

# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 25.]

MAY, 1891.

[No. 5.

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## The Sunday-School Banner

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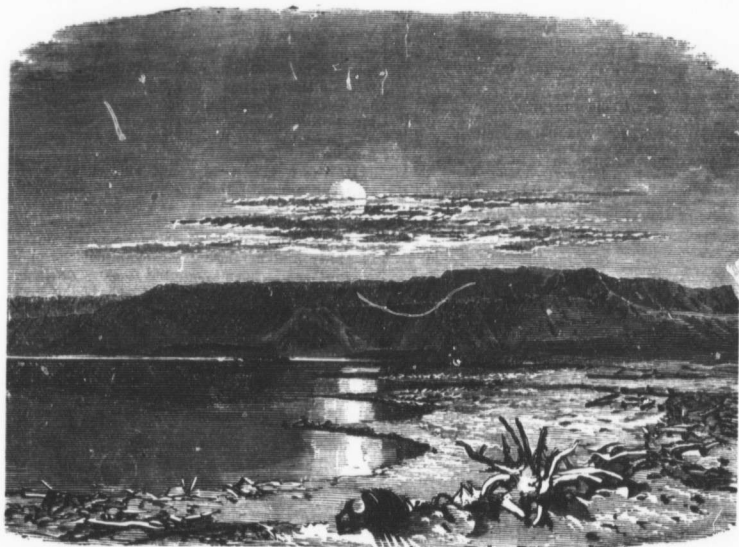
# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
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YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XXV.]

MAY, 1891

[No. 5.



THE DEAD SEA.

## The Dead Sea.

BY THE REV. GEO. J. BOND, B.A.

WE crossed the ravine from Mar Saba, wound along the side of the opposite hills till we reached their summit, and soon had one of the finest views in Palestine immediately before us. Away in front, in the distance, stretched the long wall of the mountains of Moab, with Mount Nebo in full view, to the right flashed the waters of the Dead Sea, while far away in

the dim distance to the north, a hundred miles or more, gleamed the snowy peak of Hermon, and at our feet lay the Jordan Valley, a bright line of foliage showing the course of the river. An hour or two more brought us to the shores of the Dead Sea, and several of us, myself included, were soon testing for ourselves its famed buoyancy, by a plunge in its cool waters. I can bear unqualified testimony as to the extraordinary buoyancy of its waters. It is not easy to swim, it is not easy to sink—indeed I should say it is hardly possible—but one can

lie down and float with perfect ease. It is exceedingly bitter and salt to the taste, but the bathing is very pleasant, though the excessive amount of salt rather irritates the skin afterwards, especially if there be any abrasion of the surface. I confess that I was agreeably disappointed in the appearance of the sea. I had pictured it as a gloomy region, brooded over as by the very shadow of death; I found it that morning glittering in the sunlight, while above it hung a sky of clearest blue. But it is 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and the pouring sun, later on in the season, must, no doubt, render its shores a dry desert of salt-coated sand.

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## Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, MAY, 1891.

### Sunday-School Teachers' Course of Study and Examinations.

THE obligation of the Christian Church to the 2,000,000 Sunday-school teachers throughout the world, who devote their gratuitous services to the instruction of the young, can never be estimated. Year after year, these teachers give time and thought and study to the exposition of the Word of God, and to the bringing it to bear on the hearts and consciences of the rising generation. Yet influential and far-reaching as those efforts are, none are more conscious than the best Sunday-school teachers, of the importance of still further improving the quality of the teaching. Secular teachers, who have twenty or thirty hours a week to impress

themselves upon the minds of their scholars, have a long course of normal training in the art of teaching. Sunday school teachers who have only an hour or two a week for still more important work have almost no systematic training.

It has been proposed to try and meet this want by having short courses of study and examinations in Bible topics and modes of teaching. One of the best and most comprehensive of these, is that proposed by an International Board, which will prepare examination papers on the Old and New Testaments, and on methods of Sunday-school work, and award certificates to those who successfully pass them. The Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches unite in this work. The Secretary of the Methodist section is the Rev. Dr. Hurlburt, 150 5th Avenue, New York. For a fee of \$1 these examination papers will be forwarded and awards given.

The American Institute of Sacred Literature, under the direction of Professor Harper, late of Yale College, prepares similar examinations, on the subject of the lessons of the year. The fee for this examination is 50 cents each. On remitting this amount to the Rev. A. M. Phillips, 11 Avenue Place, Toronto, General Secretary for the Methodist Church of the Dominion, names of teachers will be enrolled and papers forwarded.

It was felt, however, that neither of these met the wants of the great bulk of Canadian teachers, and a meeting was recently held in the office of the editor of the BANNER, in Toronto, for preparing a short, inexpensive course of study and arranging for examinations. A committee has been appointed to carry out this scheme. It is expected that the books and pamphlets will not cost more than 50 cents, and the examination will be similarly inexpensive.

In the meantime, the course of study for the Epworth League will be found exceedingly helpful. It comprehends for 1891, "The Chattanooga Life of Christ," "Palestine Class; A Study of the Holy Land," Bishop Vincent's "Evidences of Christianity," "The World of Missions," "Sunday-school Studies in John," a number of tracts on practical religion, and other little books, twenty-two in all, which will be sold for \$1.02, by post \$1.10. Examination papers in these subjects have been prepared, and will be forwarded to any address at 10 cents for one, or 50 cents for ten to one address. The answers will be carefully examined, and all who answer correctly 70 per cent. of the questions will receive a certificate. The small fee is asked to pay cost of postage and printing only, the examination of the papers is assumed as a labor of love, for the benefit of Epworth Leagues and Sunday-school interests. Already considerable inquiry has been made concerning these papers. For any information on this subject, or on any other in connection with the Leagues, address Rev. Dr. Withrow, General Secretary of the League, Toronto.

## To Schools Opening in the Spring.

THE new arrangement of our Sunday-school papers—giving a paper of three different grades every Sunday—has been found better adapted for our schools than any previously existing. Nearly all the schools heard from heartily approve of the change, and some which at first did not cordially accept it have pronounced strongly in its favor.

Onward, the new senior class paper, has been a brilliant success, the regular edition being already 22,000. To schools opening in the spring it will be sent every week for six months, for 25 cents, in quantities of five and over. A new serial story of early Methodism of intense interest will be begun in the May number, and will run for six months. The selling price of this alone is three times the cost of the paper, which will have in addition from six to ten beautiful engravings every week, and a great variety of interesting and useful reading.

*Pleasant Hours* will be sent every week for six months, less than ten copies, for 12½ cents; and over ten copies, 12 cents each. The illustrated stories in this paper are proving immensely attractive to the boys and girls in our schools. For the same price as was paid for *Home and School* and *Pleasant Hours* a much greater number and variety of these two papers can be sent, in the proportion of two *Onwards* for three *Pleasant Hours*.

For primary classes the junior papers, *Sunbeam* and *Happy Days*, will be sent—less than ten copies, 7½ cents; over ten copies, 6 cents each, for six months.

The BANNER, enlarged from thirty-two to forty-eight pages, or fifty-two, will be sent for six months for 30 cents. Send orders promptly, that papers may be received in time for the spring opening of the Sunday-schools. William Briggs, Wesley Buildings, Toronto; C. W. Coates, Montreal, Que.; S. F. Huestis, Halifax, N.S.

## The Wesley Centennial.

We are glad to know that the Centennial Anniversary of the death of John Wesley has been very widely celebrated and we believe with the best results. In many places, Sunday-schools and Epworth Leagues have had special meetings, and have prepared short programmes of Essays and addresses on incidents in the life of the Wesleys and the chief aspects of Methodism. It is pleasing to know that the youth of the Church are thus laying their wreath of loving tribute on the grave of the founder of Methodism. The beautiful statue of John Wesley, in front of City Road Chapel, London, is paid for by the Sunday-school children of Great Britain, and at the hour of its unveiling beautiful wreaths of early spring flowers were sent up from Cornwall, the scene of some of

Wesley's most earnest labors, to be laid at the base of the statue.

We hope that the young people of Canadian Methodism will become more familiar than they ever were before with the story of the life and labors of the early Methodists, with the heroic traditions of their own Church. We hope, too, that very many of them will take part in the competition for the prize announced in April number of the BANNER, for the best essay on "The Influence of Methodism, especially in Canada." The essay must be in the hands of the editor of the BANNER, by the first of May.

## Methodist Magazine for April.

THIS number is specially devoted to memories of 100 years of Canadian Methodism. Among other important features is an admirable sketch by the Rev. Dr. Johnston, in his best vein, of the late Rev. Dr. Rose, almost the last of the pioneer preachers of early Methodism in this land. An especially appropriate article is one abridged from Dr. Ryerson's volume, now out of print, on Canadian Methodism, giving an account of the trials and triumphs of such men as Losee, Dunham, Asbury, Bangs and Case, and others of the fathers and founders of Methodism in Canada. The Rev. Dr. Carman writes an article of characteristic vigor on "The Momentum of Methodism." The Editor describes a visit to the grave of Barbara Heck, the mother of Methodism both in Canada and the United States, with an engraving of her grave and of the "old Blue Church" near Maitland, from a water-color drawing, made especially for this Magazine. The Rev. Dr. Caven, Principal of Knox College, contributes a scholarly and timely study of Messianic Prophecy. The Symposium of Methodism is continued, embracing characterizations of Methodism by the Rev. Dr. Sheraton, Principal of Wickliffe College; the Hon. R. Harcourt, Provincial Treasurer of Ontario; James Croil, Editor of *Presbyterian Record*, and Rev. A. H. Newman, D.D., LL.D., Professor of History in McMaster University. Three copious and beautiful papers on "Through Hungary," "Strassburg to Heidelberg," and "Round about England," are also included, as well as chapters of Habberton's "All He Knew," and a scientific paper on "The Reign of Ice."

Centennial back numbers can still be supplied. Toronto: William Briggs. \$2 a year, \$1 for six months.

THEY that deserve nothing should be content with anything; bless God for what you have, and trust God for what you want; if we cannot bring our condition to our mind, we must bring our mind to our condition; if a man is not content in the state he is in, he will not be content in the state he would be in.—*Erskine Mason*.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER: STUDIES CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

About B. C. 787.] LESSON V. ISRAEL OFTEN REPROVED.

[May 3.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Prov. 29. 1.

## Authorized Version.

**Amos 4. 4-13.** [*Commit to memory verses 6-8.*]

4 Come to Beth-el, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years:

5 And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Is'ra-el, saith the Lord God.

6 And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

7 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when *there were* yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

8 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

9 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured *them*: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

10 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

11 I have overthrown *some* of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Is'ra-el: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Is'ra-el.

13 For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what *is* his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, *is* his name.

## Revised Version.

- 4 Come to Beth-el, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim free-will offerings and publish them: for this liketh you, O ye children of Is'ra-el, saith the Lord God. And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, and were not satisfied; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees hath the palmer-worm devoured; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have carried away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camp to come up even into your nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown *some* among you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Is'ra-el: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Is'ra-el. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name.

## HOME READINGS.

- M.* Israel often reproved. Amos 4. 4-13.  
*Tu.* Refusing to return. Jer. 5. 1-6.  
*W.* An evil heart. Jer. 7. 21-28.  
*Th.* Folly of disobedience. Prov. 14. 1-12.  
*F.* Consequence of rejection. Prov. 1. 24-33.

**TIME.**—About B. C. 787. **PLACE.**—In the kingdom of Israel; but the prophet was a native of Judah. **RULERS.**—Probably Jeroboam II., of Israel; Uzziah, of Judah. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The discipline of trouble.

- S. The wicked husbandmen. Mark 12. 1-9.  
S. Christ's sorrow for sinners. Luke 19. 41-46.

## LESSON HYMNS.

No. 110, New Canadian Hymnal.

I hear thy welcome voice.

No. 108, New Canadian Hymnal.

A charge to keep I have.

No. 112, New Canadian Hymnal.

Jesus, my Lord to thee I cry.

## DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 82, 128, 258.

## QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

## 1. Transgression, v. 4, 5.

Why did the prophet use irony in reproving the wicked Israelites?

Why did the idolatrous rulers of Israel so constantly maintain the worship of Jehovah in Israel?

Can a man square accounts with God for one misdeed by doing more than he was commanded in another direction?

Are there in morals any such work as Romanists call "works of supererogation"?

How does God regard the form of godliness without its power?

## 2. Discipline, v. 6-11.

How many consecutive punishments had God visited on these rebellious Israelites?

Name them.

Are the pleasant and painful providences of our lives to be regarded as alike messengers from God?

Is the famine here referred to mentioned elsewhere? (See 2 Kings 8. 1.)

Is the drought here alluded to mentioned elsewhere? (See 1 Kings 17. 1.)

Does God send a similar message to you as he here repeats to these Israelites—"Yet have ye not returned unto me?"

## 3. Warning, v. 12, 13.

How should we prepare to meet God?

What reasons can we find in God's providential dealings with us for this preparation?

What reasons can be drawn from amid the poetical diction of verse 13 for making this preparation?

If we must meet God, how may we meet him as a friend?

## Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach—

1. That all God's providences are sent as angels to beckon us heavenward?

2. That zeal cannot atone for wrong-doing?

3. That sin and satisfaction do not dwell together?  
4. That there is danger of missing mercy's last offer?

## Hints for Home Study.

1. Write the names of the monarchs who mainly supported the wicked calf-worship at Beth-el.

2. Write the names of the prophets who spoke most severely against it.

3. Find the account of a singular miracle which occurred in connection with its establishment.

4. Find a remarkable prophecy concerning it which was fulfilled centuries after it was pronounced.

5. Find any fact in Scripture concerning the marvelous career of Jeroboam II.

## QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

## 1. Transgression, v. 4, 5.

For what purpose were the people asked to Beth-el?

What were they to do at Gilgal?

What were they to bring, and when?

What offering were they to make?

Why were they to do this?

Who brought this charge against Israel?

## 2. Discipline, v. 6-11.

What had God given them in rebuke of their evil?

What had the people not done?

What did God withhold in further discipline?

What difference had he made between cities?

What between fields?

How were the cities distressed thereby?

What had this warning failed to effect?

What further visitation came on the people?

What became of the fruit of their vineyards?

What did the people not do?

Then what punishment was sent?

What happened to their men and horses?

What shows that the slaughter was great?

Like what cities had they been served?

## 3. Warning, v. 12, 13.

Who warned Israel of their evil ways?

For what were they told to prepare?

How does God describe himself?

By what name is he known?

What warning does he give to every sinner?  
(GOLDEN TEXT.)

## Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That God knows the wickedness of men?

2. That God is very patient with the wicked?

3. That God will punish those who persist in evil?

## Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find a passage in second Kings which alludes to the famine spoken of in the sixth verse.

Find an allusion in first Kings to the lack of rain mentioned in the seventh verse.

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Amos? **One of the prophets of Israel.**

How long before Christ did he live? **Nearly eight hundred years.**

To whom did God send warnings by him? **To the people of Israel.**

Whom had the Israelites forsaken? **The true God.**

What did they worship? **Idols.**

Who had reproved them many times? **The Lord.**

Why had he sent famine upon them? **To lead them to repentance.**

What did he withhold from them? **Rain.**

What did he send upon their gardens and vineyards? **Blasting and mildew.**

What was sent upon the people? **Pestilence.**

How had many of the young men been slain? **With the sword.**

What were all these troubles meant for? **The good of Israel.**

Did they learn the lesson God sent them? **No; they did not return to the Lord.**

What did God tell Amos to say to them? **"Prepare to meet thy God."**

Who only can meet God in peace? **Those who obey him.**

### Words With Little People.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS.

THE SAFE WAY OF . . . . .	{ Love,
	{ Faith,
	{ Obedience.
THE DANGEROUS WAY OF . . . . .	{ Self-will,
	{ Self-pleasing,
	{ Disobedience.

### Whisper Motto.

"I will follow Jesus."

### General Statement.

Nearly one hundred years have passed since that memorable evening when the city of Samaria, starving to death in the grasp of the Syrians, was suddenly called back to life and hope by four lepers who shouted across the walls that Ben-hadad and his soldiers had fled and left behind them the luxuries of their camp. Great changes have taken place since then. The group of little kingdoms that were packed together in what we now call Palestine—Israel, Judah, Syria, Philistia, Edom, and Moab—have had a turbulent century. Constantly warring with each other, they have diminished in power and shrunken in size, until when Jeroboam II. ascended the throne of Israel his kingdom was about one half the size of the average American county. Bounded on the east by the Jordan River, it did not extend on the west to the Mediterranean Sea, and it was threatened on the north by Syria, and on the south by Judah. But a great intellect throbbed under Jeroboam's crown, and he steadily pushed his conquests in all directions, until from the Dead Sea to the northern boundary of Syria, and from "the Great Sea" to Solomon's remotest desert frontiers, the dominion of Israel was extended. But with prosperity came corruption. "The consequences of these victories," says Dr. Milman, "were not a holier worship, purer morals, and national virtue, but pride and luxury in ivory palaces, oppression of the poor, unlawful sacrifices, and foreign idolatries." Meanwhile, hardly noticed by Israel's politicians and warriors, two great powers were developing, one in the north-east and one in the south-west—Assyria and Egypt—between which, as between upper and nether mill-stones, all the petty states of Palestine were ere long destined to be crushed. The clear eyes of Jehovah's prophets recognized in Egypt and Assyria the executioners of God's wrath, and the scholarly Isaiah and the rustic Amos alike, when denouncing the sins of the Hebrews, foretold their coming doom, and implored them to return to the God of their fathers. Amos was a shepherd of Tekoa, in Judah, and it was a strange providence that called him to cross the bounds of his native land and proclaim God's threatening message to the proud court of Israel. In this lesson the prophet recalls the frequent punishments which God had inflicted on his people, and pathetically pleads for their return to him.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 4. Come to Beth-el, and transgress.** A sarcastic and ironical invitation. Beth-el, the chief seat of the golden-calf worship, had been from early times regarded as a sacred place (Gen. 28. 19; 35. 7; 1 Sam. 4. 3). **Gilgal**, between Jericho and the Jordan, was the place of the first encampment of the Israelites in the promised land; there the rite of circumcision was renewed; there the first passover was kept; it was for years the military head-quarters of the people, and the place where the ark abode. It also had early become a seat of spurious worship. The calves are often al-

luded to as the transgression of Israel (1 Kings 12. 32; 13. 2), and many Israelites, who would have scorned to resort to gross idolatry, worshipped Jehovah with degrading accessories at Beth-el, Gilgal, and Dan. Lesson II, First Quarter (1 Kings 12. 25-33), gives the origin of this false worship. It was instituted and perpetuated as a political device, to prevent the union of the two kingdoms; it directly violated the second commandment, and incidentally disobeyed God's orders concerning the priesthood; it degraded the religious ideal of the nation, and subverted that hope of the coming



Messiah which was the very sap of Hebrew religious life. **Bring your sacrifices every morning.** As commanded in the law (Num 28. 3, 4), the letter of which they followed when it suited them, while utterly violating its spirit. **After three years.** Every third year. See Deut. 14. 28; 26. 12.

**5. Offer,** etc. Rather, "burn incense." This was to do more than the law commanded. The entire passage is a derisive exhortation to display exaggerated zeal. **Proclaim and publish.** Leave nothing to spontaneous impulse, but urge the people to redoubled religious fervor. But (1) *Our account with God cannot be balanced by placing "overdone duties" over against disobeyed commands. This liketh you.* This is what you like. (2) *God hates the form of godliness without the power.* (3) *Mere zeal can never make wrong right.*

**6.** In the rest of this lesson the Lord by his prophet describes five sorts of discipline—famine, drought, blight, pestilence, earthquake—which he had employed without effect. (4) *God sends calamities as angels to beckon us heavenward. Cleanliness of teeth.* Comp. Prov. 14. 4. Read 1 Kings 17. 1, and 2 Kings 8. 1, which describe scenes substantially repeated many times in the history of Israel. In Lev. 26 and Deut. 28 such punishments are foretold. **Yet have ye not returned.** (5) *Man has the power to reject all divine mercies and warnings.*

**7. I have withholden.** (6) *All natural forces are controlled by God for the ultimate good of men. Three months to the harvest.* This was the season of the "latter rain." It included the latter half of February and the whole of March and April. Famine would inevitably result from drought at this season (Hos. 6. 3; Joel 2. 23). **Rain upon one city . . . not . . . upon another.** This fitfulness of the rain was almost as damaging to the crops as entire drought.

**8. Three cities wandered.** A deplorable scene, men, women and children by the city-full wandering over miles of territory in search of a little water. Read Jer. 14. 1-6. **Yet have ye not returned unto me.** While they searched for water, what they really needed was God. (7) *Even though all temporal good be secured, the human soul will starve without God.*

**9. I have smitten.** Again the Lord calls attention to his personal responsibility for the evils that had befallen the nation. It is worse than nonsense for the Christian to talk about "accidents" and self-acting "natural forces." (8) *Natural law is simply the process by which God ordinarily works, and is as really the exertion of his will as is a miracle. Blasting.* Hot winds

had come from the desert, blowing away the rain-clouds, withering the corn, and bearing upon its baleful blasts the dreaded palmer-worm, a sort of locust, specially hurtful to gardens and vineyards. **Yet have ye not returned.** (9) *"It is a man's own choice that fixes his doom."*—Mathieson.

**10. Pestilence.** "The plague has from time immemorial been epidemic in Egypt."—Barrows. The disease was something like the awful "black death" of the Middle Ages, which even yet, at times, devastates Central Asia. **After the manner of Egypt.** Refers especially to God's use of the plague in liberating Israel (Exod. 9. 3; 12. 29; Deut. 28. 27, 60). **Slain with the sword.** Killed in battle. **Taken away your horses.** Horses were as necessary to the ancient army as are rifles to the modern army. **The stink of your camps.** Thousands of slain soldiers lay unburied so long as to poison the air with deadly infection.

**11. I have overthrown.** By earthquake, the most terrible phenomenon of nature. **Some of you.** Unnamed cities. The calamity was familiar to those who heard these words. **Sodom and Gomorrah.** As these two cities were typical of extreme iniquity, so their destruction was typical of the extremest punishment of God. **A firebrand plucked out of the burning.** A proverbial phrase for a narrow escape. See Isa. 7. 4; Zech. 3. 2. The reign of Jeroboam II. was a period of unparalleled prosperity which sprang from almost utter destruction and was followed by absolute ruin.

**12. Therefore.** Seeing that all my chastisements have failed to do any good. **Thus will I do.** "Then God, having said this, is silent as to what he will do; that so Israel, hanging in suspense, as having before him each sort of punishment, which are the more terrible because he imagines them one by one, may indeed repent, that God inflict not what he threatens."—Jerome. **Prepare to meet thy God.** (10) *An injunction that should be personally applied by both teacher and pupils.* Israel "met God" a few years later when the Assyrians overthrew the kingdom. (11) *Acceptance of Jesus as our Saviour is the way for us to prepare.*

**13.** Here follows one of the most magnificent descriptions of Jehovah to be met with in Scripture. **The mountains.** All stupendous natural phenomena. **The wind.** All subtle forces, like wind and electricity. **Declareth unto man.** God is the Searcher of hearts. **Maketh the morning darkness.** Turning Israel's prosperity into sudden and ir retrievable ruin. The force of this verse is seen in that it portrays the God whom the nation must shortly meet.

## CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

BY REV. JAMES HOPE MOULTON, M.A.

In the Book of Amos we hear the first words of written prophecy. Jonah seems to have lived at an earlier period in Jeroboam's long reign, but as we have seen, there is the gravest doubt whether the Book of Jonah is not the production of a much later age. Earlier prophets wrote history, and their writings are the material from which the historical books were compiled. But prophecy, or preaching, was essentially oral, and when the advancing culture of the people made it possible for the prophet to perpetuate his message by sending it forth in written form, it was still a spoken word, the orator's fire not giving way to the writer's logic. Written prophecy is worthily inaugurated by a book full of genius unsurpassed except in the "roll of Isaiah" itself. Amos was a child of nature. He was not of the "sons of the prophets" (7. 14), the degenerate clerical order who rivaled the priests in the violence and immorality of their lives. To this order Amos belonged in the same sense as Savonarola belonged to the priesthood of Florence, or Wesley to the Anglican clergy. To him, as to those prophets of later ages, came a voice which he must obey, bidding him speak God's message against the wickedness in high places that made the splendor of Jeroboam's victorious reign the presage of speedy ruin. In the quiet pastures of Judah, where he tended the flocks of some rich sheep-master and dressed the coarse sycamore figs, the Lord Jehovah spoke to him. Straightway he took the short journey to the royal city of Beth-el, and there confronted priests and people with his outspoken denunciation. He had every reason to expect violence, but seems only to have met with contempt. Amaziah the high-priest sent a perverted account of his words to Jeroboam, but the powerful monarch was indifferent. Then in tones of haughty scorn Amaziah bade him get back to Judah and earn his bread. He must not bring such messages to a royal city so full of the odor of sanctity. Amos took him at his word, and after one tremendous woe against the worldly priests and the sinful land he seems to have retired home. He dwelt at Tekoa, a village in the hills, twelve miles from Jerusalem and six from Bethlehem, still bearing the same name. Comp. 2 Sam. 14. 2; 23. 26. There he wrote out his prophecy, added (it would seem) the message of hope at the end, and sent it to work upon consciences that were not yet dead. The style and contents we shall best appreciate by studying the selected passages before us.

