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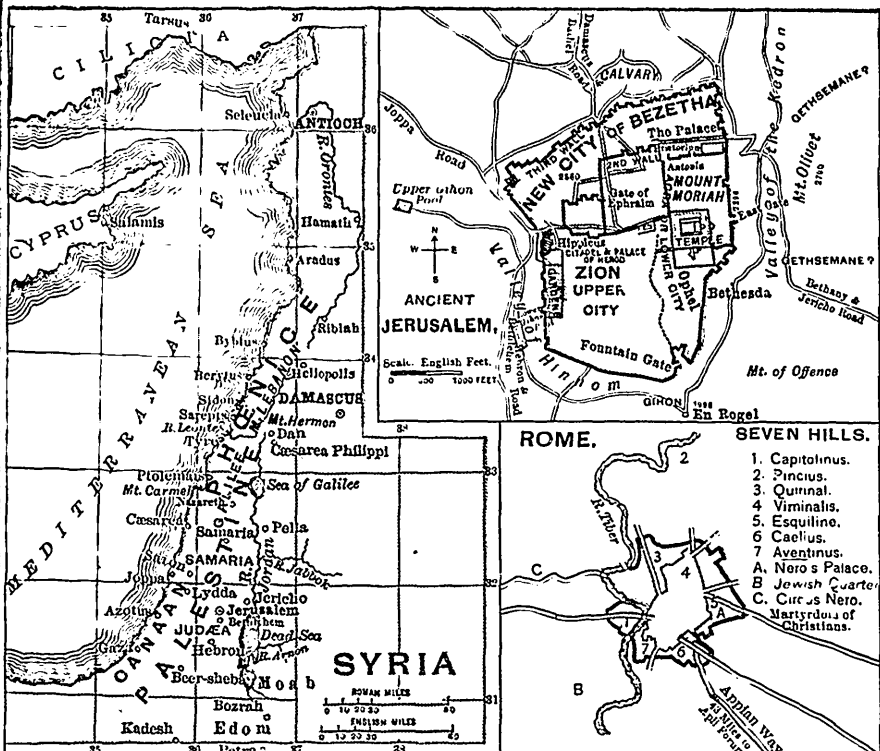
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The Teachers' Monthly.

Vol III.

FEBRUARY, 1897.

No. 2.

SHORTER CATECHISM FOR THE QUARTER.

Text-Book. "An Exposition of the Shorter Catechism" by Professor Salmon^d, D. D., price 45 cents. The portion gone over in 1897 may be obtained separately for 20 cents.

Q. 82. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. No mere man since the fall is able, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God,^a but doth daily break them in thought,^b word,^c and deed.^d

^a Eccl. vii, 20. For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

^b Gen. viii, 21. The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

^c James iii, 8. The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

^d James iii, 2. In many things we offend all.

Q. 83. Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?

A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.^a

^a John xix, 11. He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Q. 84. What doth every sin deserve?

A. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.^b

^b Gal. iii, 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Matt. xxv, 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Q. 85. What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin?

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life,^a with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.^b

^a Acts xx, 21. Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

^b Prov. ii, 1. My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; V. 2. So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; V. 3. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; V. 4. If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; V. 5. Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

Q. 86. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace,^a whereby we receive^b and rest upon him alone for salvation,^c as he is offered to us in the gospel.^d

^a Heb. x, 39. We are not of them who draw back unto perdition: but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

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

^c Phil. iii, 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

^d Isa. xxxiii, 22. The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King; he will save us.

Q. 87. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace,^a whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin,^b and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,^c doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God,^d with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.^e

^a Acts xi, 18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

^b Acts ii, 37. When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

^c Joel ii, 18. Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

^d Jer. xxxi, 18. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned: for thou art the Lord my God. V. 19. Surely after that I was turned, I repented: and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

^e Ps. cxix, 59. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

Q. 88. What are the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer;^a all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

^a Acts ii, 41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. V. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Q. 89. How is the word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners,^a and of building them up in holiness and comfort,^b through faith unto salvation.^c

^a Ps. xix, 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple.

11 *1 Thee 1. 6.* And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.
2 Rom. 1. 16. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth.

Q. 90. How is the word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?

A. That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence,^p preparation,^y and prayer;^r receive it with faith² and love;^z lay it up in our hearts,^u and practice it in our lives.^w

^p *Prov. viii. 84.* Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

^q *1 Pet. ii. 1.* Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speaking. **V. 2.** As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the world, that ye may grow thereby.
^r *Pa. cxix. 18.* Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

^s *Heb. iv. 2.* The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

^t *2 Thess. ii. 10.* They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

^u *Pa. cxix. 11.* Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

^w *James i. 25.* But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Q. 91. How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them;^x but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.^y

^z *1 Cor. iii. 7.* So then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.

^y *1 Pet. iii. 21.* The like figure whereunto even

baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Q. 92. What is a sacrament?

A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented,² sealed, and applied to believers.^a

^z *Gen. xvii. 10.* This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee; Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.

^a *Rom. iv. 11.* And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.

Q. 93. Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?

A. The sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism,^b and the Lord's supper.^c

^b *Mark xvi. 16.* He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.

^c *1 Cor. xi. 23.* For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, etc.

Q. 94. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,^d doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace,^e and our engagement to be the Lord's.^f

^d *Mat. xxviii. 19.* Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

^e *Rom. vi. 3.* Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death

^f *Rom. vi. 4.* Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 3.—CHRIST'S ASCENSION. Acts 1: 1-14. Commit vs. 7-9. (Read the remainder of the chapter.) *Golden Text*—While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. Luke 24: 51.

2. Jan. 10.—THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN. Acts 2: 1-13. Commit vs. 1-4. (Study also vs. 14-31.) *Golden Text*—They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 2: 4.

3. Jan. 17.—A MULTITUDE CONVERTED. Acts 2: 32-47. Commit vs. 38, 39. *Golden Text*—The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off. Acts 2: 39.

4. Jan. 24.—THE LAME MAN HEALED. Acts 3: 1-16. Commit vs. 13-16. *Golden Text*—His name through faith in his name hath made this man strong. Acts 3: 16.

5. Jan. 31.—THE BOLDNESS OF PETER AND JOHN. Acts 4: 1-14. Commit vs. 10-12. (Read also vs. 15-31.) *Golden Text*—There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4: 12.

6. Feb. 7.—TRUE AND FALSE GIVING. Acts 4: 32 to 5: 11. Commit vs. 32, 33.

Golden Text—Man Looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. I Sam. 16: 7.

7 Feb. 14.—THE PRISON OPENED. Acts 5: 17-32. Commit vs. 29-32. (Read vs. 12-32.) *Golden Text*—We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5: 29.

8. Feb. 21.—THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.—Acts 6: 8-15; 7: 54-60.) Commit vs. 57-60. (Read chaps. 6 and 7.) *Golden Text*—Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2: 10.

9. Feb. 28.—THE DISCIPLES DISPERSED. Acts 8: 1-17. Commit vs. 5-8. (Read also vs. 18-25.) *Golden Text*—They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8: 4.

10. March 7.—THE ETHIOPIAN CONVERT. Acts 8: 26-40. Commit vs. 29-31. *Golden Text*—Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. Acts 8: 35.

11. March 14.—SAUL, THE PERSECUTOR, CONVERTED. Acts 9: 1-12, 17-20. Commit vs. 17-20. (Read vs. 1-31.) *Golden Text*—This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all ac-

ception, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I Tim. 1: 15.

12. March 21—CHRISTIAN SELF-RESTRAINT.—I Cor. 9: 19-27. Commit vs. 25-27. (May be used as a temperance Lesson.)

Golden Text—Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. I Cor. 9: 25.

13. March 28.—REVIEW. *Golden Text*—The word of God grew and multiplied. Acts 12: 24.

“MY CLASS FOR JESUS.”

My precious class for Jesus,
Who did so much for me—
Who paid the price which justice claimed,
In hours of agony.

'Tis little, O, my Saviour,
That my weak hand can give ;
O, let me win those thoughtless ones,
To look to thee and live.

My whole dear class for Jesus !
Now in their youthful bloom,
Ere shadows lie across the path,
Dull sickness and the tomb.

While life is in its morning,
and bright things cluster nigh,
May these immortal souls lay up
Their treasures in the sky.

My whole dear class for Jesus !
O, let not one be lost,
When Calvary was the fearful sum
Their wondrous ransom cost.

One little step may sever
The parting veil away,
And forms that now are glad and fair,
To-morrow may be clay.

For Jesus, O, for Jesus !
The time is fleeing fast ;
The holy Sabbaths hasten by—
Soon, soon will come the last.

O, teachers, toil for Jesus
As ne'er you toiled before,
That each may bear a precious sheaf
To yonder shining shore.

—S. S. Monitor.

The lesson for February 28th will be given in the March MONTHLY. See that it is distributed on February 21st at the latest.



Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON V—January 31st, 1897.

The Boldness of Peter and John. ACTS 4: 1-14.

(Commit to memory verses 10-12).

GOLDEN TEXT: "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

PROVE THAT—Jesus sustains in difficulties. Acts 4: 13.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 86. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?* A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 80, 42, 101, 134.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The boldness of Peter and John. Acts 4: 1-12. *Tuesday.* The boldness of Peter and John. Acts 4: 13-22. *Wednesday.* Resort to prayer. Acts 4: 23-31. *Thursday.* Fear not. Matt. 10: 24-33. *Friday.* The only name. John 3: 9-19. *Saturday.* The Corner Stone. 1 Pet. 2: 1-10. *Sabbath.* No other foundation. 1 Cor. 3: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Our lesson properly embraces the whole fourth chapter. The address of Peter was interrupted by officers sent to arrest them for creating a disturbance, but really because they proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus. This is the first attempt of the authorities to suppress the infant church by persecution.

LESSON PLAN. I. Suffering for Christ. vs. 1-4. II. Witnessing for Christ. vs. 5-12. III. Being like Christ. vs. 13, 14.

1. And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them—

The priests, as responsible for the temple services, resented the diversion of the multitude from the accustomed ceremonies. The commander of the temple guard, a body of military police whose duty was to preserve order and which was composed of levites, made the crowd a pretext for interfering (Luke 22: 4; Acts 5: 24), and the Sadducees, who denied that there was any future life, or angel, or spirit (ch. 23: 8; 5: 17) tried to put down by force, testimony so fatal to their infidel creed. The word for "came upon" stands in an emphatic position and implies that they came suddenly and with violence (Luke 20: 1; Acts 23: 27).

2. Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead—"Grieved" is in the R. V. "sore troubled" (ch. 16: 18), they were thoroughly annoyed and their patience was exhausted. The word originally means, tired out with hard work. They could stand it no longer. "Proclaimed in Jesus" (R. V.) i. e. "in the person of Jesus," that Jesus himself had risen and that therefore in

"Christ shall all be made alive. He was "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15: 20, 22).

3. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day; for it was now eventide—They were imprisoned until morning. It was too late in the evening to assemble the sanhedrim which could meet, lawfully, only in daylight.

4. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand—The men only are enumerated, as was the custom at the time (Matt. 14: 21). It is not clear whether this stands for the whole number of converts, including the three thousand at Pentecost, or denotes the number added on this occasion. The R. V. takes the former view and translates "was" by "came to be." It is more natural, however, to understand the last clause of the verse as referring to the same persons as are mentioned in the first, and there is no reason for interjecting at this point a new census of the church as a whole.

5, 6. And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and An'nas the high priest, and Cai'as-phas, and John, and Alexan-

der, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem—This was a full meeting of the sanhedrim, or supreme court of the Jews. It consisted of 70 members and these were of three classes, chief priests, elders and scribes. Some held their seats by right of their rank as heads of the priestly courses but the greater number were called to "the bench" by a vote of the sanhedrim itself. It had supreme authority in all civil and criminal cases and even acted as a legislative body. It held daily sessions in its court room in the temple. Caiaphas was really high priest (John 11: 49) but Annas, his father-in-law, having once filled the office, retained still the title according to Jewish usage (Luke 3: 2). The kindred of the high priest means those of high priestly race. The high priests were taken from certain families only, the members of which are called "high," or chief priests (Matt. 16: 21; 26: 47 &c.) Many of these would naturally be near relations of the "high priest." (Hervey). We know nothing about the others mentioned. The R. V. places "were gathered together in Jerusalem" at the close of verse 5, and inserts "was there" after the name of "Annas the high priest." But why is Jerusalem mentioned? The scene of all these events is Jerusalem and the sanhedrim never met in any other place. Alford supposes that the meeting was held in the city and not in the usual room in the temple, others (Lightfoot &c.) that there was an unusually large meeting when a number of members who lived out of town were present.

7. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?—They did not deny the reality of the miracle, and the apostles had already declared that it was wrought by the power and in the name of Jesus (3: 6, 16). But they wished to found a charge of blasphemy against them based upon Deut. 13: 1-5 (See also Ex. 22: 18; Lev. 19: 26) by shewing that it had been wrought by Satanic influence or magic (Luke 11: 15; ch. 13: 6; 19: 19). "Power" means force, and "name" authority. In the Greek there is an emphasis upon the "ye," which is placed last, equal to "such as you," unlearned and contemptible men. (Hervey).

8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, ye rulers of the

people, and elders of Israel—The tense implies an immediate, sudden inspiration, giving the wisdom and courage, and words which were needed at the time. The promises of Matt. 10: 19, 20; Luke 12. 11, 12; 21: 14, 15, were abundantly fulfilled. (Ellicott). The R. V. omits "of Israel." The elders were grave and learned rabbis elevated to the dignity of councillors for their character and attainments.

9. If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he (R. V. "this man") is made whole—Both nouns are without the article, "a good deed done to an impotent man," "of" means "concerning" as we still use it in the phrase "to speak of." (Lumby). Peter's words imply that perhaps there would be some other charge brought against them, for men are not usually treated as criminals for making lame people well.

10. Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by (R. V. "in") the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him (R. V. "in this name") doth this man stand here before you whole—With what wonderful conciseness and force are the great doctrines of the gospel condensed into a few words. The human nature, the mediatorial glory, the humiliating but atoning death, the glorious resurrection (a cardinal point in all the apostolic preaching) and the present might of Christ to save his people on earth, are all set out in half a dozen pregnant words. How could they deny it with the man there before them. (Hervey).

11. This is the stone which was set at nought of you (R. V. inserts "the") builders, which is become the head of the corner—Peter proceeds to shew that prophecy was fulfilled in this rejection of Jesus, applying the words of Ps. 118: 22 as Christ himself had done (Matt. 21: 42). Some of them would doubtless remember unpleasantly the occasion (See also Isa. 28: 16). The council are fitly called "the builders," for on them depended the whole religious and civil government of the people. (Lumby). The "corner stone" is still regarded as standing for the whole edifice which rests upon it and is laid with more or less elaborate ceremonial. So the once despised Jesus is now become the

foundation of the new building, the church of the redeemed (Eph. 2: 20-22; 1 Pet. 2: 7).

12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved—The word “salvation” has the definite article in the original, “*the* salvation,” *i. e.* the salvation which all the children of Abraham looked for in accordance with prophetic promises. If by his power they could say “arise and walk,” so that same power alone could pardon the sinner (Matt. 9: 5).

13. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus—The word for “boldness” implies

freedom and readiness of speech such as would not be expected from the unlearned (Lumby), “outspeakness.” They perceived their courage and the clear and forcible way in which they spoke (Phil. 1: 20). “Unlearned,” means unversed in rabbinical literature, and “ignorant” is better rendered “common”—men of the workshop, the farm or the fishing-boat. (Lindsay). But they noted that the spirit of the master lived again in his disciples (Phil. 2: 5; Rom. 8: 29; 2 Cor. 3: 18).

14. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it—They could not argue against a fact. It seems, too, that some of them suspected that they might be found fighting against God (ch. 5: 39; Luke 21: 15; Acts 6: 10).

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

1. What is the captain of the temple called in the Old Testament? (1 Chr. 9: 11; 2 Chr. 31: 13; Neh. 11: 11). How did Jesus refute the infidelity of the Sadducees? (Matt. 22: 23-32).

4. What special promises are given to the persecuted? (Mark 13: 11; Luke 6: 22, 23; John 12: 25; 1 Pet. 4: 14; Rev. 2: 10; 20: 4).

5-8. Mention other trials before the Sanhedrim (Luke 22: 66; Acts 6: 12; 22: 30). Did any of its members become Christians? (Mark 15: 43; John 3: 1; 7: 50, 51; 19: 39).

7. What other noted prisoner was brought before these high priests? (John 18: 13, 24).

8. What similar insinuation with regard to Christ's miracles? (Luke 11: 15). Was sorcery common at this time? (ch. 13: 6; 19: 19).

9. Did the good works of Jesus protect him from hatred? (John 10: 32, 33).

10. This passage was a favorite one with Peter (1 Pet. 2: 4-7; Eph. 2: 20-22).

12. The prophets pointed to one who would save from sin (Acts 10: 43; Rom. 10: 11; John 3: 14, 17; John 5: 39; Luke 24: 27, 44). His name meant this (Matt. 1: 21). Experience proves that he does save (1 Tim. 1: 15).

13. Ought we to imitate this kind of “boldness?” (Acts 4: 29; 4: 31; Eph. 3: 12; Phil. 1: 20; 1 Tim. 3: 13; Heb. 10: 19; 1 John 4: 17; “boldness of speech”).

14. What place has the gospel for the common people? (Jas. 2: 5; Rev. 2: 9; Matt. 5: 3).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

By Rev. R. H. ABRAHAM, D. Sc.

I. THE ARREST. Truth naturally provokes opposition. The devil has a very keen aversion to the proclaiming of the gospel, and will stop it if he can. He will not only take away the seed when it has been sown, but he endeavours by every possible means to prevent the sowing of it. The arrest of the apostles was brought about by officialism in religious matters, which has done quite as much to hinder as to help the cause of Christ. Amongst the opponents of Peter and John were “the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sad-

ducees.” The arrest was roughly and violently made, as though they were disturbers of the peace. This was the church's first taste of the cup of persecution. The Lord had foretold this experience, and now it was being fulfilled. The apostles would no doubt remember his words of warning and his gracious promises connected with it. To imprison the heralds of the cross cannot stay the progress of the gospel. The torch-bearers were cast into prison, but five thousand other torches were lighted.

II. THE TRIAL. The trial could not take

place the same day, as the hour for such functions had passed. On the morrow the prisoners were arraigned before the court which sat at Jerusalem. The court—the Sanhedrim, consisted of some of the very persons who had compassed the death of the Lord. There was a great array of notables, and although the persons to be tried were only poor fishermen, yet it is altogether likely that it was felt to be an occasion demanding the attention of a full court. The object of the trial was to put a stop to the movement with which the events of the past few days were associated. As well might they have tried to arrest the light of the sun as to prevent the light of the gospel of Jesus from spreading further. The proceedings of the court were opened by the rulers putting a question to the prisoners. They wanted to convict Peter and John of sorcery by having worked a miracle, not in the name of God, but in the name of a crucified malefactor. They hoped to bring them under the awful death sentence pronounced in the law (Deut. 13).

III. THE APOSTLES' DEFENCE. In the plea presented by the disciples in their defence it is clear that their design was not so much to secure their own liberty, as it was to advance the name and honor of their Master, who had told them that their being brought before governors and kings would give them an opportunity of preaching the gospel to those whom otherwise they could not have access to.

In the defence we notice (1) *The Lord Jesus was honoured*. Before the rulers, the very body which had condemned Jesus to death, perhaps in the very chamber where the sentence of death was passed, a disciple of Christ declares his master to be the true Messiah. He leaves no doubt as to whom he means, for he adds, "Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified." The boldness of the declaration was astonishing. True heroism will not flinch in the face of great odds. He presses home the fact, that, although Pilate had given the formal sentence, it was they who had crucified the king of glory. He most emphatically declares the messiahship of the Lord Jesus, and boldly announces that it was through the power of the living Lord that this great miracle and the other wonderful events had been accomplished.

(2) *The gospel was faithfully proclaimed to the rulers*. Peter was determined that the

whole array of Judges should hear the gospel at least for once. He had received the commission to "preach the gospel to every creature," and he would not allow this opportunity of proclaiming its glorious truth to pass. The message he had delivered to the multitude he now delivered with the utmost directness to the rulers. How the court must have winced under his faithful declaration of the gospel. Especially would this be the case when he portrayed the part they had taken in the death of Christ, and declared that salvation could only be attained by them, or any one else, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

(3) *The only way of salvation was proclaimed*. Peter and John arraigned before the angry council were compelled to reveal their authority and power. The name they gave was one hated and despised by the Jewish rulers, yet the apostles declare that it is only by this means that salvation can be obtained. By him and by him only, by receiving and believing in him, and embracing his doctrines, can salvation be hoped for. There is no other name, no other religion, no not even that delivered by Moses, by which salvation can be had. In whom can we find a sufficiency, either of merit to justify, or of power to renew a sinner? If we were to apply to the highest angel in heaven to give us of his merit, he would tell us that "he himself is only an unfaithful servant, for that he does no more than is his duty." If we should entreat him to change our hearts, he would confess his utter inability to effect so great a work. Shall we look to ourselves? We are full of sin. We have not sufficiency in ourselves to think a good thought, much less to renew ourselves after the divine image. None but Jesus can atone for sin; none but Jesus could yield such an obedience to the law as should be capable of being imputed to others; none but Jesus can send down the Holy Spirit into the souls of men through whose power the renewing and sanctifying work is accomplished. There was but one door to the ark in the days of the flood; so there is only one name which has power to open the door of salvation to men—all the elements of power necessary for salvation, all that can reach the soul and fit it for a holy life, are found in Jesus Christ and in him alone.

