

OCTOBER
1898

Vol. 32
No. 10



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SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

for

TEACHERS

AND

YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXII.

OCTOBER, 1898.

No. 10.

Hitherto.

BY WILLIAM R. WOOD.

The day is bright, my Father, and the path

With flowers bestrewn, is pleasant to my feet;

The forest songsters, in their cool green bowers,

With joy-born, welcome notes my journey greet.

Clear is the sky, my Father, and my heart,

Uplifted, rises in unwonted peace, As 'twere the cares of earth were wholly fled,

And from their thrall my life had won release.

And effortless my spirit turns to thee, In gratefulness too full, too deep for speech;

Yea, wordless, breathed into thy listening heart,

Still fails its strength thy might of love to reach.

But, O my Father, in my hour of joy, When rises all my grateful heart to thee,

I falter for the blindness of the past, Though still, as now, thy hand has guided me.

I falter that, because the air was chill, Because, perchance, the way was rough, unknown,

I doubted, trembled, feared thou didst not see,

That thou hadst left me in the dark alone.

I falter, Father, for my spirit knows Thy Father-heart as now was guiding then;

That thou didst choose the path, and knewest all

The chill and shade of each dark-winding glen.

Forgive me, Father, fill me with thyself, That I may know thee all the days beside,

That I may never doubt thy tender care, Till trusting still I pass beyond the tide.

Riverbank, Ont.

Thought and Talk.

John Wesley is said to have given the following advice to one of the preachers of his time :

"Your talent in preaching does not increase; it is about the same as it was seven years ago; it is lively but not deep; there is little variety; there is no compass of thought. Reading alone can supply this, with daily meditation and daily prayer. You wrong yourself greatly by admitting this. You can never be a deep preacher without it, any more than a thorough Christian. Oh, begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have not. What is tedious at first will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way. Else you will be a trifler all your days and a petty, superficial preacher. Do justice to your own soul, give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer."

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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1893.

The World's Sunday-school Convention

The World's Sunday-school Convention, in London, England, was a remarkably successful occasion. It was quite a personal disappointment that we were unable to be present. It will be remembered that this convention was announced for last year, and we arranged to be present at that time. But on account of the Queen's Jubilee the convention was postponed to the present year, when it was impossible for us to attend.

We have very delightful recollections of the cordiality and enthusiasm with which the Canadian and American delegates were greeted at the previous convention in London, nine years ago. We had on that occasion the honour of speaking for Canada at the public reception. We undertook to eulogize our country, describing its magnificent ex-

tent, forty times as great as Great Britain, its boundless resources and marvellous progress. What seemed to especially amuse our English friends, however, was the assertion that it, and not Great Britain, was the real "Old Country," that it was the oldest country in the world—the first heaved up above the bosom of the seething deep, that the oldest inhabitant of this planet was a Canadian, and that Sir William Dawson had discovered and given his name, "Eozoon Canadense,"—"the early-born Canadian." They took this as a bit of Canadian bounce and applauded it very generously.

One of the special courtesies tendered the convention was a reception by Lord and Lady Aberdeen at their beautiful place near London, Dullis Hill.

Canada was grandly represented at the recent convention by the Hon. S. H. Blake and the Rev. Dr. Potts, of Toronto, Rev. A. Lucas, of New Brunswick, and one report says sixty other active Sunday-school workers.

The Rev. Dr. John Potts (Canada), as chairman of the committee, submitted the report of the International Lesson Committee. We give the principal points.

The principles first adopted continue to characterize the International Lesson system. Substantially the entire Bible is to be surveyed during the course of six years. One and the same lesson is to be chosen for each Sunday for the whole school and for all schools. While these general principles have been adhered to by every committee, steady progress has been made in the evolution of the lesson system. Each successive course has traced more accurately and continuously than the preceding courses the succession of events and the progress of revelation in biblical history. The committee has endeavoured to make the connection more plain by selecting, in addition to the text to be printed, connected readings and parallel passages. The next course of lessons, beginning with 1900, is to cover six years, two and one-half of them to be given to the Old Testament, and three and one-half to the New. The first year and a half will be devoted to studies in the life of our Lord, selected from the books of the New Testament, and chronologically arranged. With these studies will be joined suggested readings which include nearly all the Gospels, and other portions of the New Testament, which relate to the events of our Lord's life on

earth. The committee believes that by placing foremost the personal element, and by it interpreting the historical, the greatest interest will be awakened among all classes of Bible students. The continued success of this system depends largely on those who prepare the lesson helps. The demands made by the millions of teachers and scholars have called into the field an increasing army of interpreters, whose labours have immensely advanced the scholarly examination of the Bible from every point of view as well as the popular study of it. The present committee invited lesson writers and others engaged in preparing and teaching Sunday-school lessons to present to it, at its first meeting, criticisms and suggestions. This meeting was held in Philadelphia, March 17, 1897. Following this Conference the committee adopted a general outline of a course of Bible lessons for six years, and adjourned till November, when tentative selections from the Gospels for the year 1900 were made.

CONVENTION NOTES.

We glean the following items relating to the convention from The Sunday-school Chronicle and other sources:

The reception of delegates to the World's Sunday-school convention, held at the Mansion House recently, formed a brilliant introduction to the official programme of the week's engagements.

The Hon. S. H. Blake, of Toronto, proposed a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor for "the right royal welcome" given to members of the convention. No more appropriate place, he said, could be found for the meetings of the World's Convention than the old, renowned city of London, the city par excellence of the world. Remembering all that London had done in its struggles for liberty, for truth and for right, they felt it an inspiration that the doors of the Mansion House should be thrown open to this convention. Referring to the motto of the city of London, "Domine dirige nos"—(May the Lord direct us)—he said that God had been directing the citizens of London in the great work that had brought their city such splendid government, and made it to be observed of all the nations of the world.

Bishop Warren, of the United States, said he was always glad to get back to "this dear old isle of my blood." An

American was only an Englishman by one degree removed. With the same blood, the same sentiments, the same Bible, the same God over all; every American was born within the sound of Bow Bells, and heard them "ring out the false, ring in the true." There were three or four places, continued the Bishop, to which he liked to go for the sake of the "broad gauge views" he could get of the world—the British Parliament was one, the Methodist Conference was another. But chief among all places on the earth where this unity of sentiment and world-wide feeling seemed to prevail was a Sunday-school convention. The Bishop proceeded to speak of some of his experiences in South America, which showed him the misery and degradation to which a people might fall who were without the Word of God; and by way of contrast he related the familiar anecdote of Queen Victoria, pointing to the Bible when asked by an Indian prince what was the secret of England's greatness. Sunday-school teachers, he said, desired for the whole world everywhere as much greatness as every Bible reading and Bible obeying people possessed; they desired for the whole world the same freedom, the same alertness of mind, the same breadth of thought, and the same immortality of institutions and ideas. Bishop Warren concluded by expressing his gratitude for the cordial welcome that had been extended to the delegates by the chief magistrate of the city of London.

The foreign delegates and other specially invited visitors, to the number of upwards of 400, were received on Monday afternoon by the committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at the Bible House, 146 Queen Victoria Street, where light refreshments were provided. The visitors inspected the warehouses, containing versions of the Scriptures in 340 languages and dialects.

The opening meeting of the convention and its principal sessions were held, through the courtesy of Dr. Parker, in the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, than which, perhaps, a more commodious and beautiful place of assembly could not have been selected for a gathering representative of the Sunday-school world. The joy of old friends meeting and the pleasure of making new acquaintances were tinged with a feeling of sadness, when four wreaths were placed on the front of the platform railing, in memory

of four delegates who perished in the La Bourgogne, while on their way to the convention, their names being Mr. and Mrs. Rundell, Miss Tower and Miss Reeves.

Mr. James E. Liddiard (chairman of the Reception and Hospitality Sub-committee), read the roll-call according to the countries from which the delegates came. The entire delegation, he said, consisted of 2,300; the largest delegation, viz., 250, being from the United States; at which announcement there were hearty and brotherly cheers, manifested by hand-clapping. From Canada, it was about 60; from far-off India, 17; from Australasia, 16; from the continent of Europe, 70; from London, 300; from the provinces, 1,500. At the suggestion of Mr. Liddiard, the delegates present from the countries named rose in their places after each call, and this uprising of representatives from near and far was the signal for loud and renewed clapping of hands, than which no welcome could have been more pronounced or hearty.

The Rev. Dr. Potts, on behalf of the delegates from the United States, Canada, and British North America, moved a resolution to the effect that the following message be despatched to Mr. B. F. Jacobs, the ex-president of the convention: "Much missed. Convention gratefully remembers past splendid services." Mr. F. F. Belsey seconded the resolution on behalf of the English and European delegates, and it was carried unanimously.

The Marquis of Northampton, who rose amid enthusiastic hand-clapping and waving of handkerchiefs, delivered an address of welcome on behalf of the Sunday-school Union, as its president for the year.

Mr. T. C. Ikehara (Tokio, International field worker of Japan) read a paper, in which he said that the teachers in the Sunday-schools of Japan were composed of earnest Christian Bible native women, the pastors, and in some cases, missionaries and their wives.

The field day of the convention was that it spent at the Crystal Palace when over twenty thousand persons, including a large number of children, listened to descriptions of primary teaching. The singing of a great Sunday-school chorus was specially effective.

The Rev. Aquila Lucas (New Brunswick) gave a report of the work in Canada. He spoke of the vast size of Canada, which was 3,500 miles from east to west, and 1,400 miles from north to south, and contained 127,000 square miles more than was in the United States. Canada was forty times larger than Scotland and England and Wales put together, and was nearly as large as the whole continent of Europe. They were here from Canada with the aim of making the teaching of the Word of God effective in their Sunday-schools. He admitted that the population of Canada was only five or six millions of precious souls, but the richness of the mineral deposits to be found in Canada would in time bring many millions of people to the country, and the Sunday-school work was not simply to build foundations for those who were there today, but for those who were coming in the future. These immigrants, from whatever country they came, or at all events their descendants, would become Canadians, and they would be worth all the more in proportion to the aggressive Sunday-school work.

The place of meeting for the next convention was left to the selection of the Executive Committee. Three cities, Toronto, Geneva and Stockholm, are anxious to entertain it.

THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

The Home Department received special prominence at the convention. It is being adopted with enthusiasm by our English friends. There are now 200,000 members of this department in the United States. Canada is especially complimented by The International Evangel for the progress made in this department. It has nearly 8,000 members in our own church, and a considerable number also in the other churches.

Are you reaching the people in your town and community? How many members of the church go to the Sunday-school? How many outside of the church who never attend either Sunday-school or church service? The Home Department, properly pushed, will reach every one of these people. We do not mean to say that it will cause them all to come to Sunday-school and church, but it will eventually get most of them; and it extends the invitation to all of them at frequent and regular periods.

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Methodist Magazine and Review for September.

Three articles in this number are very fully illustrated, "With the Fisher Folk," describing the Canadian toilers of the sea; "Flemish Pictures,"—Ghent and Bruges; and "Hampton Court and its Memories." "Stories of the Underground Railway," is an interesting paper by Miss M. Murray. An able paper by Lr. Rose, on "That Other Man's Conscience," will show where the individual responsibility to our fellows rests. "The Governmental and Commercial Relations of Great Britain and the United States," is a masterly paper by Hon. David A. Wells. The second part of "What the Deaconess says to the Churches," by Miss I. Horton, is a touching appeal on behalf of the out-of-work and out-of-heart members of the commonweal. F. S. Spence, Esq., presents a practical paper on "The Prohibition Plebiscite." Short articles on "William Theophilus Davison," by Rev. W. H. Adams, and "Public Libraries," by the Editor, and "Important Oriental Finds," with Science

Notes, Current Topics, etc., make up a good number.

Toronto: William Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. F. Huestis. \$2.00 a year; \$1.00 for six months.

The Model Superintendent

Let it be remembered that no Sunday-school runs itself. Behind the flourishing, growing school you will find the prayers and work and money of consecrated souls, who are watching its every interest and doing all in their power to keep it vigorous and strong.

The great object of the Bible is to bring God and man together. The great object of the devil is to keep them as far apart as possible.

The beauty of the Gospel is its simplicity. And this should suggest our duty in teaching it. Augustus Hare wisely says: "The greatest of truths are the simplest; and so are the greatest men."

ORDER OF SERVICES—FOURTH QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPP. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

SCHOOL. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

SUPP. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:

ALL. A good understanding have all they that do his commandments.

III. SINGING.

IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.

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

VI. SINGING.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.

II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.

III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.

IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS [especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings.]

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPP. Stand thou still awhile, that I may show thee the word of God.

SCHOOL. What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

SUPP. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

ALL. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF JUDAH.

LESSON I. REFORMATION UNDER ASA.

[Oct. 2.

GOLDEN TEXT. Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee. 2 Chron. 14. 11.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read chapters 14, 15, and 16.]

2 Chron. 14. 2-12. [Commit to memory verses 2-5.]

2 And A'sa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God.

3 For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:

4 And commanded Ju'dah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.

5 Also he took away out of all the cities of Ju'dah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

6 And he built fenced cities in Ju'dah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.

7 Therefore he said unto Ju'dah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

8 And A'sa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Ju'dah three hundred thousand; and out of Ben'ja-min, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valor.

9 And there came out against them Ze'rah the E-thi-o'pi-an with a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Ma-re'shah.

10 Then A'sa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zeph'a-thah at Ma-re'shah.

11 And A'sa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

12 So the LORD smote the E-thi-o'pi-ans before A'sa, and before Ju'dah; and the E-thi-o'pi-ans fled.

REVISED VERSION.

2 And A'sa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God: for he took away the strange altars, and the high places, and brake down the pillars, and hewed down the Ash'e-rim; and commanded Ju'dah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Ju'dah the high places and the sun-images: and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Ju'dah: for the land was quiet, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest. For he said unto Ju'dah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars; the land is yet before us, because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered. And A'sa had an army that bare bucklers and spears, out of Ju'dah three hundred thousand; and out of Ben'ja-min, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valor. And there came out against them Ze'rah the E-thi-o'pi-an with an army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and he came unto Ma-re'shah. Then A'sa went out to meet him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zeph'a-thah at Ma-re'shah. And A'sa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, there is none beside thee to help, between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O LORD our God; for we rely on thee, and in thy name are we come against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee. So the LORD smote the E-thi-o'pi-ans before A'sa, and before Ju'dah; and the E-thi-o'pi-ans fled.

15. 9-24. Carefully read also 1 Kings 15. 1-8 and 2 Chron. 13. 1-22.

Home Readings.

M. Reformation under Asa. 2 Chron. 14. 1-12.
 Tu. God's presence. 2 Chron. 15. 1-9.
 W. A solemn covenant. 2 Chron. 15. 10-19.
 Th. Call to repentance. Amos 5. 4-15.
 F. Trust in God. Psalm 20.
 S. God the strongest Defender. Isa. 31.
 S. Reward of obedience. Prov. 3. 1-10.

Time.—From about 955 to about 941 B. C.
Place.—The kingdom of Judah. The battle with Zerah was fought in the valley of Zephathah, at Mare'shah. **Rulers.**—Asa, king of Judah; he reigned for forty-one years, the first fourteen of which are covered by this lesson. Contemporary kings of Israel: Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab; in Ahab's fourth year Asa died. **Parallel History.**—1 Kings

Lesson Hymns.

No. 411, New Canadian Hymnal.

God will take care of you. All through the day
Jesus is near you to keep you from ill.

No. 424, New Canadian Hymnal.

Who'er would win the battle
Must never mind the blows,

No. 416, New Canadian Hymnal.

Some one will enter the pearly gate
By and by, by and by,
Taste of the glories that there await:
Shall you? Shall I?

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. Moral Reform, v. 2-5.

To whom did Asa succeed as king of Judah?
Whose law became Asa's rule of conduct?
What destructive reforms did he begin?
What commands did he give, and to whom?
In the cities what reforms were effected?
What was the state of the kingdom?

2. Worldly Wisdom, v. 6-8.

What measures for defense were taken?
Why were the times favorable for this work?
How large an army did Asa enroll?
How were the men of Judah armed?
How were the Benjamites equipped?
What characteristics had these in common?

3. Faith in God, v. 9-12.

What enemy came against Judah?
With what force?
Where did Asa meet the enemy?
On whom did he rely as an ally?
What plan did he make to the Lord?
What result followed?
What is the cry of true faith in trouble?

GOLDEN TEXT.

Into what covenant did Asa enter? Chapter 15, 12-15.

When and how did he break his covenant? Chap. 16, 1-6.

Who rebuked him therefor, and with what result? Chap. 16, 7-10.

How long did he reign?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. "Fear God and keep his commandments." This is the only way of peace, of safety, of success.
2. Break down the strange altars. Destroy the evil to conserve the good.
3. Call on the Lord in trouble. He is the defense of his people. He can give deliverance. No foe can stand against this ally.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Moral Reform, v. 2-5.

Who succeeded Rehoboam as king of Judah? 1 Kings 14, 31.

Who succeeded Abijah?

What was Asa's character?

How did he deal with idolatry?

What two commands did he give in verse 4.

What is it to seek the Lord?

What is the best time to seek him? Prov. 8, 17.

Where can we find his law?

How may we best keep it?

2. Worldly Wisdom, v. 6-8.

What was this "rest"?

Who gave it?

How was it obtained?

How may we find rest? Matt. 11, 28, 29.

How did Asa propose to improve the years of peace?

What is the Church's privilege in time of rest? Acts 9, 31.

How large was Asa's army?

3. Faith in God, v. 9-12.

Who came against Judah?

From what country and where located?

How large was his army?

Where was the battle?

Did Asa rely upon his army?

Upon whom did he rely?

What confident statement did he make to the Lord?

What prayer did he offer? GOLDEN TEXT.

What was the result of Asa's prayer and Asa's fight?

What may we do in trouble? Psalm 55, 22.

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. An example of thorough reformation?
2. An example of earnest work?
3. An example of earnest prayer?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How was Solomon's kingdom divided after his death? Into "Israel" and "Judah."

Who was the king of Judah? Rehoboam.

What tribes stayed with him? The tribe of Judah and part of Benjamin.

Who was king after Rehoboam?

Who followed Abijah?

What kind of a king was Asa?

How long was the land free from war?

What did he do about the idols?

What did he command the people of Judah to do? To seek the Lord, and to keep his commandments.

What were the "high places" and the "images" which he destroyed? **The high places were the altars, and the images the false gods.**

How did he tell the people to make their cities strong? **With walls, towers, gates, and bars.**

Why did he want this done? **So as to be ready in case of war.**

What really happened soon? **A great army of Ethiopians came upon them.**

To whom did Asa look for help? Verse 11.

How did the Lord help him?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. How did King Asa try to make his people better? **He destroyed false gods.**
2. How did he try to make his people safer?

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Portrait of a King.

I. RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. *Did... good and right.* v. 2.
Blessed...undefiled. Psalm 119. 1.
2. *In...eyes of the Lord.* v. 2.
Upon the righteous. Psalm 34. 15.

II. REFORM.

1. *Took away the altars.* v. 3.
Idols...to the bats. Isa. 2. 20.
2. *Seek the Lord.* v. 4.
While he may be found. Isa. 55. 6, 7.
3. *To do the law.* v. 4.
Do that which is lawful. Ezek. 33. 19.

III. INDUSTRY.

1. *Built fenced cities.* vs. 6, 7.
By labor...increase. Prov. 13. 11.
2. *Had an army.* v. 8.
Diligent shall bear rule. Prov. 12. 24.

He made strong forts and kept large armies.

3. Who came out with a stronger army to fight with him? **Zerah, the Ethiopian.**

4. In what words did king Asa pray to God? **GOLDEN TEXT: "Help us, O Lord," etc.**

5. Who won the victory? **"The Lord smote the Ethiopians."**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

20. What is faith in Christ?

Faith in Christ is a saving grace whereby we receive Him, trust in Him, and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel.

John i. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Acts xvi. 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.

IV. COURAGE.

1. *Went out against him.* vs. 8, 9.
Fear not, nor be afraid. Deut. 31. 6.
2. *Set the battle.* v. 10.
Whom shall I fear? Psalm 37. 1.

V. PRAYER.

1. *Cried unto the Lord.* v. 11.
Incline thine ear. Psalm 88. 2.
2. *Help us, O Lord.* v. 11.
Their help and their shield. Psalm 115. 9.

VI. FAITH.

1. *We rest on thee.* v. 11.
He shall deliver. Psalm 37. 40.
2. *In thy name we go.* v. 11.
Strength of the Lord. Psalm 71. 16.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Asa was the third king of Judah. His grandfather Rehoboam's folly had led to the division of the great empire founded by David. King Abijah, Rehoboam's son and Asa's father, was neither very wise nor very good, and yet he seems to have died in the odor of sanctity. Asa entered into the peaceful enjoyment of Abijah's exertions in the field of war. "In his days the land was quiet ten years." He took advantage of national peace and prosperity to sweep away the heathen symbols and ceremonies which infested the land, and he fortified the nation more thoroughly than any of his predecessors had done. Our lesson story emphasizes the doctrine of faith—the profitableness of resting upon God. It also falls in with the current Jewish theory of the retribution of sin in this life—a theory which, while liable to lead to extremes, nevertheless contains some truth. "Medicine," says John Ruskin, "often fails of its effect, but poison never; and while summing the observations of a past life, not unwatchfully spent, I can truly say that I have a thousand times seen Patience disappointed of her hope and Wisdom of her aim, but I have never yet seen Folly fruitless of mischief

nor a Vice conclude but in calamity." Asa reigned for forty-one years, from B. C. 955 to 914, and the first fifteen years of his reign are covered by this lesson. It is worth while, in the study of his reign, to read carefully the record also of his father Abijah's career in 2 Chron. 13. 1-22 and 1 Kings 15. 1-8.

Verse 2. Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord. He studied carefully the will of Jehovah as it had been expressed by lawmakers and prophets, and zealously sought to conform his life to it. There is no safe test of integrity but the approbation of the Lord. Public opinion often goes astray, and often our own hearts condemn us; but God is greater than our hearts. If in his eyes our motives are right, all is well. **His God.** Two sorts of idolaters are recognized by the historians of Judah and Israel—those who "sinned according to the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat," that is, those who had the true God and the correct theology, but whose worship was either degraded in deference to political plans or insincere; and those who sinned like Ahab—that is, worshiped false gods.

3. He took away the altars of the strange gods. "Strange gods" means "stranger" gods, foreign gods. **High places.** Especially the high places consecrated to these false gods. From 2 Chron. 15. 17 we find that the high places consecrated to Jehovah were not yet removed. Altars were usually built on hilltops, and often chapels or sacred tents were erected with them. **Brake down the images.** The pillars, memorial stones, or posts erected to Baal. **Cut down the groves.** Revised Version, Asherim. This phrase, like "images," refers to pillars, only that these were wooden, and dedicated to the goddess Ashtaroth. The worship of the false god and the false goddess were naturally entwined about each other. The rites were picturesque and exceedingly degrading, as indeed they could not but be, for the deities themselves were personified vices.

4. Commanded Judah. Issued a proclamation throughout his little kingdom. **To seek the Lord God of their fathers.** To worship Jehovah as the only God of Israel. From the story elsewhere we learn how tremendously in earnest Asa was in all this reformation. He deposed Queen Maachah, his mother (1 Kings 15. 10), or his grandmother, according to 1 Kings 15. 2, and her idols were openly destroyed. **To do the law.** To study the civil and religious order of the nation. **Commandment.** The thought here is that of obedience. The "commandment" is the precept which enjoins the practice of the "law" which they studied.

5, 6. He took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images.

The sun statues, altars, and emblems of Baal, the sun god. Judging by modern Hindu images, some of these were in the shape of a human head surrounded by a halo, and others probably of the human form thus surrounded. Asa was a beneficent despot; he did not consult with anyone, but did what was right, and his nation was the better for it. **The kingdom was quiet before him.** Literally "under his eye." He looked on every hand about his little kingdom and could see no sign of plotting within nor of invasion without. It is true that the kingdom of Israel and that of Judah were not at this time in friendship, but it is probable that a hostile feeling rather than actual hostilities are referred to in 1 Kings 15. 16. That a people, some of whom doubtless were sincere in their worship of false gods, and others of whom were financially interested in that worship, should so readily obey his commands shows that the moral poison had not yet completely corrupted the spiritual life of the nation. The ten years of peace which Asa enjoyed were made good use of. He built fenced cities in Judah, thus following the example of his grandfather Rehoboam. The customs of the Hebrews gave to their kings huge revenues, and the royal wealth was increased by each successful campaign; but the "good" kings always emphasized the theocracy, and regarded God as the real king and themselves as vicegerents—stewards of the great Householder. Their income therefore was not regarded as "private," but was lavishly spent for the defense of the nation. "Fenced cities" were fortresses, some of them most massive. The invasion by the Egyptians in Rehoboam's day and the extensive wars which Abijah suffered made this renewal of the fortresses by Asa a necessity. **The land had rest.** Not only was "the kingdom quiet under his eye," not only did the statesmen and generals recognize the prevailing conditions of peace, but the people themselves were at rest, each one sitting under his own vine and fig tree, with none to make him afraid, and the signs of prosperity and security made the popular life wholesome and happy. "Rest and quiet," as Dr. Trumbull weightily says, "sometimes go together; but sometimes rest is accompanied by strife and struggle." We read that in Asa's reign his land was quiet ten years, but when barbaric invasion shattered the national quiet Asa was still able to say to the Lord, "We rest on thee." This is our privilege—to have rest alike when there is

quiet and when there is warfare; and to dwell with delight at all times on the thought that there remaineth a rest to the people of God.