**Verse 4.** From addressing the women, whose cruelty and luxury proved more than any thing else the corruption of the upper classes, Amos turns to the whole people in words of scathing irony. We are not to understand this verse as a denunciation of the calf-worship. After its first introduction the

prophets, until Hosea, appear to have left this alone, bending their energies almost exclusively to the work of moral reform. The one unvarying message of the prophets, from Samuel down to John the Baptist, was to expound the "pure worship and undefiled" as set forth by the New Testament writer who shows their spirit must perfectly (Jas. 1. 26, *sq.*). We may well doubt whether the people of Amos's time realized that the cherubim at Beth-el were forbidden symbols of Jehovah, nor did the prophets insist that Jerusalem was the one authorized place of worship, preferring to use and regulate the imperfect worship existing. **Transgress.** Acts of worship offered by unrepentant sinners were an aggravation of their guilt. Comp. Isa. 1. 13, *sq.* **Morning.** Instead of on special occasions. **Days.** Instead of every three years (Deut. 26. 12). This exaggeration of external piety shows us that the Pharisee (Luke 18. 12) was no new type. The prophetic communities, which in Elijah's days had kept alive Jehovah's worship at Beth-el and Gilgal, now only existed to encourage self-righteous formalism.

**5. Offer by burning** (margin). A comparison of Lev. 7. 12, 13, shows that the part of the thank-offering which was burnt was always unleavened, while the accompanying cakes, destined for the priests, were leavened, as being more palatable. Leaven, except in a solitary parable, is always a symbol of corruption, and is therefore rigidly excluded from all that is directly offered to Jehovah. It is most in character with the ritualistic zeal here displayed to suppose that they deliberately substituted leaven in order to offer God the same palatable food they gave the priests. The Canaanite conception of Deity actually consuming the food offered naturally gained ground among men who had accepted a materialistic symbol of Jehovah. Thus they endeavored to show exceptional devotion by breaking Jehovah's law, and only succeeded in showing that their ideal of God was an almighty epicure! **Proclaim.** Here again the Pharisees are anticipated (Matt. 6. 2). **Liketh.** Matt. 23. 37, echoes yet more sadly the All-Father's recognition of man's free will in rebellion. **Saith the Lord Jehovah.** The word "saith" inadequately renders this characteristic phrase; literally, "oracle of."

**6. I.** Very emphatic judgment upon judgment had been sent to warn them, but they were so secure in their righteousness that they only credited the order of nature with the disaster. **Cleanness.** This vigorous pictorial phrase is explained by the parallel following; often the literal phrase comes first in the parallelism. **Returned.** Comp. Hos. 14. 2. In chap. 5. 4, Amos insists on "seeking Jehovah" as his one positive message. But this was

a materialized phrase, denoting to the ritual-ridden people nothing but appearance at a sanctuary. It was the prophet's work to restore its higher meaning.

**7. When.** That is, at the end of February, which was, as we should say, two months before the harvest, lasting from the end of April till the end of May. This "latter rain" (Jas. 5. 7) was essential to the development of the "full corn;" and if withheld made the crop an assured failure. **One city.** Compare the immunity of Goshen during the later plagues. Were these favored cities singled out as less guilty? Whether so or not, the partial drought was a strange and rare phenomenon which they might well have recognized.

**8. Two.** The afflicted cities were considerably more in number than those which escaped, which rather helps the inference in the last note. Comp. Jer. 14. 1-6. **Wandered.** "Staggered," a vivid word. **Satisfied.** For the stores of the city would be soon exhausted under such pressure.

**9. Blasting and mildew.** Joined in the warning of Deut. 28. 22. The burning wind appears in Pharaoh's dream (Gen. 41. 6; comp. Matt. 20. 21, margin, and Jas. 1. 11); the blight is well known in our own climes. The carefully inclosed and watered gardens were attacked by the locust. Comp. Joel 1. 4, which is thought by some to record the same judgment. Most critics now, however, place Joel at a later date. The "palmer-worm" is a kind of locust. See Revised Version, margin, on Joel cited.

**10. Egypt.** The last plague seems especially referred to. Egypt has always been the home of the pestilence. The three judgments of David's reign thus recur: famine in verse 6, pestilence and the sword here (2 Sam. 24. 13). **Horses.** Their most trusted equipment of war, obtained at great cost. The horse was always regarded as a foreign importation in Israel. The devastations of Hazael (2 Kings 13. 7) are referred to here. **Camp.** Comp. Joel 2. 20. The unburied corpses after a great slaughter would breed fresh pestilence.

**11.** The great earthquake of the inscription is meant. Comp. Zech. 14. 5. If so, this is added by Amos when he wrote out and completed the prophecy he delivered in brief on the occasion of chap. 7. **Overthrew.** Again the word is used which we have seen is reserved to describe this primeval judgment, "set forth as an example of eternal fire" (Jude 7). That God had sent his scourge into the land, as upon those wicked cities of old, should have proved that the guilt of Israel was such as theirs. **Brand.** This vivid image of a bare escape with life is quoted by Zechariah (8. 2).

**12.** It would be hard to find in the whole Old Testament a verse of such concentrated and stupendous power. Its awful vagueness comes as the climax to this series of judgments which had failed

to warn—what was the use of declaring now that the fatal stroke would be? In chap. 1. 3, etc., Amos uses the same ind finiteness; we read there (with margin), "I will not turn it away." He never reveals his knowledge that the distant Assyrians were the appointed instrument of God's wrath. That the Israelites themselves never dreamt of danger from that quarter is due to their confidence in the delusive prosperity of the time. Jehu, as we learn from the monuments, had paid tribute to the Assyrians, and any unblinded eye might have seen that their expansion could not, humanly speaking, be stayed till they met their rivals from the Nile. **Prepare.** Not a word of unrelieved doom, for the warning suggests that "their God" might yet be appeased. **Thy God.** There is a stern irony in the word describing the God whom pious Israel so assiduously claimed as their own. He had sent his forerunners before him—famine, drought, blasting, blight, locust, pestilence, the sword—but Jehovah was not in them; and after them an earthquake, but Jehovah was not in the earthquake; and now—it was for them to say whether he would come in the voice of repentance or in the anguish of judgment.

**13.** With this compare the equally grand description in 5. 8. He is almighty whom they must meet. The "everlasting hills" he made, the wind, youngest yet oldest, most impalpable yet mightiest of created things, is his work. And the monarch of creation, proud in his sole possession of mind, has no secrets from his Maker—nay, thoughts he scarcely reads himself are unfolded to him by the all-seeing Mind above. **That maketh.** A difficult phrase. Orelli thinks it parallel to 5. 8, and translates "maketh darkness dawn," describing the daily miracle of morning light. With the common translation Hitzig refers to Matt. 16. 3, and Ewald understands the rising of a storm just after dawn. It may be simply morning "kerchieft in a comely cloud." It is less likely that a judgment is described, like Isa. 50. 3, as this does not suit the rest of the verse. **Treadeth.** Comp. Mic. 1. 3. The parallel somewhat favors the conception of Jehovah angry, trampling the proud mountains and bringing them low. See Deut. 33. 29. But the words more naturally suggest Psa. 18. 10; 104. 3; the loftiest things of earth alone can be conceived as God's chariot and God's pathway.

### The Lesson Council.

**Question 1.** How are famine, the failure of crops, and pestilence by the operation of natural law, and at the same time, the result of divine providence?

What is natural law? The theistic view is stated by Professor Fisher thus: "Law signifies the plan which the living God ordains for the action of the

forces of nature." A miracle of special providence is thus not in conflict with natural law. Effects depend upon causes. Unusual effects indicate unusual combinations or forces. Bountiful harvests are according to natural law, and are usually thought of as special marks of divine providence. Moral ends may require famine and failure of crops. He who giveth the rain at one time withholds it at another. That is divine providence. Dry weather causes poor crops. That is natural law. Natural law is not an independent force;—it is the expression of the way God works.—*Rev. William F. McDowell, D.D., Denver, Col.*

Natural law is always providential when it touches human experience. General providence is made up of special providence. The Holy Ghost administers all law, natural and spiritual, with reference to the glory of Jesus. In the old dispensation more especial use seems to have been made of natural law for spiritual ends; God calling attention to the lesson through a prophet. Now the same ends are reached, as a rule, through revealed truth. It is presented and emphasized by preacher or teacher. It is sent home by the Holy Ghost, who works in harmony with law, whether it be physical, social, or mental.—*W. A. Robinson, D.D., Covington, Ky.*

Natural law, in its operations, is frequently made to subserve the purposes of divine providence in chastising and correcting rebellious men. Famine, failure of crops, and pestilence are often the only means by which sin-hardened subjects can be reached and subdued and made to know God (Ezek. 6, 11-14). In all God's dealings toward us we should be submissive and trustful, knowing that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind to us (Heb. 12, 11; Rom. 8, 28).—*Rev. D. F. Waddell, D.D., Nanticoke, Md.*

Natural law is the expression of God's will in abstract terms; divine providence in concrete facts. One is philosophy trying to satisfy reason; the other, Scripture seeking to affect conduct. They are different ways of viewing the same things. Difficulty between the two usually lies in one's science being mechanical, philosophy transcendental, theology deistical (Acts 17, 30). To-day science is biological; nature is the unfolding of life (Gen. 1; Psa. 33, 6; Acts 17, 28). Philosophy is immanent; physical energy is the presence of infinite will (Psa. 104; Col. 1, 17). Theology is theistic; God is self-conscious, personal, ethical spirit reigning in nature (Amos 4, 13; Rom. 1, 19, 20). The references show present thought and Scripture in harmony. Divine providence is God working through natural law. God wears nature as a garment. Natural laws are the expression of his life and love. Mildew and famine, pestilence and war, are divine providences in natural law, and God's speech to us.—*Rev. Samuel L. Beller, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Any human answer must be largely speculative. The hypothesis which at present finds most favor among theistic scientists and philosophers is that God is immanent in natural law, working thereby his providential designs. Natural laws are but the habits of God in nature. While God is immanent in natural law, he nevertheless transcends nature. He has also created man in his own likeness—free. Thus the theory is saved from pantheism. The difficulties which attach to this hypothesis are the same that arise in any theistic scheme of the world whatever. Who can find out God to perfection?—*Rev. J. C. Jackson, Ph.D., Puterson, N. J.*

## Analytical and Biblical Outline.

### God's Dealings with His People.

#### I. THEIR TRANSGRESSION.

1. "Offer a sacrifice." v. 5.  
"No other gods before me." Exod. 20, 3.  
"Keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5, 21.

#### II. THEIR DISCIPLINE.

1. **Famine.** "Cleanness of teeth." v. 6.  
"Eat, and not be satisfied." Lev. 26, 26.  
"Why should ye be stricken?" Isa. 1, 5.
2. **Drought.** "Withholden the rain." v. 7.  
"Will make your heaven as iron." Lev. 26, 19.  
"The land... nor ruined upon." Ezek. 32, 24.
3. **Blasting.** "Palmer-worm devoured." v. 9.  
"Land shall not yield." Lev. 26, 20.  
"Palmer-worm left... locust eaten." Joel 1, 4.
4. **Pestilence.** "After... Egypt." v. 10.  
"Will send the pestilence." Lev. 26, 25.  
"Gave their life... to the pestilence." Psa. 78, 50.
5. **Defeat.** "Overthrown... you." v. 11.  
"Shall be slain before your enemies." Lev. 26, 17.  
"We should have been as Sodom." Isa. 1, 9.

#### III. THEIR WARNING.

- "Prepare to meet thy God." v. 12.  
"I will make your cities waste." Lev. 26, 31, 32.  
"He cometh to judge the world." Psa. 98, 9.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### The Justice and Love of God.

1. *God is just, and therefore makes definite commands for our good.* His commands are not whimsical. Every thing he tells us to do is for our own advantage. Purity brings health; honesty brings prosperity; truthfulness brings confidence; kindness brings happiness. If God's commands were all obeyed, this poverty-stricken, jarring world would be turned into a paradise of harmony and plenty.

2. *God is loving, and allows none to stumble on in darkness, not knowing the way.* He forewarns. If drought and famine, commercial collapse or

foreign invasion, are to result from our misdeeds, it is the voice of kindness that so tells us. If there be a worm that dieth not and a fire that is not quenched, it is the finger of love that points to them. No sinner is condemned for the sin that he was ignorant of. The Lord's way is so plain that a way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

3. *God is just, and therefore hates iniquity.* His punishments are inevitable. A man might fall from a lofty pinnacle to the granite ground and not be hurt sooner than a soul could fall from rectitude into iniquity and not suffer. In the truest and loftiest sense punishment is "natural consequence." It is the lurid and awful blossom of which sin was the bud.

4. *God is loving; his punishments are not vengeful, but reformatory in their intent.* Had Pharaoh minded the first plague, his armies would not have drowned in the Red Sea. Had Jeroboam I. listened to the warning of the prophet, the long succession of Israel's calamities would never have come. Had Jeroboam II. hearkened to Amos, the annihilation of the Israelite monarchy might have been avoided. Are you and I listening to the voice of God to-day?

5. *God is both just and loving,* which gives a peculiar pathos to the exhortation, *Prepare to meet thy God.* Prepare to meet him who was thy maker, and is thy almighty judge; who is so pure that he chargeth even his angels with folly; who is inexorable and cannot be turned aside. Prepare to meet him who is thy loving Saviour, who came to earth for the very purpose of showing a weak and sinful race how a God can love. He whose portrait is given in verse 13, he that treadeth upon the high places of the earth and maketh the morning darkness, is the same one that turned the midnight of the world into sunshine by his incarnation, and who, being lifted upon the cross, draws all men toward him.

### Lesson Word-Pictures.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

A rough pasture-land, where the hills are bleak and sandy, where the herds and flocks quietly graze in the grassy vales, where the herdmen and shepherds lazily loll among the fields. There are only cattle and sheep stolidly feeding day after day, the sun coming up, the sun going down, and Tekoa is the same weary land.

But one of the men of Tekoa has heard a voice. Life for him among his herds has lost its interest. He sits apart. His thoughts are afar. He sees strange visions coming into form and color. O, weary is the burden he carries for the sins of his people. He hears the mutterings of the thunders of judgment. Still worse, he witnesses the sin that calls down the lightning fires.

In his prophetic mood he is still looking afar. The colors burn within the range of his rapt vision. There is a flame of indignation flushing his cheek. He sees in different places two crowds of idol-worshippers. He hears their insane outcries. He frowns as he sees their frantic prostrations. Two different crowds of idolaters! Communities among the Assyrians or Philistines or Edomites, says somebody. No; towns, alas, in Israel! One is Beth-el, where Jacob saw the angel ladder; the other is Gilgal, where Israel camped after the wonderful crossing of the Jordan. And those idolaters are descendants of Abraham! O, the hot shame tingling the face of Amos!

But look! The figures in the prophetic glass are shifting; the same sharp colors, but a different scene. He is looking upon a famine-smitten land. Hunger is in the cities. Hunger is in the valleys. Hunger is out in the wide, desolate fields. Men go with famished look and feeble walk. Beggars ask for bread at every door. The crowd clamor for food in the gates of the towns. And yet no one holds out pleading hands to him who can turn the very stones into bread.

The prophet witnesses another scene. It is a land withering in drought. The sun is only a hot furnace-door in the heavens; the earth is only the ashy bed of the furnace itself. No rain drips from the clouds. No water runs in the brooks. Where babbling streams made their music, saddest silence reigns. People despairingly look down into empty wells. Crowds flock to cities where any fountain may be rumored to flash its jeweled crystals in the sun. Home they may go with empty water-skins. Drought in the land, thirst tormenting and incessant, and yet where in all the prophet's sweep of vision does he see any soul bowed before God and asking water of him in the palm of whose hand rolls the great deep?

The glass shifts. There are other scenes rising up out of the mists of the prophetic hour. Blasting and mildew are in all the land. The palmer-worm is crawling over the gardens, crawling over the vineyards, crawling over the fig-trees, crawling over the olive-trees. All the land wriggles with the curse. Stalks and tendrils bare of foliage everywhere! A land desolate as with death! And who is alive unto God and crying for deliverance?

The prophet witnesses still another terrible scene. It is an evil presence with fetid, poisonous breath, with covered face, that makes no outcry, that has muffled its feet, but moves with all the fatal power of Egypt's pestilence when Pharaoh would not let God's people go. The strength of youth is no armor against it. The feebleness of age meets not with its pity. A host of warriors securely encamped cannot alarm it. But who prays for a covert from its ravages?

Once again do the strange mystic colors light up before the prophet's eyes. There have been out-

trophes of fire visited upon sin, like the burnings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and still there is no turning to God. The prophet cries out to Israel, "Prepare!" He sees the unseen One. He feels the impalpable Presence going by him, throwing up and shaping the great mountains, harnessing the strong winds to the tempest-car, searching in silence the deep places of the soul, then shaking with his solemn tread the high places of the earth. O, solemn coming unto judgment of the great Jehovah!

### By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

*Verses 4 and 5.* The Israelites combined the form of godliness with idol-worship, as if that might save them. The Italian banditti, or highway robbers, are said to be very particular about their devotions. A traveler in Russia saw a votary of the Greek Church devoutly telling his beads with one hand and picking the pocket of a fellow-worshiper with the other.

When Napoleon I. invaded Egypt he destroyed all the forts in his road but one. When they were built of stone, he blew them up; when built of wood, he burned them. The one which defied all efforts was built of mud, in which his missiles would stick fast. Some people get into a fort built of religious profession and church membership which defies all gospel artillery.

"*Yet have ye not returned unto me.*" Afflictions do not of necessity work out salvation. Talmage says: "I stood upon the beach looking off upon the sea, and there was a strong wind blowing, and I noticed some of the vessels were going that way and other vessels were going another way. I said to myself: 'How is it that the same wind blows one vessel in one direction, and the other in another direction?' I found out by looking that it was the different way they had the sails set. And so does trouble come to this world. Some men it drives into the harbor of heaven, and other men it drives on the rocks. It depends upon the way you have your sails set. All the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans of surging sorrow cannot sink a soul that has asked for God's pilotage."

"*Prepare to meet thy God.*" I heard a few nights ago that if you take a bit of phosphorus and put it upon a slip of wood, and ignite the phosphorus, bright as the blaze is there drops from it a white ash that coats the wood and makes it almost impossible to kindle the wood. And so when the flaming conviction laid upon your hearts has burnt itself out, it has coated the heart, and it will be very difficult to kindle the light there again.—A. Maclaren.

It is said of birds that build in steeples, being used to the continual ringing of bells, the sound disquiets them not at all. Thus it is that the com-

monness of the death of others is made but, as it were, a formal thing. Many have grown familiar with death, and when the solemnity is over, the thoughts of death are over also; as soon as the grave is out of sight, preparation for the grave is out of their mind. They go to their worldly business—yea, to coveting and sinning—as if the last man that ever should be were buried.—Caryll.

### Teachers' Meeting.

Make sketch-map of the kingdom of Israel as Jeroboam II. inherited it (barely reaching from the Jordan to the Philistine border and from upper Galilee to the kingdom of Judah), and another map of Israel as Jeroboam left it to his successor (including the full inheritance of the ten tribes on both sides of the Jordan, besides Syria, Ammon, and Moab).... Effects of this sudden growth.... The royal dynasty—Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam II., and Zechariah.... The prophet: his home; his station in life; his auditors; his style; the burden of his message—repent and reform!.... Describe the twofold "sin of Israel" and its consequences: 1. Idolatry (Baal, Molech, etc.), leading to grosser license. 2. Worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which included or led to (a) image-worship; (b) rejection of the chosen priesthood; (c) permanent alienation from the Messianic tribe and traditions; (d) hypocrisy; (e) open sins, especially tyranny, covetousness, and selfish luxury.... Follow the lesson outline: 1. Transgression—the irony of verses 4, 5, points to the prevalent wickedness. 2. Discipline—famine, drought, failure of harvests, pestilence. God works to-day, as then, by natural forces. Earthly joys and sorrows all are discipline. 3. Warning. Each Sunday-school teacher should be as faithful as the Tekoan shepherd. We "stand in Christ's stead."

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### Primary and Intermediate.

BY MARTHA VAN MARGER.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Getting ready to meet God.*

*Introductory.* Make a shepherd's crook on the board. Ask what great Bible king was once a shepherd. Who said "I am the good shepherd?" Who can repeat the first verse of the shepherd psalm? The lesson to-day tells what a shepherd said a long time ago. I will print the name of the shepherd—"Amos." God sent Amos to do an errand for him. He told him what to say. Do you

love to do errands for mamma or papa? Would you love to do errands for God?

Once a little boy was sent to do a very hard errand for his papa. He did not like to do it, but he loved his papa so much that he did not ask to be excused. His papa knew just how hard it was, and he was pleased to have his little son willing to obey him. It was a hard errand that Amos was sent to do. Who wants to know what it was? [Print "Israel" in large letters. Make an altar with a calf upon it. Some child will be able to tell the story of the golden calves.] Who taught the people to worship them? Why was it wrong? What commandment forbids idol-worship?

Once the people of Israel worshiped God, but they grew careless. They got tired of praying to him. They stopped reading God's holy law. They made idols and worshiped them. They taught their children to worship idols. They "went away from God." Tell how children can go away from God in these days. If they pray, it is only with the lips. They do not want to learn the Bible verses. They would rather play than go to Sunday-school. They care more for having fun than for seeking God. Any thing that we care more for than for God is an idol.



God knew that the children of Israel had gone away from him. He was sorry for them. And he sent Amos to tell them that if they did not come back to him he would have to destroy them. This was the errand Amos had to do for God. It was a hard errand, because people who are doing wrong do not like to be told of it, and often hate and persecute the one who tells them.

Sometimes when people go away from God he sends trouble to call them back. If they will not obey, the trouble grows worse and worse. God has to punish his naughty children, just as a good parent does, to make them do right. If God did not love his children, he would not take the trouble to make them obey him. Here are some of the troubles God sent upon Israel: "Famine, holding back rain, mildew and blasting, terrible sickness."

Yet the people would not hear him and obey!

Here is the word God sent to them by Amos: "Prepare to meet thy God."

[Tell story of a little boy who had disobeyed his papa.] When it was time for the father to come home the little boy went away and hid. Why? Amos knew that the wicked Israelites would not want to meet God. But he says they must get ready to meet him!

*Closing Words.* We must all meet God. How are we getting ready? Here is the way some are

going: [Mark a broad path; on it print, "Pleasing self," "Forgetting God," "Having my own way." Make another and narrower path; on it print, "Putting God first," "Hearing his voice," "Trying to please him," "Denying Self."]

Which path is the right and safe one?

### Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



**BLACKBOARD TALK.**—A part of the message of Amos to Israel is set forth on the board. Let us all read it together. It expresses the need of preparation. Speak particularly of this word. Tell how it enters into our every-day life. Mention the following illustrations of this: Preparation of the child for school life; in the school for college; in the college for a professional life; in early youth for a business career as a merchant, and the preparation of every one, as far as he is able, for comfort in old age. Speak of these and others as they are brought to mind, and then call attention to the fact that thousands of people, who are every day preparing for worldly success and comfort, make no preparation to meet God. Refer to the life of the farmer-prophet Amos, in quiet preparation among the trees and herds in the country. Though he was then "no prophet, neither a prophet's son," yet his heart and mind were prepared for the great work. His message comes to you and to me as it did to Israel: "Prepare to meet thy God!"

**APPLICATION.**—How is it with me? Am I ready? Am I making preparation? Is my lamp trimmed and burning? Close by school singing.

"Say, is your lamp burning, my brother?  
I pray you look quickly and see."

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Free grace.  
Wonderful words.  
There is a fountain.  
Jesus is tenderly calling.  
Depth of mercy.

Now is he accepted.  
There is a Friend.  
Who'll be the next?  
To Je-sus I will go.  
I heard the voice.  
I was a wandering.  
Jesus, lover of my soul.  
Dare to do right.  
Blow the trumpet.

### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Were the Israelites worshipers of the true God? **They were, but their worship was corrupt.**
2. What were the chief seats of their false worship? **Beth-el, Dan, and Gilgal.**
3. How had God sought to warn them of their

wickedness? **By famine, drought, pestilence, and earthquake.**

4. What solemn words did the prophet utter to them? **"Prepare to meet thy God."**

5. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"He, that being," etc.**

### CATECHISM QUESTION.

24. What is the Catechism?

A book which teaches by questions and answers according to the ancient method of the Christian Church.

Luke i. 4; Proverbs xxii. 6, 21.

25. What does the Catechism teach?

The main doctrines and duties of religion, set in order and proved by texts of Scripture.

About B. C. 787.]

### LESSON VI. ISRAEL'S OVERTHROW FORETOLD.

[May 10.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have. Luke 8. 18.

#### Authorized Version.

**Amos 8. 1-14.** [*Commit to memory verses 11, 12.*]

1 Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit.

2 And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people of Is-ra-el; I will not again pass by them any more.

3 And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: *there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.*

4 Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail,

5 Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?