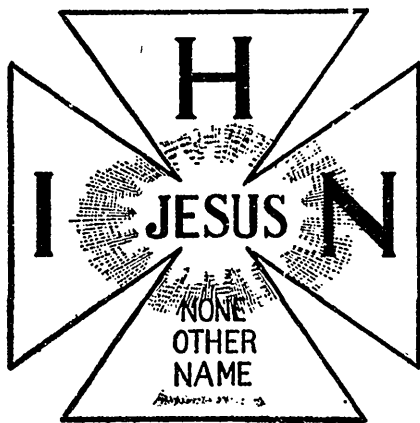
IV. BEING WITH CHRIST PRODUCES CHRISTLIKENESS. What is meant by being

with Jesus? To have the Lord Jesus as the centre of all our thoughts, desires and affections, so that our spirits will be continually in communion with him. To have Christ as the object of our heart's loving confidence, so that in the midst of all life's trials and troubles we are still trusting in his power and might, goodness and love. To have Christ, love to Christ, as the motive power of all the actions of life, doing all for his sake and for his glory. He that thus makes Christ the very centre of his life

and living, walking with him as a daily companion, beholding his beauty and loveliness as revealed in his word and works, seeking to copy his imitable perfections, cannot help being more or less transformed into his likeness. This sitting at the feet of Jesus and looking up into his face and having his holy life shine upon ours, will certainly change us into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

The blackboard design explains itself. We give here one or two anecdotes that may be used with effect while impressing the central truth, contained in the Golden Text, on the minds of the scholars. "Standing opposite Fort William, a missionary heard the Mussulmans and Chinamen saying 'There are very many gates into Fort William—there is a hospital gate, a water gate, and others. Now, Sahib, it is just the same in regard to heaven, Chinamen get in at one gate, Mussulmans in at another, and Hindoos in at another.' 'Yes,' the missionary said, 'that is true; but there is a sentinel at every gate, and every sentinel has the same watchword, and you cannot get in without that watchword, and the watchword at every one of the twelve gates of heaven is the name of Jesus.'"



**"Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed,
do all in the name of the
Lord Jesus."** Col. 3: 17.

other name,—None other name,—None ———." Some of the people smiled at the man's embarrassment, but the gentlemen went on his way with very serious thoughts in his head. He had lately become convinced that he was a sinner, and had been trying in many ways to obtain peace of mind. But religious exercises, good resolutions, altered habits, all were ineffectual to relieve his conscience of its load, and enable him to rejoice in God. The words he had heard from the blind man, rang their solemn music to his soul,—'None other name.' When he reached his home and retired to rest, the words, like evening chimes from village towers nestling among the trees, were still heard—'None other name,—None other name.' And when he awoke, in more joyful measure, like matin bell saluting the morn, the strain continued, 'None other name,—None other name.' The music entered his soul, and he awoke to new life. 'I see it all; I see it all,' he joyfully exclaimed, 'It is Jesus who alone can save me. To him I will look. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is NONE OTHER NAME under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved.'"

LESSON VI—February 7th, 1897.

True and False Giving. ACTS 4: 32-5: 11.

(Commit to memory verses 32, 33).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. 16: 7.

PROVE THAT—God loves cheerful giving. 2 Cor. 9: 7.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 87. *What is repentance unto life?* A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 2, 8, 223, 85.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* True and false giving. Acts 4: 32-37. *Tuesday.* True and false giving. Acts 5: 1-11. *Wednesday.* Sacredness of vows. Eccl. 5: 1-6. *Thursday.* Warning against hypocrisy. Matt. 6: 1-8. *Friday.* Lying lips. Prov. 12: 13-22. *Saturday.* Insincere offerings. Mal. 1: 6-14. *Sabbath.* Blessing on true giving. Mal. 3: 8-12. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. A wonderful spirit of brotherliness seemed to possess the apostolic church. Their liberality was unbounded. They seemed to strive who should give most into the common fund. Hence arose a temptation to hypocrisy. Some wished to have a reputation for generosity without really possessing the grace itself. Ananias and Sapphira were not only liars, but hypocrites. Their sin was against the "Searcher of Hearts." They pretended to be what they were not.

LESSON PLAN. I. True Giving. vs. 32-37. II. False Giving. vs. 1-11.

32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common—A better translation is "and the heart and the soul of the multitude of those that believed were one." (Lindsay). "Heart and soul" is a Hebrew mode of expression denoting entire oneness of affection, interest and aim. Our common use of it is borrowed from the Bible. In this condition of the church our Saviour's prayer was answered (John 7: 21; 13: 35). They fulfilled the "Royal Law" perfectly (Jas. 2: 8). For "neither said anyone," the R. V. has "and not one of them said," this is more emphatic and more literal. This community of goods was not the result of any law, nor does it prove that the life of monkish fraternities is a higher one than that of ordinary christians. The wealthier did not give up all their possessions, and when one did sell his property and distribute the proceeds he gave them to the poor and not into any common fund. There was no abolition of individual proprietorship. On this read 1 Thess. 4: 11; 2 Thess. 3: 10, 11.

33. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all—It was easy for the apostles to preach with such a congregation sustaining them by its enthusiasm. The grace referred to is not the favor with which the people regarded them but rather the grace of God which abounded towards them in spiritual gifts and abundant unction and rich blessing, crowning their labors with success. (Hervey). (John 17: 17, 23; Luke 2: 40).

34, 35. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need—"Lacked" *i. e.* were in need. Notice that this christian socialism had these characteristics; (1) It was voluntary (5: 4); (2) It was not universally practised; (3) No one sold all that he had; (4) Only those "in need" were beneficiaries of the common fund; (5) It led to trouble in the church (6: 1-7); (6) The principles underlying it are per-

manent (2 Cor. 8: 14, 15). The apostles were entrusted with the distribution of the common fund, a duty from which they afterwards asked to be relieved (6: 2). Doubtless many a one lost his situation, or found his business ruined, by becoming a christian.

36, 37. And Jo'ses, who by the apostles was surnamed Bar'nabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet—He was the cousin of John Mark (Col. 4: 10 R. V.) and became quite a prominent man in the church (see references in Bible Search Lights). His name meant rather "Son of exhortation" (R. V.), he was an eloquent preacher (11: 23; 13: 1; 14: 12). The special duty of the Levites was to wait upon the priests in the temple, but as there was not employment for them all the greater number were engaged in secular occupations, and although they had no inheritance in the land they acquired property (Num. 18: 20, 21; Jer. 32: 7-12). Either the gift of Joses was an unusually large one, or it was the one which stimulated Ananias and his wife to commit their sin.

1. But a certain man named Anani'as, with Sapphi'ra his wife, sold a possession—The "but" with which this verse begins is not emphatic, still one cannot but feel the contrast which the following narrative presents. Ananias means *God is gracious* (same as Hananiah), and Sapphira, *beautiful*.

2. And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet—The Greek word translated "kept back" is used in the Septuagint to describe the sin of Achan (Josh. 7: 1) and is rendered "purloining" in Tit. 2: 10. They gave because others did, and coveted more praise than they were willing to deserve. It was a deliberately planned falsehood.

3. But Peter said, Anani'as, why hath satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?—The Holy Spirit must have informed Peter of the facts. But there is an inspiration of the devil too. Satan could not have entered his heart if he had not listened willingly to his suggestions (Luke 20: 3; Eph. 4: 27; Jas 4: 7; 1 Pet. 5: 9; 1 John 2:

13). Ananias' fraud was an ignoring of the whole spiritual character of the apostles' ministry. (Hervey). It was dishonesty in a transaction, not with the apostles or the church, but with God really.

4. While it remained was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men but unto God—Nobody compelled him to sell it, and he need not have given any part of the price unless he chose. There was no compulsion in the matter. We have here a proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit; a lie to him is a lie to God,—he is called God.

5. And Anani'as hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all them that heard these things—Such a terrible warning was needed for an evil which might ruin the church at the outset (Jude 4). Compare Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10: 2 and 1 Cor. 11: 17-21).

6. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out and buried him—Being active and strong they would naturally be asked to do this. Coffins were not used, the body was wrapped in his long loose robe for a winding sheet. Burial usually followed immediately after death in that warm climate (2 Kings 9: 34).

7. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in—Perhaps she waited so long for her husband's return and now came seeking him. No one had the courage to tell her what had happened.

8. And Peter answered her, tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? and she said, yea, for so much—Peter answered her inquiring looks by giving her an opportunity for confession and pardon. The very question must have aroused her fear that Peter was aware of the fraud, or at least suspected it. Her lie was therefore more daring than her husband's.

9. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out—Peter does not curse her but sadly pronounces the divine sentence against her, he speaks "by the Holy Ghost." They had

daringly put the Holy Ghost on trial whether or no he is able to discern the thoughts of evil hearts. (Hervey). (Luke 4: 12).

10. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband—The Holy

Ghost himself struck down the audacious offender.

11. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things—This is the first time that the word "church" is used to denote the christian community.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

32. Was "community of goods" the rule in the early church? (ch. 5: 4). What evidence that it was not universally practiced? (ch. 6: 1-7; 1 Cor. 11: 21; Jas. 2: 1-3, 6; 2: 15, 16).

33. Why did the apostles make the fact of the resurrection so important? (1 Cor. 15: 13-19).

35. Did the apostles afterwards find this duty burdensome? (ch. 6: 2).

36. What other mention of Barnabas in the Acts? (11: 25, 30; 13: 2-14, 28; 15: 2, 36-41). What special gifts did he possess? (ch. 13: 1). In what sense is he called an "apostle?" (ch. 14: 14. Compare 2 Cor. 8: 23, margin "apostles," Phil. 2: 25, margin "apostle.")

1. Who else are accused of stealing from God? (Josh. 7: 11; Mal. 1: 14; 3: 8, 9).

3. Give other instances of evil doers found out by direct revelation (2 Kings 5: 25, 26; 2 Sam. 12: 7). What was the Old Testament law concerning religious promises? (Num. 30: 2; Deut. 23: 21; Ecc. 5: 4). What bearing has this verse on the doctrine of the divinity of the Holy Spirit?

5. Give other severe warnings sent to check an evil at its first appearance (Lev. 10: 2; Num. 15: 35, 36; Acts. 8: 20; 13: 11; 1 Cor. 11: 17-21).

9. How may we tempt God? (Luke 4: 12; Deut. 6: 16; Ps. 139: 7-12). Does God tempt men? (Jas. 1: 13-15).

11. What temptations before the church to-day are like those that assailed Ananias and Sapphira? (Rev. 2: 4; 3: 2, 3, 16-19). How are they to be overcome? (1 Cor. 2: 2).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *The fellowship of the disciples.* We very frequently speak of the primitive church and appeal to it as an example to the church to-day. What a beautiful picture we have here given to us of the spirit prevalent among the early christians. They abounded in love to one another, their joining together in holy ordinances seemed to knit their hearts in love their charity was as eminent as their piety. They made very large contributions of their means for the help and relief of those who were in need. As they abounded in love so they abounded in charity. It may be that in this they acted upon the words of our Lord to the rich young ruler, when he would test his sincerity, "Sell all thou hast and give to the poor." Not that this was ever intended by our Lord for an example to be followed by all christians in all ages and all places requiring them to sell their property and contribute to the poor. These early christians were under no obligation to do what they did, they were

constrained by the law of love. Their actions give us an illustration of the wonderful power of the grace of God in the heart, to raise it above the love of the things of this world, to fill it with love to the brethren, and compassion for the poor and needy, and to fire it with an intense zeal for the spread of the gospel.