7. Therefore. "Because the Lord had given him rest." **He said unto Judah.** Probably by a series of proclamations. **Let us build these cities.** No cities are named, but Geba and Mizpeh (2 Chron. 16. 6) were two of these. **Make about them walls and towers, gates and bars.** The "walls" were of stone and were an abundant defense against any weapons that in that age could be brought against them. Explosives were almost unknown, and battering-rams were guarded against by backing the walls by solid earth. "Towers" were built at intervals, so as to give the defenders advantage over the assailants. The besieging army often on its part built wooden towers high enough to reach these towers on the walls. The "gates" were covered with plates of brass or iron, and the "bars" increased their strength. **While the land is yet before us.** This was the reason for Asa's building. "In time of peace prepare for war" is a maxim which, while often misused, has some wisdom underneath it.

8. Asa had an army. Not, however, a regular army, in the modern sense of that phrase. He had provided with weapons all citizens on whom he felt justified in calling in time of war. **Targets.** Long shields. **Spears.** The most readily used weapons of ancient warfare. **Bare shields and drew bows.** The shields were of the lighter, round sort, and the bows were evidently very strong (which is shown by the word "drew," literally "trod," which indicates that the foot had to be used in placing the arrow in position, so stiff was the spring). The armor of the left-handed Benjamites was evidently lighter than that of the troops from Judah.

9. There came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian. Most of the facts concerning Asa are given in Kings as well as in Chronicles, but this invasion is only mentioned here. Who Zerah was is not certainly known. Most late authorities incline to believe that he was a king of Egypt, though it is not easy to understand how an Egyptian could be called an Ethiopian. It is conjectured by some that Zerah was Osarkon II, and was really an Ethiopian prince who ruled over Egypt on account of his marriage

with the daughter of the Egyptian king. If he in any way represented the Egyptian throne, the reason of his invasion may have been that Asa refused to continue the tribute which Shishak had imposed upon Rehoboam. **A host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots.** This horde probably was made up of mercenaries, Arab nomads, always ready for a fight, and now swept northward by the Ethiopian army, each tribe hoping to have a share of the expected plunder. The number of chariots is small, due, doubtless, to the fact that it was next to impossible for chariots to be used effectively in Judah. The approach from Egypt was especially difficult for them. **Mareshah.** "Summit." This town had been fortified by Rehoboam, and it lay on the edge of the desert, about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. From it the road rose rapidly and roughly. It was the first great Jewish fortress to which Zerah's army came.

10. Then Asa went out against him. As soon as the news of the invasion reached him, **The valley of Zepthathah.** Of this valley nothing is certainly known.

11. Asa cried unto the Lord his God. He took every precaution for the safety and advantage of his army, but was at the same time conscious of his own inability to meet the foe, and relied entirely on God. **Lord, it is nothing with thee to help.** "No one is able like thee to help." **Whether with many, or with them that have no power.** God is as ready to take the side of the weak as the side of the strong. The giving forth of God's power is nothing to him, but it is a great deal to his children. **Help us, O Lord our God.** (Exod. 14. 10; 1 Chron. 5. 20; 2 Chron. 13. 14; Psalm 18. 6; 50. 15; Acts 2. 21.) **We rest on thee.** Here comes the second, and by far the most impressive, view of the rest of soul which Asa enjoyed. **In thy name.** Trusting to thy help. **We go against this multitude.** When a man stands for the Lord and moves forward as the Lord's representative he is invincible. **Let not man prevail against thee.** "No man can ever hold out against thee."

12. So. Therefore. The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa. Not Asa smote the Ethiopians before the Lord. The results of all human efforts are, in the last analysis, divine.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Asa, the third king of Judah, was conspicuous as a reformer. When he came to the throne idolatry, with its attendant demoralization, was prevalent throughout the kingdom. He immediately

set on foot various measures for the restoration of the worship of Jehovah and the eradication of the sources of evil. He was unsparing in his zeal, going even so far as to burn the symbol of

the religion of his grandmother, Maachah, and to throw its ashes into the Kidron. Besides restoring the ancient religion, he developed the defenses of the kingdom, fortifying cities and raising a great army, and bringing Judah up to a higher station among the nations. After a successful reign of about forty years he passed away, greatly mourned by his people, who had developed a strong and sincere affection for him.

Verse 2. Good and right. Considering the record made by his two predecessors, it would not have been remarkable if Asa had done that which was bad and wrong. Rehoboam, the first king, "reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there; and he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." Then came Abijah, with a short reign of three years, the most important event of which was the victory over Jeroboam, but "he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God." With a father and a grandfather of such types it is quite remarkable that Asa did not succumb to his evil environment and walk "in all the sins of his father." Evidently his determination to do "that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God" was stronger than the degenerative influence of heredity.

3. Took away the altars. They had been established so long that they must have seemed to be part of the very life of the people. Since Solomon had admitted idolatry toward the close of his reign no king had had the temerity to suppress it, and the attempt of Asa was not wholly successful, so firmly was the evil entrenched in the heart and characters of the people. It is easier to prevent than to pluck up evil. **Cut down the groves.** Asa knew that the favor of God could not be expected as long as these symbols of idolatrous worship remained standing to tempt the people away from him. The rites employed in this idolatrous worship appealed to the basest passions, and there could be no real worship of Jehovah so long as these evidences of debased nature were left undisturbed.

4. Commanded Judah. The earnestness of Asa suggests the seriousness of the situation. Another reign such as that of his grandfather would probably plunge Judah into irretrievable ruin. It was time for vigorous measures, and the king was equal to the emergency. "He set before him the dangerous consequences of forsaking God and his ordinances, and that there was no way of having grievances redressed but by repenting and returning unto God."—*Smith*.

5. The kingdom was quiet. That was the natural result. The distress and disquietude of the world are largely due to the evil in it. Once remove that disturbing cause, and quietness will inevitably result. And this is equally true of the individual heart. Distraction can usually be traced to sin. Let the sin be eliminated, and the peace of God which passeth understanding will possess the soul. Judah reformed meant Judah in tranquillity. It is remarked of Asa's reign, "In his days the land was quiet ten years," and this was due to his strenuous stand for the reestablishment of the worship of Jehovah.

7. Let us build. Here we see that "peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." When sin is regnant among a people the virtues that abide and make for their higher development cannot flourish. The ways of peace, sobriety, and contentment are hedged up, and the purpose to seek the things that pertain to the kingdom of God and the spiritual well-being of the soul is strangled.

8. Asa had an army. During the ten years of peace Asa, like a wise king, knowing the jealous dispositions of his neighbors, sought to develop the internal resources of his kingdom and to prepare his cities for defense against any enemy who might attack him. In time of peace he prepared for war; and when the encounter came he was ready. If the figures given relative to the strength of the opposing forces are accepted, the armies must have presented a wonderful spectacle, but there is reason to believe that these large numbers are an error of some copyist, and that the forces, though great and unequal, were less than 580,000 on the one side and 1,000,000 men and 300 chariots on the other.

9. Zerah. There is difference of opinion as to who this Zerah was. He may have been a Cushite of Arabia, or of Ethiopia. It is supposed, also, that Zerah is the Hebrew name of Osarkon I, Shishak's successor, and the second king of the twenty-second Egyptian dynasty, or of Osarkon II. It is quite likely that a large portion of his vast army was made up of Libyan mercenaries.

11. Asa cried unto the Lord. Without supernatural help there was only the remotest possibility of success for Asa. But he had resources that Zerah knew not of, and against which his vast horde would be utterly powerless. The arm of the Lord was revealed, and he triumphed gloriously, as he always does when arrayed with his children against the forces of evil. The battle of Mareshah is without parallel in Jewish history. "On no other occasion did an Israelite army meet an army of one of the great powers on either side and defeat it. Shishak was unopposed; Sennacherib was not met in the

field; Necho was so met, and overthrew Josiah's army; Nebuchadnezzar, like Shishak, was only delayed by fortifications." **In thy name.** This is the spirit of the true reformer. The work was not Asa's, but Jehovah's, and he was but the instrument. All great reforms have been accomplished in the same way. The work of regeneration, whether it be moral or spiritual, is God's work, and his servants, who are called upon to be coworkers with him in the work, should recognize the true relation they sustain to it. Asa had an opportunity to assume the credit of that marvelous victory, but he undoubtedly recognized the divine hand in it.

12. So the Lord. The smiting of the Ethiopians before Asa is a promise of God's willingness and ability to do for all who trust in him exceeding abundantly above all they may ask or think.

Thoughts for Young People.

How to Promote True Religion and True National Prosperity.

1. Let the rulers set good examples. All the success and prosperity of Judah were measurably due to Asa. A bad ruler inevitably makes his easily-molded subjects bad, and a great majority of men and women in this world are easily molded.

2. Remove temptations to sin. We have no justification for the toleration of moral infection or of snares of sin. The shameless journalism of modern times, the liquor traffic, the opportunities furnished by corrupt politics, the unscrupulous use of civil or military power, tend to corrupt youth and to make it easy to do wrong. Gladstone never uttered a wiser word than when he said that the true vocation of government was to make it *easy to do right, and hard to do wrong.*

3. Impart religious instruction. In our nation this cannot be done by the State, but in no nation can it more easily and generally be done. If there are slums, it is the fault of Christians, in past generations or in this; if there are unevangelized rustic neighborhoods, it is because those who enjoy high Christian privileges have not the true missionary spirit. Every one of us is responsible for the religious instruction of youth.

4. Train in practical obedience. I like that word "commanded." If young America has a besetting sin, it is disregard of authority, disposition to criticize official superiors, lack of reverence for the powers that be, which, nevertheless, we have the divine assurance are ordained of God.

5. Give the people occupation. We have had a

singular incidental evidence of this advantage in our own land. What was the first and most apparent effect of the declaration of war? It was the belittling of differences at home. Political grudges were forgotten just because the people had a war to wage. They became better citizens than before. It is precisely the same if they can be interested in peaceable activities. People need something to do to keep them from spoiling.

6. Expect dangers and prepare for them. Our war, with its sources of mortification and pride—the nation's comparatively unprepared army and thoroughly prepared navy—forms an excellent illustration of the necessity of this injunction.

7. Trust in God, and look to him in emergency. We try, but it is God that performs. The wavering, uncertain, half-hearted Christian has no real sense of God's love, therefore no faith in his presence and help, therefore no strength against spiritual foes. But enlist under Christ's banner, put on the whole armor of God, take the shield of faith, and we shall be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

There is something which tends to awaken a sense of pity in the ever-present spirit of compromise in religious matters found throughout the entire history of the Jewish people. Here we have a king, Asa, commended for his zeal against idolatry, in breaking down the high places, and yet the next chapter tells us he carried his reform only to a limited degree, when he was obliged to compromise by making a distinction. He did remove those high places which had been wholly devoted to the worship of idols, but did not remove the idolatrous symbols under which the people had come to worship Jehovah. If we were intent only on emphasizing this as an orientalism, we could furnish no end of illustrations of the compounding of religions in all the nations of the East. To be sure, a further investigation might show that Christianity, too, had compounded with the old heathenism of northern Europe and with Roman usages, and had not only taken color, but been corrupted by the blending. But it is specially remarkable how everywhere the most iconoclastic faiths have been more or less mixed with other systems, just as we find it throughout the entire Hebrew history. It is the same at this day. We venture to illustrate by referring to the mixture of several systems in one brought recently to notice by the Rev. Samuel M. Zwemer, just now attempting an extension of missionary enterprise into the interior of Arabia. He says of the four or five thousand so-called

"St. John Christians" living along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, that their worship is a composite of all the religions which have appeared on the plain. They turn toward the North Star in prayer, and baptize every Sunday; they bathe toward midnight in the river, and on emerging put on white robes. In an open space before their tabernacle the priest places the sacred book, "Sidra Rabba," on the altar. Two live pigeons are handed him; one is held toward the polar star and released with the invocation, "In the name of the Living One blessed by primitive light, the ancient light, divinely self-created." The throat of the other pigeon is cut, and the blood is let fall on waters—four spots on each, forming a cross. These are put into the mouths of the worshippers by priests with the words "Marked be thou with the mark of the Living One."

The integrity of Asa is not called in question; he would not have failed to make thorough work of the reformation, but, like many another reformer, he had to get on as far as he could. He was honest enough to feel that he could call confidently on God to stand by him in the battles against the Egyptians, and to make the war a sort of religious duel. It was a splendid and courageous challenge. He had not an army equal to hurl against the great forces of the Ethiopians. Asa challenged the pantheon of Egypt. There was a splendid ritual in Egypt. The calendar was crowded with festivals; ceremony followed ceremony; foreigners beheld with wonder the round of religious services; scores of priests with shaven heads crowded the courts of the temples; long processions made their way up and down the "sphinx" avenues; incense floated in the air; strains of music resounded without pause, while hundreds of victims were being sacrificed. In every city and town were one or more grand structures enriched with all that Egyptian art could supply of painted and sculptured decoration dedicated to the honor of some divinity or divinities. The image of the great god of the place occupied the central shrine; around were the chambers of the priests, and further off court after court, some pillared, some colonnaded, and all more or less adorned with sculpture and painting. The entrance to them was through long avenues of sphinxes or obelisks which conducted to the two gigantic towers flanking the main doorway.

It was not so much against the overpowering Ethiopian army that Asa asks Jehovah to give him triumph as against the pantheon of Egyptian gods. "In thy name we go against this multitude." It is like the old-time challenge of Elijah at Carmel. He is willing to defy all the multi-

tude of Egyptian armies and Egyptian gods. It is Jehovah against all the deities of all the temples, or hills, or brickyards, or palaces, of all the Egyptian calendar, singly or combined—a great religious battle, a great moral crisis, and a sweeping religious victory.

By Way of Illustration.

Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. A new foreman in a manufactory announced that the rules of the company would be enforced. A workman said to him, threateningly, "Do you know that you will make yourself very unpopular?" "I am sorry for that," he answered, "but it is more important to be popular with the president than with any man or company of men." The reformers of the world have been hated and persecuted and sometimes put to death by men, but they did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and he has brought them to honor and reward.

Importance of reform. Thomas Carlyle says: "Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms on April 17, 1521, may be considered as the greatest scene in modern European history; the point, indeed, from which the whole subsequent history of civilization takes its rise. The world's pomp and power sit there on this hand; on that, stands up for God's truth one man, Hans Luther, the poor miner's son. It is the greatest moment in the modern history of man. The germ of English Puritanism, England and its two Parliaments, America's vast work these two centuries, the French Revolution, all lay in that crisis of the Reformation. Had Luther in that moment acted otherwise, it would have made different history for all these great nations."

Christians should be reformers. Christians should be like railway switches, turning people off from the track of sin to the track of righteousness. I fear that too many of us are like the railway stations, past which the great companies of sinners whirl to destruction.—*Beecher.*

Asa victorious with God's help. The motto of the old German reformers has been often quoted, "One with God on his side makes a majority." The Lord is so strong that the question of large or small in reference to men is of no account to him; as a few more or less people on board are unnoticed by a great steamship; or a few grains of sand more or less which would make a great difference to ants rolling them along are nothing to a man. A good woman in the Middle Ages felt that she ought to build an orphanage for homeless children. But she was very poor, having only two pence, and

when some one asked her how she could do anything with so little she answered, "Two pence and Thresa are nothing, but two pence and God are everything."

England's deliverance. To commemorate the deliverance of England from the formidable group of Spanish ships called the Spanish Armada, Queen Elizabeth commanded a medal to be struck representing the Armada scattered and sinking in the background, and in the front the British fleet riding triumphant, with the following passage from Exod. 15. 10, as a motto round the medal, "Thou didst blow with thy wind, and the sea covered them."

A modern example. The best example of modern reform is the warfare of temperance against the saloon. Men drive out the saloons, but they come again. They make prohibitory laws, but in some form the saloon appears again. It is so rooted in the passions of men and in moneyed interests that the repeated temperance reformatations are only partly successful, though really making a continual gain. If we should put "saloons" instead of "high places" in this story, it would well describe the modern temperance warfare.—*Peloubet.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

You remember our lesson a week ago last Sunday was a sad story of sin and its effects. Israel and Judah "left all the commandments of the Lord their God," and a long train of sorrowful disaster followed.

It is always so. I wish we might see it; I wish we might believe it without having to learn the lesson by hard experience. The commandments of God, every one of them, are given "that it may be well with us and with our children forever." "In keeping of them there is great reward." Besides the wickedness of disobeying God, we show a great lack of good sense when we disobey him. He loves us; he knows what is best for us; he tells us what to do. But we do not like to be told; we want our own way, and we have to take the consequences.

Stop for a moment and think of the Ten Commandments, which include the whole moral law in so few words that we can easily remember them. There is not one of them we can break without doing ourselves personal harm. Not one, which if kept, but will make us more prosperous and happy. Jesus put them all into one short sentence: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Ask the Holy

Spirit to help you think this out for yourself, so that you may see how very foolish it is not to obey God.

But we have come to a brighter day in Judah's history. "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God," and he commanded Judah to do the law and the commandment. Things began to mend at once. "They built and prospered." It was the logic of conditions. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." I want you to get a true view of the rewards of goodness and the punishment of sin. These lessons teach it plainly if we study them rightly. God does not reward us for doing right; for instance, as a mother gives her child "something nice for being good." That is a very low conception of the principles of his government. There is a moral law of cause and effect; we do not understand it, God does understand; and he bases his commands upon that unchanging law. If we obey, we come to the logical outcome—prosperity and peace. If we disobey, we come just as logically to disaster and sorrow. And yet God does out of his infinite fatherly love shower upon his obedient children blessings beyond all we can ask or think, because we are in conditions which make it possible for him to do so. Never, never think of God of his own will sending a sinner to everlasting death. He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

But it was not all peaceful with Asa, even though he was doing right. A host of a thousand thousand came out against him—more than three times as many as Asa could gather together. Does that look as if God was taking care of him? It doesn't look so, but he was. God generally leads his people that way. They get their best things out of the great trials they have to meet. They learn to pray as Asa did. O, what a prayer is this! How often I have read it; in my Bible there are deep lines around it, and dates too, when I have proved that "it is nothing with thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power." It is good to have a host come out against us if we find out that truth. God is above circumstances, greater than circumstances; hard places are of small account with him. It is very sweet to pray, "Help me, O Lord my God, for I rest on thee." It was a great thing for Asa to have rest from his enemies and prosperity in his kingdom, but it was even better to rest in God in the midst of his enemies. It is comfortable to live without trials, but we never know the exquisite depth of rest until we find it in the midst of anxieties and difficulties, in the strength and comfort of God.

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. Recall the names and characters of the kings from David to Asa. II. Define and give account of *strange gods, high places, groves, commandments, images, fenced cities, targets, Zerah the Ethiopian, Mereshah*. III. State concerning King Asa: 1. His acts, as recorded in this lesson; 2. The elements of character which he displayed. What are the truths which this lesson teaches concerning: 1. Times of peace? 2. Times of war? 3. Times of need? This lesson may be taught in various lines. 1. A good one is suggested by the "Thoughts for Young People," "How to promote true religion and prosperity in a nation." 2. Take for another: (1) Asa's opportunity—time of peace, prosperity, etc. (Youth such a time.) (2) Asa's use of the opportunity: reform, preparation, work. Let young people so employ theirs in thorough equipment for usefulness. (3) Asa's need. The dangers through which the young must sometimes pass; (4) Asa's power—prayer, reliance upon God. So let the young look to God and rest upon him.

Before the Class.

Introduction. The lessons for the present quarter give us a view of some of the leading events of the kingdom of Judah. The history of this kingdom, unlike that of Israel, is that of a single dynasty—the dynasty of David—thus fulfilling the promise of God made to David and renewed to Solomon. (See 1 Chron. 17. 11-15 and 1 Kings 11. 11-13.) Rehoboam reigned over the southern kingdom for seventeen years, and was succeeded by his son, Abijah, who reigned three years. During Rehoboam's reign the people fell into gross idolatry, and as a punishment suffered a severe defeat at the hands of Shishak, king of Egypt, who was bought off from destroying the city by a great ransom, which included the famous shields of gold which were in the temple. Abijah followed in the footsteps of his father, doing evil in the sight of the Lord. This was the condition of things when Rehoboam's grandson, Asa, came to the throne. He reigned for forty-one years.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Life," and the following outline of the lesson: 1. A righteous purpose; 2. A thorough purification; 3. A commendable prudence; 4. A humble prayer.

1. *A righteous purpose.* Asa turned from the evil ways of his father and grandfather, and "purposed" to follow the law of God. In this he was successful, for the record tells us that "the heart of Asa was perfect all his days" (2 Chron. 15. 17). Thus Asa took the first step in

the way of life toward a true reformation—the forming of a purpose to do right in the eyes of the Lord. Many so-called reformations are not reformations at all, because this first step has not been taken. Without a righteous purpose as an ideal to actualize there can be no true reformation of the individual and of society. Call out from the class suggestions as to the hindrances Asa had to contend against in carrying out his high purpose, such as (a) Influence of his father and grandfather and their example; (b) The prevailing idolatrous religion; (c) The influence of Maachah. Ask also for the influences helpful to his purpose, such as (a) The prophets; (b) The direct promises of God given to David and Solomon; (c) Experiences of the past in both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

2. *A thorough purification.* King Asa not only began to walk in God's way, but also began the purging of the nation of its idolatrous practices (verses 3-5). Note (a) The thoroughness of the purging—the utter destruction of the altars, the images, and the groves; (b) The extent of the work—throughout all the cities of Judah; (c) The positive command to the people—seek the Lord God; (d) The result of the purging—rest. Asa was terribly in earnest and made a clean sweep of everything. So to-day a true reformation is a complete reformation, a complete giving up of all enshrined idols, coupled with a seeking of the Lord God and the keeping of his law and commandments.

3. *A commendable prudence.* During the ten years of rest and quiet which the kingdom now enjoyed Asa built cities and strengthened them, thus preparing for a possible assault in the future. This was the part of wisdom. In our lives to-day we must use the times of peace and quiet to strengthen our characters, so that when the assaults of evil strike we may be able successfully to resist them. This with us is the part of wisdom.

4. *A humble prayer.* The time of trial came after a number of years, when Judah was invaded by Zerah the Ethiopian. Although Asa had a large army and at once went out to give battle to the invaders, he did not trust in the strength of this army, but turned to God in humble prayer, praying for divine help to overcome the enemy. The prayer was heard and answered. "Thus, while we must prepare for all times of temptation and trial, when such times come let us look upward for help and not trust alone to our own strength.

Specific application. Seek to impress the truth that the way of life is a way of complete reformation, and that all true reformations begin with a change of purpose—a turning to the Lord

God and his righteousness. Our purpose must be to do not simply that which seems right in our own eyes or in the eyes of society, but that which is right in the eyes of the Lord.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Lord, we come before thee now.
How good thou art to me.
Praise, for his excellent greatness.
There's a wideness.
Glorious things of thee.

A mighty fortress.
Be with me every moment.
Come, let us use the grace.
Come, thou long-expected Jesus.
Awake! Jerusalem, awake!

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

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Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL.



LESSON II. JEHOSHAPHAT'S GOOD REIGN.

[Oct. 9.]

GOLDEN TEXT. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Prov. 3. 6.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 1 Kings 14. 21 to 16. 34.]

2 Chron. 17. 1-10. [Commit to memory verses 3-6.]

1 And Je-hosh'a-phat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Is'ra-el.

2 And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Ju'dah, and set garrisons in the land of Ju'dah, and in the cities of E'phra-im, which A'sa his father had taken.

3 And the LORD was with Je-hosh'a-phat, because he walked in the first ways of his father Da'vid, and sought not unto Ba'al-im;

4 But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Is'ra-el.

5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Ju'dah brought to Je-hosh'a-phat presents; and he had riches and honor in abundance.

6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD; moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Ju'dah.

7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-ha'il, and to O-ba-di'ah,

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And Je-hosh'a-phat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Is'
- 2 ra-el. And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Ju'dah, and set garrisons in the land of Ju'dah, and in the cities of E'phra-im,
- 3 which A'sa his father had taken. And the LORD was with Je-hosh'a-phat, because he walked in the first ways of his father Da'vid,
- 4 and sought not unto the Ba'al-im; but sought to the God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Is'
- 5 ra-el. Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Ju'dah brought to Je-hosh'a-phat presents; and he had riches
- 6 and honor in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD; and furthermore he took away the high places and
- 7 the Asherim out of Ju'dah. Also in the third year of his reign he sent his princes, even Ben-ha'il, and O-ba-di'ah, and Zech-a-ri'ah, and Ne-than'e-el, and Mi-cha'iah, to teach in

and to Zech-a-r'ah, and to Ne-than'e-el, and to Mi-chai'ah, to teach in the cities of Ju'dah.

8 And with them he sent Le'vites, even Shem-a-f'ah, and Neth-a-ni'ah, and Zeb-a-di'ah, and As-a-hel, and She-mir'a-moth, and Je-hon'a-than, and Ad-o-ni'jah, and To-bi'jah, and Tob-ad-o-ni'jah, Le'vites; and with them E-lish-a-ma and Je-horam, priests.

9 And they taught in Ju'dah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Ju'dah, and taught the people.

10 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Ju'dah, so that they made no war against Je-hosh'a-phat.

Time.—B. C. 914-889. **Place.**—The kingdom of Judah. **Rulers.**—Jehoshaphat, the fourth king of Judah. Contemporary kings of Israel: Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram. Ben-hadad, king of Syria.

Home Readings.

M. Jehoshaphat's Good Reign. 2 Chron. 17. 1-10.

Tu. Good instructions. 2 Chron. 19. 1-11.

W. Refuge in trouble. 2 Chron. 20. 1-13.

Th. Resting in God. 2 Chron. 20. 14-21.

F. Deliverance. 2 Chron. 20. 22-30.

S. The king and the Scriptures. Deut. 17. 14-20.

S. A joyful Bible reading. Neh. 8. 1-12.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 210, New Canadian Hymnal.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land.