7 The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Ja'cob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.

8 Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

10 And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God,

#### Revised Version.

- 1 Thus the Lord God showed me: and behold,
- 2 a basket of summer fruit: And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people Is-ra-el; I will not
- 3 again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: the dead bodies shall be many; in every place shall they cast them forth with
- 4 silence. Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail,
- 5 saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat? making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances
- 6 of deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the
- 7 refuse of the wheat. The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Ja'cob, Surely I will never for-
- 8 get any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? yea, it shall rise up wholly like the River; and it shall be troubled and sink again,
- 9 like the River of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will
- 10 darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter
- 11 day. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord



that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:

12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.

14 They that swear by the sin of Sa-ma'ri-a, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Be'er-she-ba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst. They that swear by the sin of Sa-ma'ri-a, and say, As thy God, O Dan, liveth; and, As the way of Be'er-she-ba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

**TIME.**—About B. C. 787. **PLACE.**—Israel. **RULERS.**—Probably Jeroboam II., of Israel; Uzziab, of Judah. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—God's anger with sin.

### HOME READINGS.

- M.* Israel's overthrow foretold. Amos 8.  
*Tu.* Certainty of punishment. Amos 9. 1-10.  
*W.* God's anger with sin. Ezek. 7. 1-9.  
*Ta.* Result of perversity. Prov. 28. 9-18.  
*F.* Solemn admonition. Deut. 28. 45-51.  
*S.* Warning to sinners. Luke 12. 42-48.  
*S.* End of the wicked. Psa. 37. 8-20.

### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 213, New Canadian Hymnal.

Be it my only wisdom here.

No. 220, New Canadian Hymnal.

Try us, O God, and search the ground.

No. 214, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me!

### DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 122, 123, 124.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

#### 1. Israel's Wickedness, v. 1-6.

What did God show Amos?

What did this ripe fruit typify?

What did God state concerning his rebellious people?

What awful threat is to be found in the second verse?

Give the names of the two Assyrian kings who destroyed Israel.

To what temple is allusion made in the third verse?

What was to be the cause of this universal wailing?

Why could not funeral services be conducted as usual.

How does God regard those who swindle and oppress the poor?

How does God regard false balances?

Can any thing be justified as a business principle which is contrary to the will of God?

#### 2. Israel's Overthrow, v. 7-14.

What is meant by the "excellency of Jacob?"

Like what singular natural phenomenon should the sorrow rise over Israel?

Did the collapse of the kingdom of Israel come as quickly as the ninth and tenth verses indicate?

What sort of a famine did God threaten?

What will be the future of those who to-day reject the word of the Lord?

What is meant by the "sin of Samaria?"

What is meant by the "manner of Beer-sheba?"

What is meant by the god of Dan?

What was to be the fate of those who trusted in these false forms?

What is the fate of those who turn away from the true God now?

### Practical Teachings.

Where do we find from this lesson that—

1. God enjoins care for the poor?

2. Overreaching in business is loathsome to God?

3. God never forgets our deeds, good or bad?

4. Individuals are responsible for national sins?

5. Confidence in false gods results in ruin?

6. There is such a thing as famine for spiritual truth?

### Hints for Home Study.

1. Find some conspicuous cases in the prophecies and the gospels of the use of nature as a parable of divine truth.

2. Find some descriptions in the Bible of the atrocities which the Assyrian conquerors committed on the subjective nation of Israel.

3. Find as many as possible of the merciful regulations of Mo-es's law in behalf of the poor.

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. Israel's Wickedness, v. 1-6.

What did the prophet see?

Who showed this vision to him?

What question did the Lord ask?  
 What did he say about Israel?  
 Of what desolation in the temple did he tell?  
 What evil-doers were called to hear this message?

Of what acts of wickedness were they guilty?

## 2. Israel's Overthrow, v. 7-14.

What had God said that he would remember?  
 How did he solemnly assure Israel of this?  
 What question did he ask about their sorrow?  
 What did he say about a flood?  
 What strange thing would happen to the sun?  
 How would feasts and songs be changed?  
 How would their raiment show sorrow?  
 Like what would the mourning be?  
 What did God promise to send on the land?  
 What kind of a famine was this to be?  
 How would the people show their distress in famine?

What would happen to the young people?  
 What sin of Samaria is spoken of?  
 What would occur to these sinners?  
 What says the GOLDEN TEXT about every sinner's loss?

### Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That God's judgments on sin are sure?
2. That God's judgments on sin will be severe?
3. That God's judgments on sin will be eternal?

### Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find out in what nation Amos lived.  
 Find out to what nation he was sent.  
 Find out what his business was.  
 How many shepherds were used by God as his special servants?

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who spoke the word of the Lord to Israel?  
**Amos.**  
 Did they repent, and turn to the Lord? **No;**  
**they kept on sinning.**

### General Statement.

The surroundings of this lesson are similar to those of Lesson V. The date cannot be given with positiveness. Amos prophesied during the reign of Uzziah, King of Judah, and that of Jeroboam II., King of Israel. Bitter jealousies were indulged in between the two kingdoms. It is not strange, therefore, that when a citizen of Judah was sent with God's anathemas to the court of Jeroboam his plainness of speech gave offense, and he was charged with conspiracy against the king. His bitterest denunciations were against the unauthorized worship at Beth-el. At that time the high-priest of Beth-el was named Amaziah. He complained to King Jeroboam against Amos, saying, "The land is not able to bear his words," and ordered Amos out of the country. Amos indignantly denied the charge of conspiracy, and declared in simple candor that he was nothing but a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit when the Lord took him from the flock and ordered him to prophesy. He foretold Amaziah's downfall and the disgrace of his family. In close connection with this event came the prophecy of our lesson, in which a basket of ripe summer fruit is used as a parable of divine truth. The reason of God's anger against the people is shown in a detailed account of the iniquity of the unscrupulous men who would "swallow up the needy." Since the Israelites were not to be deterred from sin by threats of a famine, Amos foretells that they shall suffer famine and hunger for the divine truth.

What did the Lord say to Amos? **"The end is come."**

What did he mean? **That he would no longer show mercy.**

What was he about to send upon the land? **Great trouble.**

What did he say the songs of the temple would become? **Howlings.**

What would be found in every place? **Many dead bodies.**

What did this show? **That the enemies of Israel would conquer them.**

Why did the Lord allow this? **As a punishment.**

What would come upon every one? **Bitter mourning.**

What kind of famine was coming? **A famine of God's word.**

Where were the people driven? **Out of Canaan.**

What did the Lord say they should become? **Wanderers.**

What should they seek and not find? **The word of the Lord.**

What does this lesson teach? **How sad it is to forsake God.**

### Words With Little People.

"THE LORD LOVED ISRAEL." How did he show his love? By choosing them to be his own people. By sending prophets and holy men to teach them. By being very kind and patient with them.

THE LORD LOVES ME. How has he shown his love? By sending Jesus to be my Saviour. By giving me kind friends and teachers to tell me about Jesus. By patiently trying to lead me in the right way.

Israel turned away from God! What am I doing?

### Whisper Motto.

"Thou hast chosen me."

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 2. A basket of summer fruit.**

That was all Amos at first saw; but it was really a basket full of moral precepts, solemn warnings, and gracious invitations from God. There is a singular play upon words in this passage. The Hebrew words for "summer fruit" and for "the end" (verse 2) are very similar in sound, and both are derived from a root that means "to cut off." Israel and the fruit have alike passed their summer of beauty, and are now ripening toward rottenness. The nation is to be plucked like a mellow apple and consumed. **The end is come.** See Ezek. 7. 2, 6. (1) *Misery is the consequence of sin.* (2) *The laws of eternity are as inexorable as the laws of nature.* **My people.** "The language of love. My people, even though they refuse to be mine."—*Dr. Gandell.* **I will not again pass by them any more.** (3) *Now is the accepted time.*

**3. Songs of the temple.**

Not the true temple at Jerusalem, but the spurious temple at Beth-el. Music had great part in Hebrew worship. **Howlings.** Where the choirs sing fugitives shall huddle in fright, and yell in pain and despair when the Assyrians find them. A singular contrast to this prophecy may be found in Luke 6. 21. If, as some authorities maintain, "palace" should be substituted for "temple," the general meaning is not altered. **Dead bodies.** The wholesale slaughter of human beings in ancient times has no parallel, even in the most degraded corners of the earth, to-day. The wildest imagination of modern romancers has failed to invent such horrors as were ordinary pastime to the Assyrians. **In every place.** That is, in any "place"—not in the sepulchers of their fathers. **With silence.** The poor women and children, bereft of their natural defenders, dared not even express aloud their sorrow. Their sobs must be suddenly suppressed lest the poor comfort of burying their dead might be forbidden them.

**4. Hear this.** But they would not hear. The conduct of Amaziah was typical of the conduct of all the nobles of the land. **Swallow up.** Better, "pant for"—"as the hart panteth after the water-brooks." **The poor.** Better, "the non-resisting." There never would have been a "poor class" in Israel if the law of Moses had been consistently kept. (4) *He who in any age or country grasps the property of the poor, whatever may be his profession, is a bad man, and under the curse of God.*

**5. The new moon.** This day and the Sabbath day were kept without working (Num. 10. 10; Neh. 10. 31). **That we may sell.** They maintained the form of godliness, but longed for God's day to pass that they might resume money-making. (5) *It is a sin to love market-days better than Sabbath days.* **The ephah small, and the**

**shekel great.** The ephah was a dry measure, a little larger than three pecks. The shekel was at first a standard weight of metal, but the word came afterward to indicate a coin, which differed in value according as it was of silver or gold. These men would have been guilty before God even if they had been honest, for they were harsh toward the poor, which is a sin, and they loved their worldly interests more than God's interests, which is a sin. But they were not honest; they were "swindlers." By a trick they delivered scant measure, and by another trick secured more than the price.

**6. Buy.** The poverty of the poor was so oppressive that they sold themselves into slavery for relief. **A pair of shoes!** Life-long servitude for a pair of shoes! The merciful provisions of Lev. 25. 39-43, were made an apology for heathenish iniquity. No national "captivity" could be worse for the needy than this. **The refuse of the wheat.** The better wheat for the aristocrats; the refuse for the poor, who were forced to pay a great price for food fit only for cattle. Read Neh. 5.

**7. The excellency of Jacob.** The spiritual privileges of the Hebrew people, including the temple Jerusalem, and the eternal God for which that temple stood. **Never forget any of their works.** (6) *Awful threat to the sinner; consoling assurance to the Christian.*

**8. The land tremble.** It seemed as if the very hill-sides must shudder at the iniquities practiced upon them. **Every one.** No citizen can evade personal responsibility for national sins. (7) *Not the provinces, nor any one of them, is responsible for the liquor iniquity, Sabbath-breaking, and other public crimes. You and I and our fellow-citizens are the sinners.* **The flood of Egypt.** The Nile, which overflows its banks once a year. The prophet foresaw a devastating calamity, which was to submerge all existing institutions.

**9. The sun to go down.** Some scholars think this to refer to a total eclipse of the sun in the year the great Jeroboam died—a weird type of the night without a morning which suddenly descended on the nation.

**10. Feasts.** During Jeroboam's reign the nobles evidently indulged in abnormal luxury at the expense of the poor. Perhaps it was something like the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV. in France. Revolution of some sort must always succeed such periods. **Songs into lamentation.** Orientals are always demonstrative. At their festivals songs incessantly sound, and a group of captives would loudly wail and lament, in notable contrast to the sullen silence of a party of European or American prisoners. **Sackcloth.** A rough fabric, usually made of black goat's-hair, the symbol of acute suffering. **Baldness.** Those who mourned dead relatives

shaved bald places on the tops of their heads. **An only son.** The hopes of ancient Eastern families, and especially of Hebrews, were peculiarly bound up in their sons. The death of an only son "blotted out" the family from Israel's records—the greatest of earthly woes. This appalling sorrow now becomes universal, for the whole nation is to be extinguished.

**11. A famine.** The people who now turned away with deaf ear from the prophet should live to long for "the word of the Lord" more than famishing travelers in the desert long for food. (8) *Of all famines the famine of spiritual truth is the worst.*

**12. From sea to sea.** From the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. **From the north even to the east.** Notice, they do not "wander" toward the south, where, in Jerusalem, stands Jehovah's authorized temple. National jealousies were too bitter for that. But in every other direction they seek the word of the Lord without avail. (9) *"Even the profane, when they see no help, will have recourse to God."*—Pusey.

#### CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

This chapter gives us the sum of Jehovah's indictment which has been ringing through the book. At the very outset Amos shows most strikingly that lack of religiousness was not the sin he denounced. One after another he arraigns the nations around for offenses against the common conscience of humanity, and nearer draws the judgment, till Israel, pious Israel, stands before the bar. Elijah had exorcised the demon of idolatry, but into the empty house swarmed seven spirits more evil than he. The primitive brotherhood of rich and poor, the simple life and simple faith, the devotion of priest, and inspiration of prophet—all were gone, and the shepherd-seer proclaims that religion without morality is the most loathsome of all abominations in the eyes of God.

**Verse 1.** The vision apparently takes up that which Amaziah had interrupted. The first two visions had been revoked at the prophet's prayer, but the third and fourth not so. The "summer fruit" represents the sin of Israel as ripe to be plucked. Comp. Rev. 14. 8.

**2. End,** Hebrew *kayse*, while "summer fruit" is *kayise*. Such plays on words are exceedingly common in Hebrew literature, especially in the prophets; there is a most telling one in Isa. 5. 7-30. In English there is much more risk of grotesqueness, but even in our literature there are most effective examples in the most serious passages. **I will not.** So in chap. 7. 8.

**3. Palace** (margin). So the best authorities. The drunken songs of luxury will change to howls of woe, for the dead are being cast forth everywhere as the sword mows the way. **Have they.** This marginal reading is much better. The dead

**13, 14. Fair virgins and young men.** The choicest representatives of the laughtiest families. **Faint for thirst.** Innumerable lives must have miserably perished in the forced marches made with brutal escorts across the hot Syrian desert. **The sin of Samaria.** The golden calf-worship at Beth-el, which was the established religion. "Samaria" was the name of the Israelite court, as "St. James" is now of the English. Baal and Ashtoreth and Molech had been rejected, but the wicked worship at Beth-el was never given up. **Thy God, O Dan.** The golden calf at Dan. **The manner of Beer-sheba.** The mode of false worship prevalent at Beer-sheba, which stood at the southern extremity of the kingdom of Judah, as Dan stood at the northern extremity of the kingdom of Israel. Probably a semi-idolatrous shrine—rival to that of Jerusalem—had been established there. That Jerusalem, the holiest sanctuary of all, is unmentioned in this list of oaths, is very suggestive. **Fall, and never rise.** (10) *Confidence in any power but that of the eternal God leads to ruin.*

are so many that burial is impossible, and the prophet, seeing the awful picture vividly before him, breaks out into the involuntary cry, "Be still." It may be addressed either to the noisy revelers of the present or the howling mourners of the future, calling them to an awed silence at this dread visitation.

**4. Swallow.** Like Mark 12. 40. Some render, "ye that pant after." **Poor.** Better, "humble," with the written Hebrew text; that is, those who are quiet and lacking in push. These and the poor they try to thrust down that they may possess their land, "laying field to field." The elimination of the small holdings ruined many a proud civilization in the past, and will do it still.

**5. God** "declareth unto man what is his thought." Formalists cannot possibly enjoy their "religion," least of all when it is simply a kind of barter, so much paid down to secure the temporal blessings of heaven. How exactly are these Israelites reproduced in the "sweaters" and users of our great cities, both Jew and Gentile. **New moon** (Num. 28. 11, etc.). The monthly and the weekly rest-days were the most trying interruptions; the occasional feasts were doubtless well-grumbled at in their turn. **Ephah.** About three pecks, the measure for corn, one tenth of the homer (Isa. 5. 10). **Shekel.** About half an ounce. With this the silver paid for the corn was weighed, so they cheated the buyer both ways. **Balances.** Uneven scales. Comp. Deut. 25. 13-15.

**6.** So chap. 2. 6. Through their perpetual cheating the poor man becomes penniless and sells himself into bondage for food. Of course such extremity was the rich man's opportunity for a specially

good bargain. "A pair of shoes" is a proverbial expression like our "an old song." Comp. 1 Sam. 12. 3, margin. **Refuse.** Chaff and bran, that which "falls" (Hebrew) when the grain is sifted. This they cover over with good corn, perhaps, and sell accordingly. O, for a new Amos to speak in unforgettable words to all our children his impressions of a civilization not less guilty than that of ancient Beth-el! The twentieth century would be a golden age indeed if every child in England and America learned to look with the prophet's eyes upon our corners and speculations, our slums and sweaters' dens, our millionaire manufacturers of licensed poison and their myriad victims sunk below the level of the beasts. God be with the teacher who tries to translate this prophecy into the terms of modern life!

**7. Excellency.** Orelli explains this as the various objects which most symbolized Israel's prosperity, and chap. 6. 8, is a strong argument in his favor. But Jehovah's "swearing" by this is an exceedingly strange conception, and it seems safer to follow most authorities in supposing Jehovah himself the "excellency of Jacob." Comp. 1 Sam. 15. 29; Hos. 5. 5. **Works.** Compare the recurring phrase, Rev. 2. 2, etc.

**8. Shall.** The Hebrew tense does not necessarily denote a future event; the pictorial present may describe here the earthquake of chap. 1. 1, and 4. 11, which at the time of "writing" was past. But similar judgments in the future may be meant. Comp. Isa. 24. 20. **River.** The Nile in its yearly inundation rose some twenty feet and sank when its currents had swirled about over the surrounding land. So the solid earth itself rises, tosses, sinks, as though weary of the weight of man's sin.

**9. That day.** The familiar vague description of the Day of Jehovah, which in the prophets has a double aspect—joy and deliverance to the true Israel, disaster and mourning to the false. **Sun.** Comp. Joel 2. 2, 31; 3. 15. It has been supposed that the image is taken from an eclipse in 784 B. C., total at Jerusalem about one P. M. Unfortunately the Greenwich calculations given by Pusey prove that the eclipse was a very small one. There was a total eclipse in Palestine in the year 771 at the same hour, and as we must place Jeroboam's death later than Usher's date (784), it is just possible the phenomenon was so recent as to point the allusion. But after all we only need to suppose that Amos employs as a figure recollections of some large eclipse.

**10.** Quoted in Tobit 2. 6, a book of the captivity. **Sackcloth.** The rough hair-cloth which was the most conspicuous sign of mourning. Worn next the skin and tightly bound over the loins, it meant much more than our merely conventional mourning symbols. **Baldness.** Women

cut their hair short and men shaved off their beards. **Only son.** Comp. Zech. 12. 10. **End.** The distress grows in intensity up to the last, when the worst comes.

**11.** Compare the piteous wail of the psalmist during the persecution of Antiochus (Psa. 74. 9), and Saul's despairing state (1 Sam. 28. 6).

**12. Sea.** From the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea; that is, from western to southern boundary of the kingdom, and then from northern to eastern boundary. The word "wander" is the same we translated "stagger" in chap. 4. 8. For all their eagerness they do not think of seeking God in Judah. But probably Amos had not this in mind; God was to be found as much in Samaria as in Jerusalem if the seeker's heart were right. These seekers had sinned away their opportunity.

**13.** Comp. Isa. 40. 30. The "thirst" begins with the spiritual and brings physical failing in its train, even in those who have youth and vigor on their side. What must the aged suffer!

**14. Sin.** Probably not the Beth-el calf (Hos. 8. 5, *eq.*), but the Asherah, or sacred pole, a Canaanite emblem set up at Samaria. **Dan.** The ancient "ephod," reconsecrated by Jeroboam I. The idea of local manifestations of Jehovah made him into Baalim, and he was actually designated by this name without any thought of a heathen god being intended. **Beer-sheba.** See chap. 5. 5. The "road to Beer-sheba," a noted "high place," is possibly the object of the oath (as Mohammedans swear by "the pilgrimage" to Mecca), lying at the very south of Judah. This pilgrimage was a much more considerable than short journeys to Beth-el or Gilgal.

### The Lesson Council.

**Question 2.** *What were the political and moral causes which led to the destruction of the Israelite kingdom?*

Loyalty to Jehovah "is not a vain thing, it is your life," said Moses. In rejecting the living God for idols Israel was as a sick man whose life depends upon a prescription which he spurns for poison. As a theocracy it fell to pieces when it lost its theocratic character. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish." Jealousy of Judah and a chronic state of war with her weakened Israel and operated as a political cause of overthrow; as did internal dissensions, as when Omri was crowned. They were burdened with taxes to prosecute foreign wars. As a man who depletes his strength by dissipation falls an easy prey to disease, so they fell.—*W. A. Robinson, D.D.*

The rebellion of the ten tribes constituted an important epoch in their history. They were in political turmoil and strife, refusing to remain under the same form of government with the other tribes.

They withdrew from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which, ever afterward, gave rise to bitterness between the two kingdoms. One sin served to introduce another; idol-worship was instituted, the morals of the people became vicious and degraded, until they had no fear of God before their eyes. Sin had become a reproach to them, and terminated in the destruction of their kingdom.—*Rev. D. F. Waddell, D.D.*

1. *Political.* Alliances and wars. War generally existed between Israel and Judah. Israel joined Syria to conquer Jerusalem. Ahaz besought Tiglath-pileser of Assyria for help. He took Damascus, capital of Syria; his son Shalmaneser made Israel pay tribute. Hoshea withheld the tribute and conspired with So of Egypt to rebel, when Shalmaneser returned and carried Israel away to Assyria. 2. *Moral.* Idolatry, in luring the unclean practices in the temples of Baal; the sacrifice of children to Molech; the rejection of true prophets and of all religious light; bribing justice; swearing by idols; oppressing the poor; dishonest dealing; general corruption.—*Rev. Samuel L. Beiler.*

The political and moral causes were so connected there is no separating them. The prophet Amos names: 1. Oppressing the poor and meek (2. 7); 2. Uncleanness and confusion (2. 7); 3. Hatred of righteous reproof (5. 10); 4. Afflicting the just, bribery, and corrupting justice (5. 12); 5. Idolatry (5, 26); 6. Superstition (8. 5); 7. Falsifying weights and measures, and extortion (8. 5, 6).—*Rev. J. C. Jackson, Ph.D.*

Idolatrous, politic Jeroboam heads a long list of unworthy kings. Corruption and dishonesty undermined the throne. Rapacity, merciless robbery of the poor; taking advantage of their poverty to oppress them; hypocrisy in religion; great show and little substance; lying and cheating in weights and measure; "hands that itched for bribes and tongues that blistered with lies;" fraud in personal dealing and treachery to national allies; impatience with the Sabbath and other holy days because they interfered with trade; false swearing; these are causes enough. The Israelites of that day might have kept a World's Fair closed on Sunday, but they would have complained bitterly about it. There was not enough "Sunday-school politics." The Ten Commandments had become altogether too much of "an iridescent dream."—*Rev. William F. McDowell, D.D.*

## Analytical and Biblical Outline.

### Sin and Its Results.

#### I. ISRAEL'S SIN.

1. *A basket of summer fruit.* v. 2.  
"Her grapes are fully ripe." Rev. 14. 18.  
"Our end is come." Lam. 4. 18.

2. *Swallow up the needy.* v. 4.  
"Eat up my people." Psa. 14. 4.  
"Teeth are as swords." Prov. 30. 14.
3. *When will the new moon be gone?* v. 5.  
"Turn away thy foot." Isa. 58. 13.  
"Honoreth me with their lips." Matt. 15. 8.
4. *Ephah small.... shekel great.* v. 5.  
"False balance.... abomination." Prov. 11. 1.  
"With the wicked balances." Mic. 6. 10, 11.
5. *Buy the poor for silver.* v. 6.  
"Shalt not compel him." Lev. 25. 39.  
"He shall go out free." Exod. 21. 2.

#### II. RESULTS OF SIN.

1. *It shall rise up.... a flood.* v. 8.  
"Therefore shall the land mourn." Hos. 4. 3.  
"Toucheth the land.... shall melt." Amos 9. 5.
2. *Cause the sun to go down.* v. 9.  
"We grope.... like the blind." Isa. 59. 10.  
"Night shall be unto you." Mic. 3. 6.
3. *Turn your feasts into mourning.* v. 10.  
"Make thee mourning." Jer. 6. 26.  
"They shall mourn for him." Zech. 12. 10.
4. *A famine.... of hearing.* v. 11.  
"No more any prophet." Psa. 74. 9.  
"Law shall perish from the priest." Ezek. 7. 26.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### The Divine Ruler of This World.

1. *God sees every act of every man's life.* The great Jeroboam conquered his royal neighbors without asking God's help; his self-reliance would have become a Bonaparte. Amaziah undertook to run Israel's religion upon his own lines, and haughtily ordered Amos back to his barn-yard. Sennacherib and Sargon held the Hebrew God in utter contempt, and did not hesitate to say so. Assyrian sinners and Hebrew sinners alike went on their several ways, and thought not upon Jehovah. But he that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, and every misdeed of that luxurious and wicked time was seen by God and registered on high, and eventually right triumphed.