2. *The best of causes may have unworthy followers.* The spirit and life of the disciples seemed to be very good and the blessing of God was present with them, but there were those in their midst whose hearts were not right in the sight of God. There is a mixture of bad with the good in the best societies on this side of heaven; tares will grow among the wheat until the harvest. The better the cause the more likely hypocrites are to attach themselves to it. It is not the baser metals or coins that are counterfeited, but men seek to imitate gold and silver with baser metals. Hypocrisy incidentally attests the genuineness of the profession assumed as the counterfeit

proves the existence of a good coin. It is therefore the greatest folly to condemn the church because there are some unworthy members in it. Shall we never use money because it has been counterfeited?

3. *The sin of Ananias and Sapphira.* It is a very happy sight to find husband and wife walking together in that which is right, true and good; but it is a sad sight to find them confederates in sin, deception and fraud. No doubt Ananias was persuaded in his own mind that this sect had a great future before it, and wishing to share in the prosperity he threw in his lot with them, not wishing to seem to be behind other devoted and pious disciples who had disposed of their property and were vying with each other in their generosity towards the poor, they disposed of their property but "*kept back part of the price.*" Their sin consisted in

(1) That they were ambitious for praise. They were anxious to be regarded as eminent disciples, when they knew they were not true disciples at all. They were possessed with an inordinate desire to appear well. So anxious were they to secure the honor and praise of their fellowmen that they were willing to offend God in order to obtain it.

(2) They were covetous. They clung to their gold. It may be that when they sold their possession they purposed to give all, but when they got the money in their hands their hearts failed them. They loved the money and thought it too much to give. This is a form of idolatry that is altogether too common even in this christian age. They were willing to hold their money at the expense of their virtue, selling their souls for gold.

(3) They were distrustful of God. They were afraid that they might come to want themselves and although now all things were common, it might not always be that there would be a common fund to draw from. They could not take God's word that they would be provided for, but thought they would play a wiser part and lay up a little for a dark day.

(4) There was hypocrisy. They made a pretense of godliness where none existed and claimed virtues they did not possess. Sin is always sinful, but in those making great professions of piety it is far worse than in others.

(5) There was deliberate wilful lying, both in word and deed. They had a perfect right

to keep their money, or any part of it, but they had no right to pretend that the gift they were giving was the whole price of their possession. A fact which aggravates this offence was that they had deliberately planned the whole matter. It shows a depth of hypocrisy and of hardness of heart when two persons plan together to lie, and pledge themselves to support each other in carrying out the falsehood. They lied to the Holy Ghost not only in that the offering was made to the church, the temple of the Holy Ghost, but in that it was made to God and was thus a direct falsehood addressed to God. "Learn to hate and loathe a lie as vile, defiling the soul and offensive to God. Spurn lying of every kind—the little lie, the white lie, the lie of society, of trade, of convenience, the lie that conceals or covers up from those who have a right to know, the lie that exaggerates, the lie that tells half the truth."—*Illustrative Notes.*

4. *The punishment.* The punishment may seem severe, but we may rest satisfied it was just. Terrible as this divine judgment was, we cannot wonder that it should be inflicted, for it was done to maintain the honor of the Holy Ghost as lately poured out upon the church. It was a great insult to the Holy Ghost, implying that he could be imposed on, that he knew not the hearts of men. It was done, further, to check that kind of offence of presumption, now at the beginning of this dispensation. At times the greatest severity in punishment is the greatest mercy. The punishment of the guilty few, results in the good of the many. There seem to be special necessity why this sin should receive signal punishment. We must not forget that these people were members of the infant church which needs special care and training, lest it gets started in a wrong direction. The little society of christians had won public favor and the church had become very popular and there was danger that many would seek to join it who would hinder rather than help, being driven by a desire to float with the tide, while in reality they had no life in themselves. Ananias is dealt with severely now at the first, that while it is being manifested that it is a great blessing to receive the Spirit, there might be given a manifestation of the danger of despising the Spirit. There are abundant examples of severe punishment meted out to those who had sinned, namely: The worship-

pers of the golden calf—the first gatherer of sticks on the Sabbath—the offering of strange fire by Nadab and Abihu—the sin of Achan—the sin of Uzzah.

5. *The revelation of God's character given by this judgment.* Every divine act is a revelation of God's character, what then does this event reveal.

(1) God's omniscience. He saw the sin though it was done in secret. We may hide from and deceive our fellowmen, our nearest friends, but we cannot deceive God. Let no one imagine that because God does not punish at once that he does not see.

(2) God's impartiality. He deals no more

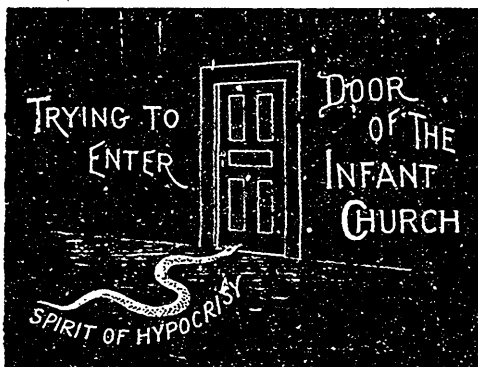
leniently with his followers than his enemies when they are guilty of doing wrong.

(3) God's justice. He will not allow sin to go by unpunished. The penalty upon the bodies of Ananias and Sapphira is only an outward token of the greater punishment impending for all sinners. How wonderful does God's justice appear in the death of Jesus who took the place of sinners and died in their stead.

(4) God's power. While we stand in awe at the power of God as revealed in his judgment, ought we not to rejoice in the fact that this same Jesus who is so strong to smite is also strong to save.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

There are two possible mistakes in teaching this lesson; that of presenting the sin of Ananias and Sapphira as if it were simple untruth, such as a child through fear of punishment might



be guilty of in an unguarded moment; and that of exhibiting our Father in heaven as inflicting severer punishment than an offence seems to justify. The title of the lesson indicates that it is to be treated in its historical connection, and that the *spirit* of the offence should be dwelt on, rather than its outward form or outward results. In so doing there is ample opportunity to exhibit the enormity of falsehood in every form.—(*Notes on Scripture Lessons*).

told a lie. The matter came up in the Sabbath School. "Would you tell a lie for three cents?" asked the teacher of one of the boys. "No, Ma'am," answered Dick very decidedly. "For ten cents?" "No, Ma'am." "For a dollar?" "No, Ma'am." "For a thousand dollars?" Dick was staggered. A thousand dollars looked big. Oh, would it not buy lots of things? While he was thinking, another boy cries out, "No, Ma'am," behind him. "Why not?" asked the teacher. "Because, when the thousand dollars are gone, and the things you've got with them are gone too, the lie is there all the same," answered the boy. O! yes, that is so. A lie sticks. Everything else may go, but that will stay, and you will have to carry it round with you, whether you will or not, a hard and heavy load.—(*Bible Museum*).

LESSON VII—February 14th, 1897.

The Prison Opened: ACTS 5: 17-32.

(Commit to memory verses 29-32).

GOLDEN TEXT: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5: 29.

PROVE THAT—The Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ. Acts 5: 32.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 88. *What are the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?* A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The prison opened. Acts 5: 17-32. *Tuesday.* Rejoicing. Acts 5: 33-42. *Wednesday.* Jonah's prayer. Jonah 2: 1-9. *Thursday.* Fearless obedience. Jer. 26: 8-15. *Friday.* Suffering for Christ. 1 Pet. 3: 8-17. *Saturday.* Blessed in trial. Luke 6: 17-23, *Sabbath.* Boldness for truth. Dan. 3: 8-18. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Notwithstanding the censure of the venerable sanhedrim the apostles continued their work of preaching and working miracles of healing just as Jesus had done. This proved that his spirit was with them and crowds flocked to them as to their Master. Again the rulers tried persecution and the apostles were a second time arrested and imprisoned.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Apostles Imprisoned. vs. 17-20. II. The Apostles Preaching. vs. 21-28. III. The Apostles Witnessing. vs. 29-32.

17. Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees) and were filled with indignation—Annas is no doubt meant, although his son-in-law Caiaphas actually filled the office at the time (4: 6; John 11: 49; 18: 13). They were indignant at the contempt of their authority shewn in continuing to preach, and they were "jealous" (R. V.) of the success of the new teaching.

18. And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison—R. V. "public ward." All the apostles seem to have been arrested. They were placed in prison for detention, imprisonment was not a Jewish form of punishment.

19. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said—R. V. "an angel," one of an order of beings whose very existence was denied by the Sadducees (Heb. 1: 14). The frequency of angelic interference in the early days of the church is remarkable. The word "angel" occurs twenty times in the Acts. (Wordsworth). This miraculous deliverance would shew the apostles that their enemies could not do anything to them beyond what God permitted (John 19: 11).

20. Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life—They were not to hide like jail-breakers, but to go on with their work, and leave the rest to God. The "life" which they were to proclaim was the spiritual life which believers have in Christ, as manifested in the whole manner of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting. It includes life in every sense (John 10: 10; 6: 68; 17: 3; 1 John 1: 1-3; 5: 11).

21. And when they heard that, they

entered into the temple early in the morning (R. V. "about daybreak") and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought—The first sacrifice took place at early dawn when the temple gates were opened. Jesus taught early in the morning (John 8: 2). This was a full meeting of the sanhedrim, all the elders who were members being present. The word for "senate" means "aged men" (Acts 22: 5).

22, 23. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors; but when we had opened, we found no man within—The officers who were sent were probably members of the levite temple guard. They found the doors bolted and the guards unaware that their prisoners had escaped. It is useless to speculate as to how the miracle was performed. Compare ch. 12: 6-10, 18, 19.

24. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow—[R. V. "were much perplexed concerning them."] The captain of the temple was the commander of the Jewish temple guards. The chief priests were the heads of the 24 courses into which the priests were divided. "Them" refers to the words of the report just brought, the strange facts, or to the apostles. They were puzzled to know how the apostles had escaped, and anxious about the effect upon the excitable multitude. They began to fear that

dealing harshly with them was a far more serious matter than they had thought.

25. Then came one and told them, saying, Behold the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people—They were doing as they had been told, calmly and fearlessly preaching the gospel as if nothing had happened. This “standing” implies the prominent and undaunted position which the apostles had taken up. They were not like prisoners who had escaped, and so were seeking a place to hide themselves; but like men whose work had been interfered with, and who, as soon as they were able, had come back to it again. (Lambly).

26. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned—There was no resistance on the part of the apostles, so any violence would have been unprovoked. The Jews were very apt to resort to mob violence (John 7: 45; Luke 20: 19; Acts 21: 27-31, 34-36).

