very humble instruments may be used by God in carrying out his purposes, but such in the hands of God are sure to bring the desired results.

4. *The ample supply.* "Bread and flesh in the morning; and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." Not luxurious, but ample for his simple wants. Not a word of complaint from Elijah; he is satisfied, for God is caring for him. "A handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse." Very simple fare, but ample for his needs, and Elijah is content, for in the continued supply he sees the hand of God. Note here (a) The gradual revelation of God's plans for Elijah; (b) Elijah's contentment with the supply; (c) The faith and love of the widow; (d) The blessings which came to her through Elijah.

Specific application. The specific application is the providential care which God bestows upon his disciples. God's hand is in the world to-day just as much as it was in the days of Elijah, and he is just as surely providing now for the needs of his disciples. The means and the methods may be somewhat different, but the results are just as certain. Illustrate sufficiently to make this truth clear and impressive.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

The Lord is my Shepherd.
Tho' troubles assail.
How firm a foundation.
He leadeth me.
In some way or other.

Whenever trials press my soul.
The Lord he is my strength.
I am safe in the Rock.
In heavenly love abiding.
All the way.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 10, Sticks for fuel, 307. Ver. 12, The barrel, 308; The cruse, 306; Use of the term "two," 678. Ver. 13, Bread-making, 11.

Blackboard.

AND THE BARREL OF MEAL
WASTED NOT, NEITHER DID THE
CRUSE OF OIL FAIL.



LESSON III. ELIJAH ON CARMEL.

[July 17.]

GOLDEN TEXT. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. 1 Kings 18. 39.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read chaps. 17. 17 to 18. 46.]

1 Kings 18. 30-39. [*Commit to memory verses 30-39.*]

30 And E-li'jah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

31 And E-li'jah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ja'cob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Is'ra-el shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that E-li'jah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of A'bra-ham, I'saac, and of Is'ra-el, let it be known this day that thou art God in Is'ra-el, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

REVISED VERSION.

30 And E-li'jah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the

31 LORD that was thrown down. And E-li'jah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ja'cob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Is'ra-el shall be thy name. And with the stones he

32 built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as

33 would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on

34 the burnt offering, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third

35 time; and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled

36 the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening

37 oblation, that E-li'jah the prophet came near, and said, O LORD, the God of A'bra-ham, of I'saac, and of Is'ra-el, let it be known this day that thou art God in Is'ra-el, and that I

38 am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou,

39 LORD, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the

LORD fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the

39 trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God.

Time.—About 905 B. C. **Place.**—Mount Carmel. **Rulers.**—Ahab, king of Israel; Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.

Home Readings.

- M. The challenge. 1 Kings 18. 17-29.
 Tu. Elijah on Carmel. 1 Kings 18. 30-39.
 W. The little cloud. 1 Kings 18. 40-46.
 Th. A solemn covenant. Deut. 50. 10-20.
 F. Decide now! Josh. 24. 14-24.
 S. Hold fast! 2 Tim. 1. 6-13.
 S. Reward of faithfulness. Rev. 3. 7-13.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 208, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, thou who camest from above,
 The pure celestial fire to impart.

No. 207, New Canadian Hymnal

Gracious Spirit, Love divine,
 Let thy light within me shine!
 All my guilty fears remove;
 Fill me with thy heavenly love.

No. 209, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, for a closer walk with God,
 A calm and heavenly frame;
 A light, to shine upon the road
 That leads me to the Lamb!

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. Standing on the Promises, v. 30-35.
 What command and promise did Elijah receive? Verse 1.
 What demand did he make of Ahab? Verses 17-19.

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What test did he propose? Verses 22-24.

What resulted from the efforts of Baal's priests? Verses 26-30.

What was Elijah's command to the people?

What work of restoration did he perform?

How did he commemorate the twelve tribes?

What surrounded the altar?

What preparation for sacrifice was made?

What threefold command was given?

What was the result at and about the altar?

Why was this done?

2. The Victory of Faith, v. 36-39.

To whom did Elijah offer his prayer? When?

For what did he pray for himself?

For what on behalf of the people?

What was God's answer?

How were the people affected? GOLDEN TEXT.

What was done with the priests of Baal? Verse 40.

What part had Elijah in bringing rain? Verses 41-46.

What pledge of his was thus vindicated? Chap. 17. 1.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. "He repaired the altar." That was a good work to begin with. Many an altar, in the closet, in the home, in the Church, is broken down. Restore the altar if you would have an answer by fire.

2. "Attempt great things for God." Dare anything in his name.

3. "Expect great things from God." He always honors true faith. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

4. See the value of, 1. True repentance; 2. Earnest faith; 3. Believing prayer.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Standing on the Promises, v. 30-35.

What did Elijah bid the people do?

What did he rebuild?

How many stones did he build into the altar?

Why did he take this number?

What did he make about the altar?

What did he lay upon the altar?

What then did he bid the people do?

How many times was this done?

2. The Victory of Faith, v. 36-39.

At what time did Elijah offer his prayer?

Upon whom did he call?

What was his prayer?

What answer came from the Lord?

What did the people do?

What did they say?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The folly of worshipping false gods?
2. The duty of worshipping the true God?
3. That God honors his true worshippers?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where did the people come to hold a great meeting? **To Mount Carmel.**

Who were there besides the people of Israel? **Elijah and the prophets of Baal.**

What was built on Mount Carmel? **Two altars.**

What was offered on one? **Sacrifices to Baal.**

What had the people said they would believe? **That the God who answered by fire was the true God.**

How did the prophets of Baal behave?

How long did they cry to their god?

Why did no answer come?

What did Elijah do when his turn came?

Why was his prayer answered? **There was a living God to hear him.**

What fell from heaven as he prayed?

What does this lesson teach us? **That the true God hears and answers prayer.**

What does it show is the wise thing to do? **To choose to follow the true God.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did Elijah make when he called all the people to him? **An altar of twelve stones.**

2. When he had prepared a sacrifice what did he command? **To pour water on it three times.**

3. What did Elijah pray the Lord to show the people? **"That thou art the Lord God."**

4. What followed Elijah's supplication? **"The fire of the Lord fell."**

5. What did the people do and say when they saw the fire of the Lord consume the burnt sacrifice? GOLDEN TEXT: **"And when all the people,"** etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

20. Wherein consists the misery of our fallen estate?

The misery of our fallen estate consists in that we are without communion with God, subject to the miseries of this life, and to the death of the body, and are liable, through following the desires of our own hearts, to the pains of hell forever.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Spirit of a Man of God.

I. DECISION.

How long halt ye? v. 21.

Cannot serve God... mammon. Matt. 6. 24.

Choose you this day. Josh. 24. 15.

II. CONFIDENCE.

Choose you, etc. vs. 25, 26.

Be not dismayed. Isa. 41. 10.

Be strong... good courage. Deut. 31. 6.

III. COURAGE.

Elijah mocked them. v. 27.

Speak boldly, as I ought. Eph. 6. 20.

Thy face strong. Ezek. 3. 8, 9.

IV. WORSHIP.

Twelve stones... an altar. vs. 31, 32.

Worship the Lord. Matt. 4. 10.

Fear the Lord. Josh. 24. 14.

V. PRAYER.

Came near and said. v. 36.

Call... I will deliver. Psalm 50. 15.

Pray... I will hearken. Jer. 29. 12.

VI. FAITH.

Let it be known this day. v. 36.

Subdued kingdoms. Heb. 11. 33, 34.

Have faith in God. Mark 11. 22, 23.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Let us try to picture the scene of this lesson. The bold mountain between Esdraelon and Sharon is crowded with people. The blue sea flashes back the rays of the sun. Above is the hot sky, toward which all Israel for three years has vainly turned for rain. Yonder are nearly a thousand priests of Baal and Ashtoreth. Against them stands one man of shaggy form and bronzed from exposure—the prophet Elijah. In his chariot sits King Ahab, full of apprehensions; his queen is not by his side. The altar of Baal, garlanded with emblems and surrounded by his priests, is watched warily by Elijah's sharp eyes. The altar of Jehovah near by is in ruins. The test is proposed—an offering upon which fire shall be invoked—"and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." We see Baal's altar piled up with useless sacrifices; we watch the barbaric rites—the priests leaping, dancing, crying; we hear the solemn sarcasm of the prophet. At length there is silence. There has been no voice, nor any that regarded—Baal is dead. And now comes Elijah's time. He steps forth, and every eye is riveted upon him. He approaches Jehovah's ruined altar, once fragrant with incense, now desolate; he gathers its scattered stones and heaps up twelve into an altar, representative of the religious unity of Israel in spite of its political separation. Upon it he lays the wood for the burnt offering, and the four quarters of a slain bullock. He pours over all jar after jar of water until altar and offering are soaked through and through. There can be no deception, and Elijah sends upward his brief, calm petition, while the thousands stand breathless. A moment, and a blinding light descends upon the offering. It consumes the wood; it crumbles the stone; it licks up the water. Jehovah is vindicated. "The Lord, he is the God;" the Lord, he is the God!"

Verse 30. And Elijah said unto all the people. "The people" who had just witnessed the failure of the prophets of Baal to secure an answer from their god. **Come near.** The Septuagint (the ancient Greek version of the Old Testament) tells us that first Elijah had bidden the prophets of Baal to depart. **The people came near.** The crowd closed around, their enthusiasm rising with every act of the prophet of God. **Repaired the altar of the Lord.** Which probably had been broken down in Jezebel's persecution.

31. Elijah took twelve stones. The region is full of stones. The altar itself was built of detached stones. Twelve of these were taken, emblematic of the tribes of Israel. Notwithstanding the frequently-returning jealousy and bitterness between the royal houses of Judah and Israel there was always, especially among the

devouter part of the people, a deep feeling of national unity. **The sons of Jacob.** The source of the national unity. **Unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.** When the word of the Lord came to that effect (and there are two records of this—Gen. 32. 28; 35. 2-10) it was to announce the adoption of the patriarch as the son of the great God, and it was this holy adoption that Elijah would now recall to the populace. He was not discussing a question of kingdoms so much as a question of religions.

32. With the stones he built. Probably without mortar. **The name of the Lord.** Dedicated to Jehovah. **A trench.** A deep ditch. **Two measures of seed.** There is more or less doubt about most of the measures of Scripture, but there seems to be no doubt that a "two-seah measure" (margin) was small, less

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than six gallons, and it is generally understood that the trench was deep enough to hold this measure in an upright position.

33. Put the wood in order. Elijah had found the altar of Jehovah a shapeless pile of dirt and stones. His work was to level this and make it fit for sacred uses, and then to arrange the twelve stones around it as buttresses. On the beaten top of the structure he arranged broken wood in orderly fashion. **Cut the bullock in pieces.** According to the ordained methods of the priests of Israel. **Four barrels.** Great jars, often carried by women on their heads. One of the natural features which have helped to identify the place where Elijah and the prophets of Baal had their conflict is a spring that never fails even in driest weather.

34. Three was in ancient times symbolical of divinity; a sacred number.

35. Ran about the altar. Poured over the bullock and wood and earth and stones. It trickled out on all sides, and Elijah kept on pouring until the ditch was full.

36. Lord God of Abraham. It is important to remember throughout that LORD in small capitals means Jehovah, and that Jehovah was a proper name, as much so as Baal. The priests of Baal had appealed to Baal as the God of Israel, for Ahab and Jezebel had so adopted him. Eli-

jah calls on Jehovah as the God of Israel, and asks him to demonstrate that he is indeed the nation's God. **That thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.** A prayer of singular comprehensiveness. If Jehovah did not in some unusual way prove himself not merely divine, but the divine ruler of Israel, then the people are lost. If in thus securing his own divine glory he does not also indorse Elijah, the lesson of the drought and this challenge will be lost. If Elijah does not make plain that he is merely God's servant, the people may glorify him and not God. More thorough consecration is not often shown than is here shown by Elijah.

37. Hear me. The destiny of the nation was at stake. They had forsaken their fathers' God, and Elijah's highest desire is that they may be brought back to his service.

38. The fire of the Lord fell. How we need not know. We may think of an intensely brilliant flame from out a clear sky. **The stones and the dust.** The intense heat crumbled the stones, and reduced the earth to a fine powder, and dried up the water in the trench.

39. They fell on their faces. Thoroughly subjected. **The Lord, he is the God.** Jehovah must hereafter be recognized as the God of the nation.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

The intervening facts between this lesson and the last exhibit Elijah as one clad in the honor and dignity of a great prophet. After his retirement to Zarephath he goes, in obedience to God's command, to the very presence of Ahab, whom impending starvation had sent out into the fields in search of food and water for his own horses. The stern prophet is not disconcerted by the king's wrathful question, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" But his reply, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou, and thy father's house"—a severe but just taunt—is too much for the wretched king. The challenge follows.

Verse 30. The people. They were more inclined toward Elijah after the miserable failure of the prophets of Baal, than the king and his followers were. Then, if he could get the thoughts and purposes of the people turned in the right direction, the worship of Jehovah would be restored speedily. **Repaired the altar.** This is a pathetic as well as a prophetic picture. Jezebel had destroyed this altar, but the One whom the altar represented was still potent and regnant, and as the prophet rebuilt the altar, so would the ancient faith flourish again throughout the kingdom. Lowell says:

"Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind
the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch
above his own."

31. Twelve stones. The use of twelve stones immediately suggested the origin of "the people," and the political and religious solidarity of the tribes. Perhaps it was prophetic of a reunion of Judah and Israel, and may have expressed the desire and expectation of many who surrounded the prophet.

36. Lord. The prayer of Elijah is in marked contrast with the prayers of the prophets of Baal. Dignity and character and confidence are in his petition. Their cry is a frantic, desperate shriek of distrust. Jehovah—the God of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel—with whose marvelous works the people were familiar—he it was for whose glory the prophet wrought. The great Elijah was only a "servant." Jehovah, the people's true Lord and God, must be magnified and enthroned once more in the hearts of "all the people."

38. The fire of the Lord fell. The answer to his prayer was more complete than Elijah probably expected. It is usually so. God gives in larger measure than we look for. The miracle of fire was marvelous indeed, and must have convinced the people, and disconcerted the king and the prophets of Baal. The "fire" may be accepted as typical of the Holy Ghost, which reproves the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and which not only consumes the dross of sin, but sets the whole being on fire with zeal and devotion to the sacred duties and privileges of pure and undefiled religion. **Consumed.** This miracle is quite impossible of explanation on the rationalistic basis. There is no valid reason for rejecting it, and repudiating the biblical statement. Nor does it argue inordinate credulity to accept the statements without intellectual prejudice. It is absurd, as Kiel points out, to attempt to read into the text the suggestion of a stroke of lightning. If all power belongs to God, why should he not control the forces of nature so as to manifest his greatness and glory when such a manifestation seems necessary? The miracle of the fire on Mount Carmel was insignificant, as Bahr suggests, "in comparison with the miracle that God has sent his Son into the world to kindle the greatest fire that has ever burnt in the world. In Bethlehem and upon Golgotha the glory of the Lord is infinitely higher in its manifestations than upon Carmel."

39. The Lord, he is the God. The people to whom the prophet appealed returned from the error of their ways, and worshipped Jehovah with reverent awe. Carmel is the mount of Elijah's triumph and of Jehovah's enthronement.

Thoughts for Young People.

Requisites for Successful Prayer.

1. *A soul in fellowship with God.* As was Elijah. Verses 30-37.
2. *A covenant of God with his people upon which the supplication rests.* This is suggested by the "twelve tribes" constituting the covenant people and by the name of the three patriarchs. Verse 36.
3. *An act of sacrifice.* Elijah looked to the virtue of a coming sacrifice; we to one rendered centuries ago.
4. *An earnest desire,* which, expressed or unexpressed, forms the burden of the petition.
5. *Strong faith in God's power and willingness.* Had we Elijah's faith, we should see answers to prayer no less wonderful than his.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The word "Baal" primarily signifies lord or owner. Among the Arabian Semites it was, perhaps, at the beginning, only a title of deity and not a proper name. Some writers suppose that at an early date the Israelites applied the title Baal to Jehovah himself, and when afterward Baal became associated entirely with idolatrous worship they wrote with the name Baal the word "Bosheth," a shameful thing. Baal is not always one and the same god. The Baal of the Syrians, the Phœnicians, and the heathen Hebrews is a much less elevated conception than the Babylonian Bel. The worship of Baal among the Hebrews has two distinct periods—one before the time of Samuel and a second after the introduction of the Tyrian worship of Baal by Ahab, who married a Phœnician princess. The ritual of this new Baal, with his long train of priests and prophets, his sacred vestments, was much more splendid than the old Canaanitish worship. In the time of Solomon Baal-worship spread greatly and, together with that of Ashtoreth, became the worship of the court and people of the ten tribes under Ahab. This Baal-worship, while occasionally put down, was never effectually abolished in that kingdom. Baal-worship among the Jews was observed with much pomp and ceremonial. Temples were erected to him; his images were set up; his altars were very numerous, erected on lofty eminences and the roofs of houses. His priests were selected from all classes and were very numerous, divided into two orders, prophets and servants, or priests. He was worshipped with offering of incense, the sacrifice of bullocks, and even of children. The priests sometimes danced about the altar and, when their prayers were not answered, cut themselves with knives until the blood flowed, like the priests of Belona. How far the Phœnicians carried his worship cannot be determined, but traces of this idolatry have been found in the British Isles, Baal being the name of the principal deity of the ancient Irish, and there are heaps of stones on many hilltops in Scotland, known to the people as "Bel's Cairns," where it is supposed the sacrifices were offered in early times.