2. *God always takes sides with the wronged and needy.* If we had traveled through Jeroboam's country royal receptions and military processions and gorgeous priestly rites would probably have first caught our eyes; but God's eye looked past the splendors of palace and temple, and saw the poor of the land fail; and God's ear clearly caught between the solemn songs of the sanctuary and the dainty ditties of pleasure-gardens, the plaintive cries of the needy one who had been forced to sell himself for a pair of shoes. Many a man is too poor to hire a lawyer to plead his case, but the poorest has an Advocate at the court on high, and it is "our Father" who sits on the eternal throne.

3. *God wants our hearts.* The "religion" that is rich in ceremonies and emotions and poor in mo-

tive and practice is a false religion. God cannot bear a man who sings psalms on Sunday and swindles on Monday.

4. *Even the punitive providences of God are merciful.* It was not cruel to send on Israel calamities which should overflow as the Nile overflows its banks. It was kind, rather, for it was the only means of checking that riotous cruelty in which the aristocrats of Israel indulged. During the captivity in Nineveh and Babylon the life of the average Israelite was undoubtedly pleasanter and safer than under the selfish misrule of the house of Jehu.

5. *God's hand should be recognized in all events.* It is not true that the north wind brings the snow, or that the grasshopper causes scant crops, except in the general sense in which the wheels may be said to bring the locomotive. Back of the locomotive there is needed an intelligent mind to generate and direct its forces; and back of storms and fair weather, of famine and plenty, of invasion and peace—back of all physical and mental forces—is the controlling mind of God. Elisha used a beautiful phrase when he advised the Shunammite to move her household because the Lord had called for a famine. God "calls for" all those conditions to-day on which our comfort depends, and works by means of all natural forces, and by means of all prejudices and passions of men, the inevitable counsels of his will.

### Lesson Word-Pictures.

Amos has left his herds. Vanished the rough pasture-land! He sits alone. He waits for "the still small voice" of old. He carries until his illumined sight should behold a vision. Something is coming into shape before him! And what does he see? A basket of summer fruit, rounded, ripe, juicy, each globe of pulp filled out to the full. What a picture of completeness, of an end reached, of a purpose accomplished! But what does it mean? As in that basket is fruit rounded out into completeness, so is Israel's fruitage now developed, the cycle of its ripening days completed, the time of its ingathering reached, the hour of judgment struck. The vats are ready for the crushing of the grapes. God has come to judgment. What a change every-where! From the palace came the bacchanalian cheer, the riotous shout. The frenzied echoes now die away into a moan that sadly grows, that sharpens, that becomes the embittered wail of a prolonged lamentation. Israel is ripe for God's hands. The wine-press is ready for the trampling feet of judgment. Alas, will not the souls greedy of evil see the warning signs? Watch that avaricious crowd. One is eyeing the young moon like a silver sickle. When will its sheath of stars be met, and the hour be-token that corn may be sold? That one amid the

hush of the Sabbath is impatiently calculating when its quiet hours shall have closed, and the wheat be "set forth." And see that third one. He is slyly trying to cut down his grimy old ephah, making it smaller than the law says. A fourth has turned away and in secret is operating upon his shekel. And look! If another old cheat is not trying to make his scales be as readily as he! O, that covetous through, trying to buy up the poor for silver, and the beggar with his way worn feet for a pair of sandals, or measuring out as a bargain the dust and the chaff and the rotten grains of the wheat!

O land, O land!

How steeped in sin! But hark! God's judgment-car is shaking the earth. Can you not hear the rumbling of the nearing wheels? O, how many shall moan and mourn and cry aloud! The prophet now sees God's judgment coming in like a flood. How it rolls in like Egypt's great river, swelling, spreading, one vast sea drowning out every thing. In that day of the swelling of a greater than Jordan at high noon the sun goes down. Dreary shadows thicken and press every-where. It is night at mid-day. In yonder house the rioters at the banquet turn pale, shiver with dread, drop their songs and begin to wail. They fold dismal sackcloth about their loins. There is baldness on every head. Men go bowed as if suddenly finding the grave of an only son, and wailing over it.

And now a famine!

A great hunger every-where, a painful longing! Is it for bread? No; but for the words of God!

O, that the silence might be broken, and then there might be some utterance from God!

Men rove in search for it. They wander from sea to sea. They faint. They thirst even by running streams. Young men and maidens have this tormenting thirst, but not for water; it is for the living God. Even idolaters shall have this longing. In this weariness they shall fall. Will they ever rise again?

### By Way of Illustration.

In a noble passage Isaiah tells us that all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field. Death lays his sharp scythe in among the grass; and to his stride and sweeping arm it falls in long broad swaths. I have seen the reapers in the harvest-field sit down on the fallen sheaves of corn to rest awhile; but who ever saw this reaper sitting on the tombstones to rest himself and repair his strength? Of death it may be said as of God: "He sleeps not, neither is weary."—*Guthrie.*

Verses 4, 5, 6, 7. Worldliness and greed for gain led to covetousness, Sabbath-breaking, fraud, slavery, and oppression. Market-day was better than the Sabbath-day. These men remind us of the old story in Strabo of the musician who thought him-

self wonderfully gifted with the power to create melody. Before his audience he was pouring forth his notes, and, as he thought, holding them spell-bound; but just then the market-bell with its tinkle was heard, and all his admirers except one left him, to trade at the market. The musician turned to his solitary listener and complimented him on having a soul above mere merchandise, so that he was not drawn away by the market-bell. "Master," said the man, "I am hard of hearing; did you say the market-bell had rung?" "Yes," "Then I must be off." And away went the last man. So when we preach up Jesus Christ there will be some who will listen to us, and we perhaps think, "Now we shall surely win them;" but, ah! to-morrow's market-bell, to-morrow's bell of sin, the bell that rings to frivolities and rings to transgressions, they will go after that.—*Spurgeon*.

**Verses 11, 12.** Sin brought spiritual death and temporal overthrow. Mexico's sins threw the nation into bondage, and the word could not be found throughout the empire. When at last missionaries were permitted to carry the Bible into Mexico, so great was the demand for it that a single Bible was separated leaf by leaf, and distributed to the crowd. The "dark ages" were so because the Bible was a chained book. Spiritual darkness brought in the establishment of the inquisition and the death of religious and civil freedom.

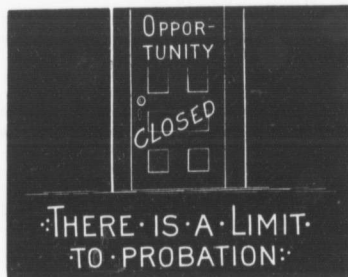
### The Teachers' Meeting.

I. A sketch-map. The chief geographical points should be kept distinctly before the student—the relative positions of Judea and Israel, of Tekoa and Samaria, of Jerusalem and Beth-el. II. A word-picture. Chap. 7, 10-17, describes a dramatic scene which serves well as an introduction to this lesson. Let it be carefully studied and reproduced. III. Five representative sins are denounced in this lesson. 1. Covetousness (verses 4, 5, 6); the sin which is most severely rephended throughout the Scriptures. 2. Sabbath-breaking; either conducting secular business or planning for it on the holy day. 3. Fraud; falsifying the weights and selling refuse wheat. 4. Slavery; buying human beings who could not pay their debts. 5. Exorbitance; cruelty of heart shown toward the needy. Each of these sins flourishes to-day in Christian lands, with the exception of slavery, and perhaps that exception is more apparent than real, for even in our own favored land men and women by the hundred are so trammelled and fettered by poverty that practically they are enslaved for life. IV. The attitude of God. He sees all deeds. He "never forgets any." He befriends the poor and he inevitably punishes the wicked. He withdraws his Spirit (verse 11). V. Personal application. How we should stand on record in relation to each of these moral questions.

### References.

FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 5: Times of public instruction, 335. Ver. 6: Worthlessness, 601. . . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 2152, 5576, 5578. 5579, 11895, 11897, 11898, 12109; Poetical, 3529, 3537, Ver. 3: Prose, 5959. Ver. 7: Prose, 3888, 10478, 10479. Ver 10: Prose, 3737, 3738, 10016, 10017.

### Blackboard.



Last Sunday the blackboard set forth the need of preparation. This life is a school of preparation as well as probation, but neglect and indifference in regard to the future may be so indulged in that there will come a time when the door of opportunity will be closed, and the day of probation passed by. Ask this question of the school: When do you intend to give your heart to God? Is it now, or when you become a man or a woman? Will you not then want to put it off until you are old? That is a great risk; the door may be closed, and it may be too late to change.

THE BEST TIME  
THE EASIEST TIME } IS NOW.  
THE ACCEPTABLE TIME }

### Primary and Intermediate.

**LESSON THOUGHT.** *Sin and Suffering.*

**Review.** Recall Amos, the shepherd-prophet. Who sent him on an errand? Was it a pleasant errand? Why was he willing to do it? What troubles had God sent upon Israel? Why did he send troubles upon them? Does God send trouble now upon people who will not obey him?

**Lesson Plan.** It is not good to fill the minds of little children with images of pain. And yet we must teach them that God's law cannot be broken without danger.

Print "Israel" in large letters, and draw a sceptor diagonally through the word. See that children understand clearly that Israel was the name of a kingdom, a nation that God had chosen to be his own. Choose the name of some child in the class, and print, also in large letters. Print "God knew



Israel." "God knows Willie." Help the children to see that the same God who cares for a nation cares for a little child.

Let us see what God did for Israel. Print before the name "Loved, Chose, Taught, Helped."

What has he done for Willie? Has he loved him? Let children give reasons why they think God loves Willie, making prominent the fact that he gave his son Jesus to die for him. Did he choose him to be his child? What an honor it would be if a king of this earth should choose Willie to be with him in his palace! But the king of heaven is greater than any earthly king. Hear what he says [read from John 15. 16]: "I have chosen you." Has God given Willie teachers? Let children help tell the ways God has provided to teach his children. Let Willie tell some way in which he has been helped by God. Sometimes little children are very ill, and God makes them well. Sometimes they are in great danger, and God makes a way of escape. Very often Satan, the bad spirit, comes to tempt them to do wrong, and God helps them to turn away from the wrong. Yes, God loves and helps his little children just as certainly as he loves and helps great nations.

How ought Israel and Willie to feel toward God? It will be easy to show the meanness of ingratitude here. Give prayerful thought and study to this point, dear teacher. You may impress a lesson of obligation on little hearts through this lesson that can never be effaced.

How did Israel repay God's kindness? See if some child can tell what they learned of Israel's sins last Sunday. Show that they did not do all these evil things at first. Make a ladder on the board. Print on the rounds "Carelessness," "Forgetting God," "Idolatry," "Covetousness," "Dishonesty," "Sabbath-breaking."

Did not God try to stop them in their sin? Yes; but they would not listen.



Talk about a loving father who wants his child to do right. What must he do if the child will not obey? He will have to punish him. And so God had to punish Israel!

Will God have to punish Willie, if Willie breaks his law? O, yes; every child who will not be taught by God and obey him will have to suffer. Sin leads straight to suffering, and disobeying God is sin.

*Closing Words.* Call back the teaching in simplest words, and strive to make every child feel that there is no safety apart from God, and that every little sin allowed now makes it easier to go away from the Father's side into evil paths.

#### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Father, I stretch,  
Cleansing wave.  
Weary of earth.  
Come, come to Jesus.  
God calling yet.  
Pleading with thee.  
Pass me not.  
Weeping will not save.  
Rock of ages.  
Take me as I am.  
Father, lead thy little children.

#### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did God show to Amos? **A basket of fruit, ripe and ready to rot.**
2. To what did he compare this basket of fruit? **To the wicked Israelites about to be destroyed.**
3. What was one of their great crimes? **Wronging the poor.**
4. How were they to be destroyed? **By the Assyrian invasion.**
5. How did this punishment come? **Suddenly, and without remedy.**
6. From what did the Israelites suffer most in the day when they were suddenly deprived of their wealth and their families and their personal liberty? **From a famine for spiritual truth.**

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

26. Recite the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

**About B. C. 725.] LESSON VII. SIN THE CAUSE OF SORROW. [May 17.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Isa. 59.2.

**Authorized Version.**

**Hos. 10. 1-15.** [Commit to memory verses 12, 13.]

1 Is'ra-el is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his

**Revised Version.**

- 1 Is'ra-el is a luxuriant vine, which putteth forth his fruit; according to the multitude of his fruit he hath multiplied his altars; according to the

fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.

2 Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.

3 For now they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the Lord; what then should a king do to us?

4 They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant: thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field.

5 The inhabitants of Sa-ma'ri-a shall fear because of the calves of Beth-a'ven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced on it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.

6 It shall be also carried unto As-syri'a for a present to king Ja'reb: E'phra-im shall receive shame, and Is'ra-el shall be ashamed of his own counsel.

7 As for Sa-ma'ri-a, her king is cut off as the foam upon the water.

8 The high places also of A'ven, the sin of Is'ra-el, shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us.

9 O Is'ra-el, thou hast sinned from the days of Gib'e-ah: there they stood: the battle in Gib'e-ah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them.

10 It is in my desire that I should chastise them; and the people shall be gathered against them, when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.

11 And E'phra-im is as a heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn; but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make E'phra-im to ride; Ju'dah shall plow, and Jo'el shall break his clods.

12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

13 Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

14 Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shal'man spoiled Beth-ar'bel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children.

15 So shall Beth-el do unto you because of your great wickedness: in a morning shall the king of Is'ra-el utterly be cut off.

goodness of his land they have made goodly 2 pillars. Their heart is divided; now shall they be found guilty: he shall smite their altars, he 3 shall spoil their pillars. Surely now shall they say, We have no king: for we fear not the Lord; and the king, what can he do for us? 4 They speak vain words, swearing falsely in making covenants: therefore judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. 5 The inhabitants of Sa-ma'ri-a shall be in terror for the calves of Beth-a'ven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced over it, for the glory thereof, 6 because it is departed from it. It also shall be carried unto As-syri'a for a present to king Ja'reb: E'phra-im shall receive shame, and Is'ra-el shall be ashamed of his own counsel. As for Sa-ma'ri-a, her king is cut off, as foam upon 8 the water. The high places also of A'ven, the sin of Is'ra-el, shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and 9 to the hills, Fall on us. O Is'ra-el, thou hast sinned from the days of Gib'e-ah: there they stood; that the battle against the children of iniquity should not overtake them in Gib'e-ah. 10 When it is my desire, I will chastise them; and the peoples shall be gathered against them, when they are bound to their two transgressions. 11 And E'phra-im is as a heifer that is taught, that loveth to tread out the corn; but I have passed over upon her fair neck: I will set a rider on E'phra-im; Ju'dah shall plow, Ja'cob shall 12 break his clods. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap according to mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. 13 Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: for thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy 14 mighty men. Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shal'man spoiled Beth-ar'bel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in 15 pieces with her children. So shall Beth-el do unto you because of your great wickedness: at daybreak shall the king of Is'ra-el be utterly cut off.

**TIME.**—About 725 B. C. **PLACE.**—Hosea's messages were probably all delivered in the kingdom of Israel. **RULERS.**—Hoshea, King of Israel, and, probably, Hezekiah, King of Judah. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—Suffering from sin.

#### HOME READINGS.

- M. Sin the cause of sorrow. Hos. 10. 1-8.  
 Th. Sin the cause of sorrow. Hos. 10. 9-15.  
 W. Separation from God. Isa. 59. 1-9.

- Th. Long-suffering abused. Jer. 44. 1-6.  
 F. Consider. Psa. 50. 16-23.  
 S. No peace. Isa. 57. 15-21.  
 S. *Whitsunday.* Acts 2. 1-12.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 208, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, thou who camest from above.

No. 207, New Canadian Hymnal.

Gracious Spirit, Love divine.

No. 209, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, for a closer walk with God.

#### DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 116, 239, 257.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

#### 1. Sin, v. 1-4.

What was the most prevalent sin in the kingdom of Israel?

What did these people mean by saying, "We have no king?"

To what sort of a covenant is reference made in verse 4?

#### 2. Sorrow, v. 5-15.

What is the meaning of the calves of Beth-aven? Who is meant by King Jareb?

How could the "glory" of the "calves" be carried to the Assyrian king?

What transgressions of the Gibeonites are referred to in verse 9?

What is meant by "bind themselves in their two furrows?"

What is meant by a heifer that is "taught?"

What is meant by "I passed over upon her fair neck?"

What is meant by "I will make Ephraim to ride?"

Who, probably, was Shalman?

How could Beth-el bring trouble to Israel?

#### Practical Teachings.

Where do we find in this lesson—

1. The iniquity of double dealing?
2. The folly of idolatry?
3. The unchangeable truth that a man shall reap what he sows?
4. The thought that even God's punishments are sent in love?

#### Hints for Home Study.

1. Find three other Assyrian kings who, like Shalmaneser, had compound names of which "eser" was one part.
2. Find cases of the abbreviation of proper names. A Hebrew king gives one example.
3. Find a requirement in Deuteronomy about the muzzling of oxen that trod out the corn.
4. Find a prophecy in Revelation concerning the end of the world which resembles that of the eighth verse of this lesson.
5. Read the account of the destruction of the kingdom of Israel in Kings and Chronicles.

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. Sin, v. 1-4.

What is Israel declared to be?

What sin had increased with prosperity?

What would become of their altars and images?

Why had Israel no king?

Of what evil in speech had they been guilty?

What followed from their wickedness?

#### 2. Sorrow, v. 5-15.

What would cause fear to the people of Samaria?

Who would sorrow because of a lost glory?

What was to become of their idols?

Who then would be ashamed?

What is said about Samaria's king?

What high places would be overthrown?

Where would thorns and thistles grow?

What would be the people's prayer?

From what time had Israel sinned?

What did God desire to do to them?

To what is Ephraim likened?

How would Judah be humbled?

What were the people exhorted to do?

What reason is given for so doing?

What sorrows had they known?

What future evils to the people are predicted?

What to the King of Israel?

Why did all these sorrows come? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That ingratitude is sin?
2. That sin brings sorrow?
3. That sin ends in death?

#### Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find a passage where Isaiah compares God's ancient people to a vineyard?

Find a passage where Jesus compares his disciples to the branches of the vine.

Find a passage where Jesus compares the Jewish nation to a vineyard.

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is Israel called in this lesson? "An empty vine."

What does this mean? That they gave nothing to God.

Whom did they serve? Idols.

What are we in danger of serving? The world.

What is a divided heart? One that is not all the Lord's.

Why had Israel no longer a king? Because they had forsaken God.

Why were the Israelites in trouble? For their sins.

What were they very anxious about? Their golden calves.

What did Hosea say would become of the golden calf? It would be carried away.

What must fall with the idols? **The kingdom.** Who would be in great trouble when the kingdom fall? **The wicked people.**

Who are afraid of God's judgments? **Sinners.** What did Hosea urge Israel to do? **To seek the Lord.**

What did he say the Lord would then do? **"Rain righteousness upon them."**

What did he mean by this? **That good would come down upon them from above.**

When can God do this? **When we repent and stop sinning.**

#### Words With Little People.

WHAT SIN CAN DO. It can cause great sorrow and suffering. It can build a high fence between us and God. It can turn sweet and pleasant things into bitterness.

WHO SHALL DELIVER US? *Jesus, the Saviour from sin.*

#### Whisper Motto.

"It is time to seek the Lord."

#### General Statement.

Hosea prophesied during a very long period, probably sixty years. It is not easy to define precisely when and where each prophecy was delivered. "During his active life Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned over Judah, and Jeroboam II., Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea over Israel." This prophecy was probably uttered between Shalmaneser's first and second invasions of Israel, and 725 B. C. has been conjectured as the date. Dr. Henderson has outlined this chapter as follows: In verses 1-4 the prophet charges the Israelites with idolatry, anarchy, and want of fidelity. In verses 5-11 he expatiates on the judgments that were to come upon them. In verse 12 he abruptly turns to them in direct address, exhorting them to seek the Lord, and appeals in the remaining verses to the experience which they had already had of the disastrous consequence of their wickedness.

#### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 1. Israel.** The northern kingdom. **An empty vine.** The Revised Version is better, "A luxuriant vine." **Bringeth forth fruit unto himself.** Not unto me. (1) *We are God's vines, and our fruit is rightfully his.* **The multitude of his fruit.** The wealth and luxury of the nation. **Increased the altars.** Idolatry increased in proportion to prosperity. (2) *Sometimes adversity is the best school for us.* God's plan for the Hebrews included one great religious center, to which all the tribes should repair in pilgrimage; a center whose services should unify the nation and perpetuate the sacred creed. That center was at this time in Jerusalem. Any altars builded elsewhere, even to Jehovah, were distinctly monuments of rebellion against him. **Images.** Better, pillars, or obelisks. They were relics of Baal worship, and probably had their origin in obscenity. Even superficial study of ancient Eastern idolatry gives abundant reason for the merciless war waged against it by God's representatives.

**2. Their heart is divided.** (3) *As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.* They were "halting between two opinions" (1 Kings 18. 21), "serving two masters" (Matt. 6. 24), "double-minded, and unstable in all their ways" (Jas. 1. 8). (4) *Facilitation means ruin—both in secular and in spiritual life.* The whim of the Israelite monarch set the fashion in religion. More than once open idolatry had become the established religion, and the court of Samaria never rose above the spurious worship of Beth-el. Amid such environments, to be faithful to Jehovah, and to habitually cross the national confines and worship in his temple at Jerusalem, must have required deep conviction and much moral courage. **Faulty.** Guilty.

**Break down.** Rather "cut off," like the heads of the sacrificed animals.

**3. We have no king.** This must have been a frequent complaint during the declining years of the monarchy, when one king after another was assassinated. "The prophet here probably refers to the time of anarchy during the interregnum between the murder of Pekah and the accession of Hoshea."—*Barrows.* **What then should a king do to us?** Jehovah is against us, and the best of kings could not restore tranquility and prosperity.

**4. Words.** Mere words; vain words. **Swearing falsely in making a covenant,** or covenants. Primarily the meaning is that they were thus false to God, for the covenants referred to were with Shalmaneser and So, and all covenants with foreigners were forbidden. But the Kings of Judah and Israel were strongly tempted to vacillation and falsity, for their little realms lay squeezed between the mighty rival monarchies of Egypt and Assyria, each of which claimed suzerainty over them. See 2 Kings 17. **4. Judgment . . . as hemlock.** Perverted laws and corrupt magistrates were numerous, like poison plants thickly studding a field which should have yielded nutritive crops.

**5. Samaria** here stands for the entire nation. **Fear because of the calves.** Contemptible as was the worship at Beth-el, it was the center of the northern nation's religious hopes. The Assyrian invaders marched steadily toward the temples of their foes, confident that if they devastated them, and demonstrated the weakness of the national gods, all hope of successful resistance would be broken. **Beth-aven.** "House of nothing."

Idols were called "nothings," "vanities." And the prophet Hosea, when he had to allude to Beth-el (which in the Hebrew language is "God's house") was so indignant at the idolatry practiced there that he sarcastically called it Beth-aven ("Nothing's house"). "The glory of the idol consisted in its ornaments."—*Barrows*. Mere formal worship cannot save our souls. (5) "From the very gate of heaven there is a by-way to the pit."—*Bunyan*.

**6. It shall be also carried.** The calf; for Jehovah, whose image it is supposed to be, spurns it. **King Jareb.** This is not a proper name, but signifies the avenger, or defender, and refers to Shalmaneser. The minor states applied this title to the great king—a sort of royal protector. **Ephraim and Israel** are terms used interchangeably for the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. **Ashamed of his own counsel.** The false worship at Beth-el was founded on "politics;" but events were about to prove it a gigantic blunder in statecraft.

**7, 8. King is cut off as the foam.** As a chip on the wave. **High places** refers here to the temple and its colonnades. **Aven**, like Beth-aven, refers to Beth-el. **The thorn and the thistle.** The populous priestly city shall become a desolate wildwood. **Say to the mountains, Cover us.** In desperation. See Luke 23, 30; Rev. 6, 16. Many will thus exclaim in the last day. (6) *Only God's power endures.*

**9. From the days of Gibeah.** The revolting transactions recorded in Judges, chaps. 19, 20, were like a key-note with which the whole national character harmonized. **There they stood.** Morally the nation had made no progress since those days of anarchy. **The battle . . . did not overtake them.** The earlier punitive measures were unavailing.

**10. It is in my desire.** The Revised Version is better, "When it is my desire, I will." **The people.** Foreign invaders. **Bind themselves.** The extremities of the land will unite, like two oxen plowing side by side, but their union shall not save them.

**11. Ephraim is as a heifer, etc.** Israel had been free, prosperous, and self-indulgent, like a heifer employed to draw a threshing sledge over

the corn, which it had permission to eat, for the law forbade animals so employed to be muzzled. Such a heifer would grow fat and "fair." **I will make Ephraim to ride.** Rather as in the Revised Version, "I will set a rider on Ephraim"—the cruel Assyrian. **Judah shall plow.** For Judah also had sinned. The term **Jacob** is probably intended to include both nations.

**12. Sow . . . reap.** (7) *Inevitably the harvest is like the seed sown.* "To the flesh, corruption; to the Spirit, life everlasting." (8) *The worst of sinners, if he will only repent, shall "reap" in mercy.* **Break up your fallow ground.**

This tender exhortation in the midst of such awful denunciations is like a rift in a thunder-cloud—the sun of divine love is shining during all the storm. **Time to seek.** (9) "Now is the accepted time." **Righteousness.** The reward of righteousness—temporal and spiritual prosperity.