No. 333, New Canadian Hymnal.

At even, ere the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around Thee lay.

No. 323, New Canadian Hymnal.

Into a tent where a gipsy boy lay,
Dying alone at the close of the day.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. A Righteous Example, v. 1-6.

Whom did Jehoshaphat succeed as king?

Against whom did he guard himself?

Whose example did he follow?

Whom did he seek and serve?

What rewards came for his fidelity?

What is promised to godliness? 1 Tim. 4. 8.

In whose ways was the king encouraged?

What evils did he put away?

2. Religious Instruction, v. 7-10.

When was this good work begun?

To whose care was it committed?

What religious instructors were sent out?

What was their authority in teaching?

Where did they teach?

Why had Jehoshaphat peace with his neighbors?

8 the cities of Judah; and with them the Le'vites, even Shem-a-f'ah, and Neth-a-ni'ah, and Zeb-a-di'ah, and As-a-hel, and She-mir'a-moth, and Je-hon'a-than, and Ad-o-ni'jah, and To-bi'jah, and Tob-ad-o-ni'jah, the Le'vites; and with them E-lish'a-ma and Je-horam, the 9 priests. And they taught in Ju'dah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went about throughout all the cities of Ju'dah, and taught among the people. 10 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Ju'dah, so that they made no war against Je-hosh'a-phat.

What great truth is illustrated in the career of this ruler? GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Follow good example. Walk in the ways of wise men.

2. Honor God's word. Search the Scriptures. Teach God's commandments. The Bible is our only guide-book to eternal life.

3. True piety is a source of prosperity to individuals as to nations.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Righteous Example, v. 1-6.

Who succeeded Asa as king?

How did he strengthen his kingdom?

What was his character?

Whose example did he follow?

Whose example is the best for us to copy?

1 Cor. 11. 1.

Who was with Jehoshaphat?

Who is willing to abide with us? John 14. 23.

To whom did Jehoshaphat seek?

What did he avoid?

What is it to seek God?

What is the command in Isa. 55. 6.

Who was the king of Israel at this time?

1 Kings 22. 41.

What were his character and influence?

What did God do for Jehoshaphat?

What did Jehoshaphat take away, and why?

What is the meaning of "lifted up" in verse 6?

2. Religious Instruction, v. 7-10.

What three classes of persons did Jehoshaphat send throughout Judah?

For what purpose?

What were the commands and promises to Joshua concerning the Scriptures? Josh. 1. 8.

How should we use the Bible? John 5. 39.

What was the effect on the surrounding nations of Jehoshaphat's piety?

Does true religion inspire respect from the world?

What is our **GOLDEN TEXT**?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. An example of fidelity in God's service?
2. An example of prosperity in God's way?
3. An example of teaching of God's law?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How long did Asa reign? **About forty-one years.**

Who became king of Judah when he died? **His son, Jehoshaphat.**

Against what kingdom did he strengthen himself? **Against Israel.**

Why was the Lord with Jehoshaphat? Verses 3, 4.

With whom will the Lord be in these days? **With those who walk in his ways.**

How may we know the Lord's ways? **We must study and learn.**

What has God given to help us? **His word, his Holy Spirit, and many kind teachers.**

How did the people of Judah show love for their king? **They brought him rich presents.**

How did this help him? **It encouraged him in the ways of the Lord.**

Whom did he send out to teach the people? **His princes.**

What did these princes or judges teach? **The right way to keep the laws of the land.**

Who went with them? **Priests and Levites.**

What did they teach? **How to keep the law of the Lord.**

What good effect did all this have? **Other nations learned to fear God.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. When Jehoshaphat became king what did he do? **"He sought to the Lord God of his father."**

2. What was the result? **The Lord was with Jehoshaphat.**

3. In what did Jehoshaphat instruct his people? **In the book of the law of the Lord.**

4. What did the Lord give Jehoshaphat? **Riches and honor in abundance.**

5. What is the **GOLDEN TEXT**? **"In all thy ways,"** etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

31. What is justification?

Justification is an act of God's free grace where-in He pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Romans iv. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The School in Judah.

I. ITS FOUNDER.

1. **A Prudent King.** *Strengthened himself.*

v. 1, 2.

The prudent are crowned. Prov. 14. 18.

2. **A Pious King.** *Sought to the Lord.* vs. 3, 4.

If thou seek him. 1 Chron. 28. 9.

3. **A Prosperous King.** *Had riches and honor.*

vs. 5, 6.

Given thee....riches. 1 Kings 3. 13.

II. ITS INSTRUCTORS.

1. *Princes.* v. 7.

Will speak....before kings. Psalm 119. 46.

2. *Levites.* v. 8.

Purify....sons of Levi. Mal. 3. 3.

3. *Priests.* v. 8.

The priest's lips....keep. Mal. 2. 7.

III. ITS PLACE.

All the cities of Judah. v. 9.

To the lost sheep. Matt. 10. 5, 6.

To the Jew first. Rom. 1. 16.

IV. ITS WORK.

They taught. v. 9.

The meek will he teach. Psalm 25. 9.

Teach all nations. Matt. 28. 19.

V. ITS TEXT-BOOK.

The book of the law. v. 9.

Search the scriptures. John 5. 39.

Law and the testimony. Isa. 8. 20.

VI. ITS STUDENTS.

The people. v. 9.

Teach them diligently. Deut. 6. 6, 7.

All taught of God. John 6. 45.

VII. ITS RESULT.

1. *Fear....fell.* v. 10.

Thy way prosperous. Josh. 1. 8.

2. *Made no war.* v. 10.

Even his enemies....peace. Prov. 16. 7.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The kingdom of Judah certainly began its career under favorable auspices. Its first two kings, Rehoboam and Abijah, though not heroically good, were not conspicuously bad, the influence of their reigns being on the whole beneficent. Asa, as we have seen, was loyal to Jehovah and vigorous as a ruler. Jehoshaphat, the fourth king, who ascended the throne B. C. 914, was the ablest of all Hebrew rulers, with the exception of David and Jeroboam II. He was thirty-five years old when he mounted the throne. He reigned for twenty-five years, while Ahab and Ahaziah and Jehoram, one after the other, reigned in Samaria. Jehoshaphat and the prophet Elijah were contemporaries.

Verse 1. Strengthened himself against Israel. The young king had every reason to expect attacks from the north, for all his predecessors had been forced to resist the aggressions of the kings of Samaria. But Jehoshaphat was a statesman as well as a soldier, and we find that his steel-clad hand was soon extended in friendship to the Israelite king. His first action was, wisely, to prepare for war; his second, still more wisely, was to establish peace.

2. He placed forces in all the fenced cities. In Jehoshaphat's age "standing armies" were in their infancy, and it was the novelty of garrisons in the great fortifications that led to this special record. Amid present conditions no ruler would think of erecting a fortification without a garrison to occupy it. **Set garrisons in the land of Judah.** He established military posts, and it is not improbable that the standing army of Judah was the earliest in the world's history. **The cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.** What these cities were and when they were taken we do not know. It will be wise for the teacher to read carefully the rest of this chapter, and the next three also, so as to get a complete view of Jehoshaphat's reign.

3. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat. Simply because Jehoshaphat was with the Lord. The reason given by the chronicler is not exactly plain to us because of a slight question concerning the text: **Because he walked in the first ways of his father David.** Many commentators believe the "first ways" to mean the former ways, and to contrast the relative purity and holy ideals of the youthful king David with the selfishness and sordid characteristics which made him fall into sin in his later years. But there are reasons for supposing that the word "David" has been put here accidentally. It does not stand in the Vatican text of the Septuagint, which is the most valuable of all ancient versions of the Old Testament; and if it be omitted, and we read, "he walked in the first ways of his father," the reference is to Asa. Additional probability gathers around this reading when we get to the next verse, and find that

the word "father" there refers to Asa, and when we read in the parallel passage (1 Kings 22. 43), "he walked in all the ways of Asa his father." Asa's early life was conspicuously of a higher moral tone than were his later years. **Sought not unto Baalim.** Which word here is probably used generically to include all idolatry. There were many sorts, ranging from the worship of the true God with the help of images, "the sin of Jeroboam," down to the foulest orgies that were ever misnamed worship. It is hard for unspiritual people to worship without the help of their senses. Forms and ceremonies cannot be done without till one has gone far in faith, and to the very end of our earthly life they are to a degree needed; but the tendency of unspiritual people is always to elevate the form above the spirit. Baalim is a plural word—Baals; while there was but one Baal, he had in the ancient mind many personifications. The worship of the Phœnician god Baal was greatly strengthened in Israel during Jehoshaphat's reign in Judah by the aggressive conduct of Queen Jezebel, who had come from Phœnicia.

4. Sought to the Lord God of his father. This, coming after verse 3, seems to carry the meaning that he not only imitated his father's policy, but that he shared his father's deepest religious convictions and experiences. **Walked in his commandments.** The commandments of God. **Not after the doings of Israel.** Even when Israel was faithful to Jehovah and worshipped the God of its fathers it did so irregularly, from the point of view of this chronicler. The Israelites *en masse* did not periodically gather to Jerusalem to participate in the great national feasts. Their interests were diverted to Bethel and Dan. But they were not merely lax and heretical in form, and probably in belief also; they had in many cases adopted the abominations of the religion of Baal.

5. The Lord established the kingdom in his hand. Whatever a nation enjoys of strength and stability it receives from the Lord, whose scepter sways above all human counsels. **All Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents.** He was honored by the loyalty, service,

and affections of his subjects. People are apt to respect rulers who try to do right. In politics there can be no true abiding success without uprightness.

6. His heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. There is an uplifting of the heart in proud self-consciousness (see 2 Chron. 26. 16) which ends with ruin, and there is an uplifting of the heart in the ways of the Lord which brings divine favor. **High places and groves.** It was not enough for him to himself walk in the ways of the Lord. It was his duty to abolish the popular idolatrous worship. Asa had done this before, but he had not done it quite so thoroughly, and the Jews had secretly made new idols in the latter part of his reign.

7. In the third year of his reign. It probably took two years to so organize his kingdom as to make possible this holy work of reformation. Early in his reign he thus realized that false religions could not be extirpated unless the people were thoroughly instructed in the truth. One generation thoroughly taught in the Bible, at home and in the Sabbath school, will give the world to Christ. **Sent to his princes.** He sent out the nobles in the realm to teach his people. Note the influence of high social position in extending reform in religion. Three classes of men were employed in this remarkable itinerant ministry: 1. The princes; 2. The Levites; 3. The priests.

8. Levites. It was a great Bible school, an assembly held all through the kingdom to indoctrinate the masses in Scripture truth. We do not wonder that under such training the land rose to a position scarcely inferior to the golden age of Solomon.

9. They . . . had the book of the law of the Lord with them. Theirs was a teaching rather than a preaching service; nearer to the Sunday school, we may imagine, than to the public worship. Evidently the book of the law of the Lord was exceedingly scarce. It was intrusted to them first of all for their own instruction, and, second, as a guarantee of their high mission. Those who instruct in God's law should have it in their hands as well as in their heads; for themselves, that their teachings may flow from God's pure fountain and not from the broken cisterns of human thought; for their hearers, who will feel the power of the direct reference far more than the mere quotation. **Throughout all the cities.** Not merely the leading cities; the more remote, the greater the need. 'Let us seek out the people without waiting to be sought by the people.'

10. The fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms that were round about. The surrounding nations respected the frontier of Jehoshaphat and dreaded the wrath of his mysterious deity. The world can see and will honor those who are in earnest in God's service.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

The high example of Asa was not lost upon his son Jehoshaphat, who followed him as king of Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he ascended the throne, and reigned with honor for twenty-five years, and the Lord was with him, "because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim." The administration of Jehoshaphat was vigorous; he strengthened the nation's defenses, inaugurated a system of religious instruction, and reorganized the judiciary. He was a great and good king, and Judah prospered under his righteous rule.

Verse 1. Strengthened himself against Israel. Toward the close of Asa's reign there was a tendency toward instability, and the evil influence of Israel was being felt. Ahab, the wicked, was king of Israel, and by the time Jehoshaphat came to the throne of Judah had reigned three years. Knowing the insidiousness of idolatry, Jehoshaphat determined to forestall the schemes of his adversaries by counteracting the idolatry of Israel with the purer worship of Judah and by strengthening the nation's defenses in antici-

pation of any wicked plan of Ahab against Judah.

2. Garrisons. Though inclined to a policy of non-resistance, the king was ready to meet any enemy who might come against him. The army of Asa was large, numbering 580,000 men, but that of Jehoshaphat became larger, and "while David had contented himself with 288,000 men, from all Israel, and Abijah had led forth 400,000, and Asa 580,000, there waited on Jehoshaphat, in addition to his numerous garrisons, 1,160,000 men. Of these 780,000 were men of Judah in three divisions, and 380,000 were Benjamites in two divisions." It is suggested that this standing army of Judah is one of the first of the kind in the history of the world.

3. The first ways. The ways that received the full approval of God; before he fell into sin and dishonored God and his kingly state. **His father David.** There is opportunity for controversy here as to whether the word "David" should be retained. David was the great-great-great-grandfather of Jehoshaphat, but it is not unusual to use the word "father" in this con-

nation. The Septuagint omits "David," which causes the reference to lodge against Asa. In either case the sense is clear that the king had walked in a manner to receive the favor of God, avoiding the pitfalls that wrought the disgrace of his ancestor.

4. The doings of Israel. Israel had gone from bad to worse under the uninterrupted succession of wicked rulers. Jeroboam, the first king, wrought evil throughout the twenty-two years of his reign and introduced idolatry, and the next five kings—Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri—during the thirty-six years of their administration, were no better; and then came Ahab and his idolatrous queen Jezebel. Israel was a danger flag to Judah, and Asa and Jehoshaphat had sense and courage enough to heed it.

5. Therefore. The establishment of the kingdom was not the king's work alone. The Lord did it through him, because of his fidelity and that of the people. The rewards of virtue come speedily, and are richer than we generally expect. The "riches and honor in abundance" which "all Judah" brought to the king were the evidences of the popular appreciation and recognition of high-mindedness and of sturdy and upright character. The true man is esteemed by all who know his life, while a man of low ideals and mean conduct is universally and instinctively condemned. Men of clean hands and pure hearts are never discounted by those who are able to estimate these qualities at their real worth.

7. To teach in the cities. One of the baneful effects of idolatry was the ignorance and superstition that enthralled the people. Possibly some of them did not know they were committing sin in following strange gods. But now Judah was to enter upon an era of great intelligence, and the debauching ignorance of Baal was to be supplanted by the ennobling knowledge of Jehovah. Here we have a contrast between sin and holiness. One leads to darkness and death, and the other to light and life.

8. Levites . . . priests. The teaching office was part of the duty of the priests and Levites, but they had probably rarely performed these functions for many years previous to Jehoshaphat, due, possibly, to the perverseness of the people and their consequent disinclination to receive instruction.

10. The fear of the Lord. This illustrates the contagiousness of a good example, and the instinctive honor that the world pays to a man who is true to the highest convictions of duty. Jehoshaphat's neighbors may have been overawed by his standing army, but his attitude as a God-fearing king also had its influence upon

them. **They made no war.** God can disarm an enemy, and turn his fury to praise. So he can cause his angels to encamp around about them that fear him, and protect them from evil of every description. But this is the reward of constant fidelity to God.

Thoughts for Young People.

Duty and Success.

1. In the truly successful man of affairs two elements must unite—capacity and character. Without either, the stars in their courses fight against a man. In exceptional cases one of these elements will carry an aspirant far, but sooner or later the inevitable failure comes. True success cannot be attained without both.

2. Men must have examples, but need wisdom to choose them rightly and not follow them blindly. There is only one perfect example; and in Jehoshaphat's day there was none. Every great and good man should be imitated as Paul wished his disciples to imitate him—"Follow me as I follow Christ."

3. Sometimes, but not always, faithfulness in God's service finds reward in worldly honor and prosperity. But these are not really needed by the man who holds the highest ideals.

4. Even the noblest are not too noble to be teachers of God's truth.

5. Even those who do not follow God often fear him.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The Talmud furnishes many evidences of the great power of education in solidifying the people of God. The Talmud says, "Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans, and the once powerful Hebrew nation was crushed to death by the legions of the pagans." While Vespasian besieged the city a humble rabbi knelt before him beseeching mercy. "What shall I grant you?" asked the conqueror. "Grant me the school of Jabne and its schoolmasters," was all that was asked. Jerusalem was turned into a slaughterhouse and her buildings into a pile of debris. But fifty-five years afterward twenty-five thousand pupils of the rabbi restored the national pride to its old glory. "Now," asks the Talmud, "who performed this miracle?" The little schoolmaster from Jabne. "The educator blew into the dead, dry bones of Judah the breath of life, and they were raised to activity." The policy of national education was well apprehended by Jehoshaphat, and his schoolmaster made a unit of the nation.

Verses 7-10. From verses 7 to 10 we have a vivid description of the revival of zeal for educa-

tion of the people. Through the four hundred years from the building of the temple to its destruction it was better developed than it was under the patriarchal system. The school of the prophets was never stationary. It was always on the move from place to place, as this was the only way of distributing knowledge among all classes. The educational department under King David, which reorganized the caste of the priests and the Levites, included a school of music under the direction of Heiman with two hundred and eighty-eight teachers of music. Now Jehoshaphat reinstates the system of peripatetic instruction, a sort of ancient "University Extension," composed of three classes of professors or instructors, or three separate collegiate departments: 1. From among the princes were sent itinerant princes to furnish oral instruction in civil law and in the constitution of the kingdom of God, which was so utterly unlike and violently antagonistic to all the other ideals of kingdoms, being exclusive, iconoclastic, and centralized in one great government dominated by the ethical element. 2. A separate college had a corps of itinerant educators selected from the Levites, who gave the people instruction in the ceremonies to be observed in the temple service. 3. The third class was a sort of theological school in which the priests were the professors, and by the same sort of circuit-school system taught the people the nature and design of the worship of Jehovah. This itinerant school system existed for some eighty years and had the effect to unify the people, to solidify society, and to preserve the whole country from revolts, so that the entire kingdom of Judah was compacted as a nation and perpetuated itself for a much longer time than had happened to Israel. The effect of this consolidation of the national spirit and thought was to impress the nations around them so that the kings of those lands did not make war against Jehoshaphat, but sought alliance and peaceful cooperation with him. The Philistines, according to their usage as a great commercial people, brought silver such as they were wont to use in their mercantile transactions, while the Arabians who were accustomed to transact their business by an exchange of commodities, purchased peace by bringing tribute from their flocks and flocks, cattle and he-goats.

It is of interest to note the present movement among Hebrews in the United States to effect a revival of education. They, too, have "the book of the law of the Lord with them" and are going "through all the cities" to teach the people. Think of a Jews' Chautauqua Assembly, such as was held in July, 1897, with its recommendation that "periodical meetings be held between the

teachers and parents of the children under their charge," and that teachers' institutes be formed! The Religious School Union of New York has for this present year its course of instruction of six conferences on the prophetic wisdom and poetic literature of the Bible, ten conferences on the institutes of Judaism, and model lessons on teaching Hebrew, and on child-study. The same revival is observed in Baltimore for the systematic study of Jewish ethics, history, and other branches covering two years. Others in Philadelphia and elsewhere are taking on all modern methods of pedagogy, but the underlying idea is the revival of study in Hebrew law, ceremony, and ethics, and religion just as it was in the days of Jehoshaphat; and if the teachers are not quite so peripatetic as in the days of Samuel and his successors, they are traveling about to teachers' institutes and Hebrew Chautauquas seeking to establish a combined system which shall become national on the plan of the Hebrew Sabbath School Union of New York, now ten years old, which meets biennially, with delegates from seventy schools.

By Way of Illustration.

King Jehoshaphat's defenses. We are learning in these days of warfare how necessary it is to be defended from attack. The Christian, in Eph. 6. 11-18, is charged to put on the whole armor of God. We find that all the armor there mentioned is defensive, except the sword of the Spirit, which is for attack.

We find in verse 4 of our lesson that Jehoshaphat, having done all that he could, sought the Lord God of his father, and the Lord established his kingdom. Many generals have found, as did Washington, that when he had done all that he could to strengthen his forces he must still depend upon Almighty God, who alone could give the victory.

Verses 7, 8. Did you ever go into a tower or building made famous by some great historical event or by some great man, and find it carved with the names of people who were determined to be known by attaching themselves to some celebrated person or place? But who knows or cares for those names? Better is it to have our names made immortal, as in this lesson, by being known as a teacher of God's word. I like to think that God remembers Sunday school teachers and considers their work as done for eternity.

A hallelujah victory. We learn in 2 Chron. 20 that Jehoshaphat was attacked by a great army coming from beyond the Jordan. Jehoshaphat went out to meet them with his army.

His men spread themselves abroad in companies and shouted, "Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth forever." The enemy was at once thrown into disorder and began to slay one another till the field was covered with the slain. The early history of England records an incident very much like this. In the year 448, in the northern part of Wales, the Christian Britons were attacked by the heathen Picts and Scots. One of the generals was a missionary named Germanus. He chose a place surrounded by hills near the village, where he placed his men in ambush, with instructions that at a signal they should all shout, "Hallelujah!" three times with all their might, which was done accordingly. The pagans were surprised with the suddenness and loudness of such a sound, which was multiplied by the echo. They were filled with terror, and without striking a blow ran away in confusion. The rush toward the river was so great that many were drowned. "Hallelujah!" is a good grace to be said before as after a battle.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

While it is true that no human life at its best is free from grief and pain, it is also true that goodness pays even from a low point of view. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." The broad sweep of human history as we read it in all nations and all ages, and in our own brief lifetime, proves clearly that those who obey God do have a hundredfold more in this present life. I have often heard this testimony from missionaries who have obediently followed the Lord Jesus in ways of self-denial. The good things of this world have come into their hands—comforts, friends, pleasant surroundings, more than they could have expected in the natural course of events if they had chosen their own way in the beginning. The true, upright, honest men are in the long run the successful men. What a pity we cannot all believe it until, too late, we find it out for ourselves. This story of Jehoshaphat is a fine study for a young man—or a young woman either, for the principles are the same under all circumstances. He chose the counsel of the Lord and proved the truth of the Golden Text. He was public-spirited, caring for the best interests of the people. Building cities and palaces for his own glorification was not the chief use he made of the wealth and influence at his command. He was interested in popular education, and sent teachers to all the cities of Judah. Naturally this large-heartedness reacted upon himself. The kingdoms around had a high

regard for their prosperous neighbor, and sent all sorts of valuable presents to this public-spirited young king. But one day he made a grave mistake. He went to visit Ahab, king of Israel. He must have known Ahab's reputation of doing evil "in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him," and yet he "joined affinity" with him. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Of course Jehoshaphat got into trouble. Ahab led him into a wild scheme of war with the king of Syria, in which he was defeated, but because he was really a true servant of God, though making a mistake, he was mercifully taken care of and came out without personal harm. He went home, doubtless, a sadder and a wiser man, and one of his prophets met him with this question, which is a pertinent one for us to consider ourselves, "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" Ought a Christian to have affinity with those who care nothing for the Lord Jesus or the interests of his kingdom? It seems as if Jehoshaphat learned a lesson from this experience. He was afterward very earnest in urging the people to fear the Lord faithfully, and with a perfect heart; and when a great multitude came up to fight against him he "set himself to seek the Lord," and called all the people together to ask help of the Lord. And after earnest prayer he was so sure God would help that he put singers in front of the army to give thanks for victory before the battle had even begun. Only people who live near to God do that way. They "see the triumph from afar," and they come as Jehoshaphat came into the valley of blessing, rejoicing in the Lord. This is a great war story. It shows what prayer can do in guiding a campaign. We can serve our country through prayer while our brothers meet the foe at the front.

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. Name the kings of Judah thus far, and state the general character of each one. II. Show what in this lesson showed Jehoshaphat's ability and foresight as a ruler. III. What showed his religious character. IV. What evidences were given of his success and prosperity. V. What school he established—its teachers; its text-book; its object; its students. VI. What duties are set before us in this lesson. This lesson admits of varied treatment: 1. It may be taught from the subject of "The Elements of National Prosperity," especially a good plan for an advanced class, with application to our own country. 2. For young scholars take the acts and character of Jehoshaphat—his energy, religion, thoroughness in God's service, efforts to do good, etc.

Before the Class.

Introduction. Jehoshaphat succeeded his father, Asa, as king of Judah and reigned for twenty-five years. He followed in his father's footsteps, for he "sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments." During the two reigns of Jehoshaphat and Asa the kingdom of Judah was very prosperous, especially so in the reign of Jehoshaphat. The Bible record distinctly attributes this prosperity to the blessing of God upon the king and the nation. In the reign of Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram, Judah departs from the way of the Lord, and disaster overtakes her. The lesson for today gives us the secret of Judah's remarkable prosperity.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Progress," and the four following divisions of the text: 1. Strengthening defenses; 2. Seeking the Lord; 3. Sacrificing idols; 4. Studying the law.

1. *Strengthening defenses.* Jehoshaphat planned to extend the good work his father had so well begun. One of his first acts was to strengthen the various defenses of the kingdom and to place garrisons or military posts throughout the land. Thus he made sure of holding what had been already gained, and could with greater confidence enter upon an advance. Dr. Trumbull says, "If a man wants to make progress, he must first see to it that he is able to hold what he already has." So in our Christian experience let us strengthen our defenses against the powers of evil by a fuller and firmer faith in God, by a careful sifting of truth from error, and a fast holding to that which we believe to be true. We should have a reason for the faith that is within us. This is one element of progress.