The Palestine Exploration Society have recently been giving us descriptions of the Hebrew rock altars, built that the Israelites might offer sacrifice to the most high God. Until within a few years no ancient altars were known to exist in Palestine west of the Jordan. A number of such have, however, been discovered, measured, and described. One is a rock eight feet in diameter at the base and eight feet high, untouched

except above it and it is to Jehovah verse 3 with stone as it was use any are all nature Their of the Heb for the eered sac as a sac In ve hear m what t chafed t and m says in which l like a h take hi the stre houses the sev of the h In Chir passed she hea two lar city; in which l awake, Up in near a dess wh as Nair mornin inform

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except at the top, where two platforms, one above the other, about a foot in width, were cut, and it is supposed to have been an altar dedicated to Jehovah over three thousand years ago. In verse 32 Elijah is said to have built an altar with stones. These rock altars show no part to have been shaped with a chisel (see Exod. 20. 25), as it was against the letter of the Mosaic law to use any tool in making an altar. These altars are all of uncut stone, but selected because by nature they were fitted to be tables of Jehovah. Their existence is held to prove that wherever the Hebrew people went they consecrated altars for the worship of Jehovah in every village, and as the blood of all domestic animals was considered sacred, it had to be offered on these altars as a sacrifice to Jehovah.

In verse 17 Elijah calls, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me." How simple this is compared with what the Baalites had been doing when Elijah chafed them, saying, "Peradventure Baal sleepeth and must be awakened." Mrs. Baring-Gould says in a Hindu temple she saw a sort of shell, which is blown every morning, making a noise like a horn, with which they rouse the god to take his breakfast. In Japan she walked along the street early in the morning and heard, in the houses on either side, loud clapping of hands in the several houses, intended to wake their gods of the house to listen to their morning devotions. In China, as she was leaving a city by night, she passed a temple near the city gate, inside which she heard a drum beating. Looking in, she saw two large images of the guardian gods of the city; in front of them sat a man beating a drum, which he would beat all night to keep the gods awake, that they might guard the city from all evil. Up in the mountains of India the writer lived near a Hindu temple erected to Nainee, the goddess who lives at the bottom of the lake known as Nainee Tal. The attendant rang a bell every morning to wake the goddess, and at meal time to inform her that the food was set for her.

By Way of Illustration.

Need of faith for a great undertaking. If a New York business man wanted to start a branch business in London, he would call some old and confidential clerk and send him over there. Suppose the clerk should take one of the most expensive sites in the city of London and put his name down for an immense rent, and open a big business, a man might come to him and say, "You have launched out?" "Yes," he answers, "I was sent to do it." "Are you worth much?" "No." "Have you no money to fall back on?" "No." "Then how do you dare to enter upon

this amazing expenditure?" "Because I have been sent by the head of our house to open this place. He told me to go ahead, and that he from New York would meet all the outlay. I have worked for him thirty years, and he has never failed me yet." Every Christian has been called to undertake great things for Christ. Behind you is your faithful God, and he cannot fail.—*Moody.*

Method of avoiding suspicion of fraud. Four barrels of water were three times poured on the sacrifice, that all fraud would be seen to be impossible. Otherwise they probably would have suspected Elijah, knowing what they themselves would have done. At the Reformation the mechanism of winking Madonnas was exposed to the people. At Pompeii may still be seen the secret staircase behind the altar, and the pipes let into the head of Isis from behind, through which the priests spoke her pretended oracles. St. Chrysostom tells us that he had himself seen altars with concealed hollows in the middle, into which the unsuspected operator crept and blew up a fire which the people were assured was self-kindled.—*Farrar.*

True religion stands the test. A friend of the writer was asked to enter on a public discussion with some unbelievers. He replied, "When you can find me twelve families who were once Christian, but by embracing your views have become more virtuous, useful, contented, and happy, I shall think it worth while to argue with you. I can find you one hundred families who were once living only on your theory, but who, by Christianity, have become better husbands and wives, better parents and citizens, more virtuous and happy." Yes, let religion be tested by its purifying fire. "The God that answereth by fire, let him be god."—*Newman Hall.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The heights of Carmel are exhilarating! What views they give us of the promises, the faithfulness, the power of God! It is good to climb this rocky steep with that sturdy spiritual mountaineer, Elijah. We are reading history, not legend. All this occurred as surely as Mount Carmel stands in Palestine to-day. Here is a man who has been praying for such a manifestation of God as will bring a realization of their sin to the conscience of an idolatrous people. He has suffered the fires of discipline himself in answer to his prayer. In everything he has followed the word of the Lord. It means more to him than all the speculations of men, and he believes its seeming impossibilities more than he trusts the apparent successes of human purposes

and plans. Consequently there is a courage in his soul which dares great things for God. With what an exultant thrill he calls upon the priests of Baal to prove their god before the people, for he is so sure of Jehovah in whom he trusts! Elijah was a man "of like passions" with us. What was the secret of his strength? He had a consciousness of God as a real and constant presence. "As the Lord God liveth before whom I stand" were the confident words with which he addressed Ahab. He had a zeal for the honor of God which filled him with holy enthusiasm. We cannot think of Elijah resting "with inglorious ease" while Baal was exalted above the God of Israel. He was God's servant, and wished it known among all the people that he did all things "at his word." He performed no self-willed plan. His heart and mind were surrendered, guided, swayed in glad obedience to the will and guidance of God. If he was like us in human infirmities, we can be like him in spiritual strength, for we have the same resources at command. We may have to sit beside Cherith, thirsty and alone, while visible supplies of earth dry up before our eyes. We may share in some Zarephath of a common sorrow the little store of comfort left, with those in whom the same afflictions are accomplished, and prove through any circumstance, as did Elijah, that when one source of sustenance disappears the Lord will open another, and that no needed supply over which he watches can utterly waste or fail. And, like Elijah, sharing the sorrows of the broken-hearted, we can prove the might of prayer, and through it bring blessing and comfort, as did he to the heart of that lonely woman whose little boy had died. "But," you say, "Elijah was a prophet, called of God to special service; can I aspire to his faith?" Yes; the God who answered by fire on Mount Carmel answers by the fire of the Holy Spirit in every heart where the altar is prepared for him. Carmel is our object lesson. The Lord he is God. Difficulties do not stand in his way. But before the "abundance of rain" can fall which shall quicken our barren souls into life, like Elijah, we must slay "all the prophets of Baal" and suffer no rivals in our hearts to God himself.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Briefly review events directly connected with this lesson. 1. A mountain—where? Appearance? 2. An assembly—who summoned it? Who composed it? Why had the people come together? 3. A rebuke—who gave it? To whom? For what? Do any of us need it? 4. A proposition—who made it? What was it?

How received? 5. An altar—to what God? For what special test? With what result? 6. A mockery—by whom? Of whom?.... Notice the time—three years and a half after the drought began; hour of evening sacrifice, just when the offering was laid on the altar in Jerusalem.... *The place*—Carmel; the sea; brook Kishon; plain of Esdraelon; Jezreel in the distance; a word-picture.... *The persons*—people; priests; king; Elijah; were these all? One more—God was there! What divine attributes were manifested on that occasion?.... *The events*—altar; wood; offering; water; prayer; fire; adoration.... *The teachings*—how should we pray as shown in this lesson? What traits of character are we here recommended to seek? On which side should we be?

Before the Class.

Introduction. The time of our present lesson is about three and a half years from that of the lesson of last Sunday. Ahab was still king and the country was almost wholly given up to the worship of Baal. Question the class as to the effect of the famine: (a) Led the people to distrust their idol, Baal; (b) Brought to them a realizing sense of their sin; (c) Brought them to repentance for their apostasy; (d) Turned them to the true God for relief. Describe the meeting of Elijah with Obadiah (1 Kings 18, 7-16) and the meeting of Ahab and Elijah (1 Kings 18, 17-19). Note the attempt of Ahab to thrust upon Elijah all the responsibility for the famine, forgetting that his own sin and the sin of the people were what had brought it upon the land.

Development of the text. Place the subject upon the board, "The True God Manifested," and the five following divisions: 1. The memorable occasion, 2. The significant preparation, 3. The expectant prayer, 4. The wonderful answer, 5. The decisive results.

1. *The memorable occasion.* Describe the scene of the great trial on Mount Carmel. Bring before the class (a) Elijah's indignant denial of Ahab's charge (v. 8); (b) The gathering of the prophets of Baal and the people; (c) Elijah's fair proposition (v. 21); (d) The severe test proposed by Elijah and accepted by the prophets and all the people. The issue was to be squarely made; Elijah, the lone prophet, staked all upon the result.

2. *The significant preparation.* The prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice and called upon their god from morning until the middle of the afternoon, spurred on by the mocking cries of Elijah. At the time of the evening sacrifice,

three o'clock. The stones of the altar were drenching with fire. The fire consumed the sacrifice.

3. *The prayer.* The prayer to the God and sacrifice a divine for divine servant to an answer back a answer a

4. *The Lord fell.* The Lord fell answer to complete room for

5. *The one knowledge.* The God's sult and lowed; (a) (b) The ending of rain which Truth and time people we knowledge fathers.

Specific tions suggest one great clear is the self to-day power, his the scholars and to the Our cry, "The Lord our God

three o'clock, Elijah began his significant preparations. Note here (a) The selection of twelve stones for the altar; (b) Their erection into an altar in the name of the Lord; (c) The thorough drenching of the sacrifice with water, thus cutting off all possible chance of a charge of having fire concealed. God is willing to be put to the severest test to prove himself to his people.

3. *The expectant prayer.* Note that in this prayer there were four elements: (a) An appeal to the God of their fathers, thus stirring up old and sacred memories; (b) An appeal to God for a divine manifestation of power; (c) An appeal for divine attestation of Elijah's position as the servant of the one true God; (d) An appeal for an answer to show God's willingness to receive back a repentant people. Elijah expected an answer and the answer came.

4. *The wonderful answer.* "The fire of the Lord fell." In the sight of all the people the answer to Elijah's prayer came and the test was completely and impressively met, leaving no room for cavil or doubt.

5. *The decisive results.* The first result was the one which Elijah had hoped for, the acknowledgment of the people, "The Lord he is the God." Emphasize this as the principal result and then turn to the others which followed: (a) The slaying of the prophets of Baal; (b) The encouraging words to Ahab; (c) The ending of the famine by the abundance of rain which came. The great battle between Truth and Falsehood had been fought and won, and time was now to determine whether the people would be true or not to their newly-acknowledged allegiance to the Lord God of their fathers.

Specific application. Apart from the applications suggested by the text-development, the one great truth which we should seek to make clear is that God is constantly manifesting himself to-day, and is never without witness to his power, his glory, his justice, and his love. Point the scholars to science, to history, to biography, and to the triumphs of Christianity for proofs. Our cry, then, should be that of the Israelites, "The Lord, he is the God," and their God should be our God.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Keep to the right.
Jesus shall reign.
Arise, go forth to conquer.
Stand up for Jesus.
Father, lead thy little children.

A mighty fortress is our God.

Give ye to Jehovah.

O, we are volunteers.

Soldiers of Christ.

Jesus, we look to thee.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 33, The barrel, 308. Ver. 36, The hour of evening sacrifice, 311.

Blackboard.



LESSON IV. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. [July 24.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him. Psalm 37. 7.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the chapter.]

1 Kings 19:1-16. [Commit to memory verses 9-12.]

1 And A'hab told Jez'e-bel all that E-li'jah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jez'e-bel sent a messenger unto E-li'jah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.

3 And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Be-er-she-ba, which belongeth to Ju'dah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

6 And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Ho'reb the mount of God.

9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, E-li'jah?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Is-ra-el have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire: but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

13. And it was so, when E-li'jah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, E-li'jah?

14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And A'hab told Jez'e-bel all that E-li'jah had done, and withal how he had slain all the 2 prophets with the sword. Then Jez'e-bel sent a messenger unto E-li'jah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by 3 to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Be-er-she-ba, which belongeth to 4 Ju'dah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better 5 than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and 6 eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid 7 him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey 8 is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Ho'reb 9 the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, 10 What doest thou here, E-li'jah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Is-ra-el have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my 11 life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD 12 was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small 13 voice. And it was so, when E-li'jah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, E-li'jah? 14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Is-ra-el have forsaken thy covenant, thrown

Is-ra-el have done thine sword; and my life, to take it away.

15 And J'ehoiada the high priest took the ephod, and the sword, and the ark of the covenant, and hid them in the house of God.

16 And J'ehoiada said unto the king, Thou shalt be as the son of Shal-om, because thou art not slain, because thou art not slain, because thou art not slain.

Time.—9 great day of Beersheba (Sinai). Ru'shaphat, 1 Syria, with

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QUESTIONS.

1. The Flight.

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Is'rael have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Da-mas-cus; and when thou comest, anoint Haz-a-el to be king over Syr'i-a:

16 And Je'hu the son of Nim'shi shalt thou anoint to be king over Is'rael; and E-li-sha the son of Sha'phat of A'bel-me-ho'lah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Da-mas-cus; and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Haz-a-el to be king over Syr'i-a; and Je'hu the son of Nim'shi shalt thou anoint to be king over Is'rael; and E-li-sha the son of Sha'phat of A'bel-me-ho'lah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

Time.—905 B. C., beginning the day after the great day on Carmel. **Place.**—The wilderness of Beersheba, in the south of Judah, and Horeb (Sinai). **Rulers.**—Ahab, king of Israel; Jehoshaphat, king of Judah; Benhadad, king of Syria, with his capital at Damascus.

Home Readings.

M. Elijah's Flight and Encouragement. 1 Kings 19, 1-8.

Tu. Elijah's Flight and Encouragement. 1 Kings 19, 9-18.

W. A despondent heart. Psalm 55, 1-8.

Th. Cast down. Psalm 42.

F. The glory of the Lord. Exod. 33, 12-23.

S. The refuge. Psalm 56.

S. Distress and deliverance. Psalms 120, 121.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 71, New Canadian Hymnal.

Thy ceaseless, unexhausted love,
Unmerited and free.

No. 4, New Canadian Hymnal.

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise.

No. 8, New Canadian Hymnal.

Jesus! the name high over all,
In hell, or earth, or sky.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. **The Flight of Elijah**, v. 1-8.

What report was made to Jezebel?

What was the queen's message to Elijah?

What effect had the message on the prophet?

Where did he seek refuge?

What prayer did he utter?

What visitant came, and with what command?

What provision was made for his need?

What second command was given?

What was the result of his obedience?

Name any other instances of similar fasting.

Why is Horeb called "the mount of God."

2. **The Vision at Horeb**, v. 9-14.

What demand was here made of the prophet?

What was Elijah's reply?

What was he commanded to do?

What manifestation of power greeted the prophet?

In what way was the Lord finally revealed?

What was the effect on Elijah?

What question was now asked?

How was it answered?

3. **The Command of God**, v. 15, 16.

Where was the prophet bidden to go?

What three prophetic acts was he to perform?

What was to be the mission of each of these three?

What great lesson may we learn from the story?
GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Right-doing will provoke opposition. No true follower of God need expect the fellowship of the world.

2. God's sympathy never fails. He is patient with our weakness, ignorance, dullness, and doubt; he would strengthen, enlighten, stimulate, encourage the weakest saint.

3. The Lord knoweth them that are his. He counts his saints as he counts the stars; their names are written in heaven.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **The Flight of Elijah**, v. 1-8.

What story did Ahab tell?

Who sent a messenger to Elijah?

What was the queen's message?

What effect had this on the prophet?

Where did he leave his servant?

Where did the prophet himself go?

What prayer did he offer?

Who came to him as he slept?

What did the angel say?

What did Elijah see when he awoke?

What did the angel say the second time?

How long did this food last Elijah?

To what place did he go?

2. **The Vision at Horeb**, v. 9-14.

Where did the prophet lodge?

What message there came to him?

What was Elijah's reply?