**13. Fruit of lies.** Faithlessness. They had depended on shrewdness and trickery, and had been deplorably duped. (10) *Harvest follows seed-time in the spiritual realm as constantly as in nature.* **Thy way.** False worship. **Thy mighty men.** The armies in which thou hast trusted.

**14. Tumult.** A tumultuous war. **Shalman** is probably a contraction of Shalmaneser, as Coniah is elsewhere used for Jeconiah. **Beth-arbel** has not as yet been identified, nor is any thing new known of a massacre which in Hosea's day was evidently proverbial for its horrors.

**15. So shall Beth-el do.** The prophet reiterates the truth that all the calamities of the nation came from the idolatrous worship at Beth-el. **In a morning.** A figurative phrase for "suddenly." This prophecy was startlingly fulfilled. See 2 Kings 17, 4. The sudden collapse of the kingdom of Israel was a source of wonder even in those turbulent times. The inhabitants of Judah were wrenched from their land after a fierce struggle made in the face of all the world; the echoes of their cries are still heard in Jeremiah's Lamentations, and a few years later they were restored to their land and their ruins rebuilt; but no waif on a river's tide ever left less trace of itself than did the King of Israel.

#### CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

We have seen with what tremendous denunciation the Judean prophet scathed the prosperous and worldly religionists of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam. We are now to study the utterances of one who dwelt among the sinful nation and raised his solitary voice in vain while the delusive glory of Jehu's dynasty sank into the miserable anarchy that preluded Israel's final ruin. The Book of Hosea falls into two parts, one written in Jeroboam's reign, the other probably before the loss of Gilead and Galilee in Pekah's usurpation. In

chaps. 1 to 8 we read the pathetic history of Hosea's call. He loved and married one whose character proved far different from the ideal he had seen in her. Her faithlessness broke his heart, but he clung to her till she left him. At last he found her in a state from which he rescued her only by buying her as a slave, and with affection still unquenched sought to win the poor wretch back to the life she had thrown away. Brooding over his own home-tragedy, he realized that it was a parable of Jehovah's love for faithless Israel, and he tells

his story in brief pathetic hints which are just enough to make a basis for the truth he has learned in so much suffering. This experience is the key to Hosea's passionate tenderness, and his realization—first among the prophets—of Jehovah's love as his supreme revelation. We may once more look to St. James for a motto which will perfectly sum up a prophet's teaching—"Unto jealousy He yearneth for the spirit which he made to dwell in us" (so read 4. 5). As might be expected, the prophet who learned this lesson sees more clearly than his predecessors in other respects as well. Elijah, Elisha, Amos had tolerated the calf-worship, or at least uttered no protest, accepting an imperfect worship of Jehovah as better than none at all. Hosea sees that it was dragging Jehovah down to the level of the heathen Baalim, and that a sensuous worship was producing a debased life. Moreover, whereas Elisha, seeing in Jehu only the appointed destroyer of Baal, had approved his massacre of Ahab's house, Hosea looks deeper into the lawless ambition which really prompted the act, and declares the reigning dynasty doomed for the "blood of Jezreel." The divine right of the northern kingdom was forfeited by their sin, and the house of David is for the prophet the true hope of Israel. His ideal of Israel restored sacrificed almost every thing that the people were attached to most deeply, and the hope was never realized; his predictions, if as such we are to regard his glowing aspirations, were fulfilled only for the faithful few, and in no earthly promised land.

**Verse 1.** Probably this refers back to the material prosperity of Jeroboam's time; the tenses of the verbs may be altered to the simple preterit.

**Fruit.** Comp. 9. 16; Psa. 80. 8-11. **Altars.** As their prosperity increased they increased their places of worship. So far they are rather to be imitated than condemned. Moreover, the "high places" had not been denounced by the prophets before this. Hosea condemns them, however, because he saw that the materialistic worship they fostered, uncontrolled by guardians of a higher faith, was the real source of moral corruption. To assimilate Jehovah to the Canaanite Baalim was to invite the immorality which Canaanite worship demanded. **Pillars.** These were tall stones set up on end, used in the primitive heathen times to mark the place where a deity was worshiped, and hence often regarded as the abode of the deity himself. As in many other cases, the symbol was adopted by the worshippers of Jehovah to denote a sanctuary, or "high place;" thus Jacob raised a "pillar" (Hebrew *massēbah*) at Beth-el (Gen. 28. 18), and Moses built an altar with them (Exod. 24. 4). Even after Hosea's day we find they were regarded as harmless in Judah, for Isaiah (19. 18) speaks of an altar and *massēbah* as a sign of Jehovah's worship. It is startling to find them unconditionally forbidden in Deuteronomy (16. 22), but we must acknowledge

that this essentially prophetic book, whether from Moses or not, corresponds with the national conscience only in the last years of the kingdom of Judah.

**2. Divided.** Comp. Jas. 1. 8. But the margin, "smooth," or "slippery," seems preferable. **Spoil.** A very strong word, expressing the hatefulness of the symbols which, innocent in themselves, had been the means of so much evil.

**3. No king.** Deserving the name, for a king set up by the people alone (8. 4) had no place in a theocracy. The impotence of the fleeting usurpers of the day was patent enough, and a true insight could have said this even of the mighty Jeroboam.

**4. Swearing.** The text, supported by Hitzig and Pusey, seems simpler than the margin (Cheyne and Orelli); the former makes the "covenants," like the "vain words," belong to fraud in private life, while the latter imports the new idea of foreign alliances as a separate sin. **Shall spring** (margin). Sin will be reaped by those who sowed, like a rank and poisonous weed. **Hemlock.** A mere guess; a general word is safer.

**5. Be in terror for.** Cheyne reads "be-moan," a slight change, and suiting the parallelism better. The text is a keen satire on the idols which only caused anxiety for their own safety, powerless to secure it, much less help their devotees. **Calves.** Literally, "she-calves," a contemptuous feminine. The plural would be an interesting confirmation of the conjecture that both Jeroboam's calves were at Beth-el. See note on 1 Kings 12. 30, January 11. But, unfortunately, the LXX. supports the inference which the subsequent "it" suggests, that the plural is a mistake, due perhaps to the frequency with which the two calves of Jeroboam I. were mentioned together. **Beth-aven.** See note preceding that just quoted. **His people.** So read, for Jehovah will not own the people of the idol which caricatures himself. Comp. 1. 9. **Che-marim** (margin). A word never used of true priests of Jehovah. It is perhaps Assyrian in origin, and means "men who prostrate themselves."

**6.** Their god would be sent away as so much bullion, to bribe a man to render the help it could not give! **Jareb.** Comp. 5. 13, best translated; it is a kind of nickname, "Fighter." The prophet speaks from a height whence even the mighty monarchs of Asshur seem small—they are mere fighters, whose exploits time would dim, till future ages could not even tell which of the monotonous series was meant by a sobriquet fitting them all alike! Most of us will complacently leave the learned to settle between Asurian and Tiglath-pileser II. The word "present" enhances the irony, being the common word for an unbloody offering in worship; the idol is to become an "oblation" itself! **Counsel.** That of 1 Kings 12. 28.

**7. Her king.** That is, her monarchy, not

merely the individual. The propitiatory gifts were omitted (comp. 2 Kings 17. 4), and the Assyrian took vengeance. Down swept the swirling flood, and the King of little Israel was but "as a chip" upon its surface.

**8. Aven.** That is, Beth-aven (Beth-el). But Cheyne takes it as a common noun, "idolatry," describing all the sanctuaries. **The sin.** Compare the recurring phrase, 2 Kings 10. 31. **Thorn.** Comp. Gen. 3. 18. The primal curse tardily falls on them, though they had pretended to be Jehovah's altars. **They shall say.** The mountains were round about Samaria, but were no barrier to the foe; welcome would they be, if they were to fall and crush them ere the judgment came. This appears among the nineteen New Testament quotations from Hosea (Luke 23. 30; Rev. 6. 16; 9. 3).

**9.** Professor Robertson Smith thinks that the reference to the evil notoriety of Gibeah, here and in 9. 9, assumes a narrative in a different form from that of the Book of Judges (chap. 20). The fact that the Benjamites, making Gibeah's cause their own, were permitted twice to inflict heavy losses on Israel, would prepare us for a fuller version in which Israel was not only the righteous avenger. A time when men "did what was right in their own eyes" probably enough witnessed many enormities as foul as that which at last roused the sleeping conscience. **There have they continued** (margin). Cheyne supports the Revised Version text, but his explanation is not quite satisfactory, and the margin ("shall not the battle . . . ?") adopted by Orelli and others, gives a clearer sense. In the battle-field of Gibeah, but in the cause of evil, Israel has taken his stand again; and on such a field shall the disaster which at Gibeah befell the champions of wrong befall them too. "Gibeah" thus is used typically, like Har-Magedon in the Apocalypse (16. 16; comp. Zech. 12. 11).

**10.** The "two transgressions"—either the two calves or the rebellion from David and the calf-worship—are the stake to which they are bound when delivered to the "peoples," Jehovah's ministers of punishment.

**11.** Ephraim is compared to a heifer broken in to the easy and pleasant work (Deut. 25. 4) of treading out corn. But now the galling yoke shall mar the sleek beauty of her neck. Jehovah breaks her in to hard field-labor, and will set a rider, the Assyrian, upon her. The alternative translation (Cheyne and others) is, "I have spared the beauty of her neck;" literally, "have passed by." The contrast then begins with the next clause, "I will make Ephraim to draw." **Judah.** Pusey and other commentators treat this clause too subtly, reading allegorical distinctions into what seems to be only the conclusion of the metaphor, declaring that Judah must plow just as Israel must harrow. The same servitude shall be for both. But out of the

very image which describes the judgment he takes the suggestion of a gleam of hope. It was not a purposeless servitude; the plowing and harrowing might prepare for a fair harvest.

**12. Mercy.** That almost untranslatable word which denotes at once God's goodness to man, man's devotion to God, and man's love to his neighbor. It is the nearest word the Old Covenant could reveal to the supreme Christian conception of love. We may perhaps observe that the Old makes righteousness the seed, while the New makes it the fruit. If, however, we regard the "mercy" as God's, the meaning will be that divine bounty gives a harvest out of all proportion to what was sown. **Fallow ground.** So long abandoned to its crop of weeds. The husbandmen who hope for a harvest must not sow among thorns (Jer. 4. 3; Matt. 13. 7), but clear the ground first. **Till.** Persevering endeavor will assuredly bring his blessing. **Rain.** Consistency with the rest of the verse makes this beautiful picture preferable to the rather tame margin, though the meaning, "rain," is less common. The metaphor reappears in Isa. 45. 8. Righteousness must be the gift of God to men so incapable of it as the next words declare these to be.

**13. Plowed.** Comp. Job 4. 8. The very soil is wickedness. The harvest is "iniquity," or oppression dealt out to them in their turn. **Lies.** Faithless to God and man, they find that men break faith with them. Perfidy brings its own Nemesis. **Way.** The substitution of "chariots" is practically certain from the parallelism and the LXX. (although manuscripts differ). Comp. 14. 3.

**14. Tumult.** The roar of the approaching Assyrians, so marvelously described by Isatah (5. 26-30). **Against the peoples** (margin). The tribes, as in Deut. 33. 8. **Shalman.** Schrader identifies him provisionally with (1) Shalmaneser III., who invaded Lebanon and Damascus in B. C. 775-72, or (2) Salamann, a King of Moab mentioned in an inscription of Tiglath-pileser. But, as Cheyne points out, the name is not uncommon, and need not here belong to a king at all. **Beth-arbel.** Probably not the Arbelæ of Alexander's campaign, but a much nearer place, as that near Pella on the east of Jordan. **Mother.** Comp. 2 Kings 8. 12; Psa. 137. 8, 9.

**15.** So the catastrophe is traced back to the idol, the root of all their trouble. **At daybreak.** Men wake, and, lo! king and kingdom have vanished as a dream. Comp. Psa. 90. 6; 73. 20. **The king.** Hosea's namesake, whose disastrous reign the prophet perhaps did not live to see.

#### The Lesson Council.

**Question 3.** *What were the sins of Israel that led to its overthrow?*

The sins of Israel were numerous and various.

1. They were an exceedingly ungrateful people. 2. They were forgetful of God's love and favor toward them. 3. There was innate in them a bent to idolatry and to sin, which they did not guard against. 4. They failed to employ the means put within their reach to fortify and strengthen them against evil. Sin has always turned against its subjects to overthrow them. The history of the race, and that of the fallen angels, is conclusive proof of the fact—*Rev. D. F. Waddell, D.D.*

Hosea mentions the following: Pride, a divided heart, forgetting the law, rejection of knowledge, scorning the truth, idolatry, shameful orgies in idol-worship, licentiousness, deceit, falsehood, treachery, covenant-breaking, perjury, bribery, profanity, drunkenness, madness, selfishness, hatred, theft, robbery, murder, slaughter, rebellion. "Ye have plowed wickedness;" "ye have eaten the fruit of lies;" "in a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off."—*Rev. Samuel L. Beiler.*

1. The foundation sin was idolatry. In chapters 1-8 this is set forth under the symbol of a wife's unfaithfulness to her husband. Israel forsook Jehovah in great part, bowed down to "the calves of Samaria," and became involved in nature-worship. 2. The result of this idolatry was moral pollution (chap. 4. 1, 2). There was no fidelity, no goodness, no knowledge of God in the land. There was all manner of cursing, lying, murdering, stealing, and uncleanness. 3. In the distress which ensued Israel sought aid from Assyria and Egypt instead of from God (chap. 5. 13; 7. 2). 4. For these sins came the dissolution of the state (chap. 7. 8). Ephraim was mingled with the heathen.—*Rev. J. C. Jackson, Ph.D.*

Read Hosea, chaps. 4 and 5. What statements these are: "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery they break out. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." So on it goes. These two chapters are full of history and equally full of warning. By these sins fell this ancient nation. By these same sins falls every modern nation in which they abound.—*Rev. William F. McDowell, D.D.*

Their tap-root sin—idolatry—went to seed in supreme selfishness. Their greed of gain led them to override the Sabbath, to oppress the poor, and to use all manner of deceits, tricks of current trade; they adulterated their articles of commerce, and used cheating measures and weights. There was an awful undervaluation of human life when a pair of shoes pulled down the scales against "the needy." They did "always resist the Holy Ghost" in rejecting the prophets. God draws the

picture of the nation, showing it to be given to lying, killing, stealing, and adultery, as a rule, and the priests excelled in these villainies.—*Rev. W. A. Robinson, D.D.*

## Analytical and Biblical Outline.

### The People Israel.

#### I. A LUXURIOUS PEOPLE.

*A luxuriant vine.* v. 1 (Rev. Ver).

"A vine out of Egypt." *Ps.* 80. 8.

"Vineyard of the Lord." *Isa.* 5. 7.

#### II. AN IDOLATROUS PEOPLE.

*Increased the altars....goodly images.* v. 1.

"He forsook God." *Deut.* 32. 15-17.

"Images....in every high hill." *2 Kings* 17. 10.

#### III. AN UNSTABLE PEOPLE.

*Their heart is divided.* v. 2.

"A double-minded man....unstable." *Jas.* 1. 8.

"How long halt ye?" *1 Kings* 18. 21.

#### IV. A DISLOYAL PEOPLE.

*Swearing falsely....making a covenant.* v. 4.

"Without understanding, covenant-breakers." *Rom.* 1. 31.

"Without natural affection, truce-breakers." *2 Tim.* 3. 8.

#### V. A HELPLESS PEOPLE.

*Carried unto Assyria.* v. 6.

"Make them....like unto them." *Psa.* 115. 8.

"Ashamed, that trust in graven images." *Isa.* 42. 17.

#### VI. A FEARFUL PEOPLE.

*To the mountains, Cover us.* v. 8.

"Into the holes of the rocks." *Isa.* 2. 19.

"From the wrath of the Lamb." *Rev.* 6. 16.

#### VII. A CAPTIVE PEOPLE.

*Set a rider on Ephraim.* v. 11 (Rev. Ver.).

"Will scatter you among the heathen." *Lev.* 26. 33.

"Commitment sin....servant of sin." *John* 8. 34.

#### VIII. A DESTROYED PEOPLE.

*The mother....dashed in pieces.* v. 14.

"Will I also deal in fury." *Ezek.* 8. 16.

"A consuming fire....a jealous God." *Deut.* 4. 24.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### Sin the Cause of Sorrow.

This world is immeasurably happier than it was in the days of Hosea. There are fewer wars; there is less brutality; there is little slavery; there are fewer diseases, and they are more completely under control; there are juster laws, and there is a longer average of life. Why? Simply because there is less of sin. We are journeying slowly—creeping, perhaps, but steadily journeying, never-



theless—toward the millennial era of earthly delighl. You and I are called by God to hasten its advent, and that can be done by crushing out the sins that remain.

1. If there were no drunkards and no intoxicants indulged in, and the vices that spring from that indulgence ceased, a very large share of the sorrow and pain now endured in the United States of America would vanish.

2. If all turbulent and licentious passions were under the control of the Spirit of God, and men were candid and honorable in their affections, another very large share of the burdens of the nation would be relieved.

3. If covetousness had entirely ceased from our land, and the rich and poor alike followed Christ's commands by seeking the interests of the other; if every man felt that he was every other man's brother, and if there were no swindling nor over-reaching nor harsh bargaining, the effect of the change would be so radical that we should not recognize our own village homes.

4. But these are only three vices, and if we go through the long list of evils that are sadly familiar to us all, and recognize how much even of disease and insanity and accident and financial depression and other evils, commonly regarded as secular, would depart from our land when these sins departed, we can have some conception of the noble work in which we as Christians are or ought to be engaged. Let us never forget that somebody's sin is the cause of somebody's sorrow. Let us seek to raise and stay and strengthen those who fall,

"Till taught by Him who for our sake  
Bore every form of life's distress,  
With every passing year we make  
The sum of human sorrow less."

#### Lesson Word-Pictures.

A beautiful vine To-day its rich leaves flutter in the mellow sunshine; its clusters droop for very heaviness. To-morrow it is a vine stripped and empty. To what use is all this harvesting of pulpy clusters? As the harvest grows, how the altars of idolatry multiply, the "images" also!

But the shadow of a heavy hand is descending. It is the mighty hand of Jehovah. What a smiting of the altars! What a spoiling of the images! And there is no excuse for the idolaters. Hear the sound of babbling, lying tongues! Hear the false words spoken in covenant-making!

What a response in judgment to all this! Like the thick springing up of the hemlock-growth in the long furrows. Judgment, too, upon those famous old calf-gods! Their faces—how silly, foolish, vacuous!

Judgment smites them. Gone now, borne away to Assyria! What a scene of sorrow is left behind—the walling worshippers, the distracted priests, Sa-

maria in the shadow of its fear, its very king a thing as transient as the bit of froth on the foaming billow! How many high places in ruin! On the very altars only a growth of thorns and thistles! And, hark! Unto the tall, overshadowing mountains hear the remnant cry, "Cover us!" They supplicate the great hills, "Fall on us!"

And now comes a scene of great severity! A land with soil hard and stubborn to be turned over and crumbled and sown down. But who are these led out to this humble, heavy toil? Is Ephraim with fair, sleek neck to be bowed and bruised? Is Judah to be yoked to the plow? Jacob to become a clod-breaker? Yes; to the plow and the harrow they have gone. Up and down the hard field they toil, tugging away in the lengthening furrows. And now let the opportunity be promptly seized. O, that over this crumbled soil the nation might pass, casting into it the seed of a holy living. Shall it be so? Then, hark! Hear the happy song of the sower as he opens his hands and broadcast scatters his seed.

And, look! How the gray skies lower! Hear the musical patter of the rain on the thirsty clods! Some day what an abundant and golden reaping there will be in mercy!

But, O, what tearful shame! There has been another scene. What long furrows have been turned up in sin, and how thickly they have been sown with wrong! What wonder at harvest-days when sheaves of iniquity are reaped and a crop of lies eaten! Day of the ingathering of the storm!

All over the tempest-smitten land is the tumult of judgment! Hark, hear the cry of the ravager of the strong fortresses! A land prostrate and spoiled, and Israel's king utterly cut off! God's harvest-fields of judgment, man's ingathering of the harvest-sheaves!

#### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 1.* John Wesley remarked in early life that he had known but four men who had not declined in religion by becoming wealthy; at a later period in life he corrected the remark and made no exception.—*Stevens.*

It seems to have been the common desire and emulation of the primitive Christians to unload themselves of this world. God forbid that any Christian now to whom wealth is a burden and a snare should be obliged to keep it! John Hopkins, the founder of the university in Baltimore bearing his name, accumulated nine millions of dollars. One day he said to his gardener, "Next to the hell of being utterly bereft of money is the purgatory of possessing a vast amount of it. I have accumulated wealth, but not happiness." Mr. Hopkins's testimony is certainly a striking commentary on Agur's prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches."

"Judgment springeth up as hemlock." "We have no king." The nation was disorganized, and judgment could not be executed when the people turned away from God. James Russell Lowell, in a reply to skeptics, said: "When the microscopic search of skepticism which has hunted the heaven and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children unpolluted, a place where age is revered, infancy protected, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard, it will then be in order for the skeptical literati to move thither and there ventilate their views. But so long as these men are dependent upon the religion which they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob humanity of that faith which alone makes life tolerable and society possible."

"Ye have eaten the fruit of lies." There is an Australian missile called the boomerang, which is thrown so as to describe singular curves, and fall at last at the feet of the thrower. Sin is a kind of boomerang which goes off into space curiously, but turns again upon its author, and with tenfold force strikes the guilty soul that launched it.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

I. *Background of the Lesson.* 1. Portray Hosea as Amos's successor—the prophet of the northern kingdom. 2. The turbulent times: Jeroboam's son Zechariah slain after a six months' reign; the usurper Shallum dethroned in a month's time; Menahem's cruel reign of ten years; his son Pekahiah's assassination by Pekah; Pekah's assassination by Hoshea; the resultant anarchy. 3. The foreign relations of Israel: War was waged with Judah; Syria rebelled and regained its independence; Egypt was a constant threat; and Assyria, fulfilling the prophecy of Amos, overflowed the land. 4. Political parties: One party counseled peace and submission to the suzerainty of the Assyrian crown; the other party counseled war for independence. II. *The Prophet's Message.* A denunciation of the sin of Israel. He shows: 1. Their ingratitude, multiplying idolatry according to the increase of prosperity. 2. Their division of heart, attempting at once to please God and gratify their own selfish desires. 3. Their frequent perjury and disregard of solemn oaths. 4. The inevitable ruin that follows sin. Call out in detail the prophecies of woe, and trace in sacred history their fulfillment. 5. The love of God in the midst of all this severity. Expatiate upon the tender exhortation of verse 12.

### References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 5: Idolatrous priests, 611. Ver. 11: Threshing by oxen, 207... FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 5290, 6010-6018, 9959-9961. Ver. 2: Prose, 5937, 2833, 1620-1622, 3762, 4120, 4121, 4925, 5257, 7269, 8141, 12282, 9842, 9843, 3731-3736. Ver. 13: Prose, 12069, 12071. Ver. 14: Poetical, 2858.

### Blackboard.



DIRECTIONS FOR COLORS.—The words "Sow" and "Reap" in yellow; the words "Sin" and "Sorrow" in red; the grain and the wheat yellow.

BLACKBOARD THOUGHTS.—Sow the seeds of sin, and sorrow will be a sure harvest.

Sin may sometimes wear a mask of pleasure, but sorrow hides behind it.

Pure joy goes with a pure heart, but sin is linked to punishment.

Mirth and sin may join hands and walk together for a while, but will part company at the sign of retribution.

Disaster follows hard in the footsteps of disobedience, and God puts signs of warning all along the way.

If one hides his eyes and stops his ears he may not heed warnings, but sooner or later he will stumble and fall.

### Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Bearing Fruit for God.*

Print "Israel" again. Let children tell what they can of her evil doings. What prophet was sent to warn Israel? Now God sent another prophet. His name was Hosea. Print the name.

Tell the children that you have a story for them about a vine. Draw one rapidly as you talk, or, if you cannot draw, show one which you have provided. Once a gardener said, "I will plant a vine in my garden. It will give me shade, and by and by good fruit." So he planted the vine in a nice sunny spot, and watered it and tended it very carefully. Pretty soon it began to grow. It was a

strong, beautiful vine, and the gardener loved it and watched it grow with great delight. It was his vine, you know, and he had a right to all the fruit it could bear. But the foolish little vine, when it began to be large and beautiful, said, "I am able to take care of myself. I know the gardener wants me to bear good fruit for him, but I shall bear just the kind of fruit that I please!" What do you think of such a vine as this?

God told Hosea that Israel was like this vine. But Israel bore fruit. Would you like to know what kind of fruit? [Make leaves and tendrils on the vine, and in place of the clusters of grapes print "Idolatry," "Falsehood," "Selfishness," etc.] Ask if this is God's kind of fruit? Whose is it? God looked down and saw the kind of fruit this vine was bearing. God had planted it, and the vine had no right to bear Satan's fruit, for it was God's vine, and was planted in his garden. He was the gardener who had watched and tended the vine. What do you think God would do with such a vine? It was not doing what it was made to do. It was a bad vine. Do you think the gardener would pull it up and destroy it?