27, 28. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us—“Straitly” means “strictly.” The high priest seems afraid to inquire about the way of their escape, and avoids mentioning the name of Jesus. It is a marvellous spectacle to see the judges take the place of culprits, and deprecate accusation where they would naturally be dealing out penalties. They fear that the horrid invocation in Matt. 27: 25 has come upon them.

29. Then Peter and the other apos-

ties answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men—He had already given this answer (ch. 4: 18). The command of the angel gave new emphasis to his words and sense of obligation.

30. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree—Christ came in accordance with God's promises to the fathers (Deut. 18: 15). Peter claims to be a true Israelite in disobeying the high priest. The word “tree” is here used in the sense of “a beam of wood,” as in “cross-tree,” “axle-tree” &c. (Acts 10: 39; 13: 29; Gal. 3: 13; 1 Pet. 2: 24).

31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness (R. V. “remission”) of sins—The “right hand” stands for the mighty power of God, as the instrument of Christ's exaltation. It was God's doing altogether. This is the meaning of Peter's repeated charges of blood guiltiness; to bring conviction of sin, and that sorrow for it which would lead to pardon (3: 19). Salvation in Jesus is only to be obtained through repentance, this and the pardon of sins which accompanies it are both the free gift of God. (Lindsay). (John 1: 16; 16: 7, 8; Acts 3: 16; Rom. 2: 4; Eph. 2: 8).

32. And we are his witness of these things, and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him—(John 15: 26). There were two witnesses to the truth of the facts regarding Christ—the apostles and the Holy Spirit. The former told what they saw and knew, the latter wrought miracles as a sign that God was with them. There is also an internal witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8: 16; Gal. 4: 6; 1 John 3: 24). Obedience to God, which they pleaded in justification of their disobedience of man, is the condition of receiving spiritual gifts.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

17. What sect were our Lord's most bitter enemies? Why do the Sadducees now come forward? What doctrine of the apostles united both parties against them? (Acts 6: 13, 14).

19. How often are angels employed in connection with the early church? (5: 19; 8: 26; 10: 3; 12: 7, 23; 27: 23).

20. What does Christ say of himself in John 14: 6? Where are these names applied to the gospel? (Acts 19: 9, 23; John 8: 32; Acts 5: 20).

21. Give other instances of prisoners supernaturally released? (Acts 12: 7-10; 16: 26).

26. What indications in the New Testament of the turbulent character of the Jews?

28. Why should the rulers object to being held responsible for Christ's death? (Matt. 23: 35; 27: 25).

31. Both repentance and faith are gifts of God (John 1: 16; 16: 7, 8; Acts 3: 16; Rom. 2: 4; Eph. 2: 8).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *The opponents of the gospel resist its progress.* Never can any good work proceed with any hope of success, but it is sure to meet opposition. Satan ever was and ever will be in opposition to those who are the benefactors of mankind; and it would have been a very strange thing if he had allowed the disciples to go on teaching and preaching without raising any opposition. Several things have taken place which have resulted in a widespread interest in the gospel among the people. The gift of the Holy Ghost, the marvellous cures wrought by the apostles, the death of Ananias and Sapphira, the courage, earnestness and fidelity of the apostles, the beautiful exhibitions of love and self-denial among those who had believed the gospel, the wonderful change in their character, all combined to call the attention of Jerusalem and the surrounding country to the gospel through which all these things had been accomplished. This general interest in the gospel awakened jealousy and envy in the minds and hearts of the Jewish leaders. They felt that they must either accept the doctrines and teaching of the gospel, which they had all along denied, or else they must stop the progress of the gospel. We see illustrated here the two effects of all good influences, saving some, making enemies of others. While the multitude thronged to hear and to be healed, the rulers were filled with indignation and aroused to bitter opposition.

2. *The Lord's deliverance of the apostles.* The powers of darkness were allied against them, but the Lord was on their side. Greater is he that was for them than all the powers against. The Lord will never desert his witnesses, but will be near to care for them. Joseph and Daniel may be confined for months in a dungeon, but deliverance comes at last. Peter may have thought that he was forsaken of the Lord, but the angel comes and bids him go forth. God has his own way to deliver his children from trouble, we cannot foresee his plan, but implicit trust and confidence in God in the darkest hours brings a blessed opening. On the very night they were imprisoned the Lord sent his angel to open the doors of their prison and restore them their liberty, giving them the command that they go on preaching the gospel. This miraculous deliverance of the apostles would convince beyond doubt, not only the apostles, but the disciples of ...

divinity of their mission, of the special providence God exercised over his people, of the omnipotence of him in whom they trusted, and the result would be that they would be wonderfully encouraged and strengthened in their work. It would make a deep impression on the minds of the opponents of the gospel of its truth and divinity, and reveal to them how useless it was for them to oppose it.

3. *God delivers from trouble and danger that we may serve him more faithfully.* There is no prison so dark, so strong, but that our God can both visit his people in it, and if he deems it proper bring them out of it for future service. Our Lord did not deliver them out of the prison that they might be simply set at liberty, or that they might escape out of danger. It was that they might with more boldness and fidelity go on with work to which they were commissioned. Our release from danger and our restoration from sickness are not granted us that we may enjoy the comforts of life, but that we may by greater devotion and increased fidelity seek the honor of God in the advancement of his cause. In obedience to the command of the angel and in fulfilment of the purpose of their deliverance, the disciples went at once to their great work of preaching the gospel in the temple.

4. *Faithfulness to duty.* Faithfulness ever implies a trust of some kind as to which it is to be exercised. The trust committed to the apostles was given in the words of the Lord, "Go preach the gospel to every creature," more immediately in the words of the angel "Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Their fidelity to the command of the Lord led them to preach to the people at Jerusalem, fidelity to the words of the angel took them to the temple at early dawn. Their faithfulness was the outcome of their faith in Jesus. Faithfulness springs from faith. Without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ it is in vain to expect genuine faithfulness in the things of God.

5. *Man's paramount duty is obedience to God.* "We ought to obey God rather than men." This is the announcement of a great principle in a few words. It was understood, adopted and appreciated by the apostles. It was the basis of their steadfastness and consistency, the cause of their zeal and courage, and the source of their joy and strength. It

is the polar star of all christian morality, the axiom to which every conscientious and enlightened man appeals. There are times when the claims and demands of men are so obviously at variance with the claims of God that there is no difficulty in deciding which to obey. While on the other hand there are occasions when men appear invested with official power to execute the laws of God, and yet they demand an obedience which interferes with the revealed will of God. On such occasions it is very difficult to arrive at an intelligent decision. In the case of the apostles they had acted rightly, though in direct opposition to the sanhedrim, they suffered imprisonment for their conscientious obedience to the will of God. God gave them his approving testimony and renewed their commission by sending his angel to command them to "Go and preach all the words of this life." They were thus prepared to meet their persecutors with an undaunted front and boldly to arrange the great principle of their conduct, "we ought to obey God rather than men." A soul without principle is like a vessel without compass or rudder, the sport of every influence to which it is opposed. But embued with the principle avowed by the apostles, it will be able at all times to govern itself wisely and direct its course through all temptations and snares. Many would be spared much pain of conscience, worry of spirit, and inconvenience, if they would but adopt this principle as the solution of all doubtful questions regarding conduct. Happy is the soul that feels the law of God written on it by the Holy Spirit, and that can say "I delight in the law of the Lord."

6. *The exaltation of Christ.* In the defence of Peter, which by critics has been regarded as one of the finest pieces of pleading on record, is revealed the fact that our Lord was fulfilling his promise made to his disciples—"It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak." Among other things Peter most emphatically announces the exaltation of that Jesus whom they despised, rejected and crucified. Him hath God—the God whom they professed to obey and who had promised the Messiah again and again—raised up honored and glorified to the highest possible position. In this short address Peter calls attention to.

(1) The dignity to which Christ was raised. The expression "with his right hand" does

not denote the agency of God in glorifying his Son, but intimates that our Lord enjoys divine honor at the Father's right hand, exercises divine authority, dispenses divine government in the universe for the good of his church and the subjugation of his foes.

(2) The character in which he was received. This Peter describes as "a Prince and a Saviour." As a divine person, Jesus never was deprived of his royal supremacy as King of the universe, and therefore, as God, he could never be exalted to a dignity from which he had never descended. But there was a dignity to which, as God and man in one person, he had never been formally raised. The princely office of Jesus as exercised in his exalted state, is very different from that sovereign power which he exercises as Creator and Preserver of all things. As the nature of Christ's kingly office is peculiar, so also is its exercise. His law is still the same immutable rule of righteousness which was inscribed on the human soul at creation, and repeated in the Ten Commandments at Sinai. But while strictest Justice is maintained in inflicting the penalty of the law on the guilty, there is exercised on the one hand long-suffering mercy to obstinate sinners, on the other the fullest and most gracious forgiveness to believers. But Christ is not only an exalted Prince, but also a glorified Saviour. He not only as Prince secures the happiness and dignity of his people, but considering their condition by nature, it is obvious that the most powerful means are requisite to accomplish their salvation from sin and misery. It was not only necessary that he should take their place, suffer the penalty they had incurred and answer for them the claims of divine justice, but he must like the high priest of old enter into the Holy Place and present the blood of his atonement as the ground of his intercession. Without this concluding act of his priestly office, no remission of sin could be granted, no prayer heard, no gracious intimation of divine love communicated. He saves to the uttermost all that come to God by him, because he ever lives to make intercession for them.

(3) The blessed consequences of our Lord's exaltation. These are here limited by Peter to those benefits which the God of all grace bestows on the children of men. "Repentance," "forgiveness of sins."

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.
ONLY TWO SIDES.

MAN'S
RICHES
REWARDS
REPOSE

BUT
ANGELS WEeping
JESUS PLEADING (in vain)
AND
HELL AT LAST

GOD'S
POVERTY
PRISON
PUNISHMENT

BUT
ANGELS HELPING
JESUS WATCHING
AND
HEAVEN AT LAST

The presence of God with his servants when persecuted is illustrated by the following anecdote:—The Rev. Dr. Baldwin, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission says, "A man who has been an opium smoker and an opium seller, by name of Ling Ching Ting, was converted at Foochow. "He immediately wished to go and tell the story of the cross in the district of Hok-Chiang, some forty miles away, where he had formerly lived. He was permitted to go. He met with much persecution, being driven out of some places, stoned in others, and maltreated in many ways. At one time, through false accusations brought against him, he was sentenced to be beaten with two thousand stripes, and the sentence was literally executed. He was carried up to Foochow groaning with intense pain occasioned by the beating, yet cheerfully endured the trial, testifying to those who called upon him that *Jesus could make his heart inside all peaceful, even while his body was in great pain.* Through his labors the gospel spread over the district of Hok-Chiang, where this church now has a thousand communicants."