What was he bidden to do?
 What then occurred?
 What came after the wind?
 What followed the earthquake?
 What came after the fire?
 What did Elijah do when he heard the voice?
 What question was asked him?
 What was his answer?

- 3. The Command of God.** v. 15, 16.
 Where did the Lord bid Elijah to go?
 What two kings was he told to anoint?
 Who was to be Elijah's successor?

Practical Teachings.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
 1. That good men are sometimes discouraged?
 2. That God knows and numbers his people?
 3. That God's cause is sure to triumph?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What did Queen Jezebel say she should do?
 What did Elijah do when he heard this?
 What did he ask God to let him do?
 What does the Lord always remember? **That we are poor, weak children.**
 Whom did he send to help Elijah?
 Where did Elijah go when he was rested?
 What did God say to Elijah?
 What did Elijah tell him? **That he was the only one left to serve God.**

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Trouble and Comfort.

- I. THE PROPHET'S TROUBLE.
 1. **Fear.** *Went for his life.* v. 3.
 Fear of man.... a snare. Prov. 29. 25.
 Fear thou not. Isa. 41. 10.
 2. **Discouragement.** *Not better.* v. 4.
 Think of himself.... soberly. Rom. 12. 3.
 Take.... my life. Jonah 16. 3.
 3. **Complaint.** *Have forsaken.* v. 10.
 Rest in the Lord.... wait. Psalm 37. 7.
 Judge not. Matt. 7. 1.
 4. **Loneliness.** *I, even I, only.* v. 10.
 I am not alone. John 16. 32.
 The Lord stood with me. 2 Tim. 4. 17.
 II. THE LORD'S COMFORT.
 1. **Strength.** *Arise and eat.* vs. 5, 6.

What did the Lord tell him? **That there were seven thousand more.**

What great sight did God show Elijah?

Was the Lord in the wind?

Was he in the earthquake?

Was he in the fire?

What was he in? **The still, small voice.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. From what wicked woman did Elijah flee?
Queen Jezebel.
 2. When exhausted in the wilderness who comforted him? **The angel of the Lord.**
 3. Where did he fast forty days and forty nights? **In Horeb, the mount of God.**
 4. By what four means did God manifest his power to Elijah? **Strong wind, earthquake, fire, and a still, small voice.**
 5. What question did God ask? **"What doest thou here, Elijah?"**
 6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"Rest in,"** etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

21. Hath God left mankind in this estate of sin and misery?

God hath not left mankind in this estate of sin and misery, but hath provided redemption whereby all men may be delivered from the guilt, power, pollution, and punishment of sin and restored to the favor and image of God.

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EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The last lesson ended with the vindication of Elijah at Carmel by the descent of the fire of the Lord. The prophet acted not only as high priest in offering the sacrifice, but as royal vizier also, in executing the official representatives of Baal's corrupt worship. Then came Elijah's earnest prayer on the rocky crest of Carmel, during which he sent his servant seven successive times to look toward the sea. At length a little cloud, "like a man's hand," arose in the distant west. The

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Beersheba,

prophet sped down the mountain side and proclaimed the drought and famine over. While heavy showers were still falling the weak-minded king told the strong-minded queen what Elijah had done. Bishop Hall says, "It is well that Jezebel could not keep her own counsel; her threat preserved the man she meant to kill." Elijah fled far toward the south, and from under a lonely shrub, in the depths of the wilderness, we hear his disheartened prayer that he may die. At length he sleeps, and when he awakes it is to the wonderful sight of a freshly-cooked meal and an angel servitor. He eats and sleeps, and is awakened the second time for further refreshment. During the next forty days and nights he fasts from earthly food, but feasts on spiritual dainties. Horeb's lonely cave is turned into a trysting-place with Jehovah.

Verse 1. Ahab told Jezebel. Ahab bowed in turn to the strong-willed prophet and to the strong-willed queen. **All that Elijah had done.** The sacrifice, the answer by fire, the slaughter of the priests, and the prayer for rain. **He had slain all the prophets.** Most of these prophets had probably been imported from Sidon and Tyre, and were therefore countrymen of Jezebel; an attack on them was an attack on her.

2. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah. The strength of this woman commands our respect, even while we recoil from her personal depravity and her ruinous influence on the nation. The nation was all with her day before yesterday; it is all against her to-day; but she does not waver. The message she sent was practical banishment. If her choice had been to kill Elijah, she would not have notified him beforehand. If she could make him fly in terror, he would probably lose his influence with the people. **So let the gods do.** She does not appeal to Jehovah, as the poor widow of Zarephath did, but is thoroughly loyal to her false gods. **Thy life as the life of one of them.** That is, the head prophets of Baal. **To-morrow about this time.** She gave him twenty-four hours in which to leave her little kingdom. That Jezebel, and not Ahab, really ruled Israel is evident throughout the story.

3. When he saw that. When he considered the queen's authority. **He arose, and went for his life.** He had no faith whatever in the

stability of the Jewish worshippers of Jehovah, and concluded that Jehovah's cause was lost. It is a great deal easier to learn to labor and fight than it is to learn to wait. Many men, like Elijah, struggle heroically and successfully, and in the struggle lose that combination of nervous force, moral courage, and faith in God

necessary to endurance. It is the last quarter of an hour of every battle that counts. **Came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah.**

Beersheba was nearly one hundred miles south of Jezreel, and stood at the extreme southern limit of Palestine, on the edge of a great desert. It was separated from Jezreel not merely by miles, but by national lines, and was part of the kingdom of Judah. **Left his servant there.** (1) *Solitude is often helpful in hours of mental and moral strain.* (2) *Strength and weakness lie close together in the characters of the greatest men.*

4. Went a day's journey into the wilderness. A desert of gravel, now called *El Tih*, which stretches for uncounted miles eastward and southward, westward also, from Beersheba. It was not safe, he thought, to remain even in the kingdom of Judah, for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were now friendly. **Sat down under a juniper tree.** A brown ugly shrub, which grows where nothing else will grow.

Requested for himself that he might die. The causes of his mental despondency are suggested by F. W. Robertson as follows: (1) Want of occupation. While there was work to be done Elijah was brave. (2) Nervous exhaustion—natural revulsion after a day of mighty effort and strain. (3) Loneliness. Note how often Elijah said, "I am alone." (4) Apparent failure. His apparent success had vanished into thin air. His thought is, "All is lost; let me die." The entire story is in accord with the deepest principles of mental and physical science. **I am not better than my fathers.** His conscience upbraids him for his own unfaithfulness, cowardice, and irresolution. He judges himself as he judges others, and decides that he is not worthy of prolonged life. (3) *How good it is that God does not answer our mistaken prayers!*

5. He lay and slept. The needs of his physical nature—rest and nourishment—God first supplies. The thoughtful, sympathetic Christian will often observe men and women of strong affections who are suddenly bereaved by death or plunged into some other unmeasured suffering. They are in such physical and mental condition that they cannot at once exercise the faith in God that they really possess. Unwise friends sometimes do harm by urging them to assume experiences that they are physically and mentally unable to have. God's plan is best. Let them



wait until nature's strain has been somewhat eased. **An angel.** A messenger, apparently supernatural. **Arise and eat.** (4) *God's people always find their real needs met by his care.*

6. A cake baked on the coals. A round flat cake, cooked by being put between heated stones laid in embers of a charcoal fire. **Cruse of water.** A jar or bottle. **At his head.** At his pillow, which was very likely a stone. **He did eat and drink, and laid him down again.** He is so utterly exhausted in mind and body that he cannot even eat all that he requires, but takes a little and returns to sleep, while God and his angel patiently wait.

8. Arose. From his sleep under the juniper tree (verse 4). His bodily weariness is gone. **Strength of that meat.** How like the Bread sent us from heaven (John 6, 35). "Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4, 13). **Forty days.** Horeb was not over thirteen days' journey (see Deut. 1, 2), but Israel lived forty years in the wilderness on heavenly bread. Elijah spent forty days, as did Moses, in preparation for the divine revelation. **Horeb.** Either Sinai or the group of which Sinai is a peak. This is an unsettled point.

9. Cave. Hebrew, "the cave;" doubtless some well-known cavern in those awful mountains. Possibly the "cleft of the rock" where God placed Moses. **Lodged.** Literally, "passed the night." **Word . . . came.** Probably in a night vision, which may continue until the thirteenth verse. It is immaterial whether the wind, earthquake, and fire were real or only a vision; the teaching is the same. **What doest thou here?** "A question of tender kindness, to relieve the full, burdened heart of the prophet, that he might pour out his whole heart before the Lord."—*Menken.*

10. Jealous. Not for his own honor, glory, or advantage, but for the Lord. Who can now say that truly? **Israel.** Like David and Paul, Elijah held Israel in his heart next to God. **Forsaken thy covenant.** The first downward step. **Throw down thine altars.** After forsaking God's covenant the next step is to neglect his service and overthrow his altars. **Slain thy prophets.** Hatred of good and murder follow naturally. See the history of the Romish Church. **I only am left.** Here Elijah oversteps the truth. See verse 18 and 1 Kings 18, 4. But it seemed to him that he was alone in his struggle with wrong. **Seek my life.** Not that he feared death (see verse 4), but it was the culmination of Israel's sin. So afterward they sought to kill Jesus (John 8, 37-40). "So, too, in Christianity, there has never been lacking a

persecution of those who have preached repentance and faith with zeal and earnestness."—*Bohr.*

11. Go forth. The Septuagint has, "Go forth to-morrow." (See verse 13.) It also puts the next words into the same sentence. Our version follows Luther. It is better to translate, "Go forth and stand. . . Behold Jehovah passeth by." **A great wind . . . earthquake . . . fire.** Though God sometimes rides in the storm, earthquake, and fire, yet he revealed not himself to Elijah, in answer to his intercession against Israel (Rom. 11, 2), in that form. That had been Elijah's way of reforming men. God now taught him that it was not his way. Jesus taught his disciples a similar lesson when they wished to follow Elijah's example (Luke 8, 54-56). **The Lord was not in.** The Chaldee version is, "The glory of the Lord (Shekinah) was not in the hosts of the angels of the wind," etc. The true glory of the Lord is not in overpowering majesty, but in his attributes of love and mercy.

12. A still small voice. Literally, "a sound of soft stillness." Just the gentle, peaceful, comforting voice needed by his wounded heart. To him it was a rest and consolation—perhaps nothing more; but to us, favored by further revelation, it lights up the fact that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth come by Jesus Christ" (John 1, 17).

13. Elijah heard, and recognized it as the voice of God. **Mantle.** His upper garment—a sort of cloak or cape, perhaps made of untanned sheepskins. **His face.** An instinct of reverence and awe. **Stood in the entering in.** The cave must have been larger than that now shown as the "Cave of Elijah."

15. Go, return. Active service is the best cure for discouragement. **Wilderness.** Probably the region between Bashan and Damascus. **Anoint.** We have no record of the anointing of either Hazael or Jehu by Elijah. It may have been done in secret, as in the case of David, or left to his successor. "Anoint" should probably not be taken literally, but means appoint.

16. Jehu the son of Nimshi, that is, the grandson (see 2 Kings 9, 2); Jehu was the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi. **Elisha.** This name, destined to rival that of Elijah, was a hint to Elijah of his mistake in supposing that he alone of all Israel served the Lord. He probably knew the place and the man (verses 19, 20). **Abelmeholah,** meaning "The-field-of-the-dance," must have been in the Jordan valley not far from Bethshean.

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CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

We have in this lesson an illustration of a strong man turned into a weakling. Elijah could withstand the wrath of Ahab, but fled like a craven before the threat of Jezebel. He trusted to the power of God to deliver him in one crisis, but his confidence was shivered up in the face of another. Under ordinary circumstances the achievement of a great victory strengthens the heart for other triumphs, but the vindictive enmity of Jezebel dried up the sources of Elijah's courage, and so filled his heart with terror that "he went for his life," and sought refuge, like a hunted criminal, in the desolate wilderness, and continued his cowardly flight until he reached Horeb.

Verse 1. All that Elijah had done. This must have aroused Jezebel's ire, because it indicated the defeat of Baal, the triumph of Jehovah, the turning of the people from her, the slaughter of the false prophets, and the general disruption of her cause. It is clear that Ahab was subservient to the will of Jezebel. She was the real ruler. Ahab was humiliated over these recent events, but Jezebel raged in her overwhelming chagrin, and sought to be avenged. The awakened sinner is either repentant or rebellious.

2. Sent a messenger. It seems strange that she should allow Elijah to escape in this way. It was hardly likely that "it was nothing more than a scheme for ridding herself of the presence of Elijah." More likely it was a case where consuming wrath "o'erleapt itself;" or may there not have been an overruling Providence in it all that made the fury of the queen contribute to the deliverance of the prophet from impending danger?

3. Went for his life. Was Elijah's flight justifiable? Whether for the moment he lost faith in God, or in his own call as a prophet, or in the ultimate triumph of his cause, it is difficult to determine. But that he fled in the face of immediate danger and sought self-protection is a fact. But it is not necessary or wise for a prophet to court martyrdom. He may have interpreted Jezebel's threat as an indication from God that his work there was finished for the time, and that there was something to do elsewhere. Had he remained and subjected himself to the queen's fury, he would have been slain, and she would have triumphed, and the work done at Carmel, with its peculiar and far-reaching significance, would have been rendered futile. Then it must be remembered that Jesus said to his disciples, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another;" that when the Pharisees "held a council against him, how they might destroy him," "he withdrew himself from thence;" and

that when Paul was persecuted by the Jews in Damascus," and "they watched the gates day and night to kill him," "the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."

5. An angel touched him. Some will claim what Elijah needed was physical refreshment, and that after a good sleep his spirits revived. This was probably true, but there is no good reason for attempting to eliminate the supernatural here. If God was guiding his prophet, why should not an angel minister unto him in his hour of physical and spiritual depression? If our eyes, which are so frequently "holden," could be always open, we should see many helping messengers of God who are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

9. What doest thou here? These words seem to convey reproof, but they are rather an intimation that the time had come to resume the active prosecution of the Lord's work. Elijah had hidden in the cave long enough, and while it was a delightful place in which to be, just as the Mount of Transfiguration was to the three disciples, yet the work assigned to him could not be performed in such a place. He needed a fresh baptism for this work, and when he went forth and stood upon the mount and saw the various manifestations of God's power that spiritual renewal came to him, and with it new commands for the new work.

18. Seven thousand. Discouragement narrows one's vision. Elijah complained, "I only am left," but he was in ignorance of or had forgotten the thousands of faithful souls of whom God had kept record. Christians frequently fall into discouragement because the cause of Christ seems to languish and that of Satan seems to triumph. The trouble is that the range of spiritual vision has been restricted by the descent into the valley of discouragement. One needs to stand on the mountain top to notice the progress of the kingdom and to read the signs of the times aright. Elisha's servant saw the city compassed with horses and chariots, and he was frightened. But when his eyes were opened in response to Elisha's prayer "he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

Thoughts for Young People.

Spiritual Depression.

1. We are all at times tempted to dejection. Even the greatest and best of men are apt to have seasons of discouragement when they are sorely troubled by temptations.

2. *The causes of spiritual depression* are partly physical, partly mental, and partly in the surroundings.

3. *God deals gently with his servants in their discouragement*, not answering their unwise prayers, nor reproaching them for their lack of faith, but tenderly supplying their needs.

4. *We may bring our deepest trouble to the Lord*, and tell him all our griefs, assured that he will listen to us.

5. *A remedy for spiritual depression is found in spiritual work*. He who labors for God will be lifted up in peace.

By Way of Illustration.