Make a heart on the board. Divide it, giving the larger part to "Self"—printed in large letters. Print "God" in smaller letters in the other part. Make a vine growing out of the heart. Print on it "My Life." Tell that we may call each little child's life a vine. God has planted it. He has put it in the right place. He has made it to bear fruit for him. What kind of fruit will the vine bear that grows out of a divided heart? If children catch the idea they will tell you what to name some of the fruits of such a life. Print "Ill-temper," "Disobedience," "Unkindness," etc. These are not God's fruits. Satan is glad to see them growing. They belong to him, and he is helping them to grow.

Make another heart and another vine growing from it. Print "God" in the heart, and name the fruits on the vine "Love," "Joy," "Peace," etc. Read from Gal. 5. 22, 23, what God says are the fruits of the Spirit.

*Closing Words.* Here are thirty, forty, fifty little vines all growing in the garden of the Lord! Who has planted you, children? Yes; the heavenly

Father has put you in the very place he wanted you to be. And he has planted you to bear fruit for him. Have you any right to bear Satan's fruit? No; that is robbing God! You belong to him, and you must not let Satan steal you away. Jesus can keep Satan from touching you. Will you ask him and trust him to be your Saviour?

#### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Deep are the wounds.  
Everlasting love.  
The gospel bell.  
Hasten, sinner,  
Come to Jesus.  
Come to the fountain.  
Why do you wait?  
Just as I am.  
I lay my sins.  
Yield not to temptation.  
No compromise.  
God speed the right.

#### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. What sin did the Israelites constantly indulge in? **The sin of idolatry.**
2. What was the chief form of their false worship? **They worshipped a calf made of gold.**
3. Why did God send calamities upon them? **To bring them back to him.**
4. How did he tell them they should reap if they sowed in righteousness? **They should reap in mercy.**
5. What was the cause of the alienation of this nation from God? **"Your iniquities have separated,"** etc. (GOLDEN TEXT.)

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

27. Why is it called the Apostles' Creed?  
**Because it contains the substance of the apostles' testimony.**
28. How did this Creed arise?  
**It is an enlargement of the form used in baptism.**

B. C. 730-721.]

#### LESSON VIII. CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL.

[May 24.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. 2 Chron. 24. 20.

#### Authorized Version.

2 Kings 17. 6-18. [Commit to memory verses 16-18.]

6 In the ninth year of Ho-she'a the king of As-

#### Revised Version.

6 In the ninth year of Ho-she'a, the king of As-syr'i-a took Sa-ma'ri-a, and carried Is'ra-el

syri-a took Sa-ma'ri-a, and carried Is-ra-el away into As-syr'i-a, and placed them in Ha'lah and in Ha'bor by the river of Go'zan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 For so it was, that the children of Is-ra-el had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of E'gypt, from under the hand of Pha'raoh king of E'gypt, and had feared other gods,

8 And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Is-ra-el, and of the kings of Is-ra-el, which they had made.

9 And the children of Is-ra-el did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

10 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger:

12 For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the Lord testified against Is-ra-el, and against Ju'dah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Ba'al.

17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Is-ra-el, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Ju'dah only.

away unto As-syr'i-a, and placed them in Ha'lah, and in Ha'bor, on the river of Go'zan, and in the cities of the Medes. And it was so, because the children of Is-ra-el had sinned against the Lord their God, which brought them up out of the land of E'gypt from under the hand of Pha'raoh king of E'gypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Is-ra-el, and of the kings of Is-ra-el, which they made. And the children of Is-ra-el did secretly things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up pillars and Asherim upon every high hill, and under every green tree: and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the nations whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger: and they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified unto Is-ra-el, and unto Judah, by the hand of every prophet, and of every seer, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by the hand of my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their neck, like to the neck of their fathers, who believed not in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified unto them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the nations that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. And they forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Ba'al. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. 18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Is-ra-el, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Ju'dah only.

**TIME.**—B. C. 730-721. **PLACES.**—1. Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel; 2. The distant point to which captive Israelites were sent. **RULERS.**—Hoshea, the last King of Israel; Shalmaneser and Sargon, the Kings of Assyria. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—National iniquity.

#### HOME READINGS.

*M.* Captivity of Israel. 2 Kings 17. 6-12.  
*Tu.* Captivity of Israel. 2 Kings 17. 13-18.  
*W.* Would not hear. 2 Kings 18. 9-12.  
*Th.* The captivity foretold. Isa. 9. 8-17.  
*F.* Prophecy against Samaria. Mic. 1. 1-9.  
*S.* The result of sin. Ezek. 39. 17-24.  
*S.* "Except ye repent." Luke 13. 1-5.

## LESSON HYMNS.

No. 75, New Canadian Hymnal.  
Come, sinners, to the gospel feast.

No. 80, New Canadian Hymnal.  
What could your Redeemer do?

No. 73, New Canadian Hymnal.  
God calling yet! shall I not hear?

## DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 46, 44, 42.

## QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

## 1. Disobedience, v. 6-12.

What was the name of the last King of Israel?

What was the name of the Assyrian king who eventually captured Samaria?

Name the places to which the Ten Tribes were transported?

Where were these places?

Did the Ten Tribes ever return to the Holy Land?

What was the purpose of the ancient Oriental conquerors in transferring such large populations from one country to another?

What cause is given in the seventh verse for the calamities that befell Israel?

What did Jesus say about the relation of temporal evil to moral causes?

Mention some of the idolatrous indulgences of the Jews given in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses?

What is meant by images and groves?

What is meant by the "tower of the watchmen?"

## 2. Warning, v. 13-17.

Mention some of the prophets and seers that God had sent to Israel.

How did the Jews treat them?

What does the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews say concerning their treatment?

What parable did Jesus narrate referring to these repeated prophetic warnings?

What was the name of the king who erected the two golden calves?

What was the name of the king who introduced Baal-worship to Israel?

What was the name of a king who caused his son to pass through fire?

Give the name of a king who in extremity resorted to witchcraft and enchantment?

## 3. Doom, v. 18.

Who removed the Israelites from their land?  
How can God be said to have done it if Sargon did it?

Does God do any of the things that we now credit to men?

## Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That upon men who will not be humbled by small evils God sends great and heavy ones?

2. That there is no apology for the sins of the righteous?

3. That false religious creeds lead to vicious lives?

4. That external rights of worship will not save?

5. That God cannot tolerate idolatry?

6. That God is always seeking his lost sheep?

7. That privileges abused are eventually withdrawn?

## Hints for Home Study.

1. Draw an outline map of Asia Minor, and mark as nearly as you can the places to which the Israelites were carried.

2. Make a list of the prominent men who were mainly responsible for the introduction of idolatry to Israel. Make a list of the most eminent prophets: (a) Miracle-workers, (b) political reformers, (c) preachers of righteousness.

3. Make a list of the false gods whom the Israelites were most inclined to worship.

## QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

## 1. Disobedience, v. 6-12.

What king conquered Samaria?

Where were the Israelites taken?

Under what King of Israel did this occur?

Against whom had Israel sinned?

Whose evil example had they followed?

Of what secret sins had they been guilty?

Where had they set up idols?

Where did they burn incense?

What provoked the Lord's anger?

What forbidden thing did they do?

## 2. Warning, v. 13-17.

By whom had God warned the people?

What had the prophet said?

In spite of this, what had the people done?

What had they rejected, and what chosen?

What false gods did they make and worship?

To what evil did they compel their sons and daughters?

For what did they sell themselves?

What warning is given to each of us? (Luke 13. 3.)

## 3. Doom, v. 18.

How did Israel's sin affect the Lord?

How did he punish them?

Who alone was left in the land?

What was the reason for this doom? (GOLDEN

TEXT.)

## Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The power of evil associations?

2. The nature of true repentance?

3. That God hates sin?

**Home Work for Young Bereans.**

Give the names of the Kings of Israel who were most noticeable for their idolatry.

Give the names of the Kings of Judah who sinned most in this way.

Find how many years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel the kingdom of Judah was destroyed.

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

Who was now the King of Israel? **Hoshea.**  
What king conquered Samaria during his reign?

**The King of Assyria.**

To what country were the Israelites carried captive? **To Assyria.**

Why did the Lord allow this? **To punish Israel.**

Against whom had they sinned? **Against the Lord.**

How had they sinned? **By disobeying the Lord.**

What had he told them to do? **To worship him.**

What did they worship? **Idols.**

What did they build? **Idol temples.**

What had the Lord said to them? **"Ye shall not do this thing."**

Who had been sent to warn them of their sin? **Prophets and wise men.**

How did they receive them? **They would not hear them.**

What did they set up to worship? **Two golden calves.**

What worse thing did they do? **They worshipped Baal.**

What did the Lord do in his anger? **He removed them out of his sight.**

What tribe only was left? **The tribe of Judah.**

**Words With Little People.**

How sin grows. The Israelites did not fall into sin all at once. Day after day sin grew in their hearts. At first they feared and hated it. Then it did not look quite so bad to them, and they began to sin a little. Then it grew easier and easier every day, until at last God's voice speaking in the heart could scarcely be heard.

Sin is just the same to-day that it always has been.

**Whisper Motto.**

"I will shun the evil thing."

**General Statement.**

The measure of Israel's sin is filled up. For two hundred and fifty years there has been an unbroken apostasy from God. Not one of all her nineteen kings has forsaken the sin of Jeroboam except to plunge into greater idolatry. God's warnings have been despised, his chastenings unheeded, his mercies unrecognized, his long-suffering love trampled upon. Israel has "sown to the wind" and must "reap the whirlwind" (Hos. 8. 7). We are called to contemplate: (1) *A nation's sin*, and (2) *A nation's ruin*. The sin was the cause of the ruin: "They obeyed not the voice of the Lord." The same road leads to the same end now as then, for individuals as well as nations. Our lesson is a guide-board on the road, and its inscription is—**BEWARE!**

**EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.**

**Verse 6. The ninth year.** 721 B. C. The date has been fixed by a comparison of the Hebrew figures with the recently discovered records of Assyria. **Hoshea.** The last King of Israel. He was a usurper, who had killed his predecessor, Pekah. **King of Assyria.** Shalmaneser besieged Samaria (verse 3), but it surrendered to Sargon in the first year of his reign. He was a Tartan general under Shalmaneser, and usurped the throne at his death. He was the father of Sennacherib. The capture of Samaria is detailed by him in a pompous inscription found in the palace of Khorsabad. **Carried Israel away.** In the days of Moses God had said that this would be the consequence of departure from his covenant. See Deut. 28. 58-67. (1) *God's judgments may seem delayed, but the day of vengeance will surely come to the impenitent.* As the weeks which in childhood appeared almost endless seem but moments to age, so the generations so long to us are but hours to the infinite God, who never forgets. **Placed them.** Sargon was probably the first great despot who

"colonized newly conquered districts by placing in them people from a distance, and forming a mixed population which would not be so likely to plan revolt." As far as can now be ascertained, **Halah** was an Assyrian city in Asia Minor. Some have supposed that it was the same as Chalachend, and stood where is now a remarkable mound of ruins called *Gla*. **Habor** was probably the river Khabor in northern Assyria. **Gozan** has been identified with the Kisel-osen, which rises in the northern part of the Zagros range, and flows into the Caspian Sea. **The Medes**, who dwelt near the Caspian Sea, had just been subjected by Sargon.

**7. So it was.** Not because of effeminacy, not because of want of patriotism, nor from the working of any natural law, but solely because they had failed to keep the covenant of the Lord. God's hand may be traced in many events which are called fate, or fortune. **Which had brought them up.** Ingratitude is the basest of sins. (2) *The son who lifts his hand against his father, or the*

wretch who turns and rends his benefactor, is innocent compared to him who sins against the tender mercies of his God. (3) *Most calamities are the consequence of special sin.* **Feared.** Worshiped. (4) *There is no apology for the sins of the children of the righteous.*

**8. The statutes of the heathen.** The licentious laws of the Canaanites, for which these heathen had been "cast out." Shall Israel fare better? **Kings of Israel . . . had made.** These were the golden calves, the unauthorized change of the feast, the prohibition against going to Jerusalem to worship, etc.; sinful in their conception, and equally sinful in their observance. (5) *Has God's Church to-day any mixture of heathen statutes or commandments of men?*

**9. Secretly.** The meaning of the original word is to "cover up, to conceal," and the whole expression probably means that they covered up or cloaked their evil practices with the pretense that they were really serving Jehovah. (6) *But secret sin steadily leads to open transgression.* **High places.** In all countries hills and mountains have been favorite places for altars; so that "high places," even when in city streets, became synonyms for such altars, particularly for idolatrous ones. (7) *There were plenty of altars, but few devout worshippers.* **Tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.** See chap. 18. 8. From the loneliest outpost to the most crowded thoroughfares, everywhere, there were traces of their depravity. (8) *False creeds lead to vice.*

**10. Images. Statues. Groves.** As these were set up "under every green tree," we must understand them as something different from the ancient grove-worship (Gen. 21. 33). The original word, *Asherim*, doubtless refers to wooden figures of Ashtoreth, or Astarte, the female companion deity of Baal.

**11, 12. Wicked things.** All the abominable rites and ceremonies of heathen worship. See 1 Kings 14. 24, and Rom. 1. 21-32. **Anger.** When God's infinite love is spurned, his mercy trampled upon, his goodness persistently abused, his warnings unheeded, he cannot be just and not be angry; that is, wounded and indignant, for that is the meaning of the word. **Idols.** The term has in it an idea of contempt. (9) *When any one sets up any thing in his heart in place of God, he does an unworthy act.* **Ye shall not** (Exod. 20. 4; Deut. 4. 16; 5. 8; 27. 15). (10) *Few do wrong in ignorance.*

**13. The Lord testified.** Notwithstanding their apostasy for two hundred and fifty years, God in loving mercy sought to bring them back to him. We have seen how he testified through Abijah, Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and Amos; there were in this time twenty prophets of whom we have the names, and many others unmentioned. **Prophets and . . . seers.** Though both these names are

used for prophets (1 Sam. 9. 9), here they have a distinct designation; perhaps something like "ordained" and "lay" preachers in these days.

**Turn ye.** The condition then, the condition now.

(11) *There is no promise to him who will not turn from his wicked ways and keep God's law—repentance and good works, the results of faith.* A vessel sailing for the rocks, a boat on the rapids above Niagara, must *turn*, and turn quickly, or it is lost.

**14. Would not hear.** Their persistent obstinacy was their crowning sin. "Ye would not" (Isa. 30. 15) will be the doom of every lost soul. **Hardened their necks.** A Hebraism frequently used for stubborn self-will. (12) *The way of self-will is the way of death.* **Like . . . their fathers.** The evil that men do lives after them. (13) *Example and precedent are powerful when they are on the side of wrong.*

**15. They rejected.** Notice, the Lord did not reject them; but in rejecting his statutes and covenant they rejected him. The covenant they made with him at Sinai (Exod. 19. 5-8) was the cornerstone of their existence as a nation. **Testimonies.** This rejection culminated when, five years before, they "laughed . . . to scorn and mocked" the messengers of the Lord sent by Hezekiah. **Vanity.** Idolatry is frequently called vanity, because of its nothingness, and (14) *Men become vain (empty) by following idols, whether they be those of the heathen or the worldliness of the present day.*

**16. Molten images . . . calves.** This seems to be a special reference to the sins of Jeroboam, while the remainder of this verse and the next refer to the doings of Ahab and his successors. **A grove.** *Asherah*, the same word as before. Probably the Astarte worship of Jezebel was far more gross than that before known in Israel. **Host of heaven.** Baal and Astarte were probably associated with the worship of the sun, moon, and stars, which was common among the Gentiles, and was specially prohibited to the Jews. See Deut. 4. 19; 17. 3.

**17. Pass through the fire.** That this was human sacrifice is evident from verse 31 and 2 Chron. 28. 3 (margin). The children were probably first killed and then burned. In the time of Jehoram a similar deed by the King of Moab so horrified the Israelites as to cause them to give up their victory. Now they practice it themselves. Thus does the most hideous vice lose its horror to those who harbor it. **Divination.** These things were an "abomination to the Lord" and directly forbidden (Deut. 18. 10-12). **Sold themselves.** Alas! how many sell themselves to do evil, the price being a little present selfish pleasure. But this turns to ashes at last, and they find they have sold themselves for naught. (15) *Salvation is free, but what a price must be paid for sin!*

**18. Therefore.** Referring back to verse 7.

The anger and the punishment were because of the sins enumerated. **Out of his sight.** From the Holy Land, where he dwelt, from the privileges which he had prepared for them, from his presence, which was a part of the covenant. Similarly the lost soul is said to go "into outer darkness" (Matt. 25. 30). **Tribe of Judah only.** That is, the kingdom of Judah, including many members of

the other tribes who had clung to the God of their fathers. See 2 Chron. 11. 16; 30. 11, 18. Judah still held feebly to the covenant with Jehovah, but one hundred and twenty-five years after this she also was sent into captivity. Subsequently Judah returned, but Israel never again was numbered among the nations. (16) *Privileges abused are eventually withdrawn.*

#### CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

The historian who here describes the final disappearance of the Ten Tribes writes from the standpoint of a time when the people had learned from suffering, as well as from the constantly advancing doctrine of the prophets, to abhor any approach to idolatry. Our lessons from Amos and Hosea have illustrated most of the counts in the present indictment, which the length of our commentary, up to this point, requires us to treat very briefly.

**Verse 6. Year.** B. C. 721, when Hezekiah had reigned five years. **Hoshea.** According to verse 2 a better man than his predecessors, though, like them all, a follower of the calf-worship. But the judgment was not for the sins of individuals; the whole nation was irretrievably corrupt. **King.** In verse 3 we have Tiglath-pileser's successor, Salmânassar IV. (B. C. 727-723), mentioned as Hoshea's suzerain. Here no name is given, but the Assyrian monuments fix the conqueror as Sargon. It is curious that the destroyer of the northern kingdom is never named in Scripture. Hoshea had rashly tried to change masters, but Sebech, King of Egypt (*So*, or *Seve*, in verse 4), had adopted the usual Egyptian policy of encouraging revolts and then backing out. Comp. Isaiah's epigrammatic appellation, "turbulence and inactivity" (30. 7). Israel's shiftiness toward other nations was severely rebuked by the prophets, as (on one view) by Hosea (10. 4; see note). **Placed.** This deportation was a common practice with the Assyrians, who thereby got disaffected tribes more under their own control. Cyrus was the first to see that such policy only perpetuated disaffection. In the present case the people were very much scattered, and through the alienation of class from class, and the obliteration of all the distinctive features in their religion, Israel's nationality proved impotent against the disintegrating forces around. Pious individuals may have come back to the restored Jerusalem (comp. Luke 2. 36), and many who still remembered their nationality doubtless joined their brethren of the "Dispersion" (Jas. 1. 1, unless there, as in Acts 26. 7, the ideal unity of Israel is meant). The practical heathenism of the rest made them simply merge with the heathens, just as Christianized Jews to-day merge with the Christian community. Few more fantastic delusions exist than the numerous endeavors to find all over the world "the lost Ten Tribes." **Halah.** Probably Strabo's

*Calachend*, on the southern border of Armenia. It was thus not far from Padan Aram, the original cradle of their race. **On Habor, the river of Gozan.** So read. Gozan is the Assyrian Guzana, between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Habor will be an eastern tributary of the Tigris. **Medes.** At this time the Medes were apparently vassals of Assyria, living in scattered towns on the east of Babylonia. Sargon's planting colonists among them was the nearest approach which the Assyrians ever made toward subjecting this warlike Aryan people. As Assyria declined, the Medes rose, and though conquered by the Elamite king Cyrus they formed the strength of the great Medo-Persian empire which he founded and Alexander overthrew. We find Tobit, of the tribe Naphtali, journeying to Rhagæ in Media, from Nineveh (Tob. 1. 14).

7. Here begin the editor's comments on the document he has incorporated in his compilation.

**8. Nations.** Most of the symbols which had done so much to degrade Israel's worship—"pillars," Ashêrim, "high places," etc.—were Canaanite in origin. So was the idea of the land's marriage with its god, which the prophets redeemed for their loftiest teaching. Israel not only applied Canaanite usages to Jehovah-worship but worshiped Canaanite gods. Comp. *Judg. passim*, especially 2. 11-15. **Of the kings.** The "statutes which the kings made" (comp. Mic. 6. 16) enforced both kinds of transgression, Jeroboam outraging the second commandment and Ahab the first.

**9. Did secretly.** A doubtful word; the LXX. makes it "deeked out." **Tower.** The loneliest inhabited place, where the watchman guarded a vineyard or sheep-fold, must have its altar as well as the fortified and populous city.

**10. Pillars.** See last lesson. **Ashêrim.** Plural of Ashêrah (verse 16). They were sacred poles, derived from the Canaanite ritual, and were either symbols of a goddess Ashêrah or marks of a place sacred to local Baalim. Robertson Smith decides for the latter, and connects it with a primitive tree-worship; the tree (or its symbol, a pole) being in later developments placed by the side of the altar to other deities. The placing of altars under "green trees" was due to the same origin. In the next verse we have the Canaanite source of these practices expressly noted.

**12. Idols.** Literally, "filths," one of the sev-



eral contemptuous designations chosen partly because of assonance with the word for "gods." **Thing.** Add with the LXX., "unto Jehovah," quoted from Deut. 12. 31.

**13. Judah.** The retrospect takes in Judah's sins and captivity as perhaps already distant. **Seer.** The older and apparently less dignified name (1 Sam. 9. 9). **Turn.** Jeremiah supplies this phrase, which he uses many times (for example, 35. 15), but it was the burden of prophetic teaching from the first. **Law.** The moral rather than the ceremonial.

**14. Neck.** Comp. "a stiff-necked people," Exod. 32. 9, etc. **Believed.** Psa. 78. 22.

**15. Testimonies.** Given through the prophets, as the "covenant" connects itself especially with the patriarchs, and the "statutes" with Moses. **Followed.** Another quotation from Jeremiah (2. 5). **Vanity.** Or, "nothingness." Comp. 1 Cor. 8. 4. They "became nothing," helpless and degraded, by the universal law which assimilates man to the object of his worship (Psa. 115. 8).

**16.** The rejection of God's law is illustrated by the worst examples in the breach of the second, first, and sixth commandments, and such precepts as Exod. 22. 18; Lev. 19. 31; 20. 6. **Host of heaven.** The worship of sun, moon, and stars was probably not earlier than Assyrian influence. The stars were believed to be alive, and to give rain, but their connection with Baalim and Asharoah is unproved. The Assyrians may possibly have taken this cult from the Iranians, whose astral worship dates back to their unity with the ancestors of the Indian tribes.

**17. Fire.** In early times at least the children were slain first, but later they are said to have been laid alive in the brazen arms of the idol, whence they fell into the furnace within. The horror of this is heightened by the probable fact that Molech, "king," is nothing but the title of Jehovah, to whom they believed they were sacrificing! **Divination.** Comp. Ezek. 21. 21, *sq.*; Gen. 44. 5; the case of the witch of Endor, etc. **Sold.** Comp. 1 Kings 21. 25. **Sight.** Anthropomorphically stated, Jehovah's "abode" being in Palestine.

#### The Lesson Council.

**Question 4.** *What became of the Ten Tribes? Are they still in existence?*

More real ingenuity and curious research have been displayed in attempts to answer the above questions than on any other by-path of biblical study, and all the efforts to identify present peoples as the "Lost Tribes" have generally received the Scotch verdict, "not proven." The St. Thomas Christians, the Malabar Jews, and some Jews in southern Russia may possibly be some of their descendants; but the more likely theory is that the Ten Tribes were assimilated and lost in the populations of Assyria and "the cities of the Medes." They lost

their tribal organization and their existence as a distinct people, as seems to have been prophesied of them.—*Rev. Samuel L. Beiler.*

There were various invasions of Israel by the Assyrians between B. C. 762 and B. C. 720, which were followed by large deportations. Two hundred and fifty years of idolatry under seventeen successive Israelitish kings had made the captives easily assimilable with its pagan populations. All attempts to identify the Afghans, the black Jews of Malabar, the Tartars, the Nestorians, the North American Indians, the English, etc., with the remnants of the ten lost tribes are almost purely fanciful. Those who remained faithful were most likely united with their brethren of Judah, transported to the same regions, and shared their fortunes.—*Rev. J. C. Jackson, Ph. D.*

They were scattered in numerous captivities. Some are said to have gone to Media, some to Babylon, and some to Egypt. They married and were absorbed into the populations where they settled. Some returned and joined Judah. Many had lost their genealogies and could not prove their pedigrees. James addresses "the twelve tribes." Are they still in existence? Not as separate tribes.—*Rev. William F. McDowell, D. D.*

All we know of the final fate of these tribes is that they were lost. Sometimes a ship goes to sea and is never heard from again. We say it is lost. We know not that we have a clew to its fate when we find a broken spar that may have belonged to it. These tribes were lost in the great sea of humanity. They are simply as broken spars around which we may weave a story. God expressly says, "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth" (Amos 9. 9).—*Rev. W. A. Robinson, D. D.*

The tendency of the Ten Tribes to affiliate with the idolatrous nations about them was displeasing to God, which resulted in their final fall and captivity to the King of Assyria, who appointed cities for them to dwell in. Their kingdom extended over a period of two hundred and fifty-four years. They never returned from this captivity. The supposition is that they have long since been absorbed by the nations they mingled with. This supposition is highly probable, as we have no history of them after they went into captivity.—*Rev. D. F. Waddell, D. D.*

#### Analytical and Biblical Outline. Israel's Downward Course.

##### I. DISOBEDIENT.

1. *Sinned against the Lord.* v. 7.