2. *Seeking the Lord.* The king diligently sought the Lord God of his father and walked in his commandments. Note as the results of this seeking that (a) The king had a consciousness of the presence of the Lord with him; (b) The Lord established his kingdom; (c) The Lord gave him riches and honor; (d) The king was greatly encouraged and strengthened and was "lifted up" into a closer communion with his God. All these blessings will be given to-day to the believer who diligently seeks the Lord his God. God will give us the consciousness of his abiding presence, will establish our work, will grant us riches and honor (not necessarily material), and will lift us up into a higher life. This seeking the Lord is another element of progress.

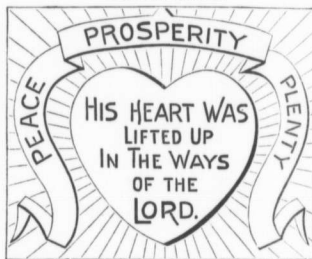
3. *Sacrificing idols.* Jehoshaphat finished the work of destroying idolatry in his kingdom which Asa had so well begun. Asa had accom-

plished either only a partial destruction of the altars and images or else the people had again set up the worship of idols in the latter part of his reign. Whichever it was, idols existed and were worshiped, and the king's purpose was to destroy utterly the Baal worship in the land. This was the only way for Judah to be prosperous and progressive. So in our lives, if we would make rapid progress toward the realization of our ideals, every idol must be destroyed, and God only, the one God, worshiped. This sacrificing of idols is another element of progress.

4. *Studying the law.* One of the most important acts of the king was his sending of princes, Levites, and priests to teach the people the word of God. Sure progress and true prosperity follow in the train of careful Bible study. Dr. Trumbull, in *Yale Lectures on the Sunday School*, says, "The results of any great reformation have been made permanent only through a process of interlocutory or catechetical teaching" [of the Bible]. If we would make sure progress along the way of life, we must faithfully study the guidebook and follow its directions. This last is one of the most important elements of progress.

Specific application. We should seek to follow Jehoshaphat's example, and by strengthening our defenses, seeking the Lord, sacrificing all idols, and faithfully studying God's word, make progress in our Christian life, and be made happy with the blessing of true prosperity.

Blackboard.



OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Thy word almighty Lord,
Take my life.
Watchman, blow the gospel trumpet.
The morning light is breaking.
Tell it out among the nations.

My body, soul, and spirit.
Sow, ere the evening falls.
All for Jesus!
Lift up the Gospel banner.
Lord, if at thy command.

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page 101. Rawlinson, *Kings of Israel and Judah*, page 78. Morris, *Sacred Biography*, vol. i, page 464. Smith, *Hebrew People*, page 310. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. ii, pages 427, 433. Kittel, *History of the Hebrews* (index). Ewald, *History of Israel* (index). Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. iv (index). Hengstenberg, *Kingdom of God in the Old Testament*, vol. ii, pages 193-217.

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 2, Fenced cities, 306. Ver. 3, Baalim, 222. Ver. 6, High places, 174.

LESSON III. THE TEMPLE REPAIRED.

[Oct. 16.]

GOLDEN TEXT. And the men did the work faithfully. 2 Chron. 34. 12.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 2 Kings 11 and 12.]

2 Chron. 24. 4-13. [*Commit to memory verses 9-11.*]

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

REVISED VERSION.

4 And it came to pass after this, that Jo'ash was minded to restore 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 tax of Mo'ses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Is'ra-el, for the tent of the testimony?
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 So the king commanded, and they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the
9 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.
11 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. 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

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.

Time.—878-856 B. C. **Place.**—Solomon's temple, Jerusalem. **Persons.**—Joash, or Jehoiash, the eighth king of Judah; Jehoiada, the chief priest, the uncle of Joash. **Other Rulers.**—Jehu, king of Israel, had with much bloodshed destroyed the family of King Ahab and the worship of Baal; Hazael, king at Damascus; Shalmaneser II, king of Assyria.

Home Readings.

M. The Temple Repaired. 2 Chron. 24. 4-13.

Tu. Another record. 2 Kings 12. 1-12.

W. Repaired by Josiah. 2 Chron. 34. 1-12.

Th. The ransom money. Exod. 30. 11-16.

F. Willing gifts. 1 Chron. 29. 6-17.

S. A widow's offering. Mark 12. 38-44.

S. Love for God's house. Psalm 84.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 143, New Canadian Hymnal.

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

No. 165, New Canadian Hymnal.

Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours.

No. 168, New Canadian Hymnal.

There is work to do for Jesus,
Yes, a glorious work to do.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. The Purpose of the King, v. 4-8.

Who was the king of Judah at this time?

At what age was he crowned?

How long after does this lesson date?

What good purpose did the king cherish?

Whom did he summon to his aid?

What command did he give?

Why was the plan unsuccessful?

How long was the work thus delayed? See 2 Kings 12. 6.

Who was called to account for the failure?

What is meant by "the tabernacle of witness?"

Who had injured the temple, and how?

What "dedicated things" had been given to Baal?

What new plan was devised to secure money?

2. The Gifts of the People, v. 9-11.

What proclamation was issued?

What collection is referred to? See Exod. 30. 12-15.

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.

In what spirit did the people give?

What kind of giving does God love? See 2 Cor. 9. 7.

Who took charge of the gifts?

What was the result of the collection?

3. The Repairs of the Temple, v. 12, 13.

Under whose direction were the repairs made?

To whom was the money paid?

For what work?

What was the result of the labor?

What is meant by "in his state"?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Honor God's house. It is not as any other house. It is the holy place. There God dwells. It should be a house of prayer. "Ye shall reverence my sanctuary" is God's word.

2. Give to God's cause. From him we receive our all; shall he not have of his own?

3. Work in God's service. It is an honorable service; reward is sure and glorious.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Purpose of the King, v. 4-8.

What pious purpose had King Joash?

Whom did he call to be 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 had Jehoiada done for Joash?

What did he say to Jehoiada?

Who had laid waste the house of the Lord?

What had become of the sacred things?

How were "the sons of Athaliah" related to Joash?

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

2. The Gifts of the People, v. 9-11.

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?

3. The Repairs of the Temple, v. 12, 13.

To what workers was the money paid out?

How ought any good work to be done, and why? Eccles. 9. 10.

What is our GOLDEN TEXT?

What good end was accomplished?

Practical Teachings.

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?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Whom do we learn about to-day? **Joash, the boy-king of Judah.**

Whose son was he? **The son of Ahaziah.**

Who was his grandmother? **Athaliah.**

What kind of a woman was she? **A selfish, cruel woman.**

What had she taught the people of Judah to do? **To worship idols.**

After her son, Jehoram, was killed by Jehu what did she do to become queen? **Killed her little grandsons.**

Which one was hid away and saved? **The little Joash.**

How old was he when he was made king? **Seven years old.**

Who taught him and told him what to do? **A priest named Jehoiada.**

What did they begin to gather money for?

Why was it broken up? Verse 7.

Whose daughter was this wicked Athaliah? **The daughter of Ahab.**

What did King Joash have made? **A great chest with a hole in the lid.**

Where did he order that it should stand?

How did the people bring their offerings? **With great rejoicing.**

What kind of givers does the Lord love?

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 abused it 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. How did the masons and carpenters act? **GOLDEN TEXT: "And the men," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

32. What is adoption?

Adoption is an act of God's free grace whereby He bestows on believers the name and privileges of the sons of God.

Galatians iv. 4, 5. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Romans viii. 17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.**How to Raise Money for the Church.****I. A WORTHY PURPOSE.**

1. *Joash was minded.* v. 4.
Heart deviseth . . . way. Prov. 16. 9.
2. *To repair the house.* v. 4.
Let us go into the house. Psalm 122. 1.

II. AN ENERGETIC LEADER.

1. *Go out, . . . and gather.* v. 5.
Exhort the brethren. 2 Cor. 9. 5.
2. *Hasten the matter.* v. 5.
With thy might. Eccles. 9. 10.
3. *Called for Jehoiada.* v. 6.
Provoke . . . to good works. Heb. 10. 24.

III. A POPULAR METHOD.

1. *They made a chest.* v. 8.
Provide yourself bags. Luke 12. 33.

2. *At the gate of the house.* v. 8.
On the first day. 1 Cor. 16. 2.
3. *Made a proclamation.* v. 9.
Abound in this grace. 2 Cor. 8. 7.

IV. A LIBERAL OFFERING.

1. *All the princes and . . . people.* v. 10.
Give as he is able. Deut. 16. 17.
2. *Rejoiced and brought in.* v. 10.
With perfect heart. 1 Chron. 29. 9.
3. *Money in abundance.* v. 11.
Riches of . . . liberality. 2 Cor. 8. 2.

V. A PRUDENT MANAGEMENT.

1. *Chest was brought.* v. 11.
All the tithes. Mal. 3. 10.
2. *Day by day.* v. 11.
Take up his cross daily. Luke 9. 23.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The alliance between the kings of Judah and Israel soon brought forth disastrous religious results. The reforms of Jehoshaphat were undone by his son and successor, Jehoram, whose wife was the daughter of the wicked king of Israel. Led by her, he rebuilt the idol altars and led his people back to sin. The next king, Ahaziah, walked in the same evil ways. When he suddenly died his mother, the widow of King Jehoram, seized the throne and tyrannized the land for six years. She was a corrupt and cruel queen. At length a revolution was effected by the good priest Jehoiada, whose wife had preserved the life of Joash, the direct successor to the throne. Athaliah was put to death near the temple which she had polluted, and her grandson, Joash, only seven years old, mounted the throne of David. So long as 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.

Verse 4. After this. Probably after the young king's marriage. **Joash.** The great-grandson of Jehoshaphat. His reign began B. C. 878, and lasted forty years. No other king of Judah ascended the throne at so early an age. **Minded.** The mind determines the deed. The minds of boys and girls, from which all their acts come, should cherish noble purposes. Observe that when this king "was minded" to do a noble deed he did not stop there. He actually did it. Our being "minded" to do a thing often goes no further. **To repair.** Not only must evil institutions be destroyed; good ones should be established. **The house of the Lord.** If one really loves the Lord, he will have a tender regard for the Lord's house. God's cause is left in human hands, for God honors men by making them workers with himself. The importance of the house of the Lord, the temple of Jerusalem, as a religious and political center, cannot be overestimated. It was the depository of the sacred and political documents of the nation, and was a sort of museum of historical curiosities and of the arms of heroes. But more than all else it stood as a monument of strength, representing the visible kingdom of God, although kings and people at times went astray. As Dr. S. L. Beiler has said: "Politically it was the central magnet that held together, and the dynamo that ever rekindled 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 the law." The temple had much to do with Judah's not falling into corruption as rapidly as did Israel, and hence the smaller kingdom was not taken into exile till more than a century after Samaria. The restoration and preservation of the temple was evidently one purpose of Judah's return from captivity.

5. The priests and the Levites. These

hereditary officers of the temple and its worship might be expected to feel a deep interest in the work. **All Israel.** Everybody everywhere who could be induced to contribute. **Money.** This money came from three sources: 1. The ordained assessment of half a shekel, about thirty cents, on each adult citizen for the expense of the public worship (Exod. 30. 12). 2. Money received from those who had bound themselves by vows; and in that age the solemn religious vow was a frequent act. 3. Voluntary gifts. It is noticeable that in that day, as in this, freewill offerings raised most money. The people had not paid the Mosaic tax, but the free collection paid for all the repairs and left a surplus. **See that ye hasten the matter.** If the restoration of the temple were to have its proper moral and religious effect, it must be promptly done. **The Levites hastened it not.** Mere formal ritual services have no power to impart earnestness, and tend to death rather than to life.

6. The king called for Jehoiada. It is a noble sight this, of the youthful king deciding to be a leader in good rather than a follower in evil. He who begins by mastering lessons and temptations prepares to rule well in life. But, after all, the king had to look after his plans himself. The Levites to whom he first left it seem to have put the money into their own pockets (2 Kings 12. 7); at all events, their work was not effective; but when the king made his own arrangements he succeeded. **Do not leave your duties to be done by deputy.** **Jehoiada.** A grand old character—the king's uncle. He had, as the narrative in chapter 23 implies, carried on Jehovah's services all through the dark days of idolatry. He had preserved the temple from the very worst desecration. He and his wife together had preserved the little Joash also, and had planned the revolution that put him on the throne. And Joash's noble behavior for the first quarter of a century of his reign seems to have been largely due to his

heeding the good counsels of old Jehoiada. It is an unspeakably mournful consideration that the goodness of Joash went away like the morning dew, and that after Jehoiada's death he slew the good priest's son on the very spot where his own coronation had taken place. **Collection.** The assessment. As we have seen, the requirements of the law had been neglected. **The tabernacle of witness.** Which in Moses's time stood, as the temple stood at this time, for the central worship of God.

7. Sons. Probably Jehoram's elder sons. **Athaliah.** Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and wife of Jehoram. Her history is one of the most dramatic recorded in the Bible. **Broken up.** Plundered. Besides the willful damage thus done, the walls had been cracking with age. **Baalim.** A general term for idols, but especially the Phœnician form of worship, introduced by Jezebel into Israel and Athaliah into Judah.

8. The king's commandment. The matter was taken from the hands of the Levites, who had lost the confidence of the people, and was now managed directly by officers of the crown. **At the gate.** Thus appealing to the sympathies of the worshippers as they remembered the former magnificence, and contrasted it with the evident present decay.

9. Made a proclamation. The king, acting with Jehoiada, set in motion all the civil and religious machinery of the nation to advance his noble plans.

10. All the princes and all the people. The "princes" were local magistrates or nobles; the "people" were the same fickle multitudes who had cheerfully indulged in gross idolatry. Their present enthusiasm was short lived. **Until they had made an end.** Till the whole nation had contributed.

11. This verse shows the checks upon maladministration, negligence, and fraud which had been provided. **The king's office.** A public place. Perhaps, however, it should read, the king's "inspection." **The king's scribe.** The chief official of the royal treasury. **The high priest's officer.** According to the story in the Book of Kings, Jehoiada did this himself. Doubtless he closely supervised the whole work. **Day by day.** Every day of the week, until means for repairs had come in abundance. The temple was not, like too many of our churches, a place of worship only on Sundays and at prearranged hours during the week. It was constantly open, and worship was constantly offered within its holy precincts.

12. The king and Jehoiada. The head of the State and the head of the Church. **Such as did the work.** Better, the workmaster or contractor. **The service of the house.** Not religious service, but work done for the repair of the house.

13. In his state. According to its original plans.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

The career of Joash is a mixture of good and bad. As long as he was under the direction and tutelage of the high priest, Jehoiada, he ran well, but as soon as he assumed direction of affairs and became independent he fell upon evil times—sowed the whirlwind. Nevertheless, his reign, at the beginning, at least, was conspicuous for its constructive and reformatory tendencies, due, without doubt, to the overmastering influence of Jehoiada. The first reformatory work was instituted at his coronation when "Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people." The second was likewise instigated by Jehoiada, at whose direction "all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down." The third, also traceable to Jehoiada, was the reorganization of the temple, service. The fourth was the repairing of the temple, in which work the high priest was a conspicuous participant. In later years, after the death of Jehoiada, the king went so far astray and committed so many wicked deeds that the glory of

his earlier good deeds was eclipsed. Then severe reverses came, the anger of his people was aroused, and at the last he was slain by two of his servants.

Verse 4. After this. The reference is not clear. It may be to the young king's marriage, but that inference is not satisfactory. **The house of the Lord.** During the reign of Jehoshaphat there was a great religious awakening in Judah, and idolatry was practically cast out. But his son and successor, Jehoram, was a weak and wicked man and dominated by his queen, Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel. The daughter was as base as the mother, and the result was that Baal-worship was reestablished throughout Judah, and "the temple of Solomon was left to decay and ruin, while that of Baal constantly increased in size and magnificence."—*Rawlinson*. But the restoration of the house of the Lord meant more than the repairing of a building. It marked the overthrow of idolatry and the rightful recognition and supremacy of the true God, with the reformation in manners, thought,

and life that this involved on the part of the people.

5. Go out. The great work was to be participated in by all the people. It may have been that the treasury was without funds for this purpose, but it is more likely that the public interest would be aroused more thoroughly by this general method, on the principle that "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." **Money.** The three kinds of offerings are described in 2 Kings 12. 4.

6. Called for Jehoiaida. The delay, due to the fact that "the Levites hastened it not," must have been vexatious to the king, especially as it extended over a period of years, the work on the temple not having been completed in the twenty-third year of his reign (see 2 Kings 12. 6). The indifference of the high priest and the Levites seems to be inexplicable.

8. Made a chest. The original order for the collection was countermanded and a money-box was made. This suggests that there may have been dishonesty in connection with the former collection; at any rate, the money was now safer for being under lock and key and in a conspicuous place.

9. Proclamation. The king had given himself to his long-avowed purpose in earnest at last. Had he issued the royal edict at the beginning, the people, who had but scant confidence in the Levites, would probably have responded generously, and the work long since would have been accomplished. **Moses.** See Deut. 12. 5-18; 2 Kings 12. 4.

10. All . . . rejoiced. The example set by the king, who probably made a generous contribution from his personal possessions, was speedily followed by all the people—from prince to peasant. It became the fashion to give to this cause, and probably many cast in their coins who had no interest in the restoration of the temple, and possibly some gave who were bitterly opposed to it; but it was the thing to do in Jerusalem at that time, and they did it. That sort of giving may fill the chest of Joash, but it does not rejoice the heart of Jehovah nor win his approval.

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 of 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 sincere and hearty worship of God the most elaborate preparations are valueless and invalid.*

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

There is, perhaps, no building in which so much interest has centered for so many centuries as the Hebrew temple at Jerusalem. The nearest approach to it is the interest in the Kaaba at Mecca, counting backward to the ancient building which Mohammed adopted and adapted from the pre-Mohammedan period. But that represented no such architecture as this of the Jerusalem temple, and no such money was ever spent on the Arabian edifice as on that of Jerusalem; nor was ever any such money value represented in the furnishings called "dedicated things," which verse 7 says were taken from this Hebrew temple and bestowed on Baalim. The enormous cost of the temple itself throws all modern millionaires' outlay in the shade. According to Villalpandus, it cost over \$34,000,000,000 (\$34,300,118,000). But the vessels of gold were worth over \$2,800,000,000, and those of silver were estimated at over \$3,200,000,000; the priests' and singers' vestments at over \$10,000,000; the trumpets at \$10,000,000. The cost of the work on this edifice may be better appreciated by thinking of 10,000 men hewing cedar, 60,000 bearing burdens, 80,000 hewing stone, and 3,000 men overseeing the work, and all this continued through seven years. Besides their wages, Solomon bestowed on these over \$3,500,000. A noted statistician has recently figured out that the total worth of the labor, material, construction, and furnishing must be put down at over \$52,000,000,000. What the cost of repairing was to Joash it is difficult to tell, as it is not provable to what extent it had been destroyed. The enormous cost, however, was supplied by the whole nation, as it was the only temple of the nation, and there was still great wealth; and this was a people's movement, even to a poll-tax contribution.

In verse 4 the phrase "gather of all Israel money" must not be understood to mean coined money, but lump money in bar or cut to a certain weight, measured by the Hebrew weight "shekel." There is no mention of coined money in the Old Testament prior to the captivity, unless this passage is an exception. Coin is held by able authorities to have been absolutely unknown before the eighth century, or nearly two hundred years after this record. The entire Babylonian and other great civilizations of the ancients got on very well, as the other great civilizations of the East do still, without coined money. In China a traveler has to-day to get his money weighed in passing from province to province, and it is subject to the varying estimates, of the extent to which it is alloyed. The half-shekel was the amount of the poll tax to be paid by or for every person in the Jewish community. It was not always paid, and sometimes was discounted, as it is supposed to have been in the days of Nehemiah to one third of a shekel. Even jewelry was made use of as currency, at a specific weight in shekels. See Gen. 24. 22 in the case of Rebekah's earrings of gold, which weighed half a shekel. Among the inscriptions in Egypt representing payments and offerings of currency being weighed are found lump gold and silver earrings, nose rings and finger rings, and bracelets. The stamp on gold or silver is merely a certificate that it weighs so much, and it has always been, and is to-day, a fact that all the money of commerce is weighed, even if it were only to determine how much it may have been clipped or have lost by wear. The traveler in the East even now, though he offers in trade French, British, or Turkish gold pieces, often has to wait while the merchant takes out his little scales and weighs them. Some richer persons may help some poorer ones, but, name for name, it must be the same sum.

By Way of Illustration.

The story of the boy king. When Joash was an infant he was saved from the murderous designs of his grandmother by his aunt, Jehosheba, who cared for him, and to whom, with her husband, he was indebted for all the good he ever tried to do. Lord Shaftsbury declared that his life of philanthropy was due to the humble servant-maid who cared for him, and who taught him to pray, and told him of Jesus. Margaret Preston tells us of a young woman to whose care was given a little motherless child. One day she was grieving because she had not done any work for Christ. But she fell asleep and dreamed that the King asked her for a gift, and when she answered,

sadly, that she had no gift for him because she was burdened with the care of a child, he said to her, "But the child is mine!" There are fathers and mothers who say, "I cannot do any work for Christ because it takes every moment to earn bread and clothing and to care for my little ones." But Jesus whispers, "Yes, but your children are mine, and what you do for them you do for me."

The Church is the nation's safeguard. The sand reed which grows along the sandy shores of Europe represents the influence of religion upon society. Its roots penetrate to a considerable depth and spread in all directions, forming a network which binds together the loosest sands. Its strong, tall leaves protect the surface from drought and affords shelter to small plants, which soon form a new green surface on the bed of sand. But for the sand reed the sea wind would long since have drifted the sand far into the interior, converting fruitful acres into deserts. The grass causes the sand to resist successfully the most furious gale.—*Hartwig.*

Verse 5. "The Levites hastened it not." The sources of their own support had, of course, been dried up during the prevalence of idolatry, and now they were asked to turn these streams into the temple and not to their own income. They had not faith enough to see that an interest in the house of God would bring interest, also, in support of its ministries. The minister to-day whose people did not pay his salary would be wise if he should interest them in foreign missions, and not seek to turn all collections to making up the arrears due to him.—*Select Notes.*

Gifts from all. The law was, "None shall come before me empty." In the temple worships the poor man shared. He could bring his turtle-doves, or, if nothing else, his little portion of flour, wine, new corn, or sprinkling of salt. The Christian Church asks everyone to give something. Christ blessed the poor widow in her gift. Gifts lead to interest, interest leads to prayer, and prayer is pledged to bring greater returns than money. I know a company of young people who never prayed for missions nor read missionary news until they gave \$100 to support a school in India.

Giving is rewarded with spiritual blessing. The Christian who opens the broadest outlet for charity will find the widest inlet for the Spirit. The health of the human body depends upon its exhalations as well as upon its inhalations. It is reported that a boy who was to personate a shining cherub in a play, on being covered over with a coating of goldleaf, which entirely closed the pores of the skin, died in consequence. Woe to the Christian who gets so goldleafed over with

his wealth that the pores of his sympathy are shut and the outgoings of his charity restrained! He is thenceforth dead spiritually, though he may have a name to live.—*Dr. A. J. Gordon.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

That unfortunate visit of Jehoshaphat to the king of Israel has a sequel. It is a most impressive lesson on the danger of bad associations. You must read the story from the twenty-first to the twenty-fourth chapters. His sons, dating probably from that visit of their father, became intimate with the family of Ahab. The training of the two households was totally different, but Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's eldest son, became fascinated with the gay, selfish life of Ahab's court, and married his daughter. When he succeeded Jehoshaphat as king of Judah he followed the ways of Israel and overturned all the good things his father had established in Judah and Jerusalem. He died a terrible death, and his son, who followed him as king, "walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" to his destruction. When he was killed by the judgment of God this wicked mother, Athaliah, that she might reign herself, slew all the rest of the royal household except one little child, Joash, a year old, who was hid for six years with the priest Jehoiada in the temple. For these six years Athaliah carried out the wicked ways of her early training, among others breaking up the house of God and taking the dedicated things for the worship of Baal. What a result from Jehoshaphat's mistaken affinity with Ahab, and the intimacy of his children with those who were not brought up to fear the Lord! But there came a revolt against Athaliah, and the boy, who had been under good instruction for those six years—the most important years of his life—was made king. Fortunately for him and for the people whom he ruled, Joash had never been spoiled by bad companionship. Under the care of his aunt he lived a quiet life, away from the excitements of the evil world.

I have known boys and girls in good country homes who are always wishing they might go to the city "to see life," as they say. Let me tell you, if God's providence puts you in the city with its temptations, he can keep you from all harm if your heart is right with him. But if you put yourself there with the intention of "having a good time," as the world goes, it is as perilous as a visit to Ahab.

Joash, under the influence of Jehoiada, the priest, set himself to repair the temple; and you see he had to gather the money from among the people, just as we have to do now to carry on the

Lord's work. He thought a mite box would be a good way to gather it, so we read in 2 Kings 12. 10 that Jehoiada "took a chest and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, and put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord." And when the box was full they emptied it, and gave the money to the people who did the work on the temple, and then they put the box in its place again beside the altar—to be refilled. They did this day by day and had money in abundance. And "all the people rejoiced."

Suppose we try having a mite box of our own for the Lord's work. It must stand beside the altar—that is, we must pray when we give. Ask God to show us how much we ought to give, and to bless our gifts. We must be systematic in giving; not drop in a mite when we feel like it, and forget it for ever so long afterward; "day by day" was the rule in Joash's time. The missionary treasury would have "money in abundance" if everyone would follow Joash's plan, and everyone would rejoice, for giving makes us very happy when we get in the habit of it.

The 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 kingly 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.

Before the Class.