Elijah's prayer not answered. Suppose God had said, "Well, Elijah, you can die if you want to." They would have buried him in the desert, and the moaning winds would have been his only requiem. You know God had something better for Elijah. You have been saying sometimes, "My prayer has not been answered." Yes, it has. God said, "No," and "no" was better. Elijah's difficulty was that he had had a mountaintop experience, and now he has come to the valley. There was a man who went up on the mountain top. He was transfigured. His face shone as the sun. His garments were bright with light, and he came down into the valley and brought the mountaintop experience with Him. This is what you may do. Bring the mountaintop experience down with you, and you may rejoice, even though it be darkness about you.—*J. Wilbur Chapman.*

Verses 5-8. What a rare picture this is of human weakness and divine tenderness! A man, famished and faint under the broom-bush of the desert, and God brooding over him motherlike, "giving his beloved sleep," and the cruse of water and the loaf of bread. We catch the same picture again in the life of Jesus at the house of Jairus who, when he raised the little girl from her deathbed, commanded that something should be given her to eat. So Jehovah brings to Elijah twice over the two great natural remedies for wasted tissues and overtired nerves—sleep and food. Nothing is said about prayers or herb teas or sea air or rebuke, but just sleep and food. Hear it, ye men of business, who toil early and late; ye weary women, whose nerves are on edge with care and undone work, the restoring gifts of God to his prophet are long naps and square meals.—*W. H. Davis.*

Elijah learned that his success was not to be measured by things that strike the senses. The hidden forces of life are by far the most powerful. No earthquake that ever tossed whole continents

into chaos, no hurricane or cyclone that cut a swath of devastation through rich populations, has shown a tithe of the strength which is evinced each recurring year by the silent forces of spring. The storms beat on the surface of the earth and we exclaim, "How strongly the wind blows!" and we invent machines to measure its rapidity. But no man ever invented a machine to measure the strength of the unadvertised forces that cause the roots to swell and fill their delicate fibers with sap and nourish the great forces of vegetation.—*R. R. Doherty.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Shall I talk with my fellow-teachers, as with my class, about this tired servant of the Lord, so discouraged, under the juniper tree? Elijah's faith has been a great inspiration to us; his discouragement may be equally helpful. It is disheartening to be told only the wonderful goodness of people, with never a glimpse of their human frailty. I remember once, being ill and discouraged, saying to my physician: "I have been reading the life of Susannah Wesley. It seems hardly worth while for me to live in the world after such a woman as she. Perhaps you may as well not give me any more medicine." "O, well," he said, laughing, "you never lived with Susannah Wesley. And besides, I do not believe she had half the demands on her time and strength that you have now, even with her nineteen children; so you may as well keep on, and in the end you may accomplish as much." God's saints on earth are human, and will be until they join the "spirits of the just made perfect" in heaven.

It is possible to go from the heights and triumphs of Carmel to the dead level of the wilderness and the request to die because life does not seem worth living. Moses had the same experience. The burden grew so great that he cried to the Lord: "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." These two men of mightiest faith and great deeds for God were not exempt from depression of spirit as long as they were in the flesh. For aught we know, they have talked it over in the world where they see now there was never any real reason to be discouraged, except that the flesh was weak and weary. They, too, were on the transfiguration mount, talking with Jesus of that time in Jerusalem when he would cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There is a blessed bond of sympathy

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between the Master and his human saints. "He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Elijah had been under a tremendous strain. Overtaxed nerves will react. God had not changed; the victory on Carmel was real; the answers to prayer were no dream; Jezebel had no power to harm God's servants; the dark prospect was wholly in Elijah's mind because he was worn out and needed rest. How well God understood; how tenderly he cared for him! Sleep was what he needed most; then food. So when he had slept a while an angel touched him—one of the ministering spirits that encamp round about the Lord's people to deliver them—and said, "Arise and eat," and there was the food, warm and stimulating, and the refreshing drink ready for him. Then, carefully considerate, the angel left him to sleep again until it was necessary to take more food, "because," he said, "the journey is too great for thee." After that God spoke in the still, small voice, low, sweet, assuring, in the prophet's secret soul; then he gave to him Elisha to minister to him until the angels came again to take him beyond weariness and discouragements in a triumphal chariot to heaven. Do not give up when things look dark. They never look dark to God, for "he fainteth not, neither is weary," as we are. Sleep if you can; take nourishing food as God provides it; his angels are watching; he understands when his children are tired. And when their work is done his restful chariots are easy to step into, and it is not very far to heaven.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Three word pictures: I. The flight. 1. In the background: Elijah's triumph at Carmel; the overthrow of Baal's priests; the prospective reformation of court and people. 2. In the foreground: The wicked queen's threat; Elijah's dejection and flight. II. Angelic ministrations. III. Divine revelation. (This scene, one of the most wonderful in God's word, should be made vivid to every mind)... Make sketch-map, showing Carmel, Samaria, Beersheba, Horeb... The causes of mental despondency... The unreasonableness of mental despondency: 1. It may alter our views of things, but cannot alter facts. 2. No true follower of God is ever alone. Jehovah was Elijah's friend, and angels were eager to minister to him. 3. There is no permanent failure possible to the advocate of the right. 4. The most discouraging events of life are interwoven by a kind Providence to secure us the victory... God's sympathy with human infirmity: He sent an angel from heaven to do duty as a tender nurse... Symbols of divine presence... God's

work endures. His far-reaching plans take in Hazael, Benhadad, Ahab and his sons, Jehu, Elisha, and the uncounted "sons of the prophets." Elijah's tried prayer was about to be answered, and he was to be removed to heaven, but not because of his failure. We need the standpoint of eternity to estimate properly any failure or success... Suggestive points may be found in "Thoughts for Young People."

Before the Class.

Introduction.—The events of the present lesson follow almost immediately, perhaps the next day, upon those of last Sunday's lesson. The great triumph had been won, and now Elijah was hoping that the king and queen would turn again to the true God, and once more would the land of Israel, the land he loved, be prosperous under God's favor. Elijah did not enter Jezebel, but waited without to see what would be the effect upon Jezebel of the defeat of Baal and the slaughter of his prophets. In this he showed his native caution.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the lesson subject, "Divine Encouragement," and develop the lesson as follows: 1. The disheartening message, 2. The discouraged servant, 3. The ministering angel, 4. The divine revelations.

1. *The disheartening message.* Much depended upon Jezebel's action, for she was the power behind the throne, and for this reason Elijah was intensely anxious to hear what her attitude was to be toward the new state of things. Within a few hours the message came, the message which seemingly shattered all his hopes and took all the heart out of him. Note (a) The profanity—the message was coupled with an oath; (b) The hate—which would not hesitate even at murder; (c) The blind fury—which could not wait, but must needs send to Elijah the message of death.

In her blind rage the queen overreached herself and gave the prophet an opportunity to escape.

2. *The discouraged servant.* Elijah fled for his life, cast himself down under a juniper tree in the desert and asked God that he might die. Why was Elijah so discouraged? Note the following among other reasons: (a) He was physically exhausted. The reaction had come and he was depressed and discouraged as a consequent of his bodily condition; (b) His utter loneliness. He knew of no other true worshiper of the Lord God; (c) The apparent failure of the great work of the day before from which he had expected so much.

3. *The ministering angel.* A cure must be effected by removing the cause. One of the

causes of his discouragement was his bodily condition; so the first step in the cure of Elijah was to bring the body to a proper condition of vigor. Two things were needed for this, sleep and food, and these two were provided. Although the body is the servant of the mind, nevertheless, it powerfully affects the mind for good or evil. We, to-day, should give proper attention to our bodies, which so strongly influence us and condition our spiritual activity.

4. *The divine revelations.* The second great cause of his discouragement was the apparent failure of his work. Note here the elements of the cure, the revelation of the divine mode of working: (a) The wind—but the Lord was not in the wind; (b) The earthquake—but the Lord was not in the earthquake; (c) The fire—but the Lord was not in the fire; (d) The still, small voice—and Elijah knew that the Lord was speaking to him. Thus did God show Elijah the great lesson of the way his kingdom was to be established, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit." The forces which work silently are the mighty forces which are building up the kingdom. Illustrate from the forces of nature, etc. God further encouraged him (a) By revealing to him that there were many thousands of true worshippers; (b) By appointing work for him to do; (c) By giving him a companion—Elisha.

Specific application. It is hard for us to work on day after day without apparent results; yet it is our part to work faithfully and to leave the results to God. In this God will find a way to encourage us even as he encouraged Elijah. Pray, study, work, keep the eye open to obtain a true view of the facts, strengthen the body by proper care, strengthen the soul by sympathetic companionship, and leave all to God.

Blackboard.



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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 4, A day's journey, 315. Ver. 6, Bread-making, 11; The cruse, 266. Ver. 13, Covering the face, 316.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

I'm poor, and blind, and wretched.
Is this thy time of trouble?
Come unto me.
I heard the voice of Jesus.
Come, ye disconsolate.

Art thou weary.
O, sometimes the shadows are deep.
Are you weary.
Go tell it to Jesus.
Fear not, O troubled soul.

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LESSON V. NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

[July 31.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. EXOD. 20. 17.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read chapters 21 and 22.]

1 Kings 21. 4-16. [*Commit to memory verses 4-6.*]

4 And A'hab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Na'both the Jez're-el-ite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

5 But Jez'e-bel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

6 And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money: or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jez'e-bel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Is'ra-el? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite.

8 So she wrote letters in A'hab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Na'both.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Na'both on high among the people:

10 And set two men, sons of Be'l'al, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And *then* carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

11 And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city: did as Jez'e-bel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Na'both on high among the people.

13 And there came in two men, children of Be'l'al, and sat before him: and the men of Be'l'al witnessed against him, *even* against Na'both, in the presence of the people, saying, Na'both did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jez'e-bel, saying, Na'both is stoned, and is dead.

15 And it came to pass, when Jez'e-bel heard that Na'both was stoned, and was dead, that Jez'e-bel said to A'hab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Na'both is not alive, but dead.

16 And it came to pass, when A'hab heard that Na'both was dead, that A'hab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, to take possession of it.

REVISED VERSION.

4 And A'hab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Na'both the Jez're-el-ite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jez'e-bel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money: or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jez'e-bel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Is'ra-el? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite. So she wrote letters in A'hab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Na'both on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Be'l'al, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he die. And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jez'e-bel had sent unto them, according as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Na'both on high among the people. And the two men, sons of Be'l'al, came in and sat before him: and the men of Be'l'al bare witness against him, *even* against Na'both, in the presence of the people, saying, Na'both did curse God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jez'e-bel, saying, Na'both is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jez'e-bel heard that Na'both was stoned, and was dead, that Jez'e-bel said to A'hab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Na'both is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when A'hab heard that Na'both was dead, that A'hab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Na'both the Jez're-el-ite, to take possession of it.

Time.—About B. C. 900; four years before the death of Ahab. **Places.**—Samaria, the capital of Israel; Jezreel, a royal residence twenty-five miles to the north of Samaria. **Rulers.**—Ahab, king of Israel, B. C. 918-896; Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, 914-889; Benhadad, king of Syria; Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.

Home Readings.

- M.* Naboth's Vineyard. 1 Kings 21. 1-6.
Tu. Naboth's Vineyard. 1 Kings 21. 7-16.
W. Law of inheritance. Lev. 25. 18-28.
Th. Vanity of wealth. Eccles. 2. 1-11.
F. Oppression condemned. Micah 2. 1-10.
S. Covetous Achan. Josh. 7. 10-13; 19-23.
S. Sin of covetousness. Luke 12. 13-21.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 64, New Canadian Hymnal.

Yield not to temptation,
 For yielding is sin.

No. 420, New Canadian Hymnal.

Once I heard a sound at my heart's dark door,
 And was roused from the slumber of sin.

No. 408, New Canadian Hymnal.

'Tis sweet in the trials and conflict of sin,
 Temptation without and temptation within.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. Ahab's Greed, v. 4-6.

- What possession excited Ahab's greed?
 For what purpose did he desire the land?
 What offer did he make?
 What hindered Naboth's compliance? See Num. 30. 7.

How did Naboth's refusal affect the king?

What did Jezebel ask?

What was the king's reply?

What law did Ahab break? GOLDEN TEXT.

2. Jezebel's Crime, v. 7-16.

What promise did the queen make?

To what forgery did she resort?

What evil plot did she devise?

What was the Jewish law concerning witnesses?

Who were the obedient tools of Jezebel's will?

What was the result of the plot?

What did Jezebel bid Ahab to do?

How did the king become a partaker of the crime?

Where is all sin born? See Matt. 15. 19.

What wise caution should we all heed? See Prov. 4. 23.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Learn the curse of greed. It banishes peace of mind; it excites evil passions; it often leads to gross crime; it challenges divine judgments.

2. Learn the gain of godliness. With contentment it is a royal heritage.

3. Shun evil counsel. Turn away from base suggestions. Have a deaf ear for the voice of the tempter.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Ahab's Greed, v. 4-6.

Of what was Ahab covetous?

What commandment did he thereby break? Exod. 20. 17.

To whom did the vineyard belong?

For what purpose did Ahab want it?

What did he offer to Naboth for it?

What was Naboth's reply?

How did this answer affect the king?

How did he show his displeasure?

What question did Jezebel ask the king?

What was Ahab's reply?

2. Jezebel's Crime, v. 7-16.

What did Jezebel then ask?

What did she promise to do?

To whom did she send letters?

In whose name did she send them?

How did she command them to honor Naboth?

What wicked plot was then to be carried out?

What is the ninth commandment? Exod. 20. 16.

What did the elders and nobles do?

What message was sent to Jezebel?

What did Jezebel then say to Ahab?

What did Ahab at once do?

What is the sixth commandment? Exod. 20. 13.

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That selfishness leads to sin?
2. That one sin leads to another?
3. That one sinner can do great harm?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What did King Ahab covet?

What is it to covet? **To want what is not our own.**

Why would not Naboth let it go to his king?

How did the king behave about it?

What do you think of boys or girls who ask when they cannot have their own way?

Is there any cure for the sin that leads to such conduct? **Yes, true love for Jesus cures self-love.**

What did Jezebel say to the king? **"I will give thee the vineyard."**

What did she write to the rulers? **To arrest Naboth, and put him to death.**

What more did she tell them to do? **To hire false witnesses against him.**

With what did she seal her letters? **With the king's seal.**

What followed? **Naboth was stoned to death.**

What commandment besides the one in the GOLDEN TEXT did the king and queen break?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What property of Naboth did Ahab covet? **A vineyard.**
2. What does God's law say about coveting? GOLDEN TEXT: **"Thou shalt not,"** etc.
3. Why did Naboth refuse to sell his vineyard? **To do so was against God's law.**
4. What did Queen Jezebel do? **She ordered Naboth's death.**

5. Of what crime was he accused? **Of blasphemy.**

6. By what means was he found guilty? **By false witnesses.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

22. How hath God provided redemption for mankind?

God hath provided redemption for mankind by His gift of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself a ransom for all.

1 Timothy ii. 4-6. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Covetousness.

I. ITS ROOT—SELFISHNESS.

Give me . . . that I may have. v. 2.

Be without covetousness. Heb. 13. 5.

Keep thy heart. Prov. 4. 23.

II. ITS SPIRIT—DISCONTENT.

Heavy and displeased . . . no bread. v. 4.

Pierced themselves. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

Not satisfied . . . silver. Eccl. 5. 10.

III. ITS GROWTH—CONSPIRACY.

Wrote letters in Ahab's name. v. 8-10.

Lust . . . bringeth forth sin. James 1. 15.

Heart . . . false witness. Matt. 15. 19.

IV. ITS FRUIT—CRIME.

Stoned him . . . he died. v. 13.

Temptation and a snare. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

Root of all evil. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

V. ITS RESULT—REMOISE.

Hast thou found me? v. 30.

Ye rich men, weep and howl. James 5. 1-3.

Treasure and trouble. Prov. 15. 16.

VI. ITS PENALTY—DEATH.

Shall dogs lick thy blood. v. 19.

Wages of sin is death. Rom. 6. 23.

This night thy soul. Luke 12. 20.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Elijah journeyed northward from Horeb, and in God's name called Elisha, the son of Shaphat, to be his successor. Ahab, the petulant king of Israel, had meantime been hard beset. The Syrian king had first made him his vassal, and had sought still further to degrade him. War between the two kings was declared. A prophet foretold the utter overthrow of the Syrian armies, and directed how it was to be brought about. So far as Ahab followed this divine direction he was blessed with success, but his downfall was foretold by God because of repeated disobediences. Turning his attention again to his private affairs, King Ahab looked with longing eyes on a vineyard which was "hard by" his palace in the city of Jezreel. Naboth owned it, and refused to part with it; such an act seemed to be contrary to God's law. Ahab sulked and pouted because he could not have the vineyard he coveted, but did not dare to violate so grossly the constitutional law of the nation as to take it by force. Queen Jezebel's character contrasts strongly with that of Ahab. She was far bolder and more decided than he, and she had no lingering Israelitish scruples to restrain her, for she was foreign born and bred. So, taking upon herself the full responsibility, she wrote letters in Ahab's name, directing the local authorities of Jezreel to accuse Naboth of a capital offense, prove him guilty by false evidence, stone him to death, and confiscate his property to the crown. Far slihter outrages have often overthrown governments, but so craven were the "elders" of Jezreel that the queen's commands were followed to the letter, and King Ahab became the owner of Naboth's vineyard. But the curse of God came with it, and in a marvelous way were Ahab, his wife, and his descendants afterward punished for this ruthless crime.

Verse 4. His house. Probably at Samaria. Possibly the "ivory house" of 1 Kings 22, 39 and Amos 3, 15. **Heavy and displeased.** That is, sullen and angry. **Naboth.** From his reference to Jehovah (verse 3) he was probably one of the seven thousand faithful ones (1 Kings 19, 18). **Had said.** His refusal was based upon the divine law (Num. 36, 7). He refused because it was wrong. **His bed.** The couch upon which he reclined at the table. He lay down flat, turned away from the table, and would not eat. Such a manifestation of ill-temper is even now characteristic of oriental monarchs.