The duty of supreme obedience to God and conscience is beautifully exemplified in the following anecdote of Basil, bishop of Caesarea (died A. D. 379). He was offered by the Emperor Valens the alternative of conforming to the Arian (Unitarian) creed or of resigning his bishopric, but he answered the prefect who brought him the mandate, with calm dignity, that he could not obey the Emperor's will,

"because it was inconsistent with that of his Sovereign Lord, and he could not worship any human creature, being himself a subject of that Lord, and commanded to be like him." "Do you know his dignity to whom you speak?" asked the prefect. "I do," was the reply, "and I respect it, but that of God is greater. We are both his servants, and among christians greatness depends, not upon rank, but upon faith." The prefect threatened him with pains and penalties. The bishop smiled as he answered, "What are such threats to me? He who has nothing to lose can scarce fear confiscation, and I have no possession save these mean garments and some few books. Neither does he fear exile who counts no spot on earth his home, being here but a pilgrim and sojourner, seeking safer place of rest; heaven is my home. Nor do I fear torture; my frail body would endure but little—you could strike but one blow, and my pain is past; I should but depart the sooner to him, for whose service alone I am willing to live, and after whom my soul yearns." The prefect could not forbear expressing his surprise at the boldness of the bishop's speech. "Perhaps," was the answer, you have not before met with a christian bishop, or under such circumstances you would have found the same conduct." The Emperor yielded, and, his child being dangerously ill, the Empress, Dominica even besought Basil's prayers on the young Galatus behalf.

LESSON VIII—February 21st, 1897.

The First Christian Martyr. ACTS 6: 8-15; 7: 54-60.

(Commit to memory verses 67-60).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
Rev. 2: 10.

PROVE THAT—We should forgive our enemies. Acts 7: 60.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 89. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?* A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading but especially the preaching of the word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 36, 69, 188, 192.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The first christian martyr. Acts 6: 8-15. *Tuesday.* The first christian martyr. Acts 7: 51-60. *Wednesday.* The roll of honor. Heb. 11: 32-40. *Thursday.* Our example. Heb. 12: 1-6. *Friday.* More than conquerors. Rom. 8: 31-39. *Saturday.* The eternal glory. 2 Cor. 4: 7-18. *Sabbath.* A crown of life. Rev. 2: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. The distribution of the common fund to which Barnabas and Ananias had been contributors was a very delicate business. The apostles were unable to give it their personal supervision and it was not always judiciously managed. Accordingly at their suggestion seven men were chosen who should act as "Deacons" and attend to the department of church charity and finance, allowing the apostles to give themselves exclusively to their spiritual duties. Of these new officers Stephen seems to have been one of the ablest and he was soon singled out by the Jews as a special object of hatred. Our lesson contains the story of his martyrdom and the cause of it.

LESSON PLAN. I. Faithful unto death. vs. 8-15. II. The Crown of Life. vs. 54-50.

8. And Stephen full of faith (R. V. grace) and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people—It is here divine grace, and includes faith as one of the chief graces, or free gifts of God's Spirit. "Power" is the divine power promised by Jesus Christ to his disciples (1: 8) as manifested by working miracles and speaking boldly and effectively.

9. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen—The Libertines were "freedmen," children of Jews who had been carried captive to Rome, but who had been freed by their masters and now dwelt at Jerusalem. They had their own synagogue there. The Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and the province of Asia, also had each a separate congregation and place of worship. The "disputing" was of a captious character like that of the pharisees (Mark 8: 11) and the scribes (Mark 9: 14) with Jesus. The same word is used here.

10. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake—His "wisdom" refers to his skillful use of quotations from the Scriptures and the writings of the rabbis. He met his opponents on their own ground and vanquished them as Paul did afterwards. Perhaps his discomfiture by Stephen in some of these encounters shewed him how to wield the sword of the Spirit against his old friends afterwards. The statement in verse 3, that Stephen was "full of the Holy Ghost," requires us here to understand that Stephen spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

11. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God—To "suborn" in law, means to procure a person to take such a false oath

as constitutes perjury. They knew that they were misrepresenting Stephen's words. This was a very serious charge (Deut. 13: 6, 10) and would rouse the pharisees to join the sadducees in persecuting this new religion.

12. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council—The words imply that he was seized suddenly and treated with great roughness (Luke 20: 1). There was nothing that would arouse the people like an insult to their temple and religion.

13. And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law—"A truth that is half a truth, is even the worst of lies," and their "bait of falsehood" took this "carp of truth" that probably Stephen spoke in the line of our Saviour's words to the woman of Samaria (John 4: 21; Acts 7: 48). Compare Matt. 26: 61; John 2: 21, and ch. 7: 48.

14. For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us—The phrase "this Jesus the Nazarene" expresses the utmost contempt (Matt. 26: 61, 71; John 9: 29; Acts 7: 40). To "change the customs" meant to do away with the whole ceremonial law. Yet this was the truth which one of the bitterest enemies then, afterwards gloried in proclaiming as his special gospel to the gentiles.

15. And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel—Compare Exod. 33: 35; Luke 9: 29. Whether here the shining was a supernatural brightness, a special and divine radiance, or a natural effect of his own divinely inspired peace and joy, is not an important question. In either case it was the direct result of the indwelling of God with him, the fulfilment of the promise of Christ (John 14: 23, 27). That the manifestation of this inward life was not without its effect on the council, is indicated by the mildness of the high priest's question, in striking contrast with his treatment of Christ (Matt 27: 62, 63, 65) and Paul (ch. 23: 2) and by the fact that the council heard Stephen's defence until his outburst of indignation at the close. Contrast 22: 22. (Abbott).

54. When they heard these things,

they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth—This was not the penitent grief of those who were "pricked in their heart" on the day of Pentecost. The word expresses the sort of cutting that would be made by a saw, "exasperated." They were roused to a frenzy of rage, like a wild beast grinding its teeth at him (Job 16: 9; Ps. 35: 16; 37: 12).

55. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God—He saw some visible sign of God's presence, the brightness which conceals Deity from mortal eyes. Jesus occupied the place of dignity and power. The glorified Jesus is generally represented as sitting, to denote his victorious rest and the permanency of his rank (Matt. 26: 64; Eph. 1: 20; Mark 16: 19). Here he appears as if risen to welcome the first martyr of the church.

56. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God—This name is applied to Christ here and in Dan. 7: 13; but nowhere else except by himself.

57. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord—The grave sanhedrim became a furious, howling mob.

58. And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul—The person to be stoned was thrown, with his hands bound, from an elevation, then a large stone was rolled down upon him by the witnesses, after which all the people present cast stones at him until he was dead. Saul must have been over 30 years old at this time as he was a member of the sanhedrim.

59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit—R. V. "calling upon the Lord." It was a direct prayer to Christ as Creator and Redeemer (Ps. 31: 5; Luke 23: 46).

60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, and when he had said this, he fell asleep—Only Jesus could have taught such a prayer (Luke 23: 34). Perhaps Saul's conversion was the answer to it. "If Stephen had not prayed, the church would not

have had a Paul." (Augustine). "Blessed rest after life's toilsome day! Blessed contrast with the tumult of passion and violence which brought him down to the grave? How near, too, in his dying was that likeness to his Lord advanced, which shall be perfected at his appearing (1 John 3: 1)." (Hervey.)

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

10. What promise was fulfilled to him? (Luke 21: 15; Isa. 54: 17).
11. On what other occasion was a sentence obtained by suborned evidence? (Matt. 26: 59, 60; 1 Kings 21: 10, 13). Give other cases of tumults excited by similar false reports (Matt. 27: 20, 65; Acts 13: 50; 21: 27-31).
- 13-14. What was the true teaching of Christ and the apostles on these points? (Matt. 5, 17; Mark 13: 2; Heb. 8: 13; Col. 2: 16, 17). What had Daniel prophesied? (Dan. 9: 26).
15. Who told this to Luke? What other faces shone with a spiritual light? (Ex. 24: 29-35; Matt. 17: 2).
54. Where does gnashing of teeth properly belong? (Matt. 8: 12; 13: 42).
55. Where do we read of God's glory on earth? (Ex. 16: 10; 24: 16, 17; 40: 34, 35; 1 Kings 8: 10, 11). Similar visions of the heavenly glory (Isa. 6: 1-3; Ezek. 1: 28; Rev. 21: 23).
56. What Old Testament prophet also beheld the Son of Man in glory? (Dan. 7: 13).
57. Did the murderers of Stephen really believe that he was guilty of blasphemy and deserved death? (1 Tim. 1: 13). By what law did they condemn him? (Deut. 13: 9, 10; Lev. 24: 16).
58. Why did they take him outside of the city before stoning him? (Lev. 24: 14; as also Heb. 13: 12, 13).
60. Contrast this with the Old Testament prayer (2 Chr. 24: 22).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *The Character of St. Stephen.* Not very much is said of Stephen in the Scriptures. but what is written is the highest testimony that can be given. He was with six others chosen by the church at Jerusalem to attend to certain business matters connected with the support of the poor widows who were in fellowship with the church. He is described as "full of faith and power," a man of earnest, strong, faith, a believer with all his heart. Unbelief, doubting, and wavering could find no place in his soul. He had large faith and therefore he had power with God and "did great wonders and miracles among the people." He was filled with the Holy Ghost in all his illuminating, sanctifying, comforting and strengthening influences. Stephen thus qualified was a formidable advocate of the cause of Christ. This was realized by Jews of the various nationalities who were frequenters of the Synagogue. These men disputed the doctrines of the christian faith, and contended with Stephen. But Stephen was more than a match for them "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." As they could not meet his argu-

ments or refute his teaching, they determined to do what they could to deprive him of his liberty, with a view of preventing him from carrying on his work.

2. *Fidelity to truth may provoke opposition and persecution.* Stephen was a faithful witness to the truth committed to him by the Lord. He had received a trust from his master, and let others do as they might, he was going to be faithful. He would let no personal inconvenience influence him. He lost sight of everything but duty. In the faithful discharge of his duty he came in contact from time to time with the enemies of christianity, and his fidelity, not only in holding to, but in the declaring of truths that these enemies hated, he was exposed to their enmity and opposition. It is always true, the more zealous and earnest we are in our declarations of the truths of christianity, the more one may expect to stir up the opposition and hatred of the wicked. Like Stephen we are to be "Faithful unto death," and we have the promise of the Lord, "I will give you a crown of life."

3. *Faith's vision.* How frequently our

brightest visions come to us in the hours of our greatest trial and danger. Jacob at Bethel, John on Patmos. Stephen standing before the Sanhedrim by which he is soon to be condemned to death has given to him a most stirring view of heaven. The things which meet the eye of his faith are a greater reality to him than the assembled court before which he stands, or the rocks in the valley by which his life is soon to be crushed out. To the eye of faith the spiritual world is always near. God, heaven, eternity are far more real to it than this world's gold or pleasures are to the natural eye. One day when Father Taylor was leaning back in his chair with closed eyes and a happy smile playing about his mouth, his daughter asked him "Are you dreaming, father?" "I am in heaven a little way" he answered. This vision granted to Stephen at this peculiar time was no doubt given with the design of increasing the strength of his faith in this trying hour, and of imparting to his final testimony a ring of triumph.