Introduction. There was a rapid deterioration in the kingdom of Judah from the close of Jehoshaphat's reign to the beginning of that of Joash. Bring before the class some of the most important events during this period, such as (a) The marriage of Jehoram and Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, and the evil consequences of that marriage; (b) Jehoram's wicked reign;

(c) The successful revolt of Edom and Libnah; (d) The prophecy of Elijah concerning Jehoram; (e) The reign of Ahaziah and the usurpation of the throne by Athaliah; (f) The crowning of Joash. Joash started out on his career as a servant of the Lord, being under the influence of Jehoiada, the priest, but the latter part of his reign was disastrous.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Blessing," and the following outline: 1. A noble desire; 2. An important commission; 3. A public proclamation; 4. A joyous response.

1. *A noble desire.* Note (a) The covenant of Jehoiada at the coronation (chap. 23, 16); (b) The destruction of the temple of Baal (chap. 23, 17); (c) The reorganization of the temple services (chap. 23, 18, 19). These were evidently the acts of Jehoiada, the priest, but now when the king had come to years of discernment he "was minded" to repair the temple of the Lord. This was, indeed, a noble desire and did him great credit. During the three preceding reigns the temple had been permitted to fall into decay, but now the ravages of time and of the enemies of the true religion were to be removed and the temple of Jehovah restored to its former glory. Preliminary to action is desire. If our desires are pure, our actions will be right; if our desires are low, our actions will be evil. Let us then look well to our desires, for in them we find the springs of action.

2. *An important commission.* The king gave into the hands of the priests and Levites the task of collecting the money needed for the temple repairs. Note here (a) That all Israel was to be privileged to contribute; (b) That the offerings were to be received from year to year, so that no one was asked for a large sum at once; (c) That the commissioners were required to make haste in the matter. Note also the different kinds of offerings which were to be received. (See 2 Kings 12, 4.) Joash did wisely in interesting all the people in the work, in distributing the time over a number of years, and in requiring immediate action. There is a lesson for us in each one of these points.

3. *A public proclamation.* The Levites did not hasten in the matter. Why? Perhaps because (a) The people did not readily respond, or (b) The Levites were not enthusiastic for the work. So the king summons Jehoiada, and, holding him responsible for those under him, asks him to explain the delay. We do not know what explanation was given, but the king takes immediate charge of the work himself, prepares the chest for the reception of the offerings, and issues a proclamation calling upon the

people to give to the Lord for his house. This action of the king emphasizes the truth of the statement, if you want a thing done well and quickly, do it yourself.

4. *A joyous response.* To this proclamation of the king the people, from the princes down, respond heartily, and the object of the measure is soon attained. Note (a) The offering was a voluntary one; (b) It was given joyfully—the Lord loveth a cheerful giver; (c) It was a liberal offering—"they....gathered money in abundance;" (d) It was faithfully expended for the designated purpose.

Specific application. The way of blessing is through giving. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Joash and all the people found joy in giving of their money to the house of the Lord for its repair. This is the highest joy—the joy of giving. We are called upon to give of what we have to the service of the Lord—of our time, talents, means, prayers, sympathies; all that we have and are should be offered up to him. So shall we enter and walk in the way of blessing.

OPTIONAL HYMNS,

Jesus, where'er thy people meet,
I love thy kingdom.
The Church's one foundation,
Gather them in.
When that glorious morn shall come.

Lord of the worlds above,
Within thy house, O Lord,
How sweet the place of prayer.
Lord, in the morning,
Jesus, we look to thee.

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Blackboard.



LESSON IV. ISAIAH CALLED TO SERVICE.

[Oct. 23.]

GOLDEN TEXT. I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. Isa. 6. 8.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Ezek. 2 and 3.]

Isa. 6. 1-13. [Commit to memory verses 5-8.]

1 In the year that king Uz-z'ah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

12 And the LORD have removed men far away,

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 In the year that king Uz-z'ah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.
- 2 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds were moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people. Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again, and be healed.
- 3 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and the LORD have re-

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and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

13 But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a tall tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

Time.—Written about 735 or 725 B. C. The event narrated dates back as far as 758 or 759 B. C. **Place.**—Probably Jerusalem; perhaps the temple. **Seraphs** (fire-angels) are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. They seem to have appeared in human form, but how far we are to understand the descriptions of seraphim and cherubim as descriptions of the physical forms of beings living in heaven it is not easy to say. Compare the accounts of living creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation with that here given.

Home Readings.

- M. Isaiah Called to Service. Isa. 6, 1-13.
 Th. Call of Moses. Exod. 3, 7-15.
 W. Ezekiel commissioned. Ezek. 2, 1-8.
 Th. Jonah's mission. Jonah 3.
 P. Messengers of Christ. Luke 10, 1-16.
 S. The harvest waiting. John 4, 31-38.
 S. Laborers with God. 1 Cor. 3, 1-11.

Lesson Hymns.

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No. 182, New Canadian Hymnal.

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling,
 "Who will go and work to-day!"

No. 149, New Canadian Hymnal.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "Come unto Me and rest."

No. 115, New Canadian Hymnal.

Take my life and let it be
 Consecrated, Lord, to thee.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. The Vision of God, v. 1-4.

- Who saw the vision?
 When did the prophet have his vision?
 Where did he see the Lord?
 What attendants were there?
 How did they use their wings?
 What do these several actions indicate?
 What was their salutation one to another?
 What effect had the voices?

2. The Call of Isaiah, v. 5-8.

- What was the prophet's cry of distress?
 Who came to his relief?
 What was done and said?
 What were the call and response? GOLDEN

TEXT.

13 moved men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. And if there be yet a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up: as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof.

3. The Message, v. 9-13.

- Whose was the message?
 To whom was it sent?
 What was the message?
 Was this a judicial utterance, or merely prophetic?
 How long was this dullness to continue?
 What gleam of mercy was there in the message?
 When did "the holy seed" return?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. God is holy. The earth is full of his glory. The heavens show his majesty. Heaven resounds with his praise. What homage do we owe?
 2. God is merciful. He pardons the penitent; he cleanses the sinful; he saves all who trust in him.
 3. God is just. He will not clear the guilty. He will not punish the innocent. He is just and righteous altogether. Is he your friend?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Vision of God, v. 1-4.

- What does Isaiah say about the throne on which he saw the Lord seated?
 What was the Lord's throne?
 Describe the seraphim from verse 2.
 What did they chant to each other?
 In what sense is the whole world full of the glory of the Lord?
 What was the effect of the voice of the singer?
 What was the effect of the flaming angels themselves?

2. The Call of Isaiah, v. 5-8.

- Into what lament did Isaiah break forth?
 What did he complain of about himself?
 What did he complain of about his fellows?
 Why was he so afraid?
 What did one of the seraphs take from the altar?
 What did he do with it?
 What did he say?
 Explain the meaning of this symbolic act.
 What was then said? GOLDEN TEXT.

3. The Message, v. 9-13.

- What strange message did Isaiah receive?
 Was this intended to be a message or a prophecy?
 Does God make it hard for anyone to be good?

What did God say should befall the cities?
 What about the land?
 What about the tenth that might possibly remain?
 What sort of trees should the remnant of Israel be like?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The holiness of God?
2. The justice of God?
3. The sinfulness of man?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Isaiah? **A prophet of the Lord.**
 What does Isaiah's name mean?
 How is Isaiah different from all the other prophets?
 How could he tell of Jesus when he had not yet come?
 When did the vision of this lesson come to Isaiah?
 Who was King Uzziah? **One of the kings of Judah.**
 What did the Lord allow Isaiah to see?
 What did he hear?
 What did Isaiah say?
 Why did he look so small and unclean to himself? **Because he had seen the Lord.**
 How was his sin purged away?
 What did the Lord ask? **For some one to go on his errands.**
 What did Isaiah say? **"Here am I; send me."**
 What did the Lord tell him then?
 What does the Lord want now? **People to do his errands.**

Whom can he often use? **Children.**
 What must they be? **Ready to hear and obey.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did the prophet Isaiah see in the year that King Uzziah died? **The Lord, sitting upon a throne.**
2. What did he hear the six-winged seraphim sing? **"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."**
3. Why was Isaiah terrified by this vision? **Because of the consciousness of sin.**
4. What did the angel say when he touched his lips with a live coal? **"Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."**
5. What happened next? **GOLDEN TEXT: "I heard," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

33. What is regeneration?
 Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit, wherein we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, being renewed in the image and likeness of God.
- John iii. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- 2 Corinthians v. 17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
- Ephesians iv. 24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Isaiah's Vision.

I. A VISION OF THE LORD.

1. *I saw also the Lord.* v. 1.
 Unto us by his Son. Heb. 1. 2, 3.
2. *Sitting upon a throne.* v. 1.
 All power....unto me. Matt. 28. 18.
3. *Above....the seraphim.* v. 2.
 Four living creatures. Rev. 4. 6, 7.
4. *Holy, holy, holy.* v. 3.
 I am holy. 1 Peter 1. 15, 16.

II. A VISION OF SIN.

1. *I am undone.* v. 5.
 Depart from me. Luke 5. 8.
2. *A man....unclean.* v. 6.
 I abhor myself. Job 42. 6.

3. *A people....unclean.* v. 5.
 All have sinned. Rom. 3. 23.

III. A VISION OF SALVATION.

1. *Coal....off the altar.* v. 6.
 Precious blood of Christ. 1 Peter 1. 19.
2. *Upon my mouth.* v. 7.
 Purge me with hyssop. Psalm 51. 7.
3. *Iniquity taken away.* v. 7.
 Thou forgavest. Psalm 32. 5.

IV. A VISION OF SERVICE.

1. *Who will go?* v. 8.
 How shall they hear? Rom. 10. 14.
2. *Here am I.* v. 8.
 Then will I teach. Psalm 51. 12, 13.

3. *Go and tell.* v. 9.

Teach all nations. Matt. 28. 19.

4. *Understand not.* vs. 9, 10.

Who hath believed? Isa. 53. 1.

5. *A tenth... shall return.* v. 13.

There is a remnant. Rom. 11. 5.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

In the reign of Uzziah the kingdom of Judah reached a high point in its advancing civilization. The wealth of inferior nations was poured into its capital, and the force and dignity of the monarch brought about a condition of private prosperity and of public magnificence that was talked of for centuries after. The elaborate ritual of the Jews was never performed with more of ceremonial splendor than under Uzziah. The people were never more formally religious. But their religion was a mantle thrown over much of moral disease and corruption, for Uzziah himself had sad lack of spiritual faith even while he was so correct in his creed, and the heart of the nation was alien to God while their faces were turned toward him and their knees bent in adoration. In the midst of these uninspiring surroundings the boy Isaiah grew to manhood. His heart craved communion with God. His soul sickened at the sins of his countrymen—the gross immorality of some, the hypocrisy of others who drew nigh to God with their lips while their hearts were far from him. The Spirit of God worked in his heart, and for two or three years he had been recognized by his fellows as a prophet of God. It is said that he was of royal lineage, and his point of view at least seems to have been very near to that of the priests. But far above priestly or kingly dignity was that which had come to him—the duty and privilege of being a direct messenger of God.

Verse 1. In the year that king Uzziah died. The death of King Uzziah, whose grandeur had so impressed the nation, marked an era in Jewish history, and, as we shall see, in Isaiah's personal experience. **I saw also the Lord.** In vision. The tradition of the Hebrews was that no man could look upon God and live. When in answer to urgent prayer God revealed his glory to Moses it was only a partial revelation. **Sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.** The thrones of the East were greatly elevated, and their height above the courtiers in attendance was a sign of the unapproachable dignity of the king. High, indeed, must be the throne of the high and holy One who inhabits eternity. **His train filled the temple.** The skirts of his robes. The word for "temple" might be translated "palace." It is not plain whether Isaiah was physically in the temple at this time, or in his own chamber he may have seen a vision of the temple, or, as some recent scholars have conjectured, the temple that he depicts was that not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2. Above it stood the seraphim. The flaming ones, an order of beings familiar to Jewish traditions. Whether these stand for an actual order of created beings we can only reverently conjecture. **Each one had six wings.** Like everything in the marble and golden temple of Jerusalem, as well as everything in the temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, each seraph was a symbol, or type, and each of the six wings had its meaning. **With twain.** Two. **He covered his face.** Shutting out the divine grandeur which he was unworthy to behold. **With twain he covered his feet.** That the tarnish and soil of everyday life might

be concealed. It was an instinctive action, and runs in close harmony with the story of the foot-washing by Jesus Christ on the evening of the last supper. **With twain he did fly.** Flew, and yet remained stationary, poised on his wings. This is the meaning of the word "stood" in the first part of this verse. Reverence, humility, and obedience are shown by these three attitudes of wings.

3. One cried unto another. Not two seraphim, but two choirs of seraphim. As temple choirs of priests used to chant to each other in turn, so did Isaiah hear and see this choir of heavenly musicians perform. **Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.** Holiness in the sense of purity is one of the qualities most essential to God. The conception of holiness was always kept before the minds of the Hebrews, and though in the earliest days they could not understand much more than formal separation of certain persons and certain vessels for holy purposes, the meaning increased and intensified during the ages of revelation until the fullness of the thought was developed in the New Testament. **The whole earth is full of his glory.** In every way nature reflects the glory of God. Men, so far as they submit to his will, help to swell the chorus of thanksgiving. But there is doubtless a much fuller sense. God's glory is to be displayed on earth and his character made known here in a very peculiar way.

4. The posts of the door moved. "The bases of the doorway shook." And remember how massive was the construction of Solomon's temple. **At the voice of him that cried.** As each one sang his song of gladness a fresh tremor shook the palace. The house was filled with smoke.

God had revealed himself as a God of absolute purity. His attendants were living flames, and everything else in the temple was in the vision consumed because of the unapproachable flaming holiness of God. Hence the smoke; hence, too, the prophet's confession of sin and his mortal fear.

5. Woe is me. "Here," says Dr. Terry, "is revealed the whole philosophy of conviction and repentance," and Dr. Hughes well adds that the only reason any sinner has a moment's rest is that sin obscures the faculties of his soul. **I am a man of unclean lips.** The angels in the splendor of holiness had sung a song, the truth of which Isaiah deeply felt. But his poor lips were dry and black with sin. How could he join in that song? **I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.** He felt at this moment that many of the things he had been accustomed to regard with the greatest reverence were hollow, and the holiness of the holiest people seemed to him now to be stained with sin. "As with the disease of the body," says Dr. George Adam Smith, "so with the sin of the soul—each often gathers to one point of pain. Each man, though wholly sinful by nature, has his own particular and local consciousness of guilt. Isaiah, being a professional talker, felt his mortal weakness most upon his lips." **Mine eyes have seen the King.** And therefore, according to Jewish tradition, he was doomed.

6. A live coal. A glowing stone. In the East there are no stoves nor grate fires, but stones are heated on charcoal fires and used for baking cakes and warming water. **Taken with the tongs from off the altar.** The golden altar of incense had upon it stones heated to a glow. When heated these stones burned the incense and caused it to smoke. One of them now was put to a better use—that of sanctifying the lips of the young prophet.

7. He laid it upon my mouth. Where he had felt his sin. **Thine iniquity is taken away.** That is, the sin itself was cleansed. The angel could not cleanse it, however; it was the fire from the altar that did that.

8. I heard the voice of the Lord. Isaiah's vision may be analyzed into what he heard and what he saw. **Whom shall I send.** The Lord calls for volunteers. That call was not addressed to Isaiah merely, but to the millions of Judah;

but only Isaiah heard it, or, hearing it, responded with the rapture of obedience. **Here am I; send me.** His whole life was changed. He no longer mourns impotently over his sin. His whole nature is eager for service.

9. Go, and tell this people. It is a message of absolute purity, and only a man of pure lips can deliver it. It is a strange message; hardly a message at all, but more a prophecy of how the people would treat him. **Hear ye indeed, but understand not.** Listen, and hear not. **See ye indeed, but perceive not.** Look, and see not. God knows that the people in their Pharisaic godliness will attend to the message and understand the words, but ignore the inward meaning. To force this meaning upon them Isaiah is directed in grave irony to tell them to do what he is trying to keep them from doing.

10. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes. Literally this means make them impervious to holy spiritual influences. But the force of it to the minds of those who heard it would be, as we have said, ironic, and exhortation to do the exact opposite to what was said. The message also was a prophecy to Isaiah to keep him from discouragement by letting him know how dull the moral sense of his fellows was. **Convert.** Turn around from sin to God.

11. Lord, how long? How long will the hardness of heart endure, and how long will be the punishment of it? **Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant.** Until the nation is taken into exile. Isaiah need not hope for the thorough moral regeneration of his people, but it is his duty to preach whether they hear or whether they forbear. **The land be utterly desolate.** The soil become a desert.

12. The Lord have removed men far away. To Babylonia and Media. **Forsaking.** Depopulation.

13. But yet in it shall be a tenth. If even one man out of every ten be left in the land. **It shall return, and shall be eaten.** Rather, be burned up. The very dregs and refuse of the nation left in Palestine shall be destroyed. **As a teil tree.** A terebinth tree. Both the terebinth and the oak shoot up again from the old stock after having been cut down. So the holy seed shall become a stem or stock from which the future glory of the nation shall grow.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Isaiah was one of the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. He was the son of Amoz, not Amos, the prophet, with whom he has been confused, and there is a tradition that he was a brother of

King Amaziah. It is clear that he resided at Jerusalem, that he was married, that his wife had the gift of prophecy, and is entitled to a place by the side of Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah. He

was a man of great earnestness and power, and doubtless incurred the enmity of Manasseh, the wicked king, by whose order the prophet was slain asunder, according to tradition. Isaiah served as a prophet under five kings—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. His prophecies extend over nearly half a century, as he was probably twenty when he began to exercise the functions of the prophetic office, and must have been about eighty when he fell under the fearful displeasure of Manasseh. For the last fifteen years of his life he evidently did not prophesy; at least no prophecies of his that seem to belong to the close of his earthly career have been found.

Verse 1. King Uzziah. As to the year of his death there is uncertainty. He was the son of Amaziah, and began to reign when sixteen. The larger part of his reign of fifty-two years was honorable. He "lived in the fear of the Lord, and showed himself a wise, active, and pious ruler." But he closed his career in humiliation and dishonor. He attempted to usurp the place and perform the duties of the high priest and burn incense on the altar of God. He was smitten "so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house." This awful judgment must have produced a sensation in Jerusalem, and the young prophet was startled in common with others. **I saw.** In a vision—not with the naked eye—thus emphasizing the reality of the invisible. This was not infrequently the way in which God revealed himself to his servants. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, Job, and the prophets also, and many others, saw visions and dreamed dreams. **The Lord.** This is a different word from that ordinarily rendered "Lord" in the Old Testament where it means Jehovah. Here the word is "Adonai," and it refers to the Lord Jesus whom Isaiah saw. (See John 1. 18; 12. 41.)

2. Seraphim. They were not above "it," the throne, but above "him," the Lord. The occupation of these beings seems to have been "to celebrate the praises of Jehovah's holiness and power, and to act as the medium of communication between heaven and earth."—*Bevan*. This is the only place in the Bible where mention is made of the seraphim. **Cried.** The vision of St. John has a coincidence with Isaiah's at this point (Rev. 4. 8): "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

4. The posts of the door. The manifestations mentioned in this verse were, according to Henry, "an indication of God's wrath and dis-

pleasure against the people for their sins; an earnest of the destruction of the temple and the city by the Babylonians first, and afterward by the Romans." **Filled with smoke.** (See 1 Kings 8. 10, 11; Ezek. 10. 4.)

5. Woe is me. Isaiah is impressed with the holiness of the Lord, and his own sinfulness stands out and startles him by sharp contrast. To be in God's presence is sure to produce this effect. (See Judg. 6. 22; 13. 22; Job 42. 5, 6; Luke 5. 8; Rev. 1. 17.) Daniel had a vision, and when the angel spoke to him he set his face toward the ground and became dumb (Dan. 10. 15). Sin seems never so terrible as when in the presence of purity.

7. Thine iniquity. This demonstrates the willingness of God to pardon sin and cleanse us who go to him in penitence from all unrighteousness, for "God has strong consolations ready for holy mourners; they that humble themselves in penitential shame and fear shall soon be encouraged and exalted; they that are struck down by visions of God's glory shall soon be raised up again with the visits of his grace; he that hears will heal."—*Henry*.

8. Here am I. The eagerness with which Isaiah responds to the divine call is in marked contrast with the unwillingness, hesitation, or cowardice of some others—as Moses, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Jonah. But Isaiah set his "face like a flint" (Isa. 50. 7), and was ready at any time throughout his long career to listen to and obey the voice of Jehovah, for he "was not rebellious, neither turned away back."

9. Tell this people. The young prophet was to proclaim an unpopular gospel, but he was not lacking in courage; the people would hear his message and then ignore it, but that did not deter him from delivering it faithfully. **Hear . . . but understand not.** These words, together with the next verse, must be understood in an ironical sense, otherwise the passage is absurd. They described the condition of the people to whom Isaiah is to preach, and point out some of the obstacles that will retard the acceptance and efficiency of his message.

11. How long? If Israel will not repent and forsake her idols, the threatened destruction will surely ensue; in other words, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." There can be no spiritual health so long as the heart is in a sinful state. So the perversity of the people, their disregard for the burning message of God's prophet, and their indifference to their own future well-being will render it inevitable that the cities shall "be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate."

13. A tenth. The remnant of faithful souls

will be saved, and through them Judah will not perish from the earth. (Compare Gen. 18. 23-33 and Rom. 11. 5.) The few who have been true to God shall preserve the "holy seed" out of which "the root of Jesse" shall spring; so "who-soever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him," and "the holy seed in the land is the substance of the land."

Thoughts for Young People.

The Actors in this Scene.

1. *The Lord God of hosts.* It is not by accident that we have no description here of Him who is invisible. His matchless glory and holiness are all that we can see. Our eyes are dazzled.

2. *The seraphs.* These burning ones, whose duty is to consume everything unholy—choirs of fire-angels—rest neither day nor night, but ceaselessly offer praise, honor, thanksgiving, to Him that lives from everlasting to everlasting. We know next to nothing about angels, and reverent souls cannot too often be exhorted to keep their Milton out of their Bibles. Nevertheless the seraphs here in every particular of form and voice and action present deep spiritual lessons for our edification.

3. *The prophet.* A simply young lover of the Lord with a poetic imagination and fluent speech. He had the "gifts" of the minister of God. This was the opportunity of his life to acquire the "graces." Would he do so?

4. *The people of unclean lips.* These were not all gross sinners by any means; they were the masses of Judah, including the best and the worst. Many of them, doubtless, were personally good and accepted by God as his followers, but they lacked that deep holiness of spirit which God required and put within their reach.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Verse 2. The reference to the seraphim covering his feet with two wings finds a possible foundation in the oriental custom of care in not exposing the feet in social gatherings, and especially the covering of them as a matter of respect when in the presence of people of noble rank. Dr. Adam Clark says that Kumpfer speaks of "the king of Persia giving audience, when the king sat on the floor cross-legged, as is the custom of the country. He was covered with a yellow garment, which reached down to the feet when standing, but covered the feet for decency when sitting with slippers off." He also makes another quotation from another writer as follows: "People of the East generally wear long robes reaching to the ground and covering the

lower parts of the body down to the feet. It may hence have been thought that it was a want of respect and decency to appear in public on solemn occasions with even the feet themselves uncovered." Sir John Chardin's manuscript note on this passage of Isaiah, translated by Dr. Clark, reads: "It is a great mark of respect in the East to cover the feet and to bow the head in the presence of the king."

Verse 3. The alternate singing by choruses of parts of the Hebrew ritual was common in the time of Moses, whose ode at the Red Sea was thus performed, and to the time of Ezra this practice continued to be observed by the Levites.

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 5. "The vision of God brings a collapse of self." When Job passed from a knowledge about God to a personal acquaintance with God he said: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself." It was the vision of God which brought the humbling, hateful vision of self. Abram had a vision of God, and he fell on his face, and God spoke over that prostrate man the seven great "I wills," and God undertook to do it all, and Abram had a collapse of self. Jacob met God, and that was the end of shifty, resourceful Jacob. He was helpless. And then he received his new blessed name, which meant that he had power with men and God. Captain Joshua met a majestic presence by Jericho one day, who said he was the captain of the Lord's host. Joshua had thought that he himself was. He knew it must be the Lord, and he goes down on his face, just as Abram had. Ezekiel had a vision of God. "And when I saw it, I fell upon my face." John, the beloved, saw Jesus in his resurrection glory, and he says, "I fell at his feet as one dead." But, O, how blessed that valley of humbling! No one falls there who does not rise to newness of life and service.—*C. S. Segfield.*

Abraham Lincoln's call. When Abraham Lincoln was a young man he brought a cargo of produce down the Mississippi to Orleans. He started out to see the town and happened upon a slave auction. The trade in human lives was exhibited in all its awful iniquity that day. Husbands were torn from wives and mothers from children. The young countryman and rail-splitter was greatly aroused, and he declared, "I call the Eternal God to witness that if I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I will hit it hard." That was Lincoln's vision and the hour of his prayer, "Here am I; send me."—*N. Boynton.*

All Christians are called to service. Not alone

those with the clear brain and winsome ways and eloquent tongue and well-filled purse, but the poor, the weak, the ignorant. Not one of the twelve was a rabbi, not one a scribe, not one a philosopher. Was this to teach you and me that we are without excuse if we fail to help evangelize the world? What is needed to win men is not worldly wisdom nor wonderful oratory, but earnest, loving, personal work. It was a personal plea that led Gough to give up his cups. It was the gift of a pamphlet that made the great Dr. Scudder a missionary. You may be weak in argument, but you can be mighty in prayer.—*In His Steps.*

Verses 13. As the eye of the lapidary detects in the rugged pebble just digged from the mine the polished diamond that shall sparkle in the diadem of a king, or as the sculptor sees in the rough block of marble the beautiful statue, so He who sees all beholds greater wonders than these. He sees the saint in the sinner; the shepherd feeding the sheep, in the wolf tearing the sheep; Paul, the preacher of the faith, in Saul, the persecutor of the faith; Israel, a prince with God, in Jacob, the trickster; Matthew, the apostle, in Levi, the publican.—*Archbishop Trench.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

I come to this lesson with a deep prayer in my heart that it may touch, if not every member of my class, at least some one, as a personal message. Reading this chapter in connection with the references in the margin to Ezekiel, Moses, Joshua, Daniel, Jeremiah, and St. John, we see clearly what is the only preparation for effective service for God. I hope you will read the references. I take it for granted you really wish to be of use in the world—for if we are not doing some sort of good service to make the world better, I think it is hardly worth while to live at all. But there is a great deal of wasted effort on really good subjects. People wear out nerves and use up time trying to do good, sometimes to very little purpose, because they undertake it without preparation. Isaiah was a young man when this call for special service came to him; and Jeremiah said, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak for I am a child." They felt utterly unequal to the work plainly put before them, because they had had that vision of the Lord which makes the heart truly humble. This is a good beginning for service. Not those who think they know everything and can do everything in their own strength accomplish the most in Christian work. Natural timidity is no hindrance when it is given over to the Lord to overcome or to use as he pleases. Self-confidence is a much greater hindrance, for

the Holy Spirit does not take possession of one who is full of himself.