5. Jezebel his wife. Her character as a strong, unscrupulous, and ambitious woman is clearly brought out in this narrative. "A prudent wife is from the Lord" (Prov. 19, 14), but Ahab did not seek his from that source. His marriage was one of his great sins (1 Kings 16, 31).

6. Give me. Ahab had offered the full value in money, or a better vineyard for Naboth's. He could not legally take it by force. (See Ezek. 46, 18.) His avaricious heart could not see why another should not do wrong for gain, and his petulance was partly chagrin at Naboth's implied reproach.

7. Dost thou not govern. Jezebel's contempt for her weak husband is evident. Educated under a more despotic rule than even Ahab dare assume, she has no sympathy for his want of spirit. **I will give.** Quick to conceive a plan, and knowing her power, she hesitates at no wickedness to accomplish her purpose.

8. Wrote letters. These had all the authority of the king. The impress of his seal upon them (not to seal up) was by his permission, and thus the crime was shared by him. **Seal.** Signet rings are very ancient, as shown by Egyptian and Chaldean remains. Pharaoh's ring (Gen. 41, 42) was one. Judah's is mentioned in Gen. 38, 18. The impression was probably made in clay. (See Job 38, 14.) **Elders . . . nobles.** Doubtless the city tribunal (Deut. 16, 18). **His city.** Naboth was an inhabitant of Jezreel, the letters were written from Samaria. (See 1 Kings 20, 43.)

9. A fast. To atone for some supposed disgrace, and thus create a prejudice against Naboth when he is accused. It is also a religious cloak to cover crime, not used alone by Jezebel. **On high.** Not in honor, but in the sight of the people, to be tried for crime.

10. Two men. Two witnesses were necessary to convict. **Sons of Belial.** Hebrew, *Belig'at*. Not a proper name, but signifies worthlessness, lawlessness—hence "a worthless, lawless fellow." In the New Testament it appears

as a name for Satan, or all that is bad (2 Cor. 6, 15). **Blasphemed God.** Jezebel knew the people would not stone Naboth for blaspheming Baal. Even in their idolatry they respected the honored Name, and would punish the convicted blasphemer with death. **The king.** So that his possessions, as those of a traitor, might be forfeited to the king (verses 15, 16, 19, and 2 Sam. 16, 14).

11. Elders and . . . nobles . . . did. Their alacrity in carrying out the infamous designs of their wicked queen shows how low they had fallen. "Like king, like people." Oriental justice is little better at the present time. How much more noble the Christian standard, "We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5, 29).

13. There came two men. Satan is always ready with tools when they are needed by his workmen. So when Christ must be convicted (Matt. 26, 6) and Stephen was to be stoned (Acts 6, 13), **Carried him forth out of the city.** Capital punishment always took place out of the city. (See Acts 7, 28; Lev. 24, 14.) **Stoned him.** A punishment common with mobs (Exod. 8, 26; Num. 14, 10, etc.), and made the lawful mode of executing blasphemers, sacrificers to Moloch, wizards, Sabbath-breakers, idolators and enemies to idolatry, rebellious sons, and adulterers. According to 2 Kings 9, 26 his sons suffered with him, as was not uncommon (Josh. 7, 24).

14. Sent to Jezebel. Having imbued their hands in blood to please her, they hasten to send her word, hoping to receive some reward. Their readiness to commit the crime and to send her word, her manner of receiving it and telling Ahab, and his in proceeding immediately to profit by it, all show an utter recklessness and hardness of heart, the direct outcome of the infamous and debasing idolatry which she had introduced. **Is dead.** In verse 19 the murder is charged upon Ahab. He, his house, and Jezebel were condemned for the crime. He was guilty because his apostasy from the Lord opened a way for the crime; he could have prevented it and did not; he willingly lent his authority to it, and he gladly accepted the result.

15. Take possession of the vineyard. Enjoy the results of crime. **Which he refused to give thee for money.** The bitter spirit of the tyrant is shown in this sneer. **Naboth is not alive, but dead.** She is as contemptuous of her husband as of the poor corpse of Naboth.

16. Ahab rose up. The Septuagint, the ancient Greek version which we have already quoted, says that when the news of Naboth's murder was brought to Ahab he burst out into horror and remorse. It was from this that he

"rose up." **Naboth.** connection chariots of

Unbridled quickly. T apparently king, the u accomplices known of it fall of the king, going has another who plainly place where noent and lick his blood the dogs sh This was the of a man o had sold thy Lord."

Verse 4. ure was un yard as "the was not just the king sho worth in th countenance was bound h land. The k gal, and he pu

5. But Je idolatress and people, had in the king hesit it. The comp Clytemnestra is very strikin handle their en in his abject pator in her nality.

7. Dost th perance of a becoming a de dently was a as a disloyal a righteous sp is as a sun, and doing m ple, in the sam mischievous."

8. With hi seal must hav

"rose up." **To go down to the vineyard of Naboth.** No one can study this lesson and its connection without remembering that as the chariots of Ahab and his bodyguard descended

the slopes between Samaria and Jezreel there were in the company Jehu and Biskar, who heard the awful prophet pronounce a doom which those two men were destined to help carry out.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Unbridled covetousness usually bears fruit quickly. The primary incident of this lesson is apparently unimportant, and but for the weak king, the unscrupulous queen and her wicked accomplices nothing would ever have been known of it. But the incident led to the downfall of the house of Ahab, for the vacillating king, going down to possess the coveted vineyard, has another unexpected encounter with Elijah, who plainly declares to the king that in the place where the dogs licked the blood of the innocent and murdered Naboth they should also lick his blood, and that as for the wicked Jezebel, the dogs should eat her by the wall of Jezreel. This was the legitimate fruit of the covetousness of a man of whom the prophet said, "Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."

Verse 4. The word. The king's displeasure was unreasonable. Naboth held the vineyard as "the inheritance of his fathers," and he was not justified in parting with it, even though the king should offer more for it than it was worth in the market. The law would not countenance such a transaction, and Naboth was bound by God's commandment to keep his land. The king's demand was, therefore, illegal, and he probably knew it.

5. But Jezebel. This terrible woman, an idolatress and a relentless persecutor of God's people, had no religious or moral scruples. If the king hesitated at wickedness, she reveled in it. The comparison between her and Eschylus's Clytemnestra and Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth is very striking. When the king allowed her to handle their case their ruin became inevitable; he, in his abject moral weakness, became a participant in her base treachery and awful criminality.

7. Dost thou govern? This has the appearance of a malignant, defiant taunt, quite unbecoming a woman and queen. But she evidently was a thoroughly bad woman as well as a disloyal queen. Lange aptly says, "As a righteous spouse in the court of a great lord is as a sun, giving light throughout the land and doing much good work by her example, in the same proportion is an unholy woman mischievous."

8. With his seal. It is quite clear that the seal must have been given to her by Ahab, who

must have known that she intended to use it in some dishonest and unlawful way. He, then, became a party to her crime. Her letters bearing the king's seal passed as authentic royal mandates, and compelled obedience on the part of the local authorities.

10. Sons of Belial. This expression becomes clearer when the word "Belial" is not used as a proper name. It should not be so used in the Old Testament, and should be translated "worthlessness" or "uselessness." The expression may be understood as signifying "simply a worthless, lawless fellow." The accusation brought against Naboth, blasphemy against God, seems strange in view of the fact that Jezebel was an idolatress and had no respect for Jehovah herself. In her pursuit of innocent Naboth she trampled under foot the divine commands against killing, stealing, and bearing false witness.

11. Did as Jezebel had said. The murder of Naboth was followed by the killing of his sons, in order that his heirs might not interfere with Ahab when he should take possession of the property, although according to the law the property of a criminal reverted to the king. Thus crime was made to bolster up crime.

16. Ahab rose up. The impediment now being removed, and his vineyard having fallen into the king's hands according to law, Ahab hurries to gloat over his ill-gotten gains, but divine vengeance is dogging his footsteps. Jehu, who is to be the means of Ahab's punishment, rides with him to Jezreel, and in the midst of the vineyard the terrible prophet will denounce him and prophesy his awful death.

Thoughts for Young People.

Thoughts on Naboth's Vineyard.

1. How much evil and trouble come from worldly possessions! Naboth's vineyard cost its owner a great price. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? He who sells himself to work evil gets small returns for his pains.

2. How much of harm comes from looking with covetous desire upon the things of others. "Thou shalt not covet" is the only one of the Ten Commandments which does not condemn or command an overt act. Almost any other desire may be

curbed before it is wrong, but covetousness is sin from the outset.

3. *A sin is none the less a sin, though done for fear or for favor.* Each person is responsible for what he does. When a sin is committed by four or five persons no one of the four or five can get off with the responsibility for one fourth or one fifth of the sin. Ahab and Jezebel and the elders were each as guilty of Naboth's death as if no others had been concerned in it.

4. *We may sin by proxy, but we must suffer punishment in person.* Because, after all, the sin is always in the heart; the overt act is the outcome of the resident sin. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

5. *Not even a king has power to make wrong right or good evil.* The laws of morals are everlasting. Right is right because God is God.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Smith's Dictionary says that the palace of Ahab in Jezreel, known as his ivory house, formed part of the city wall, and Jezebel's quarters were on the city wall, with a high window facing eastward; but Van Lennep says it was just within the city gate, upon an open square or "void place," similar to one which existed in Samaria. Josephus says that it had a watchtower, on which a sentinel stood, known as the tower in Jezreel. The gateway of the city on the east was also the gateway of the palace. Immediately in front of the gateway, and under the city wall, was an open space where the dogs prowled for offal. A little further east was a smooth tract of land cleared out of the uneven valley, which belonged to Naboth, a citizen of Jezreel, but the royal grounds were so near that it would have been turned easily into a garden of herbs for the royal use. Naboth cultivated this small plot of ground as a vineyard. Van Lennep says the windows of the upper story of the palace were probably an habitual resort of the queen, who, as is customary with oriental rulers of the present day, sat here upon a divan to divert herself with the sights of this public thoroughfare. Women of her age and station are not very scrupulous in the use of the veil, and dispense with the lattice. She was, however, attended still by her eunuchs, those pliant tools of oriental despotism. The king sought to obtain the vineyard of Naboth, that he might have it for a garden of herbs. Naboth declined to make it over to Ahab because it was the inheritance of his fathers. If Ahab seized it violently, it would give great offense and provoke revolt among the Jews. According to Hebrew usage and law it was prohibited even to transfer land from

members of one tribe to those of another (Num. 36. 7-8). If, through poverty, anyone had to sell his landed inheritance and it was bought by any of his kin, the title had to be restored in the year of jubilee. The Jews were very tenacious about the observance of this usage and law, and, petulant as Ahab was, he did not dare provoke riot by seizing this property, though he was the head of the people, and kings showed scant courtesy to usages or laws that crossed their whims. The Hebrews never conceded that the title of the land inhered in the crown. The possessor of it had to acknowledge that it was the Lord's land and that he was but a tenant, with a lease limited by the directions of Jehovah. This was a serious limitation as compared with the ideas which obtained among the other orientals, that the monarch owned the land, to which Jezebel makes reference when she asks, "Dost thou not govern the kingdom of Israel?" which was equivalent to, "Thou art king, and the title to the land inheres in the sovereign." Even Jezebel herself did not recommend that the right of the sovereign to the land should be asserted, but she devised a scheme to arraign Naboth for a crime which, according to the laws of his own people, was punishable by death. As he interposed Hebrew law to avoid yielding his title to the land, she attempts to use Hebrew law as a means of removing him as a tenant of the land. Death by stoning was appointed by the Mosaic code as a punishment for blasphemy, and it required but two witnesses to certify to the crime. She requires the two witnesses. She ordered the execution of Naboth through the secretaries, who usually wrote the royal decrees, and took the signet ring of her husband and sealed the document.

By Way of Illustration.

Ahab unhappy. In many cases the misery of unhappy people is of their own making. Nothing tastes good to a man whose tongue is coated with a fever. The fault is not with the food, but with the disordered body of the invalid. Discontent is a disease of the heart, and is not dependent on external conditions. Paul could sing in a prison, and Ahab was wretched in a palace. Some of the most miserable people I am acquainted with are surrounded with external prosperities. And some of my most sunny-souled friends have not much property except Jesus Christ and a good conscience in possession and heaven in reversion.

—T. L. Cuyler.

A woman's influence. Adam Clarke declared long ago that a woman was equal to seven men and a half. It sometimes seems as if a thoroughly

bad woman. There is no doubt of it. Jezebel, and finished Shalmaneser's woman. Cease the real Jezebel's spare. There where she is reminding u himself to ntaunted him me the dagger.

In Jezebel There is no r

Ahab's doom ways happen sold himself buried robe Judas for the could only Ahab turned might well so of his murder blood.—Farrar

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Heart

The story of saying of Jesu heart of men, dangerous to h what it may le evil deeds—the men and women which they wo are the outcom until its natura ample to warn b ble evidences o and God's just through a perva tree of wrong t ration is lost.

Near the pal yard. Ahab co Naboth's intere ever. Selfishne grow, it destroy the soul. What

bad woman was equal to a dozen bad men. There is nothing too cruel or unjust for her to do. Jezebel has been compared to Lady Macbeth, and it has been suggested that she furnished Shakespeare with his idea of that wicked woman. Certainly, in coarseness and brutality, the real Jezebel exceeded the creation of Shakespeare. There are comparisons, as in this case, where she says, "I will give thee the vineyard," reminding us of how Macbeth could not bring himself to murder Duncan, and Lady Macbeth taunted him, saying, "Infirm of purpose, give me the dagger!"

In Jezebel wickedness comes to its full climax. There is no redeeming trait anywhere.

Ahab's doom. His sin found him out. As always happens to such colossal criminals, he has sold himself for naught, as Achan did for a buried robe and a useless piece of gold, and Judas for the thirty pieces of silver which he could only dash down on the temple floor. Ahab turned away from the vineyard, which might well seem to him haunted by the ghosts of his murdered victims and its clusters full of blood.—*Farrar.*

It is said that a duke of Austria once hired some men to murder an enemy, and then paid them in counterfeit coin, saying, "False money is good enough for false knaves." So Ahab was paid when he sold himself to work evil.

Robespierre was beheaded by the same guillotine to which he had consigned so many in the French Revolution.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The story of Naboth's vineyard illustrates the saying of Jesus, that "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts." It is dangerous to have a bad heart. We never know what it may lead to. Evil thoughts may end in evil deeds—thefts, covetousness, murder. Many men and women have committed crimes at which they would once have shuddered, which are the outcome of evil left to grow in the heart until its natural fruit appears. Ahab is an example to warn us that notwithstanding remarkable evidences of God's power, God's goodness, and God's just punishment of sin, a person may, through a perverse heart, be led on from one degree of wrong to another until all hope of restoration is lost.

Near the palace of the king there was a vineyard. Ahab coveted it. Purely selfish as he was, Naboth's interests were no concern to him whatever. Selfishness is the root of all sin. Left to grow, it destroys every good plant in the soil of the soul. What did Ahab care that Naboth had

all the memories of his ancestry connected with this vineyard, and his religious convictions, too, were against disposing of it? Sentiment and conscience are of no account with selfishness. One cannot help despising such a mean, ignoble trait. Do let us tear it out, root and branch, before it gets the better of us, as it did with this wicked king.

In a pet because he could not have his own way Ahab lay upon his bed with his face to the wall. It required Jezebel's daring badness to carry out the evil thoughts of Ahab, though his heart was just as bad as hers. She conceived a bold plan by which the life of a good man should pay for the coveted possession. She accomplished her end. The vineyard was at last a part of the palace gardens, and no doubt they took great satisfaction in seeing the herbs growing where Ahab had thought it so very desirable to have them. Quite possibly they never gave a thought to the man they had killed, nor to his friends who had been made sad by their awful crime. The entrance of selfishness gives apparent satisfaction sometimes. Conscience may be so hardened that it does not hinder the enjoyment of very sinful pleasures. But that is a fearfully dangerous state. To be happy in willful wrongdoing is like dying of paralysis. There is no consciousness, no feeling, no pain, yet death is certain. Sin never pays in the end. The prophet Elijah, sent by the Lord, found Ahab in the vineyard, "whither he had gone to possess it." As is usual with wrongdoers, he calls the one who would have been his best friend his enemy. Jezebel was his enemy—not Elijah. If Ahab had listened to the prophet's warnings rather than to the wicked counsels of his wife, the woes Elijah foretold would not have befallen him. But he "did sell himself to work wickedness." He was a slave to selfishness. Would you be free so that you may never be the servant of sin? Yield your heart to Him who has redeemed you with his precious blood, "having your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

The Teachers' Meeting.