"They sin more and more." Hos. 13. 2.

2. *Walked in the statutes of the heathen.* v. 8.

"Deeply corrupted themselves." Hos. 9. 9.

3. *Set them up images.* v. 10.  
 "Ephraim is joined to idols." Hos. 4. 17.  
 4. *Burnt incense in . . . high places.* v. 11.  
 "A horrible thing in . . . Israel." Hos. 6. 10.  
 5. *To provoke the Lord to anger.* v. 11.  
 "Provoked him . . . most bitterly." Hos. 12. 14.
- II. WARNED.
1. *Testified . . . by all the prophets.* v. 13.  
 "I have multiplied visions." Hos. 12. 10.  
 2. *Turn ye from your evil ways.* v. 13.  
 "How shall I give thee up?" Hos. 11. 8.  
 3. *Did not believe.* v. 14.  
 "Have eaten the fruit of lies." Hos. 10. 13.  
 4. *Rejected his covenant.* v. 15.  
 "Counted as a strange thing." Hos. 8. 12.
- III. PUNISHED.
1. *The Lord was very angry.* v. 18.  
 "Will pour out my wrath." Hos. 5. 10.  
 2. *Removed them out of my sight.* v. 18.  
 "Will take away." Hos. 5. 14.  
 3. *There was none left.* v. 18.  
 "Wanderers among the nations." Hos. 9. 17.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### A Personal Application.

1. If Israel's rejection of God, under their imperfect light, brought such severe punishment, how shall he who, under the full light of the Gospel, rejects Christ hope to escape? *Am I rejecting God?*
2. If Israel's refusal to serve the God who brought them out of Egypt was base ingratitude, how shall we characterize the action of him who will not love and serve Christ who died for him? *Am I serving God?*
3. If Israel's neglect to hear God's prophets deserved such severe censure, what words can express the wickedness of those who will not listen to the Son of God himself? *Am I listening to God?*

#### Lesson Word-Pictures.

A long, long procession of evils, of abominations, of wickedness most repulsive to God, and do the perpetrators see in what the procession will end? Are they aware which way the procession is heading? No; they are so busily working out their abhorrent purposes that they do not look forward to and dwell upon the dreadful, inevitable end. For, look! See what they are doing now! They are bringing earth. They are heaping it up. They give it form. They raise it higher and higher, carrying it up symmetrical and shapely. And for what? To get men as near heaven as possible? To elevate and point a summit where the soul shall find wings to help its aspirations mount Godward? "Wings!" Does that object they are tugging up the hill look like a delicate, ethereal wing?

It is of wood or stone or iron; a dumb, cold, stupid, senseless block. It has eyes that were hand-punched and a mouth that was gashed; and how dead, how abominable this idol! And now they are planting trees with which to occlude this abomination. In the shadowy stillness of "a grove," amid its quiet, dusky depths, sweet and smoky with the incense they have burned, they love to practice those abominations that the sunlight frowns upon. This train, this procession of evils, will end in such serious disaster, and do not men yet recognize it? They see not, they care not, they rush blindly on.

Hark! Hear the clear, strong voices of warning ringing out! The faithful old prophets are challenging. The seers are testifying. "Turn, turn!" they cry. The end of this procession of transgressions they point out.

It is of no avail. More high places are thrown up. More images squat in ugliness on their pedestals. More unhallowed groves are planted, to help in their idolatry.

They go farther. It is night. The stars are out, those watch fires burning far up on the heights of space. How they flash! They stand like silvered sentinels around the queenly moon. Such purity, dignity, nobility above! But that crowd below looking up in adoration is giving to the moon honor due its Maker!

What imbecility and idolatry! Another time, it is that grim old abomination, the worship of Baal. His adorers bow the knee. They kiss the hateful image. O, shame! Do they dream of the end of this procession of horrors? Look, for there is something more abhorrent still. There is a sound of crackling flames. There is the rolling up of smoke. And who are these passing their sons and daughters through the merciless flames! Who with thump of drum and clangor of trumpet would drown the screams and shrieks of their victims? Are they the gross Canaanites? The people of God, the children of Abraham, make this awful holocaust!

The end, the end! It has come at last, that toward which this dire procession has been heading all the long days of transgression. It is a very different procession now winding forth, and all see whither it tends and where it will end, exile beyond the great river. Sorrow and shame and captivity! A piercing wail goes up from Israel's homes. The Assyrian oppressor is tramping over the land. His cruel hands reach into every hiding-place. Parents are torn from their children's arms! Wives are separated from their husbands. The infant and the decrepit may be abandoned. In fetters, the exiles begin their long march. They go bowed under their household goods. They sob. They cry aloud. They tear their robes. They faint by the way. But on, on, they must go.

"March! march!" is the cruel order. Across stretching plains, over rough mountains, through chilling rivers winds the dreary column. Gone, gone, over the Euphrates, into the land of Babylon and Nineveh, to be the oppressor's slaves, Assyria's bondmen. And this was the end of the procession started in the Promised Land, the home of the descendants of Abraham, started amid high places and images and incensed groves.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verse 7.* God's peculiar and covenant people forsook God and were forsaken by him. You may be clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, as Dives did, and not be saved. You may rule vast provinces, and command vast armies, as Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar did, and not be saved. You may be fair and lovely to behold, as Absalom was, and not be saved. You may belong to a church, pure and simple and apostolic, as Ananias and Sapphira did, and not be saved. You may live under the highest blaze of gospel teaching, as Judas did, nay, you may bear witness to the truth of Jesus, as he did, and not be saved. You may be exalted unto heaven in privileges and opportunities, as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum were, and not be saved. But you cannot believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and fail of salvation. Then Christ is yours, and Christ is salvation.—*Dean Law.*

We easily catch an infectious disease from one another, but no man receiveth health from another's company. What a change must grace work in us, before we shall be fully like our Lord Jesus, who was incapable of being inoculated by sin, but abundantly able to communicate goodness.—*Vaughan.*

"*Followed Vanity.*" Be not like the foolish drunkard who, staggering home one night, saw his candle lighted for him. "Two candles," said he; for his drunkenness made him see double. "I will blow out one," and as he blew it out he was left in the dark. Many a man sees double, owing to the delusion of sin. Men think they see one life to sow wild-oats in, and another to turn to God in. They blow out their only little life, and lie down in darkness.—*Spurgeon.*

"Did secretly things not right," "built high places," "set up images," "burnt incense," "served idols," "wrought wicked things," "caused sons to pass through the fire," "used divination and enchantment." There are two ways of coming down from the top of a church-steeples: one is to jump down, and the other is to come down by the steps; but both will lead you to the bottom. So also there are two ways of going to hell: one is to walk into it with your eyes open (few people do that), and the other is to go down by the steps of little sins.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

1. *The fall of Samaria.* Fix the city geographically. Draw out its relations to the country of which it was the capital, like Paris to France. Tell what you can about the last of its kings. Ascertain which great Assyrian monarch besieged the city and which captured it. A very brief *résumé* of the Israelitish kingdom, showing the three great dynasties, might be of advantage. 2. *The wholesale deportation of the Israelites* ended their national existence. Make a sketch-map showing the regions to which they were probably taken. Word-picture of travel across the desert. 3. *The cause of the captivity.* The great difficulty with this lesson is the abundance of matter for explanation and application. We must adapt it on some single line of thought, selecting the lesson best adapted for each class, and adhere to that one line, or we shall lose much of its value. The regular outline is good. The particular sins are (1) ingratitude; (2) disobedience; (3) disbelief. 4. *Apostasy of Israel.* 1. Its beginning. 2. Its growth. 3. Its result. 4. Its lessons. Trace in the lesson many modern sins. Forgetting the Lord (verse 7); evil companionship (verse 8); secret sin (verse 9); open sin (verses 10-12); refusing to listen to God's messengers (verses 13, 14). Moral debasement.

### References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 10: "Groves," 222. Ver. 16: Worshipping the stars, 189; Baal, 184. Ver. 17: Passing through the fire, 163; divination, 195, 578, . . . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 5276, 5277, 2481, 2498, 10016, 10019, 2535, 250-262, 6603-6669. Ver. 8: Prose, 8728, 8729. Ver. 12: Prose, 3150, 2528. Ver. 13: Prose, 3905, 3903. Ver. 17: Prose, 8746.

### Blackboard.



The blackboard tells the sad story. At last the end of the road is reached, and Israel as a nation is overthrown, broken up, and in ruins, never again to be restored. The road of sin leads to ruin. Are you walking in it? Perhaps you are out of the

highway, and think it is no harm to try a by-path. Remember this: God abhors all sin, great and little, and though he wants you to leave the paths of evil and return to the right way, he does not love the willful sinner. He pities him; he would save him; but he cannot love sin. The most awful thought in this world is to think of being utterly forsaken of God. Then why forsake him?

### Primary and Intermediate.

**LESSON THOUGHT.** *Sin binds with chains.*

**Review.** Recall the warnings of Amos and Hosea. Tell that God sent these prophets to try and save his people. But they would not listen. Sin had shut up their ears so they could not hear God's call. Ask what God said he would do if the people did not put away their sin and return to him? Yes, God has to destroy sin, and if people love it and hold fast to it they must be destroyed too.

[Make a crown at one end of a heavy line, a scepter at the other. Print above the line, "Israel—245 years." Tell that Jeroboam was the first king, and Hoshua the last. Erase a part of the scepter, and tell that the kingdom was broken. What destroyed it? SIN, the great destroyer. Make a sword, or pin up one cut from paper.] A strong heathen king came with his army and carried the Israelites away to a strange land and made them slaves. The king, Hoshua, was put in prison. The people of Israel tried to fight, but it did no good, for God was not with them to help them. Now they had to wear the heavy yoke of slavery.

They had made the yoke for themselves! Do you wonder how? They did not make it all at once. They began a long time before. First, they forgot God. They thought it was too much trouble to pray to him.

After a while they began to pray to heathen gods. Other people did this, and they said, "What harm does it do?" At first they were afraid to worship idols openly. But in a little while they did not care how many knew it. Then they began to build places of worship. 'On the high hills and among the beautiful groves which God had given them they set up images to worship, and burned incense to them just as the heathen who had never heard of God did!

And now the time came when God took away their kingdom, and sent them away into captivity. This is what sin does—it de-roys.



**The Lesson for Us.** Is sin the same now that it was in the days of Israel? Yes; the very same! [Make a heart, with some links of a chain in it. In each link print some word—as "Self," "Hate," "Pride," etc. Tell story of

a child whom Satan is getting ready to bind fast with the chain of sin.] Satan knows that he will have to make the chain first. Whom do you think he gets to help him make it? Why, the child himself! He always has to have help. If he can only get you to help him, he will work very fast. He has succeeded in getting little Johnny to help him. This is the way he does it.

Johnny has a sled. One day he was coasting, when a boy ran against him and threw him off his sled. This made Johnny very angry. He called the boy hard names, and tried to injure him in every way he could. This giving place to hate helped Satan to make a big link. Another time Johnny stayed out of school to play. Satan told him not to confess it. So he talked at home as if he had been in school.

Every time any child does wrong he is helping Satan make a chain to bind him with! And when the chain is long and strong enough he will be led away into captivity by it.

Who can break Satan's chain? Jesus.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

I'm poor and blind.  
Blest are the hungry.  
Weary child,  
I am coming to the cross.  
Look up.  
Hide thou me.  
Come unto me.  
My Jesus, as thou wilt,  
In some way or other.  
God's anvil.  
Come, ye disconsolate.  
Lord, at thy mercy-seat.

### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who removed the Israelites from their beautiful land? **The King of Assyria.**
2. How had some of the Israelites sinned? **By worshipping images that represented the true God.**
3. How had the rest sinned? **By worshipping false gods.**
4. To what does false worship always tend? **To wickedness of life.**
5. What was the result of Israel's idolatry? **The Lord was very angry with Israel.**
6. Who really removed the Israelites from their beautiful land? **Their offended God.**
7. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"Because thou hast forsaken," etc.**

### CATECHISM QUESTION.

29. How is the Creed an enlargement of that form?

Baptism is "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The first part of the Creed speaks of the Father, who created us; the second of the Son, who redeemed us; and the third of the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies the Church, assuring us of forgiveness and fitting us for everlasting life.

B. C. 864.]

## LESSON IX. THE TEMPLE REPAIRED.

[May 31.]

GOLDEN TEXT. God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9. 7.

## Authorized Version.

2 Chron. 24. 4-14. [*Commit to memory verses 8-10.*]

4 And it came to pass after this, that Jo'ash was minded to repair the house of the LORD.

5 And he gathered together the priests and the Le'vites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Ju'dah, and gather of all Is'ra-el money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Le'vites hastened it not.

6 And the king called for Je-hoi'a-da the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Le'vites to bring in out of Ju'dah and out of Je-ru-sa-lem the collection, according to the commandment of Mo'ses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Is'ra-el, for the tabernacle of witness?

7 For the sons of Ath'a-li'ah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Ba'al-im.

8 And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

9 And they made a proclamation through Ju'dah and Je-ru-sa-lem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Mo'ses the servant of God laid upon Is'ra-el in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Le'vites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Je-hoi'a-da gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.

13 So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

14 And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Je-hoi'a-da, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer *withal*, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt-offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Je-hoi'a-da.

## Revised Version.

- 4 And it came to pass after this, that Jo'ash was minded to restore the house of the LORD. And he gathered together the priests and the Le'vites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Ju'dah, and gather of all Is'ra-el money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Le'vites hastened it not. And the king called for Je-hoi'a-da the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Le'vites to bring in out of Ju'dah and out of Je-ru-sa-lem the tax of Mo'ses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Is'ra-el, for the tent of the testimony? For the sons of Ath'a-li'ah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon the Ba'al-im. So the king commanded, and they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD. And they made a proclamation through Ju'dah and Je-ru-sa-lem, to bring in for the LORD the tax that Mo'ses the servant of God laid upon Is'ra-el in the wilderness. And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end. And it was so, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Le'vites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the chief priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to its place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.
- 12 And the king and Je-hoi'a-da gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD; and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to repair the house of the LORD. So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set up the house of God in its state, and strengthened it.
- 14 And when they had made an end, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Je-hoi'a-da, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer *withal*, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt-offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Je-hoi'a-da.

**TIME.**—Probably about B. C. 864. **PLACE.**

—Jerusalem. **RULERS.**—Joash, or Jehoshaphat, the eighth King of Judah; Jehu, King of Israel.

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

**HOME READINGS.**

*M.* The temple repaired. 2 Chron. 24. 4-14.

*Tu.* The tabernacle gifts. Exod. 30. 11-16.

*W.* Joyful giving. 1 Chron. 29. 1-9.

*Th.* Offering to God. Mal. 3. 8-12.

*F.* A large gift. Mark 12. 41-44.

8. Sincere giving. 2 Cor. 8. 1-9.  
9. Spiritual building. 1 Cor. 3. 9-17.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 118, New Canadian Hymnal.

Let him to whom we now belong.

No. 120, New Canadian Hymnal.

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice.

No. 115, New Canadian Hymnal.

Take my life and let it be.

#### DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 253, 86, 76.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

##### 1. Purpose, v. 4-7.

After what event did Joash make up his mind to repair the house of the Lord?

What causes had combined to bring about its ruin? How long was it since services had been regularly held there?

Who had trained Joash?

Can you narrate briefly the romantic circumstances of his coronation?

What was his father's character?

From what bad King of Israel was he descended?

On whom did he depend to gather the money to repair the house?

Why did the Levites not hasten their task?

Whom did the king hold responsible for their delay?

What collection is referred to? (Exod. 30. 12-16; Lev. 27. 1-8.)

Who was Athaliah?

What provision did the king make for voluntary contributions?

##### 2. Endeavor, v. 8-12.

What influence would a royal proclamation have? How did the people respond?

What was the method of delivery of this money? (Verse 11.)

Who gave personal supervision to the holy work?

##### 3. Accomplishment, v. 13, 14.

What was the result of this combined effort?

What is meant by "in his state?"

What did they do with the overplus of money?

How regularly was the service continued?

What is the GOLDEN TEXT of this lesson?

#### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That the worst of parents may have the best of sons?

2. That if you want a thing done quickly and well you should do it yourself?

3. That every one should contribute to sustain God's worship?

4. The influence of a lofty character?

#### Hints for Home Study.

1. Find how Solomon secured money to build the temple.

2. Read the passages in Exodus and Leviticus arranging for a steady income for the divine services.

3. Find an instance during the journey of the Israelites from Egypt where the people gave voluntarily to pay for the services of God.

4. Find what Paul says about providing for church expenses.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

##### 1. Purpose, v. 4-7.

What pious purpose did the king have?

Whom did he summon as helpers?

What did he command them to do?

How well did the Levites obey?

Whom did the king call to account for the delay?

What did he say to Jehoiada?

Who had laid waste the house of the Lord?

What had become of the sacred things?

##### 2. Endeavor, v. 8-12.

What did the king order, and where was it placed?

What proclamation was made to Judah?

How was this order received?

How did the people show their joy?

What officers took charge of the money?

What shows that the people gave liberally?

To what workers was the money paid out?

How ought any good work to be done, and why? (Ecd. 9. 10.)

##### 3. Accomplishment, v. 13, 14.

What good end was accomplished?

What was done with the money which was left?

What offerings were presented to the Lord?

What kind of givers does the Lord love? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. Love for God's house?

2. Zeal for God's cause?

3. Joy in God's service?

#### Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find how many years before the date of the last lesson the incidents of this lesson occurred?

Find what relation Jehoiada bore to the king.

Ascertain of what wicked woman Joash was the grandson.

Ascertain of what wicked woman he was the great-grandson.

#### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Joash? One of the kings of Judah.

How old was he when he began to reign? **Seven years.**

How many years did he reign in Jerusalem? **Forty years.**

How long did Joash rule the people well? **As long as Jehoiada lived.**

Who was Jehoiada? **A priest who guided the young king.**

What did Joash determine to do? **To repair the house of the Lord.**

How had it been broken up? **By idolaters.**  
 Whom did the king send to gather money? **The priests and Levites.**

What was placed at the gate of the Lord's house? **A chest.**

What were all the people commanded to do? **To bring money.**

How did the people bring the money? **With rejoicing.**

What was soon gathered? **Money in abundance.**

Who attended to the repairs of the Lord's house? **The king and Jehoiada.**

What was carried on in the Lord's house all the days of Jehoiada? **The worship of God.**

Was this a good work which Joash did? **Yes, because it honored God.**

#### Words With Little People.

GIVING TO THE LORD.

Why give to the Lord?

Because he asks our gifts.

Because all we have is his.

Because his love demands return.

How give to the Lord?

With rejoicing heart.

With open hand.

When give to the Lord?

Always—our love.

Daily—some part of our time.

When he asks—our money.

#### Whisper Motto.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

#### General Statement.

The alliance between the royal houses of Judah and Israel soon brought forth disastrous results. The reforms of Jeho-haphat were undone by his son and successor, Jehoram, who, led by his wife, Athaliah, rebuilt the idolatars, and led his people back to sin. His son, Ahaziah, walked in the same evil ways. At his sudden death Athaliah, the queen-mother, seized the throne, and by deeds of blood showed herself a true daughter of Jezebel. Six years the land groaned under her tyranny, until a revolution was effected by the good priest Jehoiada. Athaliah was slain near the temple which she had polluted, and her grandson, Joash, only seven years old, was placed on the throne of David. While Jehoiada stood by his side Joash's rule was just and wise. The most noteworthy event of his reign was the repair and ornamentation of the long-neglected house of the Lord.

#### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 4. After this.** Probably after the young king's marriage. **Joash.** The great grandson of Jeho-haphat, youngest of all the kings of Judah. His reign began B. C. 878, and lasted forty years. **Minded.** The mind determines the deed. (1) *All great events grow from the seed of a thought and a purpose.* St. Peter's Church stood in the architect's mind years before it rose in marble. He beheld its glory even while it lay unheaven in the quarry. (Teacher, urge that the mind, from which is evolved all action, clerical noble purposes.) **To repair.** Not only must evil institutions be destroyed, but good ones should be established. (2) *The iconoclast has a mission, but that of the builder is higher.* **The house of the Lord.** (3) *God's cause is left in human hands, for he honors men by making them co-workers with himself.* There was a debt of gratitude which Joash felt toward the temple in which he had been secretly preserved during the usurpation of Athaliah. The temple had now withstood the storms of a century, and had repeatedly been sacked by Judah's enemies, and rifled by her kings and people. (4) *If one really loves the Lord he will have a tender regard for the Lord's house.*

**5. The priests and the Levites.** These were the hereditary officers of the temple and its worship, who might be expected to feel a deep interest in the work. **All Israel.** Every body who could be induced to contribute. (5) *Every one owes a contribution to God's worship.* **Money.** Not a voluntary contribution, but the assessment of half a shekel (about thirty cents) on each individual in the nation, for the expense of the public worship. **Hastened it not.** So careless that they would rather see their temple drop into decay than take the trouble to collect money for its repair. When the ministers of religion have turned from their loyalty to God, it is as if the forts for a land's defense are held by its foes. We notice through all the history of Israel the slowness of the priesthood in religious reforms. Mere formal ritual services have no power to impart earnestness, and tend to death rather than life. (6) *Let us seek the power of godliness.*

**6, 7. The king.** We see the energy of one man overcoming the apathy of an entire order. (7) *One man with purpose, enthusiasm, and wisdom can move a mountain or a million.* (Teacher, urge your boys and girls to be leaders in good, and

not followers in evil. He who begins by mastering lessons and temptations in school prepares to rule well in life.) **Jehoiada.** A grand old character—the king's uncle. **Collection.** The requirement of law had been neglected, or else the funds had been misappropriated by the priests. **For the tabernacle of witness.** Which in Moses's time stood, as the temple stood at this time, for the central worship of God. **Sons.** Not only Ahaziah and his brothers, but all who were under her influence and followed her evil example. **Athaliah.** Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and wife of Jehoram. She brought into Judah all her mother's force of character, hatred of God, and passion for idolatry. She ruled the counsels of her husband and her son, and finally grasped the scepter itself, which she held, to the ruin of the nation, until slain by Jehoiada. **Broken up.** Not content with leaving it to decay, they had plundered it to enrich the idol shrines. **Baalim.** A general term for idols, but especially a Phœnician form of worship, introduced by Jezebel into Israel, and by her daughter into Judah.

**8, 9, 10. The king's commandment.** The matter was taken from the hands of the Levites, who had lost the confidence of the people, and was managed directly by the officers of the crown. **A chest.** Into which each contributor might drop his money, with no "middle-man" between him and the treasury. **At the gate.** Thus appealing to the sympathies of the worshippers, as they remembered the former magnificence, and contrasted it with the evident decay. **Of the house of the Lord.** There is Bible warrant for the "collection" at public worship. Those who are benefited by the services of religion should cheerfully contribute to its expenses. **Made a proclamation.** Now that the court was setting goodly fashions one half of the battle was fought. **Bring in to the Lord.** If we remembered that all our religious contributions were given by us personally to the

Lord our zeal would be quickened. **All the princes and all the people.** The lofty ones did not despise the cause because it belonged to "the masses;" nor did the people leave it to the purses of the princes. The gifts of the rich and of the poor should lie side by side in God's treasury. **Rejoiced, and brought in.** As a contribution it was 1) wisely conducted; 2) generally entered into; 3) willingly, cheerfully made. Nothing makes a congregation happier than a liberal contribution.

**11, 12, 13, 14. The chest.** The plan embraced checks upon maladministration, and left no chance for covetousness. 1) The chest was taken to a public place, the king's office. 2) It was opened in presence of witnesses by the king's scribe as representative of the crown, and the high-priest's officer in behalf of the hierarchy. 3) It was expended under the personal direction of the king and Jehoiada. 4) It was used directly for the object proposed. God's money should ever be held a sacred trust, and never diverted from its legitimate purposes. **The work was perfected.** Every giver could feel a personal interest in the progress of the work. Let young people be trained early to contribute to the interests of religion. **In his state.** According to the original architectural designs. As the temple represented God's dwelling-place, and preached to Israel by its very stones, there was a need of costly materials and rich workmanship, which may be dispensed with at the present. Ornate architecture is lawful when it can be afforded without unduly burdening the congregation; but no church has a right to pay for its steeple by cutting down its missionary contribution. **All the days of Jehoiada.** So long as the good old priest lived the service was conducted legally and energetically. (8) *This lesson shows impressively the influence of a lofty character.* (9) *God demands something more than transient reform.*

#### CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

We have no space this month for any discussion of the origin and character of Chronicles, the last and latest book in the Hebrew canon. The date of this passage is about one hundred and forty years earlier than the captivity of Israel, our last lesson.