In the second and third chapters of Ezekiel we read how he was prepared for service. He had the same timidity, and a hard duty was given him. But God commanded him to stand on his feet—that is, to realize his dignity as a messenger of God. Do you realize it? You are sent into the world to do grand work for him. Your life, no matter where or what it is, need not be commonplace. You have a high calling in Christ Jesus. In this attitude he "heard him that spake," and so will you hear. Then he was told to study the word of God; to "eat" it, to fill his inner being with it, to receive it in his heart, and then go in the strength of the Spirit to his work, and no matter what the difficulties were, he could not fail. And so Isaiah, when his lips were touched with the coal from the altar, forgot himself, and filled with the enthusiasm of service, answered the question, "Whom shall I send?" with the glad response, "Here am I; send me."

O, do you see what a grand thing it is to work for God? To be associated with angels who do his pleasure, and with the ministry of Christ himself? Do you see the opportunities such as were never before so fully open to young people? You ought to be glad you live in a day like this. You ought to be so full of enthusiasm that you would march with your eyes straight before you and your head erect, conscious that you have your own place as a soldier in the ranks which no one else can fill, and that you are under a commander who leads to sure victory. The preparation must be made; but you can make it. It is to hear God's call; put yourself entirely in his hands; be filled with his Spirit; study his word; and obey his voice. I do covet your youth, your talent, your glorious opportunity, all for Christ.

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. The condition of Judah—backslidden. Unconsciously hypocritical. Formally religious. A dark day with darker days impending. II. The vision. In the temple, before the youthful Isaiah, prince, priest, prophet, and poet all in one, suddenly rises the lofty throne and on it sits the great God. But all that Isaiah knows about him is holiness. III. A conviction of personal guilt always comes with a consciousness of God's presence. Every man is a sinner when contrasted with the divine purity. IV. The cleansing. It is divine, though a seraph is the medium. V. The call. How many centuries that divine call had been sounding, "Who will go for us?" we do not know. The first impulse of a saved soul is to save others. Isaiah cries out, "Here am I;

send me." VI. The commission. Not so much to predict the future as to proclaim God's message. With the commission comes a warning and a promise—a warning that men will not heed, a promise that there will be a holy seed, a remnant of faithful ones.

Before the Class.

Introduction. As the next two lessons are from the Book of Isaiah, it would be well to give the class a brief account of the prophet and his work. His home was in Jerusalem. Tradition says he was of royal blood. His wife also was endowed with the gift of prophecy. He wrote other works in addition to the book which bears his name, but these are lost. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahab, and Hezekiah, and it was near the middle of his prophetic period that Israel's end came. Tradition states that he came to a martyr's death, in the early part of the reign of Manasseh, by being sawn asunder. The place of the lesson is Jerusalem, and may have been the temple.

Development of the text. Place the subject upon the board, "The Way of Greatness," and the following divisions: 1. The prophet's vision; 2. The prophet's cleansing; 3. The prophet's call; 4. The prophet's commission.

1. *The prophet's vision.* God was about to call the young man Isaiah to be one of his greatest prophets, and so vouchsafed to him this wonderful vision that in remembrance of it Isaiah might always have an assurance of his divine mission. Note the four elements of the vision: (a) The Lord himself; (b) The worshipping seraphim; (c) The antiphonal song; (d) The symbolic smoke. One must have a vision of the Lord, an abiding consciousness of a personal relation to him, and a clear vision of the final triumph of his plans and the manifesting forth of his glory in all parts of the earth, ere he is fitted to go out as a special messenger of the Lord to the peoples of the earth.

2. *The prophet's cleansing.* In the presence of the Holy One the prophet to be felt his own uncleanness and cried out, "Woe is me!" So when we compare ourselves with the Perfect Man we see our own uncleanness and how far short we fall of what we should be, when in comparison with our fellow-men we may deceive ourselves as to our true condition. Now in the vision comes the symbolic act of cleansing. Note (a) The live coal—a burning away of sin with fire; (b) From off the altar—the fire of sacrifice purges; (c) The assurance of forgiveness—"Thine iniquity is taken away." The young man had seen the Lord, had been cleansed of his sin, and now—would he be ready for God's service? The final test comes.

3. *The prophet's call.* The voice of the Lord is now heard calling, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Immediately comes the ringing answer, "Here am I; send me." No mistake had been made in choosing Isaiah for the great work of a divine messenger, for when the call came the man was ready. Note (a) The call was for a volunteer. Two elements: God's sending—"Whom shall I send?" man's free choosing—"Who will go for us?" (b) It was for an unknown service. So to-day God is calling for volunteer service. How many will answer in the words of the prophet, "Here am I; send me?"

4. *The prophet's commission.* What the prophet was now told was more of the nature of a prophecy of how the people would receive his warnings than messages of divine truth. He was sent forth to preach truth, but was warned beforehand as to the results. Note (a) The unresponsive attitude of the people to the truth; (b) The length of time this condition would exist; (c) The result of such rejection of the truth; (d) The final triumph of truth (verse 13).

Specific application. The way of greatness is the way of prompt, cheerful, willing, consecrated service for the glory of God and the uplifting of humanity. Jesus Christ himself sets this up as the standard by which greatness is to be measured (see Matt. 20, 26, 27). Impress the thought that God is calling to-day for many varieties of service—preaching, teaching, and ministering in a multitude of forms. Who will hear? Who will heed? Who will answer, "Here am I; send me?"

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve.
Soldiers of the eternal King.
Watchman, blow the Gospel trumpet.
Far and near the fields.
Tell it out among the nations.

Lo! the harvest field is bending.
Hark! the voice of Jesus calling.
More of earnest work for Jesus.
There's work for us all.
Ready to follow God's commands.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 2, Covering the face, 316. Ver. 3, Responsive worship, 359.

Blackboard.



LESSON V. MESSIAH'S KINGDOM FORETOLD.

[Oct. 30.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Isa. 11. 9.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the chapter, and also Isa. 2. 2-4; 9. 1-7.]
Isa. 11. 1-10. [Commit to memory verses 2-4.]

1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.
- 10 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, which standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting place shall be glorious.

Time.—It is impossible to tell how many years Isaiah had been known, as a prophet when he uttered the words of our lesson. We date the coronation of Hezekiah, king of Judah, about 726 B. C. (some say 724). Hoshea, the last king of the ten tribes, was taken captive about 723 B. C. The great invasion of Palestine by King Sargon is usually dated 711 B. C. The kingdom of Judah lived in hourly terror of Assyria. This chapter should be studied in connection with the one preceding, which poetically describes the approach of the Assyrian invaders under Sennacherib. This invasion actually took place, as nearly as we can estimate, in 702 B. C.

Home Readings.

- M.* Messiah's Kingdom Foretold. Isa. 11. 1-10.
Tu. Without end. Isa. 9. 1-7.
W. The Deliverer. Isa. 42. 1-12.
Th. Spirit of the Lord. Isa. 61. 1-6.
F. King of Glory. Psalm 24.
S. A peaceful kingdom. Isa. 35.
S. A spiritual kingdom. John 18. 33-40.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 242, New Canadian Hymnal.

Jerusalem the golden,
 With milk and honey blest.

No. 317, New Canadian Hymnal.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
 Doth its successive journeys run.

No. 319, New Canadian Hymnal.

The morning light is breaking;
 The darkness disappears.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Coming King, v. 1-5.**
 Of what lineage was the King to be?
 What indicates his humble origin?
 What traits in his character are foretold?
 In what spirit was he to rule among men?
 How to deal with the poor and needy?
 How with the wicked?
 What his qualifications for righteous rule?
- 2. His Holy Kingdom, v. 6-10.**
 What declarations show the peace of his kingdom?
 How are these statements to be understood?
 What trait of the kingdom does verse 8 foretell?
 What is meant by "my holy mountain"? See chap. 2. 2-4.

What knowledge is to prevail everywhere?
GOLDEN TEXT.

What standard is foretold?

Who would seek it, and with what result?

How widely have the Gentiles turned to the true King?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Our King is wise.
2. Our King is righteous.
3. Our King is loving.
4. Our King is eternal.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Coming King, v. 1-5.**
 What King is here meant?
 Of whom was the King to be a descendant?
 To what is he compared?
 Whose Spirit was to rest on him?
 How is this Spirit described?
 When was this prophecy fulfilled? See Isa. 61. 1; Luke 4. 16-21.
 What effect would the Spirit have on the King?
 What would he not do?
 How would he judge?
 How would he punish wickedness?
 With what would he be girded?
- 2. His Holy Kingdom, v. 6-10.**
 What promise of peace is here given?
 What further promise in verse 7?
 What is said of a child and a venomous beast?
 Why would no harm come to any?
 What would the root (or son) of Jesse be to the Jews?
 What other people would seek him?
 What is said of the rest he would give?
 What beautiful promise is given in verse 9?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The lowly origin of Christ?
2. That Christ brings peace on earth?
3. That Christ is a Saviour for all?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- How long before Jesus came did Isaiah live?
 How could he know what was coming so far ahead?
 What did he mean by the stem of Jesse? The **house of David.**
 Who was Jesse? **The father of King David.**
 Who is meant by the "Rod" and the "Branch"? **The King, our Lord Jesus Christ.**
 What did he say should rest upon him?
 What does the Spirit of the Lord give?
 How should we judge the poor?

How did most kings treat the poor? **With scorn.**

How would this new kingdom be unlike earthly kingdoms? **It would be a kingdom of peace.**

Why would all in it be safe? **The King would take care of them.**

When will this kingdom come? **It has come already.**

Who are in it? **All who love and obey the King.**

What part have the children in the kingdom? **They are most welcome in it.**

How can we best help to get people into the kingdom? **By coming into it ourselves.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. Who was to come from the family of Jesse? **The Messiah.**

2. Whose Spirit should rest upon him? **The Spirit of the Lord.**

3. How was he to rule men? **With righteousness and with love.**

4. What should happen under his dominion? **The wildest beasts should be tamed.**

5. Who shall seek the Messiah? **The Gentiles.**

6. What blessed result will come? **GOLDEN TEXT: "The earth shall be," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

34. How are believers assured of their sonship? Believers are assured of their sonship by the witness of the Spirit, direct and indirect.

35. What is the direct witness of the Spirit? The direct witness of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The King of Zion.

I. HIS ROYAL ANCESTRY.

Out of the stem of Jesse. v. 1.

Thy throne . . . forever. 2 Sam. 7. 16.

Of this man's seed. Acts 13. 22, 23.

II. HIS DIVINE WISDOM.

The Spirit of the Lord. v. 2.

The Holy Ghost descended. Luke 3. 22.

The Spirit . . . is upon me. Luke 4. 18.

III. HIS RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER.

In the fear of the Lord. v. 3.

Tempted . . . yet without sin. Heb. 4. 15.

Who did no sin. 1 Peter 2. 22.

IV. HIS JUST JUDGMENT.

With righteousness. . . . judge. v. 4.

He shall judge thy people. Psalm 72. 2-4.

Called Faithful and True. Rev. 19. 11.

V. HIS TRANSFORMING POWER.

The wolf. . . . dwell with the lamb. vs. 6-8.

Ye must be born again. John 3. 7.

In Christ . . . new creature. 2 Cor. 5. 17.

VI. HIS UNIVERSAL RULE.

To it. . . . Gentiles seek. v. 10.

Other sheep I have. John 10. 16.

Shall the Gentiles trust. Rom. 15. 12.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

It is noticeable, as Dr. Terry has said, that this great Messianic prophecy follows immediately the stirring picture of the overthrow of the Assyrian army, in which the boastful invader is represented as hewn down like a lofty tree. The people of God, Israel, have also been humiliated and spoken of as a felled oak (see Isa. 6. 13), but there is this difference—Assyria falls never to rise again, but there remains in fallen Israel a stock or stump from which a new shoot is destined to grow. That shoot is no other than the "holy seed" mentioned in Isa. 6. 13, but here represented in the person of an anointed ruler, whose triumphant reign is to fill the earth with peace and righteousness. It is common for the Old Testament prophets to speak of Israel's salvation and triumph as wrought by the mighty hand of God and following close upon the overthrow of their enemies. The fall of the enemy and oppressor opens the way for the Messianic kingdom. The Assyrian shall be broken and trodden under foot. Compare Isa. 14. 25: His stump shall never sprout again; but the stump of Israel shall shoot forth and branch out through an offspring of the house of Jesse, and fill the earth with the knowledge of Jehovah.

Verse 1. **A rod.** A new shoot. **The stem** was the ancestor of David. **A branch.** The Hebrew word here used is *netzer*, which closely resembles in sound our Lord's geographical sur-

name, the Nazarene. **Grow out of his roots.** "Out of his roots shall be fruitful." Strangely enough, the word rendered "fruitful" is the word from which "Ephratah," another name for Bethlehem, is derived. When these words were uttered the tree of Jesse was not yet cut down.

2. This verse describes the character of the king who has just been spoken of as a branch from Jesse's roots. **The Spirit of the Lord.** The spirit of Jehovah. **Shall rest upon him.** Clothing him like a garment. Now comes a six-fold analysis of the Holy Spirit which has made a deep impression on all ages of Christendom. It has been repeatedly compared to the golden candlestick or lampstand of the temple, which was a golden shaft with three pairs of arms proceeding from it, and which was popularly understood to be emblematic of the divine nature. The golden shaft here is the Spirit of the Lord, and his perfect fullness is shown by the pairs of graces now named—**wisdom and understanding, . . . counsel and might, . . . knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.** That is, intellectual and moral clearness, right conclusions and the ability to carry them out with energy, acquaintance with the will of God and holy reverence.

3. Of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. The Hebrew word is also applied to "sent," and critics divide as to whether the meaning here is quick apprehension, perspicacity of mind, or great delight, an allusion to the hound or to the scent of flowers. Another translation is, "He shall draw his breath in the fear of the Lord," which is the most expressive definition of sinlessness, that sinlessness which is the attribute of Christ alone. **He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.** The imagery here is so daring that it should be explained with profound reverence. He has a scent for good things. He will not depend on his sight or his hearing or his intellectual judgment, but all his judgments are in the fear of the Lord.

4. With righteousness shall he judge. Judges in the East have been in all ages corrupt, but this man cannot be bribed or terrified. **The poor** are ignored by too many oriental judges. "When thou goest to a magistrate, take a gift in thy hands;" but the poor have no gift. **The**

meek. "Who use no adroit or eloquent words to win the ear."—*Bannister.* **The earth.** The human race. **The rod of his mouth.** The words of his mouth are like a rod. In another place they are compared to a sword. **The breath of his lips.** A poetic phrase for his judicial sentence.

5. Girdle. A belt by which the outward loose-flowing robe was confined during active labor. One's habits are often represented as one's clothing. All the character of this coming One was kept together in consistency by righteousness and faithfulness.

6-8. All the ferocious animals of Palestine are here mentioned; each one is coupled with the domestic animal which is its natural prey. Our Lord speaks of the way in which wolves harried sheepfolds. Little kids could run out along precipices where no beasts of prey could follow them but the leopard, which can keep on its feet like a cat. In the East hay is not used as an article of food, but oxen are fed with chopped straw. **On the hole** should be "near to the hole;" the playground of the babe should be close to the den of the asp. Exactly which of all poisonous reptiles are meant by asps and coeatrices is not certain. They were fabled to poison even with their breath. Power over beasts was greatly coveted in the ancient East, and charmers were regarded as supernaturally gifted. To prove their power with the gods Egyptian priests played with serpents and crocodiles. But in the happy time that was coming such wisdom and skill should be given to the little children.

9. They. The evil beasts and the evil and moral forces symbolized by them. **My holy mountain.** The mountain land of Judah, and symbolically the redeemed world. No comment can make the last part of this verse simpler or more beautiful than the words themselves.

10. In that day. The time of which the whole lesson teaches. The Revised Version of this verse is a great improvement. **A root of Jesse.** From which the "branch" of verse 1 has sprung. **Shall stand.** "Standeth." **An ensign of the people.** A standard of the nations. **The Gentiles.** The nations. **His rest shall be glorious.** His resting place shall be glory.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. There shall come forth a rod. There is a note of triumph in these words, although it involved destruction and humiliation. Troublous times would surely come to Judah, but there would still be a remnant of the old stock. The new king, whose reign was to be

glorious, was to come out of Jesse. The cedar, to which the Assyrians had been compared, was to die, while the oak of Judah was to recover from its afflictions and thrive. **Branch.** The Hebrew word is "netzer," which suggests the name of the home of Jesus the Nazarene.

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2. The Spirit. Here the prophet refers to the character of the Messiah and the marvelous sweep of his powers. "He is to be David and Solomon in one, equally great in knowledge and in practice. His qualities are arranged in three pairs, but all spring from one source—the Spirit of Jehovah which rests permanently upon him." —*Cheyne*. It is regarded as remarkable by George Adam Smith that "there is almost no single text of Scripture which has more impressed itself upon Christian doctrine and symbol than this, interpreted as a definition of the seven Spirits of God." (See Rev. 4. 5.) Possessed with these great gifts and powers, the Messiah became adapted to the needs of all men, and is able to succor all.

3. Of quick understanding. Some biblical scholars suggest this rendering: "He shall draw his breath in the fear of the Lord," denoting his absolute freedom from the domination and taint of sin. It would be a great gain to the world if those who array themselves on the side of the Messiah were to draw their breath in the fear and in the presence of the Lord. More communion and contact with the Sinless One would do much toward keeping oneself unspotted from the world, as well as toward improving the quality of human character.

4. With righteousness. The flagrant dishonesty and degradation of the judges of that day give particular pertinence to this characterization of the coming Judge. The poor, the weak, and those who have no helper will find a friend in him. **The rod of his mouth.** His righteousness will compel him to be firm, severe, and terrible to the unrepentant evildoers. His word will strike terror to the stubborn and defiant sinner's heart, and the breath of his lips will seal his doom.

6. The reign of the Messiah, wherever acknowledged in human hearts, will soften the asperities of life, and all the bitter, destructive antagonisms that have made existence wretched will be mellowed into sweetest concord; for he is the Prince of Peace. That such a condition does not exist in no way affects the validity of his claims or destroys the power of his Spirit and life, but it is a sad reflection upon the weakness of his followers, and an invasion of the integrity and sincerity of their devotion to his teachings and his cause. Whether these prophetic utterances are to be taken figuratively or literally is not easy to determine. As might be expected, there is a division among biblical interpreters here. Many of them look upon the passage as allegorical, while some of the foremost among them regard it as literal. "When Isaiah talks of the beasts," says George Adam Smith, "he

means the beasts. The passage is not allegorical, but direct, and forms a parallel to the well-known passage in the eighth of Romans. Isaiah and Paul, chief apostles of the two covenants, both interpret their magnificent odes upon the outpouring of the Spirit, to remind us that the benefits of this will be shared by the brute and intelligent creation." This is emphasized by the fact that as man comes more and more under the influence of God's Spirit he has a higher appreciation of his own relation to the animal creation, and he recognizes the fact that he "discharges to the lower creatures a mediatorial office." **A little child.** The direct reference is probably to a young lad as driver of this motley flock, but in the prophetic sense the Babe of Bethlehem is alluded to. This representation of the Messiah as a shepherd occurs elsewhere in Isaiah; notably in 40:10: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

9. The earth shall be full. To the Hebrews, hedged about and harassed by their enemies, this prospect of ultimate triumph must have been a source of consolation and hope. But there was undoubtedly an earthiness to this universal sway in the mind of the Hebrew. He evidently failed to see its complete relations. The universal dominion of the Messiah was not to be equivalent to the universal supremacy of the Hebrew people; but the thing for which he should stand would fill the whole earth "as the waters cover the sea." The Christ-spirit is to become universal and not the material kingdom of a new king. This may have been a disappointment to the Hebrews, but it satisfied the needs of the heart of humanity.

10. Ensign. The obscure "root" will become conspicuous as a banner to which men will be attracted and around which they will gather. But the ensign must be lifted up in order to accomplish this. "And I, if I be lifted up above the earth, will draw all men unto me." **Gentiles.** This is, perhaps, the discordant note in the prophecy from the standpoint of the Hebrews. They may have inferred that the Messiah was to be theirs alone to the exclusion of all other peoples; while the people to whom Jesus spoke could not understand what he meant when he said, "My kingdom is not of this world," or "other sheep I have which are not of this fold." He is the ensign "of the people," and of all the people, and wherever men lift up clean hands and pure hearts, and their souls long for release from the thralldom of sin, there he is to be found acknowledging his relation to them by performing his great and gracious work in their behalf.

Hasten, Lord, the glorious time,
When beneath Messiah's sway,
Every nation, every clime,
Shall the Gospel call obey.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Prince of Peace.

1. *Our Lord was in his earthly life the Prince of Peace.* He was born, as has so often been said, at one of those rare moments of ancient history when universal peace prevailed. Royal by blood, and a descendant of a long line of warlike princes, he made no attempt to rid his nation of the yoke of the Romans. In the hour of his triumph he enters Jerusalem—"the city of peace"—not like other kings, on horseback and in armor, but riding "on a colt the foal of an ass," with a choir of children about him, an emblem of tranquillity. There has lived no other public man in any age or nation whose life took hold of so many forces and made so uniformly for peace.

2. *Our Lord taught that love was the only fit weapon of warfare.* The peacefulness of his career was not due to political forecast or to happy circumstances. When reviled he reviled not again, and he wants his followers to tread in his footsteps. He taught us to do good to them that spitefully use us, to give the coat to the man who forcibly takes the cloak, to turn the left cheek to him who smites the right.

3. *The true Christendom is the empire of peace.* Very slowly have our Lord's principles leavened the thought and practice of the world. A few centuries turned the heathen of Europe into nominal Christians; but nineteen centuries have not sufficed to imbue Christians fully with the spirit of Christ. And yet our Lord's life and teachings have wrought immeasurably the greatest change in man's conduct that the world has known. War is the exception now where once it was the rule. "Arbitration" is a method for settling international difficulties which will before many years be universally adopted. And the quiet happiness of our homes, the good order of our great cities, and the general integrity and fairness of our merchants are due to the measurable dominion over us of the Prince of Peace.

4. *Each human heart is a principality of which our Lord is the rightful sovereign.* "The peace of God which passeth understanding" should dwell in every soul. Let us open wide all ways of entry and welcome the Prince of Peace to the throne of our affections and thoughts.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Verse 8. The Targum speaks of the pupil of the serpent's eye, as in the cockatrice's den. Kimchi describes this by saying, "When he is in the mouth of his den, in an obscure place, his eyes sparkle exceedingly. The child seeing this and supposing it to be a piece of crystal or precious stone, puts forth his hand to take it."

Sir Edwin Arnold has put into verse the Buddhist conception of a sort of millennium modeled after this ideal of Isaiah. He says:

"There grew that day
Friendship among the creatures; spotted deer
Browed fearless where the tigress fed her cubs
And cheetahs lapped the pool beside the bucks;
Under the eagle's rock the brown hare scoured
While his fierce beak but preened the idle wing;
The snake sunned all his jewels in the beam
With deadly fangs in sheath; the shriek let pass
The nestling finch; the emerald halcyons
Sat dreaming while the fishes played beneath."

But it is well to remember that there was nothing in these several systems that could realize such a millennium as either Roman, Greek, or Hindu poet fancied. Arnold shows the outcome of Buddhism:

"Pray not! the darkness will not brighten!"
"Vex not your mournful minds with pious
pains."
"Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruit and
cakes."

There is no millennium in Buddhism; there is no pardon, no prayer, no hope.

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 1. The prophet has just been speaking of the fall of the mighty trees of Lebanon. These trees, which symbolize Assyria, are to be cut down. They are cedars, and the cedars, once cut down, never spring up again. Herodotus tells us that Croesus threatened to destroy a certain royal house like a pine tree, and they were afraid because they knew that a pine, once cut down, never springs up again. Here in contrast with the monarch of Lebanon cut down never to rise again is contrasted the lowly vine of Judah, from which, though now pruned down to the very root, shall spring a vigorous branch. In Palestine every year the whole of the young wood of the vine is cut back to the stump, which throws out vigorous branches for successive centuries. Thus from the vine plant of Jesse, now by captivity cut down to the very root, a Branch shall spring.—*Canon Tristram.*

Verse 2. The Holy Spirit is not only the Comforter, but also is pledged to lead us into all

truth. On the windows of the mediæval churches of Europe people noted for great learning are represented as having the dove descending upon them. The Middle Ages grasped the truth that the Spirit of the Lord is the spirit of wisdom and understanding and knowledge.