First make a plain geographical and historic background by means of sketch-map and review . . . Ahab's sins: 1. Covetousness. 2. Discontent. 3. Conspiracy, in which Ahab was as guilty as his queen. 4. Falsehood—their charge against Naboth was a lying one. 5. Hypocrisy—for it was in the name of holy religion. 6. Robbery—for it was to obtain the possessions of another. 7. Murder—for it ended in Naboth's judicial slaughter. . . . A good blackboard exercise is to draw the outline of a vineyard to a

representation of Ahab's heart, and name each of the vines according to the outline of Ahab's sin given above. . . . Results of crime and sin are inevitable. Ahab's sentence.

Before the Class.

Introduction. The events of to-day's lesson occurred in the latter part of Ahab's reign, probably about three or four years before his death. The scene of the lesson is Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, and Jezreel, a royal residence about twenty-five miles to the north. Describe briefly the condition of the kingdom, the slow progress of the reforming work of Elijah, and the work of Elijah and Elisha among the schools of the prophets (2 Kings 2, 3-5). Persecutions had ceased, the king had come to realize to a certain extent his sinful course of opposition to God, and in consequence the prophet had some little influence at the royal court. But the case of Ahab was hopeless, and the doom was soon to be pronounced against him and his house. The lesson gives us a glimpse of his utterly depraved character, showing the hopelessness of any attempt at reformation.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the lesson subject, "Warning against Covetousness," and the following outline: 1. The covetous king, 2. The unscrupulous queen, 3. The weak elders, 4. The successful issue, 5. The prophesied doom.

1. *The covetous king.* The first four verses of the lesson reveal Ahab's character in its true light. Note (a) The desire for the vineyard was perfectly natural and right; (b) Ahab's proposition was fair, even liberal; (c) With the continued desire for the vineyard after Naboth's refusal to part with it the sin began; (d) The manifestation of his temper was childish and showed that the king was a slave to himself, to his desires; (e) This manifestation showed not only his wickedness, but his weakness. Give the reasons for Naboth's refusal to part with his vineyard: (a) He had a right to keep it; (b) He was a follower of the Levitical law (Lev. 25: 23, 24); (c) It was bound to him by past associations. Question the class to bring out the meaning of covetousness, which might be defined as a desire for more, uncontrolled by reason or conscience.

2. *The unscrupulous queen.* Contrast the strong character of Jezebel with the weak one of Ahab. Such strength, turned into right channels, would have produced marked results in the kingdom of Israel. Speak of her (a) Sneering question—"Dost thou govern the kingdom?" (b) Emphatic promise, showing who had the real

power; (c) Energy in immediately formulating a plan. The plan itself was devilish, but the instructions to the elders were very direct and plain, so that there could be no mistake made.

3. *The weak elders.* What a record of weak yielding to wickedness in its baldest form! There was no attempt to cover up; the design was fully stated. "And the elders. . . . did as Jezebel had sent unto them." Not a protest, not a sign of a murmur against the murderer. "They. . . . stoned him with stones, that he died."

4. *The successful issue.* The message is sent to Jezebel, acquainting her with the successful issue of her plan. Her promise to Ahab was now fulfilled. She goes to him and tells him to take possession of the vineyard, for Naboth is dead. And Ahab, like the weak elders, weakly obeys.

5. *The prophesied doom.* In the vineyard Ahab meets Elijah face to face. Anger and anguish are visible in his countenance as he says, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Then comes Elijah's answer, sealing his doom. Covetousness led to murder, and murder ends in just retribution and the ruin of family.

Specific application. This lesson is given us a plain warning as to the possible results of covetousness when it is finished. This sin was a growth; the evident thing to do is to strangle such desires before they become so powerful as to control us. Daily not with the weak beginnings of sin.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

I need thee every hour.
Yield not to temptation.
Dare to do right.
Am I a soldier of the cross,
Rescue the perishing.

Hear thou my prayer.
I bring my sins to thee.
Teach me, O Lord.
Be with me every moment.

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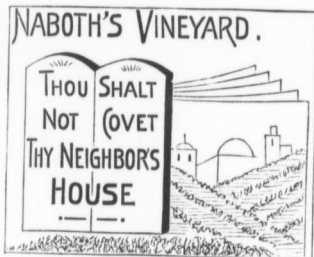
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Blackboard.



Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

—In the kingdom of God there is no question of majorities and minorities, but it is simply are we steadfast and faithful unto death?—*Bahr*.

—If Providence calls us to solitude and retirement, it becomes us to acquiesce; when we cannot be useful we must be patient, and when we cannot work for God we must sit still quietly for him.—*Henry*.

—O God, thou that providest meat for the fowls of the air, wilt make the fowls of the air provide meat for man, rather than his dependence on thee shall be disappointed! O let not our faith be wanting to thee; thy care can never be wanting to us!—*Bishop Hall*.

—Grace is such a pilot as without its steerage you will certainly suffer shipwreck on your voyage to everlasting tranquillity.—*Secker*.

—The purpose of just men depends not so much upon their own wisdom as upon the grace

of God, on whom they always rely in whatsoever they take in hand.—*Thomas à Kempis*.

—The covetous person lives as if the world were made altogether for him, and not he for the world; to take in everything, and to part with nothing.—*South*.

—While we are straitened in our expectations the blessing is withheld; but when our hearts are enlarged the more we ask the more we have.—*Hill*.

—We fear our own steadfastness: "Lord, abide with us!" The foe is strong, and we, through our sins, weak: "Lord, abide with us," and be our strength. We are ever subject to change and ebb and flow: "Abide with us, Lord," with whom is no change.—*Pusey*.

—Each of us may be sure that if God sends us on stony paths, he will provide us with strong shoes, and will not send us out on any journey for which he does not equip us well.—*Maclaren*.

If I wander far and oft
From that which I believe and feel and know,
Thou wilt forgive, not with a sorrowing heart,
But with a strengthened hope of better things.

—*Lovell*.

—The tendency to persevere, to persist in spite of hindrances, discouragements, and impossibilities; it is this that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak.—*Carlyle*.

—It is from small seeds dropped into the ground that the finest productions grow; and it is from the inborn dictates of conscience and the inspired principle of duty that the finest growths of character have arisen.—*Smiles*.

—Only when our Sun of righteousness rises toward high noon does every province of life and duty become warm with it, and the summer green pervade the by-places where the frosts and the shadows had kept before.—*Sears*.

—Everybody wants to attain to conspicuous and shining virtues, but very few seek after the lowly graces, the thyme and sweet herbs which grow beneath the shadow of the life-giving tree.—*Sales*.

—The shortness of life is bound up with its fullness. It is to him who is most active, always thinking, feeling, working, caring for people and for things, that life seems short. Strip a life empty, and it will seem long enough.—*Phillips Brooks*.

—Find your niche, and fill it. If it be ever so little, if it is only to be hewer of wood or drawer of water, do something in this great battle for God and truth.—*Spurgeon*.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Primary Note.

"HURRAH for the flag!" says some one in anticipation of First of July. Yes, the flag should be cheered. In the public schools the flag is saluted, admirably addressed, and allegiance is sworn to it. Is the Sunday school to be silent? We can, in the Sunday school, put into patriotism a meaning and back it up with a support that in the public school must be cautiously expressed, perhaps cannot be mentioned. In the Sunday school we can say what we please about the religion of Jesus, and can affirm that love of country gets its finest form when it expresses the principles of Jesus. We can say that we must make the flag and the cross one in a beautiful meaning of good will. We can only see the blood-stained banner of the cross aloft in our country's colors as we put that banner there. We can only put it there as we train up those loving the cross who shall bear the flag. It is the flag supporter who makes a flag. Wanted, a million of boys and girls trained in the Sunday school to say that the flag a generation hence shall be the cross-banner to float North, South, East, West,

Women Teachers.

We have traveled thousands of miles up and down a State of nearly 7,000 Sunday schools, and have met thousands of superintendents and teachers in other States and in the International conventions, and so far have heard of but two schools where the primary or junior department is taught by a man. And yet there must be more. In other places some of the most successful primary teachers are men.

The host of Sunday-school workers will not agree with Mr. Bok that neither men nor business women should be Sunday-school teachers. A sorry spectacle we would have if we limited the teaching to those who are idle and at rest all week. The Sunday school needs the busy, practical men and women, and hosts of these are to-day blessing the church universal by their efficient work in the Sunday school. Dr. Roads, of Philadelphia, quotes a wide-awake superintendent as saying: "Why, it is only the busy people who ever do the work of teaching."

John Wanamaker teaches the busy men's class in his school. W. S. Witham, of Georgia, president of several banks and a railroad director, teaches a large "Busy People's class." A Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States teaches an adult class.—*International Evangel.*

Teaching Hymns to the Children.

BY ALICE MAY DOUGLAS.

THERE is one branch of religious instruction of children which is greatly neglected at the present day—the memorizing of old church hymns.

Our forefathers when young were often obliged to commit to memory certain hymns and the sacred lines thus acquired followed them throughout their lives.

Standard hymns could be taught to the children either by the teacher or by the parent. As soon as a class has learned a hymn let it stand and repeat it in concert. It is not necessary to always sing these hymns.

Many of these hymns have interesting histories connected with them, which it might be well to relate to the class.

Since these hymns are not as easy to understand as are some of the modern songs with which the children are familiar, it would be well to explain each verse as it is taught to the class.

It would be an excellent plan for the pupils to pick out the hymns to be learned, the teacher to choose from such selections the most appropriate ones.

Significance of Interruption in the Primary Lesson.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

EVEN a limited intercourse with primary children will show us that it is always the unexpected which happens in their class room. "Primary teaching is wearing on the nerves," people tell us, and though there are compensations for this nerve wear-and-tear, yet one cause of it is the seemingly unavoidable and frequent interruptions to every lesson.

"If all the children were good, we would have few interruptions," say primary teachers. While this is certainly true, we will often find that there is a serious cause for "badness," and by removing the cause we may expect comparatively uninterrupted lessons.

We may look upon physical discomfort as cause for many needless interruptions, for the children will be irritable and noisy if uncomfortable. This is altogether needless, because the children's comfort should be one of the first things considered in a primary class.

Let us visit a primary class room on purpose to make a study of interruptions avoidable and unavoidable.

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There are sixty children in the room who vary in age from four to eight. During the singing of the first verse of the opening hymn the teacher notices that a thinly-clad child is seated with his back to a northeast window, against which the wind is driving the sleet and snow. Before we begin the second verse that child must be moved to a sheltered corner near the heater.

We notice that care has been taken to seat all the children with their backs to the light. This teacher evidently considers that the children must be subject to more or less eye-strain during the week, and proposes to spare their eyes on Sunday.

During the singing of the second verse the teacher notices a mite of a girl pulling at her neighbor's stocking. This is disorderly, but there is good reason for it. The little neighbor is in torment, for her stocking is fastened by means of a bit of twine wound around the leg just above the knee. The day is cold, and the tight string impedes the circulation so that her chubby leg is becoming quite numb. Her kind-hearted mate, seeing her plight, hastens to the rescue while singing "Help us to do the things we should." The teacher, without stopping to reprove anybody, cuts the twine, singing all the while.

This teacher is an expert in drawing, and makes her few rapid lines on the blackboard "tell." The children are all attention while the lesson opens with a graceful illustration, which they are expected to discuss. Their discussion is to lead them to the vital point of the lesson. John, who is seated on the back row, is the only inattentive member of the class, and he will not look at the board or let anybody else look at it so far as his arms can reach. The teacher asks John a question. This, before the discussion of the picture begins, so that he has not heard the other children describe it. He cannot see the picture. The teacher discovers this in a flash; but she discovers more! John's sight is so very defective that he cannot even see the blackboard!

That child who has walked a mile to Sunday school through the snow, wearing her carefully-saved, partly-outgrown "best boots," is not easily quieted when she noisily kicks the leg of her chair, fretting audibly, and saying she "wants to go home."

Willie's disorderly conduct, which has already caused frequent interruptions, is not so easily explained. He is usually so good and quiet that there must be some trouble here which does not show on the surface. At last Willie becomes so unbearable that his case must be investigated even while the class waits. A little "aside" with

Willie reveals that he "got up so late sister wouldn't give him any breakfast." Willie is sent home to be fed, and the teacher makes a mental note to "have a little talk" with "sister" on the subject of hygiene.

Late-comers were, to-day, a serious interruption to the lesson story, for the class stopped listening to stare at them, while the tardy members stood helplessly staring at the class until somebody found chairs for them. Possibly the next generation of expert primary teachers will know how to prevent tardiness in children who are too young to "tell time," and who must depend on others to "start them off" in season.

The closing prayer might have been interrupted by older brothers and sisters who were in the habit of flocking into the primary room to take the little ones home; but the teacher, who had learned wisdom from experience, locked the door and fastened on the outside of it a placard bearing this inscription:

"Wait outside for the primary children."

There are interruptions for which neither teacher nor children are responsible. If the primary class must take what is left in the way of a class room after the main school has been provided for, it may be that we are subject to interruptions from without. In that case our only defense is to make our lessons so intensely interesting that our children will be blind and deaf to all outside matters. If we succeed in doing this, not a child in the class will have the inclination to interrupt. Yet our defense from interruption is incomplete until we have cultivated a placid manner, poise, foresight, presence of mind, and readiness of resource in times of emergency.

"When He had Taken Him in His Arms."

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

THE Gospel of the gentle touch is as potent as of old. The children's Saviour has left us an example that we should do as he did, both in deed and in spirit. Not only when "they brought unto him young children" did he "take them in his arms and put his hands upon them and bless them," but when he would teach the disciples who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven he "took a child and set him in the midst"—who can doubt that there were children near?—and "when he had taken him in his arms," he set forth the lesson never to be forgotten.

Perhaps that little one understood nothing whatever of the admonition given to his elders.

It is not likely that he could ever remember, intelligently, a word of that striking lesson. But could he ever forget the loving embrace, the tender touch, the close folding to the Saviour's heart? O surely, never, never!

We primary teachers, "ministering in his name," should gather our scholars close and hold them fast against our hearts. The literal loving touch, the absolute contact, means much as to influence, but there is a deeper significance still to the phrase "When he had taken him in his arms." Aside from the caressing touches which we love to give when the children come within arm's length, when they crowd close and want little bonnets tied and coats fastened, there is a taking them into a warm embrace that means more than a caress. Are the arms of love always close-folded about the children of our care? Is the love for Jesus' sake equally distributed to all? It should be so.

During the closing exercises of the Sunday school a primary teacher sat on one of the low chairs beside the children, leaving the general oversight of the room to her assistant. With the change of air in the opening of the large doors a dainty little maid needed her cloak on, and the teacher took the wee morsel upon her lap to adjust her belongings. The little blossom was exquisitely fair, and in a passion of tender and admiring love the teacher held fast the little one in her arms, noting, over the small shoulder, the delicate beauty of the sensitive face, the ravishing brown curls, waving back from the white forehead in the loveliest way, all the baby charms being set off by dainty dress. The beautiful child was also one of the most regular and studious in the class, and her attentiveness and interest, with her sweet gentleness, made her everywhere attractive. It was impossible not to love her most tenderly. It would be hard to judge of this teacher's love for her class as a whole by her feeling for this scholar. She thought of it herself, and wondered if this child had not more than her share.

But another Sunday, at the close of the lesson, a boy got up suddenly and made a plunge at another a few seats farther along. He was a forbidding-looking little fellow, his dull face never showing any change of expression. While never giving trouble, he did not answer questions nor show any special interest in the lesson.

"Take your seat, Johnny," said the teacher, quietly; "you know I don't like to have you change seats after you are once settled."

The boy obeyed with a sullen look, but the next glance toward him showed that he was sobbing distressfully. Filled with instant pity and surprise over the unusual demonstration, the

teacher's arms were about the child in a moment, and in reply to her gentle question he sobbed out, "He's got my hat." And sure enough, the mischief of the class produced the hat which he had somehow managed to secure. Johnny had evidently been terrified over the loss, fearing, no doubt, that it would be a final one, and that he would have to go home bareheaded and account for the missing article. His teacher's heart was smitten to think that she had so misunderstood the hasty action and had reproved the wrong boy. She said so to the sobbing child, assured him that Harry could not have meant to trouble him so much, and must feel sorry now, and sought to soothe him with all the tender skill she could command. As she did this her heart yearned over the dull boy in his trouble with a love she had not felt before, and she suddenly realized that he was very dear to her. Has not every teacher had some similar experience which has taught her that there are different kinds of appeal to the affections, and that it is possible, yes, easy, to love each member of the class?

But do we gather the children in the arms of faith? We ought not to fail of this, for so we not only bring them close to our own hearts as we pray for them, but we bring them near to the Saviour that he "may put his hands upon them and bless them." Surely this is something that we not only may do, but we must, and it is sweet to know that we may, while duty cries, "You must."