4. *Praying for his enemies.* To what degree of Christlikeness has Stephen attained. Our Lord not only taught His disciples that they should pray for their enemies, but he set them a glorious example. The prayer of Stephen for his murderers is an echo of the prayer of his master. "Father, forgive them." How hard it seems for christians to rise to the true and Christlike way of dealing with enemies. Amid showers of hard names and unjust accusations which hurt more than stinging blows, it does not seem easy to say "Father forgive them." One should remember that every hard word flung back, every unkind retort only increases the evil and never conquers the enemy. As Latimer says, "let our hearts be like the broad and open shore, offering no resistance to the sea of malice as it dashes its waves above us. They will then not only break harmlessly, but cleanse and beautify the shore of our being." No one can tell how many of the enemies of Christ present when he uttered that prayer on the cross, were among those converted on the day of Pentecost. We can never forget that the voice of Stephen's last prayer never ceased to echo in the soul of at least one who heard it, and who became in after days a mightier advocate of the truths of the gospel that he whose prayer was answered in his conversion.

If St. Stephen had not forgiven and prayed for his persecutors, the church and the world had not heard Paul's voice in proclaiming Christ as the Saviour of the world.

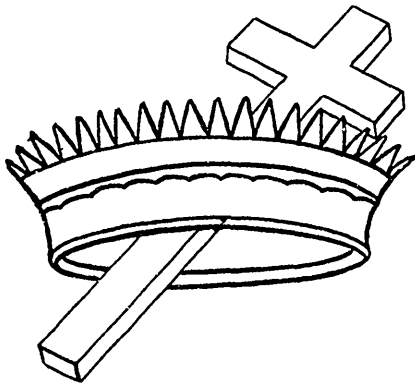
5. *Death to the Christian is as a Sleep.* Under the dispensation of the gospel the term sleep is frequently used to denote death. In the case of the ruler's daughter our Lord said "the maid is not dead, but sleepeth," again in speaking of the death of Lazarus, He said "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." So the sacred historian in describing the death of Stephen says "he fell asleep" so calmly he laid down his life. The term *sleep* as applied to the death of the believer, not only intimates the peaceful departure but it also expresses the expectation and hope he has of a future resurrection. We lie down to rest in sleep, expecting to rise again refreshed and strengthened for the duties of another day. So he only sleeps, he lays his head upon the lap of earth. The tomb is the resting place, the couch on which the body reclines, until resurrection morn, then shall the slumbering dead arise.

6. *God can overrule evil for good.* The martyrdom of St. Stephen was the prelude to a terrible persecution of the early church. The condemnation of St. Stephen to death by the Sanhedrim might be supposed to involve a legal decision on the part of that court that christianity was blasphemous and a capital offence, to be punished by death. If this were so it was indeed a very critical time for the infant church, and that it was so to at least a certain extent was manifested by the effort to exterminate christianity. The death of St. Stephen and the subsequent persecution and scattering of the disciples of Christ were but examples of what so frequently happens. The real victors were those who had seemingly suffered defeat. What a glorious illustration we have of this in the death of Christ. The most powerful blow the kingdom of satan ever received was by that apparent victory. So in the death of Stephen and the persecution, the jewish priests and rulers seem to gain the victory. But they were doing that which would in time bring defeat to their own purpose. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Paul was one of the first fruits that sprung from the sowing—the persecuted disciples scattering in

every direction were just so many heralds proclaiming the glorious gospel all over the count. And soon instead of one church at

Jerusalem we find the light of the gospel burning in many countries, towns and cities.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.



“Stephen” means in Greek “a crown,” speak of him then as the ‘crowned one,’ the first martyr of the church. Draw a cross as the emblem of suffering and bring out the facts of the lesson by questioning. Speak of the “noble army of martyrs” who have followed Stephen. Tell of the persecutions of our forefathers and their faithfulness unto death. Try to inspire the scholars with reverence and loyalty to their church heritage and point out their responsibility for such privileges. Then encircle the cross with the crown, the emblem of victory. Stephen’s life was not thrown away. The blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the church. Be prepared to bear any

loss rather than deny Christ, the “Crown of life” is better than the sceptre of the world.

The following anecdotes and illustrations may be used with effect while teaching or reviewing.

The young converts in Uganda, Central Africa, many of them mere boys, were cruelly tortured before their execution by the heathen king. Their arms were cut off, and they were bound alive to a scaffolding, under which a fire was made, and so they were slowly burned to death. Their persecutors stood around jeering, and told them to pray now to Jesus Christ, if they thought he could do anything to help them. The joyful spirit of the martyrs at once entered into these lads, and together they raised their voices and praised Jesus in the fire, singing until their tongues refused to form the sound—

“Daily, dally, sing to Jesus,
Sing, my soul, his praises due,
All he dees deserves our praises,
And our deep devotion too.”

One of the executioners, struck by the extraordinary fortitude of the lads, and their ardent faith in another life, came and asked that he also might be taught to pray.

Renwick, the last of the Scottish martyrs, speaking of his sufferings for conscience’ sake says: “Enemies’ think themselves satisfied that we are put to wander in mosses and upon Mountains; but even amid the storms of these last two nights I cannot express what sweet

times I have had when I had no covering but the dark curtains of night; yea, in the silent watch my mind was led out to admire the deep and inexpressible ocean of joy, wherein the whole family of heaven swim. Each star led me to wonder what he must be who is the Star of Jacob, of whom all stars borrow their shining.”

The dying words of Stephen have often been heard on the lips of martyrs. Patrick Hamilton, the first martyr of the Scottish reformation was distinctly heard, amidst the fury of the flames and of an angry multitude, praying thus:

“How, long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm? How long will thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus receive my spirit.”

The thought of death as a sleep was very familiar to the early christians. On the walls of the ancient cemeteries in the catacombs at Rome, are inscriptions written in the first and second centuries such as “Victoria Sleeps” “Domitian’s artless soul, sleeps in peace,” “Antonia, sweet soul, in peace, may God refresh her.” “He sleeps, but lives.” “Laurinia, sweeter than honey, rests in peace.” “Clementia, tortured, dead, sleeps, will rise again.” Faith loves to dwell upon an image which represented so sweetly her hope in dying.

Primary Department.

Edited in connection with the *Primary Quarterly for Little Folks*, by MR. & MRS. GEORGE H. ARCHIBALD, Montreal, P. Q.

COMMUNION.

(G. H. A.)

Saviour, to live with Thee, to talk to Thee Is not a means, but in itself an end, That time is full of truest joy dear Lord, That with Thee in communion sweet I spend.	I dare not try one day to live alone, For I have learnt so oft that thus I fail, And so I wait, and while I wait I pray That love and joy, and peace within my heart prevail.
Saviour to me thou art the nearest friend, My path each day thou wilt most surely show; I come to Thee again, once more to wait, To wait and listen, that Thy way with me I'll know.	Oh, fill me Jesus, Saviour, with Thyself, Make me to know the richness of Thy love, Even while I wait, so that this day May be a foretaste of the life above.
I wait dear Lord, in quiet at thy feet ; I wait to hear the word thou hast for me. Speak it so plainly, that I cannot help but know Thy will, and give me grace to do it readily.	Give me the Spirit's fulness every day To keep, and cleanse and banish all the strife That I may know the sweetest peace within, And rest in quiet every hour of life.

Grant me the faith that takes Thy loving gifts ;
Grant me the trust that gives thee back again ;
My life, my all, that thus I may be thine,
And wholly thine for evermore, Amen.

LESSON V—January 31st, 1897.

The Boldness of Peter and John. ACTS 4: 1-14.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "There is none other name under heaven given among men, where-by we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER :

1. The work of the Holy Spirit of Love in the heart.
2. Do not grieve or "hurt the Holy Spirit of Love. (See Preview for *children* in *Little Folks Quarterly*).

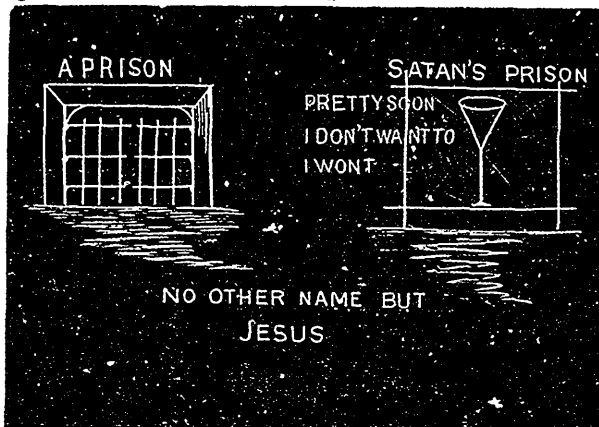
III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of Love setting me free.

IV. REVIEW: (These questions are only suggestive. The central spiritual truth and its teaching ought also to be recalled).

1. Who was lying at the beautiful gate of the temple?
2. Who passed by?
3. What did Peter do for the lame man?
4. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: The healing of the lame man and the preaching of Peter, caused such a commotion amongst the people that the priests and the leaders of the people became alarmed, laid hold of Peter and John, and put them in prison, where they were kept

until the next day. They were then brought before the council and asked "by what power, or by what name have ye done this?" Peter being full of the Holy Ghost, again stood up, and fearlessly showed that all they did was by the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This silenced their opponents, who could do no more than threaten them, which they did. Peter and John told them that they would continue to speak the things which they had heard. The council again threatened them and let them go.



VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the board beforehand.
2. Who ever saw a prison? Tell us about it.
3. Tell a story about a man in a prison who was condemned to die. His friends were trying to get a pardon for him and they went first to a great friend of the prisoner, who wrote a letter to the keeper of the prison

and asked him to let his friend free, but when the keeper saw the letter, he said "this man's name won't set a prisoner free." Then the prisoner's friends went to a very rich man and got a letter from him, but the keeper said the same thing about his name. Again the prisoner's friends went to the Governor, and got a letter from him, but the keeper said this time—"there is no use bringing me a letter from any other than the Queen, only her name can set the prisoner free." As the story is told draw or pin to the board a picture of a prison and some marks to represent the keeper and the messengers.

4. Draw the spider's net as in the cut, as you draw it, tell how the spider is trying to catch flies. So is Satan trying to catch boys and girls. Has he caught you in his "pretty soon," or "I don't want to" net, or in his "I won't," or his "wine glass" net? Everyone has been caught in some one or other of his nets.

5. Be sure and convince each child that he has been caught. Sometimes it is hard to do so. "The pretty soon," or "I don't want to" nets usually convince.

6. Now introduce the Golden Text. When we are caught in any of Satan's nets, no other name but that of Jesus can set us free. He is the only one who is stronger than Satan. Mother is not, her name won't do, Father is not, his name won't do, even the Queen's name won't do. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

7. If we will trust Jesus (See notes on Lesson IV., VI., 9), he will send his Holy Spirit of Love who will set us free from Satan and all his nets.

LESSON VI—February 7th, 1897.