The golden age. The converted wolf makes the best guardian of the sheep and a safeguard of childhood. The St. Bernard and the shepherd dogs are only wolves refined. The fierce wild-cat is the toy and pet of our infants. The question of converting the lion and tiger is only a question of a little more cat. The little child leads the wolf and leopard to-day. But these things are only the light-flying spray of the advancing billow and tide. A child is safer with a huge dog than with many people, and a little boy will ride or drive a horse. So that there is really no improbability of the literal realization of Isaiah's prophecy. All dangerous animals will be eliminated or tamed. Wild animals and poisonous serpents will fade away before civilization.—*Bishop Warren.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

It is like taking a breezy walk to a mountain summit to stand upon the heights of Isaiah's prophecies and see, beyond the mist of the world's sorrow and sin, the glory of the coming days. The golden age is before us. Not even in paradise, when God saw all that he had made and pronounced it "good," was it so glorious as it will be when this grand prophecy comes to fulfillment. It does not seem as if it could ever be true; it is a beautiful ideal, a dream of joy. But will wrongs truly be righted? Will oppressions cease? Will the sorrow-riven heart of humanity be folded under the wings of love and peace? Will sin be destroyed and righteousness reign? It is so in heaven, but can it ever be so on this poor earth, so long under the curse? Yes, it surely will be so here on this very earth upon which we dwell. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" has not been prayed through ages in vain. It is to be gloriously, perfectly, literally answered in the good time coming when righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Every little crevice among the rocks is filled by the rolling tide; every corner of the globe, every human habitation, shall know the truth, and the truth shall break all fetters and make all men free. It was in the darkest days of Judah's history that Isaiah promised these wonderful things. There was no human possibility of their fulfillment. But he had a spiritual vision, and from the depths of the nation's darkness he saw the stars of hope.

So should every Christian see them. We should be optimists always. The world needs the courage and faith which inspire those who believe in the sure coming of the golden future. No matter how heavy the sorrows or deep the sin, evil must and shall be overcome with good. The word and the Spirit of God are working this transformation now. The principles of the Gospel are changing the governments of nations. Terrible wrongs yet exist, but compared with a few centuries ago, no fair observer of history can fail to see that the true light shines as never before. What are we doing to hasten the coming of this glorious day when, through the knowledge of the Lord, earth shall be like heaven? When it comes to pass we shall be living somewhere in the universe; if not here, somewhere else where we shall know about it. And what if we have had no share in bringing it to pass? How shall we feel? When Jesus reigns in his kingdom, and his faithful servants reign and rejoice with him, think of the shame of having no part in that triumph. How a selfish life will wither in contempt in the presence of a life spent in the service of humanity. We would be glad then to change places with the humblest worker in the loneliest corner of the world who has helped to fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord. Now is our opportunity, by being good and doing good, to share in the coming glory.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Perhaps the best way to treat this lesson, after carefully reading it and explaining unusual phrases and allusions, is to study it as a prophecy, and then to rapidly glance at its fulfillment (1) In the life of Jesus of Nazareth; (2) In the subsequent history of the world; (3) In individual hearts. If time permitted, all three of these lines might be profitably pursued. The last can be made the most practical. 1. The King (verses 1-5) foretold as (1) A descendant of David (verse 1); (2) Profoundly spiritual in character (verse 2); (3) Wise (verses 2, 3); (4) Just (verses 4, 5). Wonderfully fulfilled in the History of Jesus. 2. The Kingdom (verses 6-10); (1) A kingdom of peace (verse 6); (2) Of transformed natures (verses 6-8); Of fellowship with God (verse 9); Of world-wide extent (verse 10). Fulfilled in Christianity. Trace how all the detailed prophecies of this passage are fulfilled in the personal history of a saved soul.

Before the Class.

Introduction. The prophecy which we study as a lesson to-day, a vision given to Isaiah for the encouragement of his people, is one of the most

remarkable and glorious of all the Old Testament prophecies. The time of the prophecy is uncertain, but it was probably given at the time of some Assyrian invasion (see chap. 10. 24-34). This tenth chapter should be studied in connection with the lesson text. Note that (a) Israel had been destroyed in 721 B. C.; (b) Palestine had been invaded by Sargon in 711 B. C., and by Sennacherib in 701 B. C.; (c) King Hezekiah was on the throne of Judah. The people lived in terror of the Assyrian power, and that part of the prophecy given in the tenth chapter must have been encouraging to the devout Jews who still believed in the prophet. The part of the prophecy which forms our present lesson is a glimpse far in the future of the rise, growth, and final triumph of a new kingdom, a universal kingdom—the kingdom of peace.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Peace," and the following outline: I. The king of peace: 1. His origin; 2. His spirit; 3. His government. II. The kingdom of peace. 1. Its complete harmony; 2. Its absence of suffering; 3. Its fullness of knowledge.

1. *The King of peace.* 1. His origin. Note the figure employed. The Jewish nation at the advent of the Messiah had lost its power, its glory, and was compared to the stump of what had been a glorious tree. But from this stump should spring a branch which would grow into a much more glorious tree than existed before. Note the lowly beginning of a wonderful kingdom.

2. *His Spirit.* Note the seven gifts: (a) The Spirit of the Lord—the Holy Spirit, given without measure to guide him in all things; (b) Of wisdom—signifying moral insight; (c) Of understanding—intellectual insight; (d) Of counsel—ability to plan; (e) Of power—ability to execute; (f) Of knowledge—of God's will; (g) Of the fear of the Lord—"determination to carry out that will to the full." God will grant these same gifts to us in the measure needful for the work to which we are called.

3. *His government.* The government of the King is to be an ideal government, in which righteousness shall completely prevail. The King will have a marvelous insight into the hearts of men, and will impartially and with absolute faithfulness apply the principles of righteousness to all cases.

II. *The kingdom of peace.* 1. Its complete harmony. In the beginning harmony prevailed in God's creation. Sin brought discord. The picture of the far future presents to us a restoration to complete harmony of all the forces of the world.

2. *Its absence of suffering.* Suffering has a place in the plans of God, and is beneficent in its purpose. But when perfect peace reigns then suffering will have done its work, and, with its companion, death, will disappear.

3. *Its fullness of knowledge.* Here is the completion of the great work. This truly is the universal millennium. When the earth in all its parts shall be filled with the knowledge of God, a knowledge both of "the mind and the heart," then indeed will the triumph of the King be complete. In this we may all have a part—the part of extending this knowledge until it covers the earth, "as the waters cover the sea."

Specific application. This lesson very clearly points out to us "The way of peace." There is no peace outside the kingdom of peace. If we would have peace then, true peace which is the gift of God, we must obtain it by becoming citizens of the kingdom of peace, and entering into personal relation with Jesus, the King of Peace. Would ye have peace? "This is the way; walk ye in it."

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Crown him with many crowns,
O, let us be glad,
Jesus shall reign.

Jesus, thou everlasting King,
Praise the Lord,
Ye that love the name of Jesus,
Hail, to the Lord's Anointed,
Prince of Peace.

Blackboard.



Library References.

THE MESSIANIC IDEA.—Delitzsch, *Messianic Prophecy*. Richm, *Messiah Prophecy*. Stanton, *Jewish and Christian Messiah*.

THE ASP.—Fouard, *St. Peter*, page 91. Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. iv, 446 (note). Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, page 270. Knight, *Bible Plants and Animals*, pages 140, 150.

THE COCKATRICE.—Knight, *Bible Plants and Animals*, page 161. Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, page 275.

THE PEACE QUESTION.—Consult the documents of the various peace societies, files of *The Advocate of Peace*, the proceedings of peace conventions, etc.

Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

—MAKING light of lesser sins makes way for greater; and they that endeavor to extenuate other people's sins will but aggravate their own. —*Henry.*

—Religious company brings fire to our graces, to kindle them when they are freezing; but irreligious company brings water to quench them when they are flaming. —*Secker.*

—The first and essential quality of a herald of the Gospel is ever a thoroughly broken and contrite heart. For it is only after having obtained mercy as guilty criminals that we are in a position to "strengthen the brethren." —*Krummacher.*

—Good purposes, when they are not held, do so far turn enemies to the entertainer of them, as that they help to double both his sin and punishment. —*Bishop Hall.*

—It shall more joy me that I know myself what I am than it shall grieve me to hear what others report me. I had rather deserve well without praise than do ill with commendation. —*Wartick.*

—In many cases it is very hard to fix the bounds of good and evil, because these part, as day and night, which are separated by twilight. —*Whitchot.*

—The mind is to the heart as the door to the house; what comes into the heart comes in through the understanding, and truths sometimes go no further than the entry, and never penetrate into the heart. —*Flavel.*

—Wherefore it is most profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, lest they should be too secure, lest they should be puffed up with pride, or too freely incline to worldly comforts. —*Thomas à Kempis.*

—It is astonishing that the sense of want or the desire of happiness does not carry us oftener to the throne of grace, and that we should ever require to be incited to prayer by the stimulus of conscience. —*Nevins.*

—A religious spirit is a noble and imperial bird, that, sometimes driven down by the storm, yet keeps its plumes expanded and its eye on heaven, till, on the first gleam of sunshine, it shakes its wet and weary wing, and, eaglelike, towers again to the sun. —*Taylor.*

—Be assured, never yet did there exist full faith in the divine word which did not expand the intellect, while it purified the heart; which did not multiply the aims and objects of the mind, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions. —*Coleridge.*

—Religion is a submission, not an aspiration; an obedience, not an ambition of the soul. —*Ruskin.*

Here and There.

. . . Sixty years ago the agent of the American Bible Society was obliged to leave Ecuador because the Romish clergy were not willing that the people should have the Bible. Since then repeated attempts have been made to introduce the sacred volume, but without success until the present time. The Bible Society is again at work in Ecuador, and the people manifest a hunger for the word of God. Opposition, of course, exists and is likely to continue, but it is to be hoped that the circulation of the Scriptures in that land will meet with success.

. . . Some enthusiastic Sunday school workers in England are experimenting in what they call "Drawing Room Bible Classes." We must remember that in that country the Sunday school is intended especially for the poorer classes of people; the children of the "upper classes," as they are called, being rarely found in them. The object of this movement is "to bring under Christian influence those boys of the educated classes and of the higher social grade, to whom the Sunday school, for various reasons, has never successfully appealed, and for whom, by the very nature of its constitution, it cannot make special and adequate provision." It is true the doors of the ordinary Sunday schools are open to them, but even if they desire to go, their parents would not allow them. In this country, where class distinctions are not so sharply defined as in England, it is difficult for us to appreciate this movement; but we trust the experiment will meet with success.

. . . It is said that the tune known as "God Save the Queen" and "America" has also been adopted for the national hymn of Denmark, Prussia, Hanover, Weimar, Brunswick, and Saxony. It is a tune good enough for use anywhere.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Primary Hints and Helps.

THE PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT of the SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL is intended first and all the time to be a help and stimulus to the teachers of little ones.

That it may be so, teachers who have found some good method for their own use are cordially invited to pass it on to a great multitude of eager workers through the medium of this department.

"Not what we give, but what we share," sings the poet, and we ask you, dear fellow-teachers, to share your goods with others through this department. Send along to the editor [marked "Primary"] your queries, your record of successes, your failures even. Some will be helped and strengthened through your willingness to share!

A practical teacher gives below suggestive hints on different topics. Many will be found to sympathize with her desire for a lock and key:

BIRTHDAYS.

The birthdays of the children should be taken into account not only by means of the customary birthday card, letter, or gift, but likewise by a talk on birthdays by the teacher before the whole class.

It would be well to speak of the manner of Eastern kings of giving a feast upon their birthdays and of granting pardon to criminals. The lesson to be drawn is that if the child feels evil thoughts toward anyone, this day—the anniversary of his birth—would be a good time for dispelling them, for forgiving all who may have wronged him.

It is well to write upon the board the name of the child whose birthday it is. A pretty calendar might be kept in the room and a red mark made at every date which is the birthday of any member of the class.

Let the child whose birthday it is not only place in the collection box as many pennies as he is years old, but likewise an extra coin—a thanksgiving offering.

Let him also learn an extra Bible verse to recite.

Let him help to pass the papers or the cards. Responsibility is a great teacher!

CHILDREN'S SONGS.

Who can measure the influence of the songs the children learn in the house of God? Take

that one little song, "Jesus Loves Me," for example. So simple, yet so sweet, sung in so many foreign languages, even the Chinese. Ah, what wonderful service it has done for the Saviour, and there are other songs which have perhaps accomplished as much.

It is well to vary the singing each time: the girls could sing the first verse, the boys the second, and so on. Another day one child could sing a solo, the others coming in on the chorus; yet again three or four children could be chosen to sing a melody. There could be a boy's chorus and a girl's chorus as regular features of the class.

To obviate the uneasiness of the children before the time for the opening of the session allow them to sing some familiar song.

When the opening song is to be sung the children should understand that they are to rise to their feet the moment the organ is struck.

Be especially careful that the children do not fall into a sing-song manner.

UNDER LOCK AND KEY.

I sometimes think that it would be a good plan for every primary room in the country to be furnished with a lock and one key—just one—to be in the possession of the teacher, who could lock herself and class up by themselves!

All know how the minds of an audience of adults will be diverted from a clergyman's address whenever one enters church a few moments late. It has been said that during a revival religious service, when the interest is intense, parties by continual whispering can so disturb the serious minded near them, turning their attention from the discourse, as to cause more deplorable results than occur during the collision of two locomotives. Whether or not this statement is exaggerated I do not pretend to say, but we all know that spiritual life is of far more importance than physical.

If disturbances are so annoying to adults, how much more so are they to children who are "all eyes and ears."

It is pleasant for children to greet the officers of the school in their room, but it is much pleasanter for the teacher to know when such calls are to be made.

HOW CAN INTERRUPTIONS BE AVOIDED? Have a clear understanding with the officers of the

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school about the times they can enter the primary classroom without disturbing the exercises. It is well to have some signal understood by all, as a slightly opened door, or a little white flag displayed; best of all to have some one stationed at the door to admit visitors and others at convenient times. It is well to have children seated with their backs to an entrance door—never facing it.

CAN WE TEACH TOO MUCH AT ONE SESSION?

There is no class of teachers who are so thoroughly in need of learning the wise principle contained in the oft-heard maxim, "The measure of information should be not what the teacher can give, but what the child can receive," as are primary Sunday school teachers. They are prone to overlay the truth with so many illustrations that the child cannot see through the labyrinth.

"Little things
On little wings
Bear little souls to heaven."

Let one truth be selected for each lesson, and let it be presented in simplest fashion, in the fewest possible words.

Food in Famine.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

I.

AN old man died last year beloved, respected, and surrounded by friends who will all bear witness to the beautiful and consistent life of love and trust that he had lived in our sight for seven years. For many years before he had been an alien from his family, and at seventy he was a common tramp. One night his bed upon the earth had been harder than usual, for he lay upon the roots of the trees that were his only shelter. The next day—it was Sunday—he went into the town, and passed the home of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in his aimless wanderings. From the windows and down the staircase of the hall floated the sound of many voices singing:

"Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land."

The old man stopped, and then as he stood upon the sidewalk a miracle was wrought. The Angel of the Lord rolled away the stone from that place deep within his soul where his childhood had been buried for more than sixty years, and the little child came forth. He heard his mother's voice singing; he heard the hymns in

the little parish church away in old England, and his whole soul longed for God. With the tears streaming down his cheeks, and praying, "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah!" he climbed the stairs to the hall and asked the prayers and the help of the people that he might return to God. The power of the old life was broken, and the man began to enter the kingdom of heaven as a little child.

Modern psychology is trying to explore the subconscious mind, and to build up an intellectual theory of life from the results of its investigations. It reverently studies the child (and here it truly seeks first the kingdom of God), but God is there before it; indeed he is there more fully and intimately than anywhere else in this creation, forming and setting in order the holy of holies of the human temple, storing first the holy seed of the divine love, and later that of the divine truth, for the future sustenance of the soul in its time of spiritual need.

Into the hands of angels and mothers first, then to parents and teachers, God gives the heavenly seed; love first and always, and truth as the child is able to receive it. The memory is able to receive long before reason begins to develop, and bits from the word may be trusted to the memory of a child very early, and he who alone knows the human soul hides it out of sight in his own way in the place prepared for it until he shall bring it forth to feed the soul famishing, perhaps, in a "far country." The holy principle is his, and as Joseph stored the corn of Egypt, so the Lord stores the bread and wine of heaven for the need of his children. "I, the Lord, do keep it," he says, "lest any hurt it I will keep it night and day," and let no one however learned, hope to find the storehouses of heaven in the soul of a child before the time. He holds the key; "He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth," and who, when the hour is come, touches the secret spring by his Holy Spirit, and the old and ever-repeated miracle of awakening is wrought. He for whom all things were made uses the key he chooses; it may be a bit of God's word, a line of an old hymn, a picture, a poem, a dream, a bird song; it is all the same, and only a means to the end that we may be saved.

I have given a marked instance of the uses of early teaching, but to the most of us the stores of love and truth are brought out for our early regeneration, and for our daily needs through our Christian life. The manna falls daily, and we are kept, we know not how, until the land into which we journey yields its fruits.

Let a great hope, then, as well as a trustful prayer, go with the sowing of the seed.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

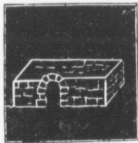
LESSON I. (October 2.)

REFORMATION UNDER ASA. 2 Chron.
14. 2-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee." 2 Chron. 14. 11.

Primary Notes.

BY MARTHA VAN MARGER.



Do you know the story of the foolish little lamb that would not go into the fold? It wanted to wander around in the fields by itself and see what it could find, and so it slipped away when no one saw it and was not missed until the shepherd counted to see if his sheep and lambs had all come home. When he found that a lamb was gone he was sorry, for he knew that it was not safe out in the fields alone, and so he went looking for it until he found it. Do you know why he was sorry to have the little lamb outside the fold? It was for the same reason that the Good Shepherd—what is his name?—feels sorry to see his lambs running away from him, and so always keeps calling to them to come home. This lesson is a story of a good king who called his people to come back to God and be safe and happy again. No one is safe or happy away from God?

Introductory. This is the first lesson of the fourth quarter. What month is this? Yes, it is October, and the quarter begins with October. The third quarter's lessons began with July, and the first lesson in July told of something that was broken into two parts. Who can tell what it was? Yes, it was the kingdom—the kingdom of David and Solomon, the kingdom of God on the earth. It was divided into two parts, and all the last quarter we studied about the part called "Israel." Now we are going to learn about "Judah," the other part. Israel had great trouble, and at last went away into captivity. Who can tell what caused the trouble? Yes, it was going away from God. We shall find in the lessons about Judah that sin always brings pain and loss.

A wise king. His name was Asa. Let us see what God says about him. [Read the first verse of the lesson.] When some good friend praises

you and says you have done right it makes you glad. But how much better it is to have God say you have done that which was "good and right in the eyes of the Lord!" This is what he said about Asa, and what he will say about you if you try to please him in all your ways.

When Asa became king of Judah he found a great deal to do to bring the people back who had gone away from God. Why did he want to bring them back? Because he knew they would get into trouble if they did not come back, just as the shepherd knew the little lamb would be lost and die if it did not get into the fold. Do you wonder how they had gone away from God? They had made images and set them up to worship instead of worshipping the God of heaven. What has God said about worshipping images? [Drill on the second commandment.] When Asa had brought all his people back to God he said to them, "Now, we will make our cities strong, so that an enemy cannot come into them," and they built walls around them and made strong gates and high towers, and now they felt safe because they were doing right, and had done what they could to keep enemies away.

What to do when enemies come. Asa was a good king, and he taught his people to do right, but enemies came to trouble them; and so, even when we are trying to love and serve God, enemies will come to trouble us. Asa teaches us in this lesson how to meet them. He had a great army, but a much greater army came against him. What could he do? Just what we can do when our heart enemies come and seem so much stronger than we are. He called God to help them, and said, "We rest on thee, and in thy name we go." That is the way to meet enemies.

Who wants to be like Asa? There is a safe place for every child of God. It is just such a place



as Asa was in—a right place, a true place, a trustful place. Who will come into this safe fold right away?

Kindergarten Hints.

BY MRS. MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Good King Asa. 2 Chron. 14. 2, 7, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee." 2 Chron. 14. 11.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 2 Chron. 13. 14.

ATTENTION STORY.

Then came a good king named Asa. We will speak the name together and then name the three letters which spell it while George writes them upon the board. All our lesson for to-day is about this king. He prayed to God. Many of the fathers, mothers, and children living in his kingdom had been praying to images made of wood and stone. The king knew that they would be happier and better if they prayed to the true God, so he tried in many ways to teach them and to help them. He took away the strange gods and images and asked all the people to pray to God and to trust him. Then he told the people to build cities with walls and towers and gates and bars. They did so, and King Asa prayed to God for help to do right. This was right, because all power comes from God. We will read about it here. [Read 2 Chron. 14. 1-7, 11.]

Explain unusual words: "Altars," "images," "groves," "fences," etc.

OUTLINE.

Sunday the lesson of the second verse may be taught, in connection with the thought of the words "for we rest on thee," in the eleventh verse. This was why Asa could do what was good and right. Even little children may be good and do right now if they ask God to help them and if they try to please him. Kings cannot be good without help, and neither can children. Show that a part of the help which God sends is the help we give to each other. How may you help other people—other children whom you know? How have others helped you? Make this thought very practical to the children. The king helped the people by taking away the images. This was removing temptation, and it may teach us that if we take away what would tempt others we are helping answer their prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." We are "workers together with God;" perhaps he allows us to help him answer prayers. [During the days of the week the lesson may be connected with the Golden Rule and 1 Cor. 13.] This was many, many years before Jesus gave the Golden Rule (B. C. 955), and before Paul wrote that wonderful letter about love [charity]; but love and goodness and God are always the

same, and though everything else may change, these never change, but are true always.

For nature talk in the kindergarten different topics may be used. One suggested is that one word in verse 3 may be the foundation of talks in the circle each day. This is the word "trees." Different kinds of trees are known, and forest trees are quite different from garden or fruit trees. Let the children bring leaves of oak, birch, maple, pine, fig, magnolia, and other trees. Children living in different parts of our country can name many kinds of trees. Gratitude to God for the beauties and the uses of this wonderful world with its trees may be felt by each child as we talk of the trunk, bark, branches, twigs, and leaves of the trees.

HAND WORK. Good suggestions are offered in fences, gates, cities, walls, and towers—all named in this lesson. The good people of long ago worked with their hands as people do now. The little hands in kindergarten may use their building blocks and imitate what King Asa and his people made. They may draw pictures of flat-roofed houses which were in the cities.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. The talk may be of the need of helpfulness. Everyone needs it, and all should give it. The king, the president, the little neighbor, and the baby in the home must have help from others and help from God if they would be able to do good in the world. Each one has work to do and all need the helpful hands and the loving hearts of other people.

"Children, do all that you can;
The harvest is great,
And the laborers are few;
Then, children, do all that you can."

LESSON II. (October 9.)

JEHOSHAPHAT'S GOOD REIGN. 2 Chron. 17. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3. 6.

Primary Notes.



Not long ago a train going into one of the large cities carried some soldiers who talked very loud and swore a good deal. Their leader did not try to stop them—indeed he used worse language than a little one else. When they came near the city a little girl about six or seven years old left her seat

aid went to the side of the young leader. Without a word she handed him her own pretty little Bible and went away. Not another oath was heard, and the young man before he left the train went and told the child that he should always keep the Bible for her sake! The little girl was like the king of whom we learn to-day. See if you can tell in what way.

LESSON THOUGHT.

To learn and obey God's word. There was a new king of Judah now. His name was a long, hard one—Jehoshaphat. He was the son of King Asa, of whom we heard last Sunday. Who can tell something about King Asa? Do you think he would teach his little boy to be good and to do right? To be sure he would, for he knew it was the only safe way. The boys and girls who have Christian fathers and mothers, who teach them to love God and his word, ought to be very glad and happy.

When King Asa died his son Jehoshaphat, who was now thirty-five years old, became king. He had learned the lessons of truth and goodness which his father took pains to teach him, and so of course he made a good king. But his people were not all good and right, and he wanted to help them to become so. He knew a book which had all wisdom and truth in it. He knew if his people would love and study that book, it would be worth more to them than all riches and honor. What book do you think this was? Yes, it was the Holy Bible. [Roll paper into the form of a scroll, and explain what part of God's word was written then, and why it was not printed in books as now.]

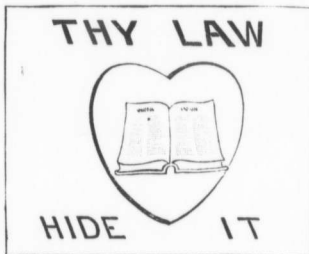
The Bible books then all had to be written by hand on sheets of parchment, and therefore very few people could have them. Now books can be so cheaply printed that even little children can have beautiful Bibles of their own. How many children here have Bibles that belong to them? Do you love your Bible and take good care of it? I hope you do!

How the king taught God's word to the people. [Read from the Bible Deut. 6, 6-9, God's command to teach the children the words of his law.] The people of Judah had not kept the command, and now the grown men, many of them, did not know the word of the Lord. So the king sent teachers out into all parts of the kingdom to gather the people together and read and explain God's word to them. Some of the princes—men who stood high in the kingdom, went with the priests and Levites who were sent out to teach God's word. We have the names here of five princes, nine Levites, and two priests who were

sent out to do this good work. This was the same kind of work which the missionaries are sent to do now. Do you not think this was a good king to give his people the word of God? He could not have given them anything else so good!