There is one way of touching a child which is perhaps less often tried than with older ones, and that is by the written word. A letter is prized as a rarity, and is apt to be more to a child than to an older one. Birthday letters have been often recommended and written, too, but did you ever try writing a little letter to each member of the class upon one occasion? I have just tried it, and have found the experience so sweet that if there is anyone to whom I may pass on the suggestion I cannot keep from doing it. I wrote Easter letters to my children—little love letters, I called them—in-closing a card in each, but making them personal appeals in the very simplest language, asking each little heart to love and trust and try to please the risen Jesus, so strong to help us every one, since he rose from the dead at this happy time, and putting into words my own love, that they might not doubt it for lack of the telling. I only hope the children have had half the help and happiness out of the letters that I have had. Perhaps it is a surer way to the hearts of the mothers than a direct letter to them would be.

Teachers, let us take the children in our arms.

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON I. (July 3.)

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED. 1 Kings 12. 16-25.

GOLDEN TEXT. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." Prov. 15. 1.

Primary Notes,

BY MARTHA VAN MAETER.



There were two brothers once who lived side by side, and who loved one another very much. But trouble came. Unkind words were spoken; people who love to make mischief stirred up bad feeling, until the brothers would no longer speak to each other. Their hearts, which had been as one, were divided now, and strife came to dwell where peace and love had dwelt! Whose work was this? Ah! you know very well that it was the work of the evil spirit. When a little heart is divided, and ill-will comes into the place where peace has made its home, do you not know that this is always the work of the evil spirit? Notice the Lesson Thought, and carry it away in your heart!

LESSON THOUGHT.—*Sin separates.* [Pin a crown to the board, or draw one.] Do you remember King Solomon? Who can tell something about him? Yes, he was very rich, and he had a great, strong, rich kingdom. What was the name of the kingdom? It was Israel, and Solomon was its king forty years. But now Solomon was dead, and his son Rehoboam went to Shechem to be made king. Do you think he would feel glad to be made king? Yes, and he felt very proud too. He thought now he would have great power, and would be praised and obeyed by all the people. He did not feel as his father, Solomon, felt when he was made king. You know when the Lord told him to ask anything that he wanted, Solomon asked for wisdom and understanding. He did not feel that he was wise enough to rule such a great people, and so he asked God to help him. The Bible does not say that Rehoboam asked God to help him. When he wanted advice he went to his friends, and they gave him bad advice, so that he made the people angry, and trouble began for him as soon as he became king. It was sin that separated his heart from the hearts of the people. If he had kept love and peace in his heart, this trouble would not have come. Let us see how much Rehoboam lost by being proud

and self-willed. [Make on the board ten little circles. Tell that each one stands for a tribe of Israel.] Solomon, had ruled them all, and his son Rehoboam might have done so, too, if he had kept love in his heart. But when some of the people wanted him to grant them some little favor, he said "No" very harshly, and it made them angry, and only two of the tribes stayed with him. The others said, "We will not have such an unkind king." [Draw a large circle around two of the little ones, and inclose the remaining eight in another large circle, telling that these tribes went off with another king.] It always costs to let sin and self rule! [Divide the crown on the board, rubbing out or tearing it, as the case may be.]

Sin in the heart. [Make a heart on the board, and teach that the things of the outward world are only pictures of the inward world in each one of us.] Each little heart is a kingdom. Each little kingdom is in danger of being divided, as the kingdom of Israel was, by sin and self. There is only one way of keeping the heart-kingdom whole for God, and that is to let Jesus come and live there. Where he is peace and love are. When he goes out sin and strife come in. Sin divides the heart [divide the heart on the board], and a divided heart makes trouble everywhere!



Kindergarten Hints.

BY MRS. MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Gentleness and Peace. Gentleness, Psalm 18. 35; Prov. 15. 17, 18; 22. 24; 2 Cor. 10. 1; 1 Thess. 2. 7; 2 Tim. 2. 24; James 3. 17. Peace, Luke 2. 14; Matt. 5. 9; John. 14. 27.

GOLDEN TEXT. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." Prov. 15. 1.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Gal. 5. 22; *Illustrative Notes* (Drs. Huribut and Doherty).

ATTENTION STORY.

We remember that John talked much about love, and he wrote many words which Jesus spoke about that and something else which is

found wherever love is. It is peace. Before Jesus came people did not talk about peace, because they had not heard about it. They did not know that anger and naughtiness should be put away, and that they should use gentle speech and kind ways. One king said that when he thought of God's gentleness it made him feel strong or great. He said this [read Psalm 18. 35, and another king did not care to have anything to do with people who were cross (angry), and he said this. [Read "Make no friendship," etc. Prov. 22. 24.] This same king said it would be better to have a dinner of greens without any beef than to have plenty of beef and have naughty and unkind thoughts (Prov. 15. 17, 18). Long after the kings lived the song of peace was sung that night when the baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and the many voices in the sky sang with the angels this verse which we have all learned to say and to love. [Read and repeat "Glory to God on earth, peace." Luke 2. 14.] After that Jesus talked of peace when he was on the mountain preaching, and the night when he had supper with the men who followed him he talked of love, and said that he would give them peace in their hearts. Hear the words that John wrote for us. [Read John 14. 27.] Last Friday was called Dominion Day. You call it the First of July, and I know some little girls who call it Firecracker Day. We have fireworks to show our gladness, because a long time ago many other people were glad to have peace and to be happy and not have quarrels with others. In some parts of the country the people have fireworks on every Christmas Day; perhaps it is because they think of the peace in the angels' song. We will repeat the Golden Text about a soft answer—speech in loving terms—sweet speech.

Explain musical words of the lesson.

OUTLINE.

Sunday. The children have Dominion Day in mind, and this lesson upon the peace and soft answer is in harmony with their thoughts.

Monday. Dwell upon the fact that kings and all people wished for gentleness and talked about it, but they did not know of it or hear of wonderful peace until Jesus came and taught them. Talk of David and Solomon, and find in the story of each life some sweet thought or narrative which will make them real people to the children. David looked at the stars, sun, and moon, and wondered about them just as boys and girls do now. Solomon had much gold, silver, ivory, and many horses, but he thought loving hearts better than all, and when people chose their friends or ate their dinners he would have them gentle and true.

Tuesday. Solomon was always talking of wisdom, and wanted to know about many things, just as boys and girls to-day want to know, but since then men have found out many secrets of the earth, and all the time the world is growing wiser. Sometimes we wish Solomon could have seen Jesus and heard him say, "My peace give I unto you." Ever since Jesus said that people have been talking about peace, and do not quarrel as often as they did before he came.

Since then all has been different from what it was when kings quarreled and people forgot to do kind acts. We all forget sometimes now, but not so often as before Jesus came.

Wednesday. Paul lived many years ago, you remember. He said to some people whom he loved dearly that he was as gentle with them as a nurse is with children (1 Thess. 2. 7), and he spoke of the gentleness of Jesus (2 Cor. 10. 2).

Thursday. Other disciples of Jesus spoke about gentleness and peace, and they read our Golden Text, for Solomon wrote the words long before that time. Do you know what a soft answer can do? It is the very opposite from the loud, rough, unkind answer.

Friday. If hasty and harsh words cause other people to be angry, how careful in speech we should be! David prayed that the words of his mouth and even the thoughts of his heart might be pleasing to God. So he knew that even the thoughts far inside and deep down must be right if our speech and acts would be gentle and kind.

NATURE WORK. Have a nature story of Christ stilling the tempest. No man can calm the ocean or stop the falling rain. God causes the rain to fall and to cease falling. Talk of rain and of water. You will find a point of connection between these topics and the lessons. Talk of calm water or of troubled and restless waters.

ART WORK. Pictures of calm and of troubled waters may be shown to the children, the teacher drawing lessons from this illustration.

HAND WORK. The children may do some kind of symbol of peace or gentleness. Perhaps a picture dove (a pigeon) suggests this, and they may build a pigeon house of their gift blocks.

The **TRANSITION CLASS.** Children may write the reference text or put the lesson hymn upon the board as the teacher reads it.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. The topic may be gentleness in the family.

LESSON II. (July 10.)

ELIJAH THE PROPHET. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord." 1 Kings 17. 16.

Primary Notes.



A poor woman sat weeping in her cold room one night. She had no fire and no food, and she did not know where she could get either. Her husband was dead, and she had been ill so that she could not work, and now the last penny she had in the world was

gone. Little smiling ing," plent work for wh asked he, ma poor w she tol they bo mornin of worl so !?"

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gone. Suddenly she felt a warm hand on hers. Little Charlie had crept out of bed and stood smiling in her face. "Mamma, I've been dreaming," said he, "that we had a good fire and plenty to eat, and that you had a promise of work. And, mamma, I'm sure it will come true, for when I woke and knew it was a dream I asked God to make it come true. He can, can't he, mamma?" "Yes, Charlie, he can," said the poor woman, wiping away her tears; and then she told her boy how the Lord fed Elijah, and they both lay down and slept sweetly. The next morning the food and the fire and the promise of work all came, and Charlie said, "I told you so!"

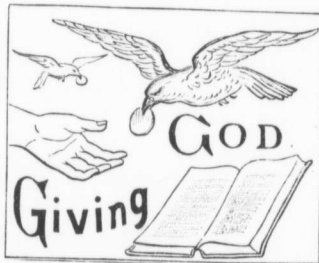
God giving. [Describe Elijah, a tall man who looked like a warrior.] He wore a sheepskin mantle and a girdle of skin, and his long hair fell down on his shoulders. He was a good man, to whom God often spoke, and he had many errands to do for the Lord. It is not the people who look fine who please the Lord most, but those who are faithful and true and who do not fear to speak the whole truth. Elijah, the prophet, was such a one, and God had sent him now to the wicked king of Israel, Ahab, to tell him that because Israel was so wicked there would be no rain, or dew for a long time. Ahab was angry, and wanted to kill Elijah for telling the truth, but God took care of his servant. Elijah went to the brook Cherith, near Jordan, and hid there as the Lord told him to do, and God sent one of his little servants to feed him. [Show the raven on the board.] Yes, the birds can do errands for God, and this raven was his messenger to feed the hungry prophet!

God has a great many servants. Another servant of his was a poor woman who had very little to eat, and thought she should die of hunger. God sent Elijah to her to be fed! If she had been selfish, she would have kept all she had for herself. But she believed God, and when she opened her kind hand to help another God filled it again for herself!

Do you know what made all the trouble in Israel? I will tell you. The people forgot God and worshiped idols. They would have their own way, and when people do this they always fall into trouble. But God knows and cares for and feeds his own people who love and trust him. He always has done so and always will; so no child need be afraid that God will forget and let him die of hunger and want.

There is something which God has sent us, and which he wants us all to feed upon each day. It is his good word of promise. You come to this place to get some of it into your hearts. It is God's food for our souls, and if we do not have

food for the soul, it will starve and die, as truly as the body will die without food. [Call for the twenty-third psalm and use it to impress this line of thought.] Are you one of the Lord's little servants? If you get his word in your hearts, he will use you to carry it to some one, perhaps, who is starving and dying for want of it!



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. God's Care of Elijah Long Ago, God's Care of Us Now. 1 Kings 17, 2-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Your heavenly Father knoweth." Matt. 6, 32.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER OR PRIMARY TEACHER. Holy Bible, 2 Kings 1. A *Comparative Study of John* will be helpful. Mendelssohn's *Oratorio of Elijah* has much depth and strength in the music. If you cannot play or sing this, look through the text, and as a study in literature it will be of value, while its spiritual tone will uplift you. *The Handbook of Bible Biography*, by Rev. C. R. Barnes, or some other, will give notes on Elijah. Whitney's *Handbook of Bible Geography* will give information of places mentioned in these lessons. Each reader will find helps in her personal reading. For the lesson story the living voice and the loving heart will be powerful, together with the magnetism of the individual. The lesson as written here may be a guide or seed-thought only to some adaptation suited to your children.

ATTENTION STORY.

Can you remember away back to the day when we said to our friends, "I wish you a happy New Year?" Well, just then we commenced to talk about Jesus and about the strange man who told everyone that Jesus was coming. Perhaps you remember that the man ate locusts and honey and he wore a strange kind of clothing. Can anyone tell his name? Yes, it was John. This book says, "The same John had his raiment (that means clothing) of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins (Matt. 3, 4). Now we begin a new lesson story to-day of another man. If

we wonder about him and wish to know his name, we will read this (2 Kings 1. 8). Long, long ago Elijah lived and helped people to do good and to be good. His love for what was right and true was like the love for right and for truth now. Elijah lived beside a brook named Cherith. [Read the story beginning "And the word." 1 Kings 17. 2-16. After this let the children repeat different parts or words in the story and talk about it. The teacher may have in hand and in heart what will develop these points. These few verses furnish at least ten topics for thought, and it may be that the teacher and children will find many more: 1. God's interest in where Elijah lived. 2. God guided him and cared whether he had water and food. 3. God sent ravens to feed him. 4. Elijah obeyed God; so did the ravens. 5. The brook dried up. (Did you ever see a dry brook?) 6. God led him to another place. 7. Elijah asked for food. 8. The woman, while trying to keep herself and her boy alive, fed Elijah. (Self-preservation caused her to demur.) 9. Elijah trusted God. "Fear not," and "Thus saith the Lord." 10. The woman obeyed and lived, and the food was enough. The nature thoughts are many, but the drought and the ravens may be the major topics, though there are also the bread, rain, meal, oil, made from what?]

OUTLINE.

The places the teacher may talk about are Cherith, Zarephath.

The lesson suggested is simple and practical hand work. For a few cents a thousand uncolored sticks a half inch wide by five long may be bought.*

Give five to each child. Say that we will make a gate. The smallest may follow you as you direct, interlacing over and under the sticks, thus making the little gate firm enough to take home as a sign or symbol of the lesson.

If you meet the children through the week, teach them to model a cruse or cup in brittle clay. The transition class or larger children of the primary department may choose which topic suggested in this lesson they will write a short paper or description about.

On Sunday the teacher may ask the boys and girls to read whatever they can find about the raven. Some may tell the class what they have found, and others may hand in written papers.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. There may be most interesting talks of the topics indicated in the lessons, especially of the hospitality of the woman who made the good man welcome to share the little cake she and her son were to have. God cared for the little family and gave daily food.

All through the lesson the teacher will find opportunity of showing that God's care of Elijah is repeated every day now with us and his providing hand gives food to each little child to-day.

*Victor Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass.

LESSON III. (July 17.)

ELIJAH ON CARMEL. 1 Kings 18. 30-39.

GOLDEN TEXT. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." 1 Kings 18. 39.

Primary Notes.



In the old times the Lord taught his people to build altars of worship. They were told to make offerings on these altars. Sometimes the offering would be a lamb, sometimes a bullock, and sometimes a pair of gentle doves. Whatever it was, it showed that the one who offered it was willing to give up something to please God. We do not build altars now, but there is an altar of the heart upon which we must offer up many things to God, and do you know we are never so happy as when we have given up something dear to us "for Jesus' sake?" What have you offered to Jesus, who gave all to you?

Review. What did we find God doing in the last lesson? Yes, "giving." We saw how he fed a prophet by a raven—yes, and afterward by a poor woman. When the raven brought food to Elijah did he take it from the raven? No, he took it from God's hand, for he knew the raven was only his servant. When we eat our good dinner do we remember that it is God who sends it, and that all the people who have helped to bring it to us are only his servants? The poor woman was another of the Lord's servants, and anyone who is willing and obedient may be his servant.

God speaking. [The story of the famine, lasting three years and a half, should be told briefly and clearly. Find it in 1 Kings I. 24. Make it plain why the famine was sent.] God wants to give his children good things, but if they will not hear and obey him, he has to send trouble to make them remember him. [Impress the lesson that our loving God does not punish in anger, but in tender love and compassion, as a good father does.]

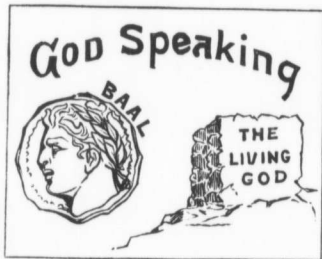
[Describe the great meeting called on Mount Carmel. The outline of a mountain will help to make the scene realistic. Tell that this meeting was like a great school, and God was the Teacher.] He sent his prophet Elijah to show the truth to the people. Elijah believed God. He really believed that he was the living God, and could do all things! Perhaps he was the

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only one at the meeting who really believed this. [Show the image of Baal on one side and the altar on the other side of the board. Explain that there are always two sides—the right and the wrong side. Little children know this very well.] In school, at home, at play, you will always find the two sides. [Tell that God was about to speak that day through Elijah.] He loves to speak through his servants. Are you his little servant?