**Verse 4.** The lesson is very probably a document inserted from a collection of temple annals, which are naturally fuller on such a subject than the annals of the king's reign (2 Kings 12). The words "after this" mark the beginning of a new document, and are quite vague.

**5.** This is entirely different from the parallel passage, which should be carefully compared throughout. Each was to collect from his "acquaintance," and Josephus says the amount was half a shekel, the same as the temple tax which our

Lord paid by a miracle (Exod. 30. 13, *sq.*; Matt. 17. 27). **Repair.** The walls had been cracking with age, besides the willful damage done by Athaliah's sons. **Levites.** They are clearly blamed for indifference, and we may suspect they were deeply tainted with the late prevailing idolatry, albeit loyal to the king. The other account makes the priests responsible, but suggests that they failed because the money came short of the requirements.

**6. Tax.** The "half-shekel." See above. Other sources of revenue appear in Kings. **Tent.** The old name of God's house in the wilderness, preserved in a few phrases. It was the "witness" of God's abiding presence, through the Shechinah dwelling therein.

**7. Athaliah . . . and her sons.** So read



with LXX. and Vulgate. They would be Jehoram's elder sons, slain by Philistines and Arabians who invaded Judah (chap. 21. 17). **Dedicated.** Vessels and implements. Comp. verse 14.

**8. King.** Acting with Jehoiada, as the parallel shows. **At the gate.** This seems more accurate than the "beside the altar" of the parallel; probably we should substitute "gate" there, as the altar was perhaps too far in.

**10.** The fickle people's conscience was roused by the proclamation, and they throw themselves with short-lived enthusiasm into the work. **Princes.** Local magistrates (1 Kings 20. 14), or nobles. **Until.** Till practically all had contributed, so keen was the emulation.

**11. Officers** (margin). Or perhaps abstract—the king's "inspection." Kings does not mention this removal. **Scribe.** His chief treasury official. It is the office which Shebna held under Hezekiah till Isaiah's influence deposed him. **Priest's officer.** Kings says Jehoiada himself did it; he doubtless inspected.

**12. Service.** The house of God is quasi-personified; the master-workmen were its "servants." **They hired.** The overseers just mentioned.

**13. State.** In its former condition.

**14.** The independence of our two narratives is shown by the app rent inconsistency between the statements that gold and silver vessels were not made (Kings), were made (Chron.). It has been supposed that the "vessels," in each case are those mentioned in the same clause, and as they are different the two accounts do not contradict each other. These vessels and spoons were for presenting the various offerings, especially the meat and drink offerings. **All the days.** How powerful was the personality of the good high-priest is seen from the evident fact that he was the sole barrier against idolatry. He had complete ascendancy over the weak young king, who as soon as his influence was removed yielded to the nobles in their demand for toleration toward heathen practices. Jehoiada's age is probably exaggerated by early copyists; possibly eighty-three should be substituted for one hundred and thirty. His son (or perhaps grandson) Zechariah occasioned by his faithful protest against wickedness in high places one of the most treacherous and ungrateful deeds in history. The blood of that foul murder was said to have bubbled up on the temple floor till its destruction by the Babylonians. Our Lord couples it with Abel's murder to present the series of martyrdoms which fill the Scripture from its first to its last page.

### The Lesson Council.

**Question 5.** *What was the influence of the temple in Jerusalem upon the kingdom of Judah?*

It was the religious and political center, and was most potent in keeping alive the national piety and life; this although it was at times desecrated by

idols set up within its precincts by Manasseh, and also by the idols of Baal and Ashtoreth, which Josiah removed. The book of the law was kept in the ark of the covenant. The temple was, further, a depository of political documents. It was also a museum of historical curiosities and of the arms of heroes. It thus served to preserve the religious feeling, to stir patriotism, and to afford a definite center of Jewish thought and regard.—*Rev. J. C. Jackson, Ph. D.*

The temple was the symbol of the unity of religious and national life. Public life clustered round it. The absence of images from the holy of holies suggested the spiritual God. Its influence was in aid of pure worship. To worship in it was a delight. It was the pride and glory of the nation. Its presence inspired patriotism and religion. Worship of God and love for Jerusalem were linked together. The temple was the fountain-head of every reform in the State and revival in the Church. In the period of its highest influence it was a beautiful type of what a Christian Church may be in a community. Dean Stanley calls attention to the figures derived from it in the New Testament.—*Rev. William F. McDowell, D. D.*

When the temple service fell into dis-use, the nation fell into wickedness. When the service was revived, the nation was called back to right ways and prospered. It operated as a rebuke to sin and an encouragement to virtue. It was as the key-stone to the arch to hold the nation together in Sabbath observance, devotion, and patriotism. The political antagonism of Israel, in view of her idolatry, was a spiritual blessing to Judah. But when the people commingled socially she caught the idolatrous infection, and the temple was despoiled and forsaken. But to its influence must be referred the national longevity of Judah as compared with Israel, and the better average character of its reigns.—*W. A. Robinson, D. D.*

The very presence of this magnificent structure in Jerusalem, with its services and appointments, was the means of preserving and perpetuating the true worship of God among the people of the kingdom of Judah. It stood as a monument of strength representing the visible kingdom of God, notwithstanding kings and people at times went astray. The Church of Christ which has supplanted the temple at Jerusalem is the visible representative of God among all people through all the ages to come.—*Rev. D. F. Waddell, D. D.*

*Politically,* it was a central magnet that held together and a dynamo that ever re-kindled fires of patriotism. *Religiously,* even amid idolatrous shrines, it was a stimulus to the worship of Jehovah. When closed it was a sermon in stone, and its restoration was connected with every religious reformation. *Morally,* it was in Judah what conscience is in every human breast, a reminder of God and his

law. The temple had much to do with Judah's not falling into corruption as rapidly as did Israel, and hence the two tribes did not go into captivity till more than a century after the "Ten Tribes." The restoration and preservation of the temple was evidently one purpose of Judah's return from captivity.—*Rev. Samuel L. Beiler.*

### Analytical and Biblical Outline. Setting God's House in State.

#### I. A ROYAL PURPOSE.

*Joash was minded to repair.* v. 4.

"How amiable are thy tabernacles," Psa. 84. 1.

"Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psa. 122. 1.

#### II. A NEEDED WORK.

*Had broken up the house.* v. 7.

"They sacrificed unto devils," Deut. 32. 17.

"Heathen are come," Psa. 79. 1.

#### III. A WILLING OFFERING.

*Rejoiced and brought in.* v. 10.

"God loveth a cheerful giver," 2 Cor. 9. 7.

"He that giveth....with simplicity," Rom. 12. 8.

#### IV. AN ABUNDANT TREASURE.

*Gathered money in abundance.* v. 11.

"The riches of thy liberality," 2 Cor. 8. 2.

"My God shall supply all your need," Phil. 4. 19.

#### V. A FAITHFUL SERVICE.

*So the workmen wrought.* v. 13.

"They dealt faithfully," 2 Kings 12. 15.

"Do it with thy might," Eccl. 9. 10.

#### VI. A HOLY WORSHIP.

*They offered burnt-offerings continually.* v. 14.

"Early will I seek thee," Psa. 63. 1, 2.

"Present your bodies," Rom. 12. 1.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### On "Church Extension."

1. *The established public services of religion are of great importance to the nation.* A new church brings more of personal safety to a city precinct than an increase to its police force could bring. Study the history of Israel and Judah, and you will find the temple and its services at the heart of every question that agitated those nations. So with the churches to-day. The moral sense of Christendom directs all great statesmen, and that moral sense is dependent on the public services of the churches.

2. *God's cause has a claim for financial support upon the people at large.* It is cause for thanksgiving that in our free land there is no established church; but that fact cannot relieve any citizen of the moral responsibility to support God's cause.

3. *Churches should be exact and business-like in*

*their management of finances.* "Let the king's scribe and the priest's officer watch each other."

4. *"Churches should pay the carpenter before casting the golden candlestick,"* (verse 14).

5. *Without the sincere and hearty worship of God the most elaborate preparations are valueless and void.*

### Lesson Word-Pictures.

Good King Joash is sunk in meditation. It may be at the temple itself. He looks somberly at the rents in the walls, at the emptiness and desolateness of which wicked Athaliah's wicked sons had been the authors. Good King Joash sighs and shakes his head and says, with a gasp, "Alas, alas! It should all be repaired." But, like many others who would rejuvenate an old temple, he wonders where the money may come from?

"Send for it!" is the bidding of a voice within. Send? Yes; he will so do.

He summons the priests. He rallies the Levites. He looks them over. Big, healthy, intelligent, what promising money-gatherers they will make! Joash commissions them as beggars. Away they go, to beg of faithful Israel. But—why do they not report promptly? Hurry up, he bade them. They no more hasten than the mountains of Lebanon. He summons Jehoiada their chief. He lays their delinquency before Jehoiada. It avails not. What can Jehoiada do with the mountains of Lebanon?

But an idea is suggested. Make a chest. Without, at the gate of the house of the Lord, set it up.

"Pooh!" cries some Levite, who as an authorized beggar had showed such unprofitable work. "That old box by the door, how much good will it do!"

But hush, thou faulty fault-finder! The king's trumpets are blowing and the king's messengers are going. Sweet and clear and ringing is the proclamation to all loving souls, "God's house is in danger! Give, give, all loyal hearts, give because you love, remembering how Israel gave to Moses in the wilderness! Freely, lovingly, promptly give, and as you come to Jerusalem, drop the gift in the chest by the gate!" What a stir that cheerful appeal makes! It touches the heart. It opens the money-bags. It starts many feet in the way to Jerusalem. And here they come, that happy, willing, rejoicing column of givers, O good King Joash! They are filing up to your box at the gate. Each one gives something. It may be the widow's mite, perhaps a prince's talent. One is as welcome as the other. "Clenk! clenk! clenk!" Hear the dropping coins! What sweeter music can there be?

But here come the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer. They shake the box. It is heavy! They covertly slip the lid back. Filled nigh to the brim!

As the chest is emptied and the coins roll out, what a glittering heap! This giving by loving

hearts, this giving steadily, will amount to something. Set up the chest again! "Clenk! clenk! clenk!" Why, it promises to fill again! In the meantime, Joash and Jehoiada, that goodly firm, can be seen in the midst of preparations for the renovation of God's house.

Here comes the mason with his hammer! Here is the carpenter with saw and plane! The iron-smith and the brass-smith hurry to their work.

Another kind of music now!

The blows of hammers are some of the notes in this new anthem of joy going up before God. It is richer music than those sonorous-voiced priests and Levites could make, the stalwart beggars who started to get money and did not get it. What! the chest filling up again. Here in great dignity come the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer again to inspect it once more and turn out the mites and the shekels and coin of every kind! What a jingle! It means more work, more beauty of color, more strength of structure! Some day, too, what vessels of gold and silver shine like lamps kindled in the waste, empty spaces in God's house! All because a chest was set up at the door, and loving, loyal hearts dropped their gifts into it. A wonderful time of giving even as in the days of Moses!

#### By Way of Illustration.

"Gather money of all Israel." The poor were not excused from giving. One Sabbath on an island in the Indian Ocean a missionary was studying a sermon to preach in the language of the people. A little boy, in ragged clothing, came in and said, "O, I do so love my Jesus! May I do something for his house?" "And what can you do?" asked the missionary. Blushing and stammering, as if afraid to say any thing, he replied, "I will be always there; I will do it loud. Please let me ring the bell." While he was a boy he rang the bell that invited the people to church; and when he became a man he preached to his people the same news to which he had called their attention when he rang the Sabbath bell.

It is said that a lady was filling a box for India, when a child brought her a cent, with which she bought a tract, and put it into the box. It was at length given to a Burman chief and led him to Christ. The chief told the story of his new God to his friends. They also believed and cast away their idols. A church was built there, a missionary sent, and fifteen hundred converted from heathenism, the result of that little seed.

"Money to repair the house of your God." Dr. Adam Clarke was preaching to a large congregation in Ireland, and after dwelling in glowing terms upon the freeness of the Gospel, and telling that the water of life could be had "without money,

and without price," at the conclusion of the sermon a person announced that a collection would be taken to support the Gospel. This announcement disconcerted the preacher, who afterward related the circumstance to the lady of the house where he was staying. "Very true, doctor," replied the hostess, "the water of life is free, 'without money and without price;' but we must pay for pitchers to carry it in."

At the annual meeting of the Western Turkey Mission a Greek villager pledged an amount from his congregation which seemed a great sum for so small a community. When surprise was expressed, he said: "Being ignorant people, with no one to instruct us, we looked into the Bible for instruction, and we saw there that at least a tenth of our income must be given to the Lord Jesus."

#### Teachers' Meeting.

I. Describe the temple at Jerusalem. Its history, briefly sketched, will be found of thrilling interest. . . . II. The decayed condition of the temple and its causes. Lessons: 1. The evil of neglecting God's house. 2. The evil of association with sin. . . . III. Joash; the dramatic events of his childhood; his noble purpose. Lesson: Even boys may be kindly and cherish royal purposes. . . . IV. The delay in repairs and how it happened. Lesson: Good purposes never accomplish themselves. . . . V. The plan; its details; advantages of system in work. Lessons: 1. Liberality. 2. Honesty. 3. Exactitude and thoroughness. . . . VI. The building, in itself a noble work. Lesson: We, too, are building—building character. What sort of edifice is mine? . . . VII. Notice as our example in this work that we find here: 1. A voluntary offering. 2. A rejoicing offering. 3. A liberal offering. 4. An offering to God's cause.

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#### Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Giving to the Lord.*

*Objects to be used.* A good picture of the temple. A small money-chest. Some coins of different size.

*Introductory.* Pin to the board a gilt paper crown. What does a crown make you think of, children? Yes, a king. Who would like to hear about a little boy king? This is his name. [Print "Joash."]

Ask a boy seven years of age to rise, and tell that Joash was made king when seven years old. How could such a little boy be king? Explain that a wise, good man, who was a priest of the Lord, was the little king's teacher, and told him what to do. Joash was an obedient boy, and grew to be an obedient man. May be you think kings do not have to obey. Yes, they have to obey God, the great King, or they will have a very hard time.

[The interest will be increased in King Joash if the exciting story of his early years be told. It should be made brief and vivid.]

*Working for the Lord.* Now Joash had grown to be a man. [Pin up the picture of the Lord's house.] It made him feel sorry to see the Lord's house looking old and shabby. Wicked people who worshiped idols had taken away the vessels of gold and silver and put them in the temple of Baal. The people did not care much for the worship of God, and so they neglected his holy house. Joash thought he would make the house beautiful again, and then the people would love to come to it. So he sent word to the people to bring money to repair it.

Show the money-chest. The king ordered that a chest should be placed by the door of the temple. Do you think the chest would be a small one like this? O, no! the chest would have to be larger than this, for there must be a great deal of money raised.

To make the Lord's house beautiful was the work King Joash was trying to do now. Do you think this was a good work?



*Giving to the Lord.* Let some children come to the table and drop the coins into the chest. Let them represent Jews. The children will enter into the spirit of this. You may give them names and speak of their occupations. Here comes a rich man. He will put in a large coin. God has given him much, and he must give much. Here is one who has but little. He puts in a small coin, and God is just as well pleased as with the larger gift. And here comes a little child. Did the king want the children to give, too? Yes, and the children wanted to help! They always do. God looked down upon the little gifts the children brought and was pleased, because he saw love in their hearts. This is what God looks for. He does not care about the size of the coin we bring, but about the love in our hearts. Let children sing, or repeat:

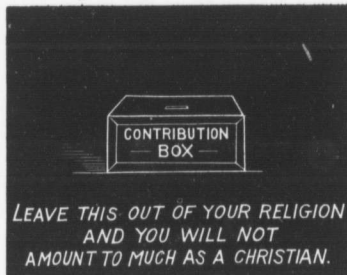
"Small are the gifts that we can bring,  
But thou hast taught us, Lord,  
If given for the Saviour's sake  
They lose not their reward."

*Closing Words.* Teach GOLDEN TEXT. Read

verse 10, and tell how the money was given in abundance until there was more than the king needed.

What is the gift the Lord wants most from us? Yes, our hearts. Make a heart. Print inside it "Given to God," and then show how words, thoughts, acts, time, love, every thing will have to be the Lord's, because the heart is his. Speak of ways in which children can make their giving to the Lord a more personal matter. Instead of asking papa and mamma for money to give, show how they can earn, or save, and so feel that it is really their own loving, glad gift.

### Blackboard.



The blackboard preaches a sermon on the gospel of giving. The contribution-box is not only a part of the church machinery, but it is that part requiring the attention of every professing Christian, and the one who neglects it is a poor Christian, no matter how much money he has. Take a lesson from the people who rejoiced, "and brought in and cast into the chest until they had made an end."

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Jesus, wher'er thy people,  
Give praise to God.  
O, let us be glad.  
Seeds of promise.  
Work song.  
Some work to do.  
Glorious things.  
I love thy kingdom.  
The Church's one foundation.  
The call for reapers.  
Gather them in.

### The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who determined to repair the house of the Lord? **The young King Joash.**
2. What good friend helped Joash? **Jehoiada the high-priest.**

3. How had the temple fallen into such a state of ruin? **Wicked princes had neglected and stolen from it.**

4. What did Joash ask for in addition to taxation? **Voluntary contributions.**

5. Did he get them? **The people rejoiced, and gave money in abundance.**

6. What does the GOLDEN TEXT teach us? **"God loveth a cheerful giver."**

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

30. May we hope for the teaching of the Holy Spirit?

Yes; our Saviour promised: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth" (John xvi. 13); and this promise, first given to the apostles, belongs to all the true disciples of Christ.

#### Topics for the Young People's Prayer-Meeting of the Epworth League.

**May 3. Sin of Intemperance.** Isa. 5. 11-13, 20-22; Eph. 5. 18.

**May 10. The Prayer that Prevails.** Gen. 32. 28; Jas. 5. 16; Psa. 145. 18, 19.

**May 17. Blessedness of Sins Forgiven.** Psa. 32. 1; Rom. 4. 6-8; Isa. 61. 10.

**May 24. Success, and How to Attain It.** Prov. 8. 1-10.

**May 31. Let Your Light Shine.** Isa. 60. 1; Eph. 5. 8; Phil. 2. 15, 16.

#### Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

— As dark misery settles down on us, and our refuges of lies fall in pieces one after one, the hearts of men, now at last serious, will turn to refuges of truth. The eternal stars shine out again, so soon as it is dark enough.—*Carlyle.*

— God, who grieves when man is ill with sin, rejoices when he sees him regain life. And man asks, "What have I done to God?" What have you done to him, O man? To him who loves you and thought he had lost you!—*Roux.*

— For every drop of sin in the life there is an ocean in the heart.—*St. Austin.*

— He that would be angry and sin not must not be angry with any thing but sin.—*Secker.*

— Titles, instead of exalting, debase those who act not up to them.—*La Rochefoucauld.*

— He that gives all, though but little, gives much, because God looks not to the quantity of the gift, but to the quality of the giver. He that

desires to give more than he can hath equaled his gift to his desire, and hath given more than he hath.—*Quarles.*

— For, lo! in human hearts unseen  
The Healer walketh still,  
And they who make his temples clean  
The best subserve his will.

—*Elizabeth H. Whittier.*

— The only gift is a portion of thyself.

—*Emerson.*

— Let no spiritual exaltation come to you without your lifting yourself up in its present power, and doing some work for God which in your weaker moments scared you with its difficulty.—*Phillips Brooks.*

— The light in us is small, and what we have we may easily forego by negligence.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

— God grant that as our horizon of duty is widened our minds may widen with it; that as our burden is increased our shoulders may be strengthened to bear it.—*Dean Stanley.*

We often give ourselves a great deal of trouble, and lose much peace, by worrying over questions which can only be solved by time, and will be so if we have patience.—*McLaren.*

— It matters little where we are so long as our inner life is hid with Christ and we keep it luminous with the joy of his presence.—*Cuyler.*

— The golden beams of truth and the silken cords of love, twined together, will draw men on with a sweet violence whether they will or no.—*Dale.*

— Acquaint thyself with God, if thou wouldst taste his works.—*Couper.*

— By communicating our experiences we may greatly strengthen one another's faith.—*Henry.*

— Peace is the sentinel of the soul, which keeps the heart and the mind of the Christian through Christ Jesus.—*Huntington.*

#### At Home.

... From an interesting article in the January *Chautauquan* on "The Mixed Populations of Chicago," by Dr. Ridpath, we learn that more than sixty-eight per cent. of the population of that great city is of foreign birth or parentage, while less than thirty-two per cent. is native to this country. Of the 1,208,000 people in Chicago 292,000 are Americans and 916,900 are foreigners; that is, the foreign population is more than three times as large as the native. The Germans have 384,958; the Irish, 215,534; the Bohemians, 54,209; the Poles, 52,756; while the remainder is divided among all the other nations of Europe, and a few from Asia and from the islands of the sea. Surely, here is a vast field for Sunday-school and missionary work, and there are not wanting laborers ready to enter it.

## Centennial Numbers of the Methodist Magazine.

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## Blackboard Work.

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school work, and is found to be a valuable factor in impressing the truths contained in the lesson on the minds of our scholars.

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His faithful and loved work is very highly appreciated by the teachers and scholars, who scrutinize the board before proceeding with the lesson for the day. The boards are hung around the room, and the congregation during the week services greatly appreciate the points emphasized, and they add to the spirituality of the meeting by riveting the subjects on the mind. The amount of good done in this way will never be known until the great day when "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."

The prayer of all in Berkeley Street Church is, that our brother may long be spared to carry on this good work which takes from him several hours every week.

The Revs. I. Tovell, J. E. Starr, Manly Benson and the late T. W. Jeffery have often spoken in the highest commendation of the good work and influence of these blackboards. We will be glad of a visit from our friends to come and inspect for themselves.

## OPENING AND CLOSING SERVICES.

### OPENING SERVICE.

#### I. SILENCE.

#### II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES (Psa. 19, 7-14).

- SUPT.** The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:
- SCHOOL.** The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
- SUPT.** The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:
- SCHOOL.** The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
- SUPT.** The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever:
- SCHOOL.** The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.
- SUPT.** More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:
- SCHOOL.** Sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.
- SUPT.** Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
- SCHOOL.** And in keeping of them there is great reward.
- SUPT.** Who can understand his errors?
- SCHOOL.** Cleanse thou me from secret faults.
- SUPT.** Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me:
- SCHOOL.** Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.
- ALL.** Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

#### III. SINGING.

- IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, or the Apostles' Creed.
- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.
- VI. READING SCRIPTURE LESSON.
- VII. SINGING.

### LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.
- III. RECITATION OF TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, OUTLINE, AND DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. THE SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.\*
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

### CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES (all standing).
- SUPT.** Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise,
- SCHOOL.** With one accord our parting hymn of praise:
- SUPT.** We stand to bless thee ere our worship cease,
- SCHOOL.** Then, with bowed heads, await thy word of peace.
- SUPT.** Grant us thy peace upon our homeward way:
- SCHOOL.** With thee began, with thee shall end, the day.
- SUPT.** Guard thou the lips from sin, the heart from shame,
- SCHOOL.** That in this house have called upon thy name.

#### III. DISMISSAL.

\* Special lessons in the Church Catechism should here be introduced.

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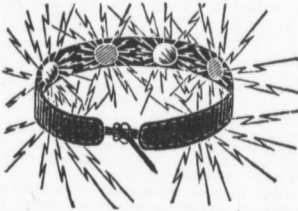
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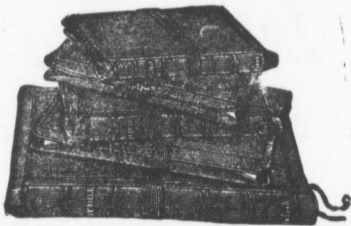
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### CURES SCALP DISEASE.

Ayer's Hair Vigor imparts a healthy vitality to the scalp, and restores it to its normal condition. The son of James U. Carter, Occoquan, Va., suffered from scald head. He was cured by Ayer's Hair Vigor, and had, after using it, a fuller growth of hair than ever. Dr. Horatio Nelson, Great Bend, Ohio, finds Ayer's Hair Vigor an excellent remedy for humors of the scalp.

beauty of her hair, should use this incomparable remedy. Mrs. O. O. Prescott, 18 Elm st., Charlestown, Mass. writes: "Two years ago about two-thirds of my hair came off. It thinned rapidly, and I was fast growing bald. On using Ayer's Hair Vigor, the falling stopped, a new growth commenced, and in about a month my head was completely covered with short hair. My hair has continued to grow, and is now as ample as before it fell." W. W. Wilkins, Windsor, Ill., says that erysipelas in the head left his scalp as bald as an infant's. The use of less than a bottle of Ayer's Hair Vigor produced a fine growth of new hair, of the original color.

PREPARED BY

**Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., (Analytical Chemists), Lowell, Mass.**

For sale by all Druggists.

### FRESH GROWTH OF HAIR.

Ayer's Hair Vigor prevents the hair from falling out, or, if already fallen, will cause a new growth. E. H. Kilpatrick, Augusta, Ky., writes: "Ayer's Hair Vigor restores vitality to diseased hair. I have used it with success." W. W. Groce, Melanora, Ind., writes: "I was entirely bald. One bottle of Ayer's Hair Vigor produced a fine growth of hair, which now covers my head."