What God's word did for the people. It made them wise and kind and good. It kept them from having war with their neighbors. The people of kingdoms near by were afraid to touch them, because they saw that the power of God was with them. It is better to know God's word than to know all the wisdom of this world. [Sing "Praise God for the Bible," found in *Song and Study for God's Little Ones.*]

What does God want us to do with his word? Get it into our hearts; love it, believe it, practice its good teachings.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Good King's Son. 2 Chron. 17. 1-6, 9, 12-19.

GOLDEN TEXT. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3. 6.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 2 Chron. 17. 18, 19.

ATTENTION STORY.

By and by King Asa's work was all done, and it was time for him to go away from this world, so his son became king. The son of a king is called a prince. While this prince was with his father he was learning how to be a king, for he saw how his father ruled, and he knew that his father asked God to help him in all his work. We remember that King Asa took away the images and taught the people to pray to God. When the son became king he tried to do what would be good for the people. He had many strong men placed in the cities which had fences about them, so that no one could come in and make trouble. He wished that all in his country might know God's laws and obey them. So he and many others who helped him went about

through all the cities of the country and read the book to them. They were missionaries to the people. We will read about it. [Read 2 Chron. 17: 1-6, 9.] Then the king built great and beautiful houses called castles, and also many stores, and he had much business. The soldiers loved the king, and five of the great captains came with their soldiers, and said they would help take care of the people and watch the cities.

Explain any unusual words of the lesson, avoiding difficult and proper names. Sometimes it is well to omit any explanation of words which might mystify children, unless they ask the meaning of the word. In the first verse of this lesson "reigned" and "stead" would hardly be intelligible to a child. The words "kingdom," "groves," and nouns in general have more significance and are more easily understood.

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Give the Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text. Use all the materials and suggestions which time will admit. The main idea is to get from this book, God's word, that which the children may be taught to reverence. The teacher will be able to give a connected story with some great moral truth which has spiritual depth and strength. The personal element is such a power in putting truth before little children that the individual teacher must have from the source of life himself that which will be the lesson aided only by the printed suggestions. The new king obeyed the fifth commandment. Make clear the thought that God, who led the king because he was obedient and trustful, will lead each little child. The Golden Text, with some part of the lesson story, may be used each day of the week. The missionary spirit of the king is a topic connected with the present day. Tell of the work of those who are busy carrying the "glad tidings of great joy" to others. The soldiers helped. We all are helpful soldiers if we are trying in a brave spirit to put away wrong thoughts, and if we refuse to do naughty acts. Asa knew that if the people gave up praying to images and worshiped God, their spirits would be brave and strong. The new king wished to have the people learn what God would have them do, for praying and doing go together. Reading God's word makes the mind clear and bright. The results of right doing may be explained with simplicity, and in all these thoughts the Spirit applies the truth to the hearts of the little ones.

NATURE WORK. In connection with the lesson story the country of Judah furnishes many topics for morning talks. How much of nature is in the cities? The cities of Judah did not look like our cities, but we are sure that children

were there, and perhaps they liked to go out into the hill country. In Judah were mountains and the wilderness, vineyards, fig orchards, and olive groves, oak trees, sheep, lambs, goats, and stones, which we may talk about. The larger children may write the names of these nouns, and the little ones may draw pictures with their blocks, or cut pictures with their paper, which will look like vegetables or animals.

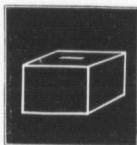
SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Let the faithfulness of God to parents and to children be remembered. The Golden Text has many lessons in its short sentence. A command and a promise; it appeals to us. Everyone needs direction; needs to be led. The way through earth would be dark and lonely but for the Light and the Guide. He leads individuals and families if they will recognize him and depend upon him.

LESSON III. (October 16.)

THE TEMPLE REPAIRED. 2 Chron. 24. 4-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. "And the men did the work faithfully." 2 Chron. 34. 12.

Primary Notes.



There was once a poor little girl who loved the church so much that she was willing to give all her pennies to help it. It was a poor little church, and when the people tried to raise a sum of money to repair it the dear child said she would help all she could. She had a mite box, and she began to save every penny she could get. She worked hard to earn pennies, and when one was given her she always hurried to her box and dropped it in. One day her grandma heard her say that she did want a canary bird very much. "Well, Mary," said grandma, "why don't you take money enough out of your mite box to buy a canary?" Mary looked at her dear grandma in surprise. "Why, grandma!" she cried, "don't you know I can't spend a single cent while I have that church on my shoulders?" The lesson to-day tells of a good king who had a church on his shoulders. Will you not find out how he got the money to repair it?

Loving God's house. Last Sunday's lesson was about loving God's—what? Yes, God's word. What king loved it so much that he sent men all

through his kingdom to teach it? Did it help the people to know God's word? Can you think of any way in which it helped them? Now we shall learn about a king who loved God's house so much that he wanted it to be all sweet and beautiful. Some people want their own houses to be fine and beautiful, but do not seem to care if God's house is old and poor. Is that right? No, we should love God's house so much that we would be glad to deny ourselves to make his house a pleasant place.

Joash was the king of Judah who was sad when he saw how the beautiful temple which Solomon built about a hundred and fifty years before had been allowed to fall into ruins. There had been some wicked kings since the time of Asa and Jehoshaphat, and they had let heathen worshippers carry away the treasures from the temple, and now, perhaps, even the very walls were beginning to crack from age and neglect. Maybe the young king loved the temple the more because his life had been saved by being hidden there when he was a little boy and his wicked aunt wanted to kill him so that she might sit on the throne. If you do not know this story, ask your mamma or papa to tell it to you when you go home.

Working for God's house. Do you think the king would be so rich that he could give all the money himself to repair the Lord's house? But even if he had been rich enough to do this, it would not have been wise or right. Joash wanted to win the hearts of the people back to the worship of God, and so he wanted them all to do something which would make them think about the temple, and feel that they had a part in it. So the king had a large chest made with a hole in the cover through which to drop money, and set it outside the gate of the temple. Each



day the chest was unlocked and the money taken out, and it was not long before there was money

enough to make the Lord's house bright and beautiful. How happy the people were then; and do you not think the Lord was pleased as he looked down from heaven?

How to love and work. We find in this story that the people rejoiced to give. God wants us to give gladly to help his work, and we shall do this if we love him. A little boy said to his mamma, when she asked him to keep a mite box for missions, "I don't want to give my money to the old heathen!" There must be love in the heart to be able to give in the way God likes to see us give.

[Teach "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and close with some familiar giving song.]

Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Temple Repaired. 2 Chron. 24. 4-6, 8-14.

GOLDEN TEXT. "And the men did the work faithfully." 2 Chron. 34. 12.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 2 Chron. 20. 21; *Old Testament History* (Smith).

ATTENTION STORY.

Different kings ruled over the people, and by and by it came to be that a little boy was made king. His name was Joash, and he was seven years old when his turn came to sit upon the throne. So young and small! What could he do? He was king for many years, and his minister, the priest in the temple, was his friend. This book tells us what kind of a boy he was. [Read verse 2]. "And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." He did right. That was a beginning which was good enough for any boy or any king. Joash found that his work was to mend the church (repair the temple). You see each person had his work to do then, as now. Each little child has a place and a work all his own. The new king told the ministers and the people to go to the cities and get money to pay for mending the church. They did not bring much, so the king commanded that a large treasure box should be made and put beside the gate of the church. Then he sent out word to everyone that all should bring in a collection to the Lord, and the princes and people brought in money till the box was full. This box was called a chest. We will read the story here. [Read 2 Chron. 24. 4-11.] Then the king and the minister paid masons and carpenters for doing the work. [Read verses 12-14.]

Explain in simple language the meaning of "wrought," "proclamation," "abundance," "perfected," etc.

OUTLINE.

On Sunday dwell upon the three great thoughts of this lesson, which are: 1. The individual work. 2. Giving unto the Lord. 3. Faithfulness. The latter subject is the topic of the

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Golden Text. Put yourself, your best self, into the Attention Story. Read the Bible lesson from the book that it may give authority to your teaching and show to the little ones that all these wonderful stories are in God's word. We wish for the children that this best of all books may be to them more interesting than any other. The days of the week may have in the home and the kindergarten the development of different thoughts upon the topics of the lesson. The people seemed indifferent to the Levites when they would gather the money, but the people gave gladly when they were to come and deposit their offerings in the chest. "All the people rejoiced and brought in and cast into the chest." The unity of service and the gladness, showing that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," are told in verse 10. Abundance of offerings is indicated in verse 11, for day after day they brought money to put in the chest. Giving is a service, and little children may be encouraged in generosity. They may be led away from any tendency to selfishness or to self-seeking. The early life of a child is open and responsive to the influence and the word of a teacher. Even her smile as well as her clothing and her touch may be powerful for lasting good.

For nature talks most interesting topics are given in verses 12 and 14; iron, brass, gold, and silver. Iron and silver are quite different in color from brass and gold, which are similar. The appearance, weight, color, and uses of these metals are of much interest to children.

HAND WORK. A form is indicated in verse 10—the "chest." Is this always oblong? Of what is it made? The children may shape it in sticks and drawing, also with blocks and tablets.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. There may be practical talks about faithfulness and unselfishness. The story of what Jesus said is suggestive, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things."

A little child who is true to responsibility and is faithful in little things or in a few things will be trusted in greater things, and will hear the "well done" in his heart now and have greater reward by and by.

LESSON IV. (October 23.)

ISAIAH CALLED TO SERVICE. Isa.
6. 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Isa. 6. 8.

Primary Notes.



There was very good news to carry to Cousin Ellen! Her dear son, who was a soldier boy, had been reported wounded, and his mother was very sad. Early one morning the word came to Emma's papa that it was all a mis-

take—that he had not been wounded, but was well and happy. "Let me run quick and tell Cousin Ellen," cried Ella, and papa said she might. How happy she was as she ran along the shady street in the early summer morning! She was carrying glad news, and it made her own heart glad to think how happy Cousin Ellen would be. There is always good news to carry to some one in this world. Do you want to be one who helps to carry it? Our lesson to-day is about a man who was alive long, long before Jesus came, who said when he heard there was work to be done, "Here am I; send me." Who wants to hear what the work was and who was ready and willing to do it?

Ready to serve. It is pleasant to carry good news. It is not so easy to carry bad news. When little Robbie was run over in the street one day no one wanted to go and tell his mamma! Do you know why? Because it would make her feel so badly. What kingdom have we been studying about lately? Yes, the kingdom of Judah. Who can tell the names of the good kings of Judah? What good work did the one we learned about last Sunday do? [Show a mite-box to recall the lesson.] There were always people to do wrong—to go away from God, just as there are now. It was true then, as it is true now, that going away from God leads to great trouble and misery. The people of Judah kept going farther and farther away from God. They did not stop to think what sin would be sure to do for them, and now God wanted some one to go again and warn them. It was not a pleasant thing to go and tell people that God would have to send awful troubles upon them, was it? God looked for some one who was ready to do this service. [Read from the Bible the Lord's call.] Do you think he would find some one ready to go and do the hard work. Yes, there was one who said quickly, "Here am I; send me!" We will print his name on the board. You may spell it as the letters are made—I-S-A-I-A-H. [Make word picture of this fine young man—a prince, a priest, a poet. Now he becomes a prophet—ready to go where he is sent and to speak what he is told.]

"Here am I." Have you ever thought how many things there are to do in this great, busy world? There is something for each one to do; and the reason that so many things are not done right is that very often the one who ought to do them is not ready to serve, but, instead of saying "Here am I," says, "Send some one else." Let us think a little about the kinds of work that God is calling his children to do. There are hungry people to be fed, thirsty who need a drink, naked to be clothed, sick to be visited, and sad hearts to be comforted. Little children can help to do all these things. Had you thought that the self-denial pennies you put into your mite box went to do just this kind of work? I will tell you how. The good missionaries find the hungry and thirsty and naked and sick and sad waiting for some one to help them. The missionaries are able to go and do this kind of work because good people give the money to send them, and so even your little pennies are helping to do the very kind of work that Jesus said we should do. If a little child can do nothing more, he can gather self-denial pennies to help on the Lord's work. Have you said, "Here am I?"

The story of the cross. But there is a story that every child can tell as soon as he has learned it, and that is the story of Jesus, who died on the cross to save us all. This is the very best news that ever was told, and so it ought to be easy to tell. Every child may tell this sweet story. Have you learned it? If you have, do you know some one who does not know it yet? Maybe you can bring that one to the church and Sunday school, where he can learn it too, and begin to tell it! Will you say to this call, "Here am I; send me?"



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Isaiah Called to Service. Isa. 6. 1-13.

"For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk

in the way of this people, saying, . . . neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." Isa. 8. 11, 12.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Isa. 6. 8.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER, Holy Bible, Isa. 6. 9. *Old Testament History* (Smith); *Illustrative Notes* (Drs. Huribut and Doherty).

ATTENTION STORY.

Not only kings tried to do what would please God, but many of the people prayed often and waited to hear the Voice speak in their hearts. You remember that sometimes we have talked of the Spirit or the voice of God speaking to us, and little children often hear the still small voice in their hearts. [Talk with the children in a simple and reverent way of the Holy Spirit speaking within us and no one else can hear.] The Lord spoke to Isaiah and told him that he was chosen to tell the people what would be by and by, so that they might be all ready for it. Isaiah loved God and wished to do what would please him, just as a boy loves his father and mother and is glad to obey them. He lived in the city where the great temple stood and where people went often to pray. They knew Isaiah, so did the kings, and they listened to his words. Though he lived in a city he was glad to go into the country, and he knew so much of trees and mountains that he wrote about them, and his thoughts were so beautiful that his words were too, and people liked to hear and to read them. When the Lord spoke to Isaiah he was taught (instructed) that he should not walk in the way where some people near him were walking, and he should not be afraid of them. Here we read about it. [Read as much of the lesson chapter as is printed at the beginning of this lesson, but read the words from the Bible, not from the JOURNAL.] Isaiah was so glad to obey God and to do something for him that he said this. [Repeat after the teacher the words of the Golden Text.]

In connection with the lesson verses tell the children of God's promises to instruct us, referring to "I will guide thee," etc. The promise of Jesus is that the Spirit shall lead us into all truth. Make clear the heartiness of Isaiah giving himself.

OUTLINE.

On Sunday dwell upon the call and the response. You may be able to inspire many little warm hearts to desire to serve our Father and to follow Jesus, the Spirit giving to both teacher and children great enthusiasm. "Here am I!" for service. Talk with the children, not wholly to them. When God says, "Who will go?" we will be ready for missionary service, patriotism, little errands in the home, or for whatever will help others to better living. The Gospel message of peace and good will touches home service, church service, and service for our country and our

flag. The lesson is rich in suggestions for many days' instruction, and is full of interest.

In the morning talks in the circle there may be stories of those who said, "Send me," and who have gone everywhere with sweet messages which God gives to the weak, the sorrowful, the hungry, and the tired people. The world is full of loving, helpful people. Another practical thought is we are not to do what others do just because they do it if it is not right. We are not to be afraid if people laugh at us, or "make fun," for we may have true courage. Teach of moral bravery; it is needed to-day.

NATURE TALKS. Choose some of the topics Isaiah talked about as found in Isa. 54. 10 (mountains shall depart; God's kindness shall not); Isa. 40. 4 (valley, mountain; crooked and straight ways); Isa. 40. 11 (sheep, dust); Isa. 40. 15 (islands). An ordinary and large topic is in Isa. 40. 8. The withered grass, the faded flowers, all pass away now before the cold winter comes, but God's words are the same, and he cares for us yet. We have food, clothing, air, sunshine, and home. Even the squirrels, the beavers, and all wild animals are taught of God how to prepare homes and food when the grass withers.

HAND WORK. Have the children represent with their kindergarten materials some form connected with whatever nature topic you choose.

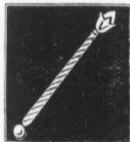
SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. The teaching may be of dependence and independence. While we must depend upon each other in the home (and this little community typifies the greater in Church and in nation), and we work together in unity and in harmony for and with each other, yet the beauty and the strength of individual life may be shown. Isaiah was with the people, yet his "Here am I" indicated his desire to offer himself; to do his own work, his very own. God expects this of us now.

LESSON V. (October 30.)

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM FORETOLD. Isa. 11. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. 11. 9.

Primary Notes.



A lady sat by her window and heard her children playing on the lawn. "How happy they are," she said to herself, smiling, "and how kind to one another!" But soon there came sounds of strife, and the mother listened again, wondering what it

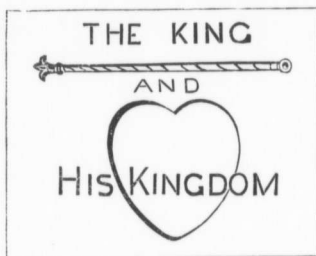
meant. Then Willie ran into the house crying: "Mamma, I'm a king and Nettie won't mind me! She must, mustn't she?" Nettie followed with a frown on her face and said, "But, mamma, a king must be good, mustn't he, if he wants to be minded?" Yes, it is the king who is good that is most likely to be obeyed, and Nettie was not so much in the wrong as Willie thought. Our lesson to-day is about a King who is always good and who is always worthy of being obeyed.

There was a new king in Judah now, and he was a good man, named Hezekiah. He was very sad when he saw how few people there were who wanted to mind the great King above, and what trouble was sure to come upon them for their disobedience and sin. One day the prophet Isaiah came and told the king something to comfort his heart. Do you remember who Isaiah was? He was the good man who said, "Here am I; send me," when the Lord wanted some one to go and do his errands. Do you think it would comfort the sad heart of the king to hear that there was a good time coming? There was once a poor girl who loved Jesus and served him with all her heart. She was sick nearly all her life, but she never complained, and when at last she became blind and could no longer go out of her poor little room, her friends thought it would surely be hard for even her faith and love to bear. But this was what she said, "O, I am happy all day long, thinking how beautiful it will be up there when I can see the King in his beauty!"

Isaiah told of the coming of a King to the earth who should make it a good sweet place to live in. He said that when this King came even the wild animals would be peaceable. A wolf, a fierce hungry wolf, would live with an innocent little lamb, and never think of hurting it! What a wonderful time that will be! For if wild beasts are so kind to one another, surely men cannot hurt and destroy one another! Do you think there will be any more war when this King has really come? Will there be quarrels and fault-finding and fretting when things do not go to please us? Let us make on the board a scepter. That is the sign of a king's authority. We will print on the scepter the word which tells what his kingdom is. [Print "Peace."] Who can tell the name of this King? Yes, it is King Jesus. But Isaiah told this more than seven hundred years before Jesus came! How did he know that he was coming! God told him! You remember that Isaiah was ready to do just what the Lord wanted him to do. He said, "Send me," and he went where the Lord told him to go, and spoke the words the Lord told him to speak. In last

week's lesson we saw that Isaiah had sometimes to carry an unpleasant message, but the story he told King Hezekiah of the kingdom that was coming was good news—the best that ever could be told!

What does this lesson mean for us? Jesus has come to the earth, but if he has not come into our hearts, then he has not yet come to us! He wants to come into every heart, and he will just as soon as the way is opened for him to enter. When he comes he brings peace and good will. The child to whom he has come will not fret and pout if he does not have his own way. He will have a little kingdom of love in his own heart, and he will not want to hurt or destroy anything, because he will be living in the sweet kingdom of love which Jesus came to bring. Who would like to live in that kingdom? Jesus invites everybody to come into it. Who will come now? [Sing "Come to Jesus, come now," and close with tender prayer.]



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Messiah's Kingdom Forfeited. Isa. 9. 6; 40. 9-11; 49. 13.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. 11. 9.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 40; 49.

ATTENTION STORY.

The kings who knew Isaiah and all the people were surprised when he told them a wonderful story of what should come by and by. He said that the earth would be filled with goodness, and people would know of God and of his ways because one would come who should teach them, and he would bring to them peace and joy. He said that God had told him to comfort the people, and he told them that the one who was coming was good and noble and strong, and he would

care for all the people, just as a shepherd cares for his sheep, and he would be gentle and loving to the weak and to those who could not take care of themselves. He wanted all the people to know of it and to call out in Jerusalem and everywhere that God was coming. [Read Isa. 40. 9, 10, 11.] Then he spoke the names which Jesus should be called. [Read Isa. 9. 6.] And then he called for earth to be glad, and the heavens and mountains to sing. Isaiah had the same spirit of joy which we have on Christmas morning when we sing carols about Jesus who was born in Bethlehem. The voice told Isaiah that the Christmas morning would come, surely come, by and by, and his heart was so filled with gladness that this made other people glad too. What a beautiful message! He was given this message and this service because he said, "Here am I; send me."

OUTLINE.

On Sunday talk of the joy of the messenger being as great or greater than of the one who hears it. The truth that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" means more than giving things or money. Make it clear that in spirit Isaiah is contemporary with each little child living to-day who sings of the star of Bethlehem and hears the minister read about the Babe in the manger. Another thought which will appeal to the child is, if he says, "Here am I," God will teach him and show him his work, giving joy to his heart as he serves others for Jesus' sake; doing service to others, but for him. The thoughts of Sunday and the days following may be made of permanent influence if we give vivid pictures of the associations and the poetry of Isaiah, making them clear and attractive to the imagination, and thus touching the heart.

In verse 9 Zion may stand for a Christian nation and Jerusalem for the Christian Church. These together call to the hungry and the helpless that God is their friend and their strong helper.

The prophecy of the Golden Text was connected with the last command of Jesus when he said, "Go, teach all nations." This has been obeyed ever since, and this very day people all over the world are telling the message of joy and peace.

NATURE TALKS. "Who hath measured the waters" (verse 12, chapter 40), and other references to water will be useful. Water is a practical, common, and ever-interesting topic.

"The waters" refers to bodies of water, and a reference to drinking water is that of Isa. 55. 1, "Ho! every one that thirsteth," etc.

HAND WORK. The small children may make forms suggested by this nature topic, and may fold paper ships, build water troughs for sheep and cattle to drink from, and the teacher may

think readily of other designs in connection with some part of the lesson.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. It will be practical to talk of the growth of knowledge in the earth. Let the older children instruct and entertain the smaller ones by telling them what they know of the progress of science and knowledge since the long ago days of grandfather.

What was promised has come true, and knowledge covers the world as the waters do the seas. Take any one art or science and think how it has grown into our life. The printed pages are everywhere. The telegraph wires and the cable under the waves of the sea permit people to talk to each other when thousands of miles separate them. This wonderful growth of knowledge in the earth causes us to revere and to love our Lord, and the smallest child may say this wonderful world belongs to my loving Father, and he gave us all these things.

Whisper Songs for October.

FIRST LESSON.

O Shepherd of thy earthly flock,
Thy little lambs are we ;
When foes are near we will not fear,
But we will rest on thee.

SECOND LESSON.

O Lord and Father of us all,
Thy little ones are we ;
In all our ways, through all our days,
We will acknowledge thee.

THIRD LESSON.

We build the temple of our Lord,
Thy temple, Lord, are we ;
Help us, we pray from day to day,
To build it faithfully.

FOURTH LESSON.

Thy work is waiting to be done,
Thy messengers are we ;
When thou dost call, O may we all
Obey thee willingly.

FIFTH LESSON.

The world is waiting for its King,
Thy kingdom, Lord, are we ;
O make us each so pure in heart,
That we the King may see.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Fourth Quarter.

SINGING.

"Praise him, praise him, all ye little children,
He is love, he is love :
Praise him, praise him, all ye little children,
He is love, he is love."

Teacher. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Children. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.
T. Come before his presence with singing.

C. My lips shall utter thy praise.

SINGING. "Our Sunday Song." [Page 12 in *Song and Study.*]

[Before the opening prayer have the children, kneeling if possible, with clasped hands and bowed heads, sing softly and tenderly:]

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child ;
Pity my simplicity,
Help me, Lord, to come to thee."

GIVING EXERCISE.

T. How does the Lord like to have his children give?

C. Gladly and lovingly.

T. What has God given us?

C. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."

[While the offering is being made the class may sing or recite these lines:]

"'Tis but little we can give,
But our mites we gladly bring ;
Knowing that the blessed Lord
Will accept love's offering.
He who saw the widow's mites,
Hears the pennies as they fall !
From his throne in yonder sky
Jesus sees and counts them all."

BIRTHDAY SERVICE.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHING.

PREPARATION FOR LESSON.

T. What are we here to learn to-day?

C. A lesson from God's holy word.

T. If God speaks, how should we hear?

C. With earnest, loving, faithful hearts.

LESSON TAUGHT.

CLOSING SONG.

"Good-bye, good-bye,
The time has come to say good-bye ;
Good-bye to those we love so well,
Yet ere we leave this happy place,
Where Jesus comes our souls to bless,
We lift our hearts to him in prayer,
To crave the blessing of his care."

—From *Sunny Songs for Sweetest Singers.*

ECHO PRAYER, followed by " Mizpah."

Beautiful Home!

"There shall be no night there."—REVELATION XXI. 25.

H. R. P.

H. R. PALMER.

1. There is a Home e - ter - nal, Beau - ti - ful and bright, Where sweet joys su -
 2. Flow - ers are ev - er spring - ing In that Home so fair; Lit - tle chil - dren
 3. Soon shall I join the ransomed, Far be - yond the sky; Christ is my sal -

per - nal Nev - er are dimm'd by night; White - rob'd an - gels are sing - ing Ev - er
 sing - ing Prais - es to Je - sus there. How they swell the glad an - them, Ev - er
 va - tion, Why should I fear to die! Soon my eyes shall be - hold Him Seat - ed

a - round the bright throne; When, oh, when shall I see thee, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Home?
 a - round the bright throne; When, oh, when shall I see thee, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Home?
 up - on the bright throne; Then, oh, then shall I see thee, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Home?

CHORUS.

Homo! beau - ti - ful Home! Bright, beau - ti - ful Home!
 Beau - ti - ful Home! beau - ti - ful Home!

Bright Home of our Sa - viour, Bright
 Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Home!
 Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Home!

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