The Lord's side. Who stood on the right side at this meeting? Yes, Elijah, and he had to stand alone! But he was not afraid or ashamed. He knew that God was greater and stronger than all the people in all the world. He had to face the great company on the other side, who did not believe that God was looking down and that he would give the victory to the right. They saw one man on the Lord's side and four hundred and fifty on Baal's side, and they said, "That must be the right side! See how many are on Baal's side!" [Finish the story, and show how the outcome teaches the lesson that God is the mighty One who can do all things. Print on the altar "The Living God," and teach that he is alive now, and knows which side each little child stands upon!] Are we on the right side? Or do we sometimes go on the wrong side because we see others there? This is a good time to choose which side we will be on! God is here, and he will help us to choose right.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Elijah on the Mountain. 1 Kings, 18, 41-45.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Ask, and it shall be given you." Matt. 7. 7.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. *The Beauties of Ruskin* give information about mountains, clouds, water, etc.; *Natural History*, vol. xi. School Readers will also contribute to your storehouse of material for this lesson. Every teacher

of little children, both in the Church and in the public schools, needs a large fund of general knowledge. Each day some treasure will be within reach, and by taking these and adapting them to the demands of the hour some wholesome truths may always be at hand to give to the little ones in attractive form.

ATTENTION STORY.

Elijah knew that it was the kind heavenly Father who cared for him and for the woman and her boy. He knew, too, that when the rain was needed no one but God could send it. Is it not just so now, children? The strongest man, the best man, not even your papa, can cause it to rain! The rain will never stop falling for any man. But it obeys God just as the winds and the sea obey him. We often sing in kindergarten, "Wonderful, Lord, are all thy works." Elijah prayed to God and asked him to send rain. He was so sure that the rain was coming that he said to the king, "There is a sign of much rain," and he told the king to get in his chariot and go home in a hurry to get out of the rain. This is what the book says about it. [Read from 1 Kings 18, 41-45.]

OUTLINE.

Some of the lessons of this narrative may be: Elijah—Praying (dependence upon God), Persevering (did not tire, but looked seven times), Waiting (patience), Expecting (because he trusted). Show the children that in their little world of daily duties, both at home and at school, God is with them, caring for them, and sending rain as well as food. Like Elijah, each little child may pray and be patient and expect God to care for him and give all he needs.

NATURE WORK. For nature talks this lesson furnishes mountains, sea, clouds, and wind. Any one of these would be enough for a little talk on Sunday. When the Bible is so crowded with nature topics it seems strange that one will overlook them entirely and talk of doctrine or dogma to little children. Through these things which are known and familiar we may lead the little ones to more abstract truth, proceeding from the known to the unknown, from the seen to the unseen, which is the Eternal. It will interest the children that Carmel was the name of a mountain. The high mountains had many caves, or little rooms, in them. Some of these little rooms have windows hewn in the rock, and these are little places where one could sleep. The door is always narrow, so that only one at a time can go in. Talk of Elijah being so in earnest as to have bowed his head between his knees in an attitude of reverence.

HAND WORK. Let the children outline the pictures of mountains on the blackboard. You can gain a knowledge of their idea of form by this exercise, and it will help fix the lesson in their mind.

The TRANSITION CLASS may write something about this mountain or this sea. What sea was it? If you cannot find all you want to learn about Elijah, little children, ask your minister to tell you something. During the week the girls of the transition class may get a pasteboard card and draw slanting lines upon it to look like the water lines of falling rain.

LESSON IV. (July 24.)

ELIJAH'S FLIGHT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. 1 Kings 19. 1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Psalm 37. 7.

Primary Notes.



Harold was a little boy who found it very hard to learn his lessons. Sometimes his teacher was displeased with him, thinking that he had not tried as hard as he might, and he grew discouraged. One day he heard some one call him

a dunce, and he went home sad and unhappy. His mamma found him crying in his room, and when he told her his trouble she put her arms around him and told him that she would help him, and that God would help him, and that he must do all he could, too, to help himself, and then she was sure he would succeed and become a good scholar in time. She comforted him and put new hope and courage into his heart. This lesson shows how the great and good God comforted one of his servants when he was in trouble.

God comforting. Do you know that God cares when we are sad and troubled? He does, and he has given us this true story to teach us that "like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

Who remembers the story of the great meeting on the mountain? How brave and bold Elijah was that day! He was not afraid of all the prophets of Baal, and he showed how strong God was. [Tell how he slew the wicked prophets of Baal, and how the blessed rain came down after he prayed, and the people fell on their faces, and said—who can repeat the Golden Text of last Sunday's lesson?] When everything goes right with us we think that then God is thinking about us and caring for us. Now, Elijah had to learn that when things are not so pleasant he thinks of us then. [Tell the threat that Jezebel

made, and how Elijah was afraid and ran away to save his life.]

Some of God's comforters. [Talk about sleep and food and drink. Tell that God sent them all to Elijah, and they all did him good. Show that they are God's good gifts to his children, and help children to feel that these common things are all from God's hand for our comfort and help.]

When Elijah was ready to hear God came and talked with him. Elijah told him all his troubles, and God told him to go and stand on the mountain. Then God came in great power and might. A terrible wind came, which broke the rocks in pieces, but God was not in the wind. Then an earthquake, and after that a fire came, but God was not in the earthquake or the fire. Then a "still, small voice" was heard, and God was in that.

Here is a sword. This makes us think of power and strength. Boys think it is a great thing to be strong and to do large things. But God is not always in the great things. Did you ever see a dove? How gentle it is! It is not wise or strong, and yet it is used as the symbol of God speaking in us—the outward symbol of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

Lessons for me. 1. Never be afraid. If you are trying to please God, you will feel discouraged sometimes, but try to remember that God will send you the help you need as soon as you are ready for it, just as he did to Elijah.

2. Never forget that God speaks to his children. He spoke to the prophet, but will he speak to you? Yes, if you are his child and are trying to please him. Talk to him and listen for his voice, and you will surely find him speaking to you in many ways.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Elijah and the Angel. 1 Kings 19. 5-8.

GOLDEN TEXT. "He shall give his angels charge over thee." Psalm 91. 11.

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Text.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. The Bible has the best and all needed help for you in this lesson. You might read *Myths and Myth-makers*, by Mr. John Fiske, but these things have no place in our Sunday school work. Verities are better than fairy tales, and the teacher who tried to teach the lesson of the Good Samaritan by telling first of a good fairy and a bad fairy, and likening the Levite and the Samaritan to those, made a mistake. The Bible illustrates itself. The grandeur of its child-lore is its very simplicity, and it is unscientific, unnecessary, and irreverent to try to lead up to its sublime heights through an ordinary tale which is not related to the topic. A study of the relationships and proper recognition of the principles of pedagogy is a necessity in the primary department. So the better way to begin the lesson of to-day is to be very brief with the

ATTENTION STORY.

Elijah had been at the brook and on the mountain, and to-day we will see what happened to him in the wilderness. He was sad and very, very tired—so tired that he laid himself on the ground under a tree and went to sleep. It was a juniper tree, which is like a bush, but taller, and has a sweet smell. While Elijah was lying under the tree something beautiful happened. [Read 1 Kings 19, 4-8.]

NATURE WORK. For nature topics this lesson has the wilderness, tree, and coals, following the mountains and the brook of the two previous lessons. Connect the nature thought with the continued care God had over Elijah. First, the ravens fed him, then a woman, and now an angel. God knew Elijah needed strength for the journey. Call attention to the great weariness of Elijah. He ate and then went right to sleep again, but a second time the angel wakened him and gave him food, and then he was so rested and refreshed that he took a long journey without food, and went to another mountain. The topics sleep and physical exercise are fruitful. In Whitney's *Handbook of Bible Geography* the teacher will find an interesting account of Mount Horeb (Sinai), to which Elijah journeyed. Perhaps God's angels watch us and help us sometimes. When Jesus was in the garden that night after the supper, while he was sad, the book says, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22, 43). Our Golden Text tells us that God's angels guard us.

HAND WORK. The small children may outline a picture of a tree or of a cup (cruse), and tell them about the tree and of what the angel had for Elijah.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may write the Golden Text.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Tell of the need of some one to administer to others by preparing food.

Mother is the angel of ministry in the home. A good book to read about angelic ministry in the home is *Blessed be Drudgery*, by George Gauth.

LESSON V. (July 31.)

NABOTH'S VINEYARD. 1 Kings 21, 4-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house." Exod. 20, 17.

Primary Notes.



Arthur lived in a fine, large house on a beautiful street, and little Joe lived in a small house in a narrow street, just back of Arthur's home. One day Joe found a beautiful new ball in his back yard. He knew well enough that it was Arthur's ball, but he did not want to give it back to him. "I haven't any ball," he said, "and he has so many things he'll never miss a ball?" "But it does not belong to you, Joe," said his mother, "and so you do not want it, of course!" Then she told her little boy the true story of Naboth's vineyard, and showed him that it is just as mean for a poor boy to covet a rich boy's things as for a rich king to want something that belonged to one of his subjects. "Mamma," said Joe, when she had finished the story, "isn't it queer how the Bible stories help a fellow to see what is right?" "That is because they are the word of God!" said mamma, reverently.

About coveting. To want what is not ours is to covet. God knew that we would want many things that do not belong to us, and so he made a command that we should not covet. How many commandments are there? Which one tells us not to covet? A part of this command is given in our Golden Text. Who can say it? In what book do we find this? Yes, in the Bible. Who can tell in which part of the Bible? [Let some child find the book of the Bible in which it is written, and another the chapter and verse. This is a good time for a short drill on the commandments.] This lesson tells how a king coveted something which was not his own. Perhaps you think that if you were rich and great, you would have all you wanted, and would never covet. But it would not be so unless you had the kind of a heart that Jesus gives to his children. The natural heart is selfish and wants its own way and its

own things. Until we get the new heart we shall be sure to covet, or to want things that do not belong to us.

The lesson story. What is this on the board? Yes, a bunch of grapes. We may let it remind us of foolish Ahab. He had a beautiful palace and broad, rich fields, but he could see a fine vineyard from his palace which did not belong to him, and this made him unhappy. He wanted to have all the nice things he could see, and so he tried to get the vineyard from Naboth. When he could not have his way he was angry, and made everybody about him miserable till his wicked wife Jezebel found a way by which to get the vineyard for the king. [Tell of the evil plot she laid, and how Ahab gladly went to take possession of the vineyard when he found that Naboth was dead.]

What the vineyard cost. Perhaps Ahab thought he got the vineyard without paying for it, but he paid a great price, as people always do who get something in a wrong way. No, he did not pay money for it. He paid something worth more than all the money in the world! [Print II-O-N-O-R in large letters on the board, allowing the children to name the letters as you form them, and show that we let honor go when we do a mean thing; that which costs honor is very expensive. In a like manner bring out the thought that sin in the end costs happiness, and even life—the life of the spirit, which is the only true life.]

My lesson. It is not safe to break one of God's commands, for if I do, that will make it easy to break others. Ahab's coveting led to murder. Only Jesus can give the new heart which will save me from coveting.

GOD REBUKING



COST

Honor
-Happiness
Life

Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Elijah and the Voice. 1 Kings, 19, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Be strong and of a good courage." Joshua 1, 6.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. The Bible

narrative is connected with Moses, because the Mount Sinai is the one of this lesson. Read the narrative of Moses on Sinai. *The Story of the Earth and Man*, by Sir J. W. Dawson, will give information on rock-building.

ATTENTION STORY.

Elijah rested in a cave when he reached the mountain, and while he was alone there and all was quiet he heard a voice, which said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He knew it was God's voice speaking. The voice said he should stand upon the mountain. While he was there a strong wind blew, the earth shook, and afterward he saw a fire. After that, a still small voice was heard, and Elijah put part of his cloak over his face and stood at the little door of the cave. The voice said again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And then it told him to go away and attend to some work. Elijah was obedient to the voice and went at once. He was to put oil on the head of a new king. Elijah had been afraid that all the good people had gone away from the world, but the voice said that there were many thousands who had not bowed down to an idol or kissed it. We will read about it. [Read 1 Kings 19, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18.]

OUTLINE.

Show that God, who cared for Elijah, had said to another man (Joshua), "Be brave and of good courage," and he says that to us now, for we hear the voice too, and it tells us what to do.

Elijah's obedience and his courage are topics for conversation. A wholesome thought it is that there are many good people in the world now, more good people than we think. There is more goodness than naughtiness.

NATURE WORK. The nature topics of this lesson may be a continuation of others given this month. The lesson of to-day has "caves" and "earthquakes." Both these are interesting. The teacher will find valuable points concerning them in the encyclopedias. *The Beauties of Ruskin* is a volume full of suggestions for conversation. Among these are "Influence of Higher Mountains," "Mountains the Bones of the Earth," etc., pages 69-103. You may talk of different birds which build nests in mountains. Sheep graze there. Jesus knew much about mountains, so did David. The night which Jesus, James, and John passed upon the mountain may be referred to. The story is found in Luke, ninth chapter. Here were Elijah and Moses.

HAND WORK. The small children may make caves in the sand table, and also outline mountains on the blackboard. They may fold paper to look like mountains.

The TRANSITION CLASS may write a list of the places and people mentioned in these four lessons about Elijah.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Talk of God seeing us as he saw Elijah when he stood at the door of the cave. God's voice spoke to him. It speaks to us—to each one in the home, even to the little child. The Golden Text has thoughts for the home. These are strength and courage. Let the teacher suggest in Sunday school what will be remembered and spoken about in the home concerning different kinds of strength and courage. Physical, with its various expressions, always of interest to the children, who boast of their strength and of what they can do. There is the moral strength, when older children, have the power of choice and the strength of a courageous spirit, which hears the voice and obeys gladly, going wherever he calls, just as Elijah went away from the mountain when it was time for him to do his next work, which was to anoint the king.

"Take the task he gives you gladly,
Let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
'Here am I, send me, send me.'"

Whisper Songs for July.

FIRST LESSON.

My heart within a kingdom is,
Where God is King alone;
He will not let another love
Set up another throne.

SECOND LESSON.

God is my Father, though he reigns
A King in heaven above;
He gives to me my daily bread,
He gives me truth and love.

THIRD LESSON.

God is not far away from me;
He answers when I pray;
He knows the very thoughts I think;
He hears the words I say.

FOURTH LESSON.

God knows when I am sick or sad;
He knows when I rejoice;
And if I listen in my heart,
I hear his gentle voice.

FIFTH LESSON.

When sin comes knocking at my door
God stands beside me there,
And sin can never enter while
I trust his love and care.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Third Quarter.

DOXOLOGY.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

Teacher. Praise ye the Lord.

Class. Praise God in his sanctuary.

T. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

C. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

SINGING. No. 265, *New Canadian Hymnal.*

Teacher. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him.

Class. To all that call upon him in truth.

CONCERT RECITATION.

"Lord, we come before thee now,
At thy feet we humbly bow;
O do not our suit disdain;
Shall we seek thee, Lord, in vain?"

[PRAYER by teacher, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert.]

Teacher. Why should we give to the Lord?

Class. (In concert.)

"We give thee but thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from thee."

T. Blessed is he that considereth the poor.

C. The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

Offerings received, followed by consecration prayer.

BIRTHDAY OFFERING.

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.

REST EXERCISE.

I will raise my right hand,
Upon both feet I will stand;
I will turn quite around,
Without making a sound,
Then raise left hand—so,
And twinkle fingers slow;
Both hands out I hold,
Then arms I will fold,
And quietly hear
What says teacher dear.

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

Last words with the children, distribution of papers, etc.

CLOSING CONCERT PRAYER.

"Saviour, who thy flock art feeding
With the shepherd's kindest care,
All the feeble gently leading,
While the lambs thy bosom share;
Now these little ones receiving,
Fold them in thy gracious arm;
There we know, thy word believing,
Only there, secure from harm."

Lead Me Gently Home, Father.

W. L. T.

W. L. THOMPSON.

Solo

1. Lead me gent - ly home, Father, Lead me gent - ly home, When life's toils are
 2. Lead me gent - ly home, Father, Lead me gent - ly home, In life's dark - est

end - ed, And part - ing days have come, Sin no more shall tempt me,
 hours, Fa - ther, When life's troubles come, Keep my feet from wand - ring,

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Ne'er from thee I'll roam, If thou'll on - ly lead me, Father, Lead me gently home.
 Lest from thee I'll roam, Lest I fall up - on the wayside, Lead me gently home.

CHORUS.

Lead me gent - ly home, Fa - ther, lead me gent - ly,
 Lead me gent - ly home, Fa - ther, Lead me gent - ly home, Fa - ther,

Lest I fall up - on the way - side, Lead me gent - ly home.
 Lead me gent - ly, gent - ly home.

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