True and False Giving. ACTS 4: 32-5: 11.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. 16: 7.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit of Love in the heart.
2. Do not grieve or "hurt" the Holy Spirit of Love. (See Preview for children in *Little Folk's Quarterly*.)

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of Love reading my heart.

IV. (These questions are only suggestive. The central spiritual truth and its teaching ought also to be recalled).

1. Who healed the lame man?
2. By what power was he healed?
3. By what power are sinful hearts made clean?
4. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: The baptism of the Holy Spirit brought the hearts of the people into such unity, that they sold their possessions and had all things in common. As many as owned land or other possessions, sold them, and gave the money to the apostles. In the midst of this most desirable condition of things, Satan was busy, and soon found two self-seeking, praise-loving hearts in the persons of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. The true state of affairs seems to have been revealed to Peter. He charged Ananias with the sin of lying to God, who, hearing his words, immediately fell down and gave up the ghost. Three hours afterwards the same thing happened to Sapphira, and both were buried together. Great fear came upon all the church, and upon all who heard those things.

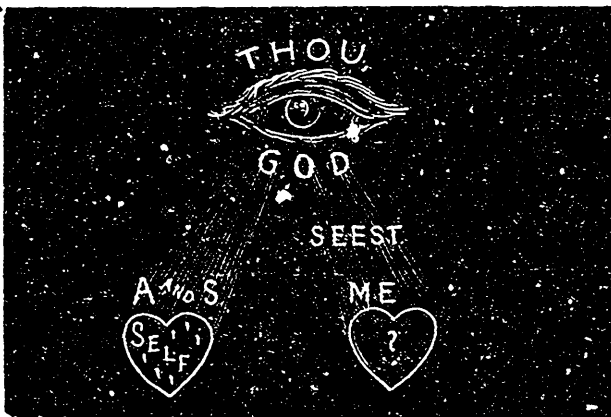
VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the board beforehand.

2. Tell the story of Willie and the cookies. One day Willie's mother made some nice cookies. When they were baked she gave Willie as many as she thought were good for him. As she put the rest away in the pantry, she said "I don't want my little boy to touch any more of these cookies." "All right, mother," said Willie, and ran out to play. By and by Willie wanted something in the house, and as he passed by the pantry, he remembered the cookies. I wish mother had not said she did not want me to touch them, thought Willie. I'll just look at them, that can't be any harm. They do look so nice lying there, nobody would ever know if I took one thought Willie. Then he heard a little voice inside saying "do right," "do right." Willie only listened for a moment, but did not obey the little voice, for he took one of

the cookies and ate it. Willie thought nobody saw him, but God saw right into his heart, and the little voice that told him to "do right" was God's voice. When we do wrong we may think we will not be seen by anyone, but God always sees us.

3. Hold up a heart cut from white paper, and pin to the board. Above it, write the word "me." If my heart has sin in it, as



Willie's had, God is sure to know. He sees right into our hearts.

4. Here introduce and teach the Golden Text.

Willie's mother may not have known what he did, for she could not see into Willie's heart, but God's Holy Spirit can read all our hearts. As you teach this, draw with a few strokes of the chalk an eye, to represent God, and with light yellow, or white chalk, make some strokes for rays, to picture God looking into the heart. There is a picture of an eye in Pease's symbols, that might be helpful here.

5. Tell the story of Annanias and Sapphira. God saw into their hearts and punished them very severely for their untruthfulness.

6. God by his Holy Spirit of Love is reading our hearts, he knows all about us. We never can do anything that he does not know. Let us be careful not to "hurt" the Holy Spirit of Love for he lives in our hearts,

LESSON VII—February 14th, 1897.

The Prison Opened. ACTS 5: 17-32.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 4: 29.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit of Love in the heart.

2. Do not "hurt" or grieve the Holy Spirit of Love. (See Preview for *children in Little Folk's Quarterly*).

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of Love making me brave.

IV. REVIEW: These questions are only suggestive. The central spiritual truth and its teachings ought also to be recalled).

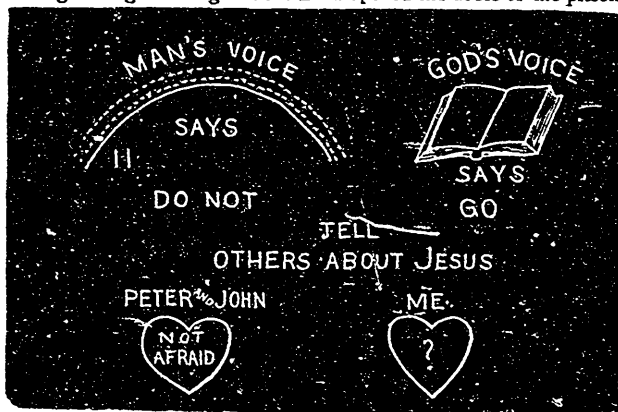
1. Who sold their possessions and brought the money to Peter?

2. What sin did they commit?

3. What happened to them?

4. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: Following the sin and punishment of Annanias, and Sapphira, the apostles wrought many signs and wonders among the people, and were magnified by them. Multitudes of believers were added to the Lord, and the sick and those having unclean spirits were healed. The popularity of the apostles, stirred up opposition on the part of the leaders of the Jews, and they laid their hands upon the apostles, and put them in prison. During the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison and said to them, "Go



stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life." In the morning this miraculous release was reported to the council, and the apostles were once more but without violence brought before them. Peter in his defense spoke to them the words of our Golden Text, "We ought to obey God rather than men. The leaders then sought to kill the

apostles, but the wise council of Gamaliel prevailed, and they were set at liberty.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.

2. Does anybody here ever feel afraid of anything? Tell us about it.

3. I want to tell you the story of a little boy who was not afraid to do right. Little Pierre was fishing one day out of a deep hole in a pond. The pond was near the roadside. Just across was an orchard, and the apples were ripe. Three tramps came along and tried to get into the orchard. They found a hole in the fence, but it was too small for them to get through, so turning to Pierre, they said, "here you boy

crawl in through this hole and get us some apples." Pierre thought a moment, and then said, "No I won't steal apples for you or anyone else." "Nonsense" said the men, "Go in and get us some of the apples or we'll duck you in the pond." Pierre looked at them, and bravely said, "Mother says its wrong to steal," and God says "Thou shalt not steal." The men would not listen to him, but took little Pierre and dipped him under the water. When they pulled him out they said, "Now go and get us some apples," "No," said little Pierre, and under the water he was put again. As they pulled him out again they saw by his face that he was determined not to do what was wrong, so left him and went their way. Brave little Pierre! he was not afraid to do what was right—for the Holy Spirit of Love lived in his heart.

4. Tell the story of the apostles. (a) The wonderful things they did after the death of Annanias and Sapphira. (b) The indignation of the leaders of the people. (c) The apostles put in prison and released by the angel. (d) The apostles brought before the council. Write marks on board to represent council, and write "man's voice," etc. (e) The bravery of the apostles as shown in verses 29-32.

5. Here introduce and teach the Golden Text.

6. What made the apostles so brave? What made little Pierre so brave? The Holy Spirit of Love living in their hearts.

7. Close the lesson by recalling some of the things the children said they were afraid of. Refer to little Pierre and the apostles as examples of courage. Teach the children not to be afraid of a dark room, etc., etc., and lead up to the closing thought, that they must not be afraid "to stand up for Jesus, and when the time comes, to speak out for him as little Pierre did, and as the apostles did.

8. How can I this week be brave and true. Call for suggestions.

9. If I allow the Holy Spirit of love to rule my heart, he will make me brave and true this week—always.

LESSON VIII—February 21st, 1897.

The First Christian Martyr. ACTS 6: 8-15; 7: 54-60.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2: 10.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit of love in the heart.

2. Do not grieve or hurt the Holy Spirit of Love. (See Preview for *children in Little Folk's Quarterly*.)

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of Love keeping me faithful.

IV. REVIEW: (These questions are only suggestive. The central spiritual truth and its teaching ought also to be recalled).

1. What did the leaders of the Jews do to the apostles?

2. Who opened the prison door and set them free?

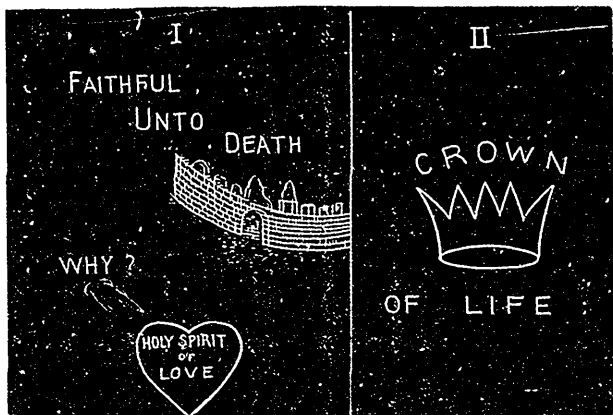
3. What did the angel tell them to do?

4. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: The story of the life and death of Stephen is full of interest. He was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and endowed in a remarkable degree with divine power and grace. He was one of the seven Deacons. When his enemies found that they could not resist his arguments, they hired men to bear false witness against him, and stirred up the people, who came upon him and brought him to the council. The elders of the people listened to him, and he made his defence, contained in the 7th chapter, his face like that of an angel, shining as he spoke. When he told them that they were the betrayers and murderers of the Christ they were cut to the heart, and dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death. He died, the first Christian martyr in the spirit of the Saviour himself, praying "Lord lay not this sin to their charge, and when he had said this he fell asleep."

VI. SUGGESTIVE HELPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Who can tell us the story we had last Sunday about "Little Pierre?"
3. Get another to tell about the apostles imprisonment and release.
4. Who was brave last week? Tell us about it.
5. Who was it kept little Pierre, the apostles, you and me faithful? The Holy Spirit of Love in our hearts.
6. Tell the story of the life and death of Stephen. Before the class meets draw upon the board the crown, and the cross, and the words shewn in cut No. II. Cover them over by pinning to the board a piece of tailor's black pattern paper. If this is inconvenient cover with white cardboard and use black crayon or pencil. As you tell the story of Stephen's death, sketch roughly the walls of the city, some marks for the people etc., upon the paper which covers the crown.



7. Here introduce and teach the Golden Text. Little Pierre was faithful, but his faithfulness did not cost him his life. The Golden Text says "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Stephen was faithful unto death and he was given a crown of life. Now at the proper moment unpin the paper and show on the board the crown of life which Stephen won.

8. What made Stephen faithful? The Holy Spirit of Love was in his heart. He loved and trusted in Jesus and was faithful and true to him. He loved the people who were killing him, and prayed for them as he died.

9. Who in my class to-day will let the Holy Spirit of Love rule in their hearts that he may keep them faithful unto death and give them a crown of life?

LESSON IX—February 28th, 1897.

The Disciples Dispersed. ACTS 8: 1-17.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Acts 8: 4.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit of love in the heart.
2. Do not grieve or "hurt" the Holy Spirit of Love. (See Preview for *children* in *Little Folk's Quarterly*).

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of Love making me unselfish.

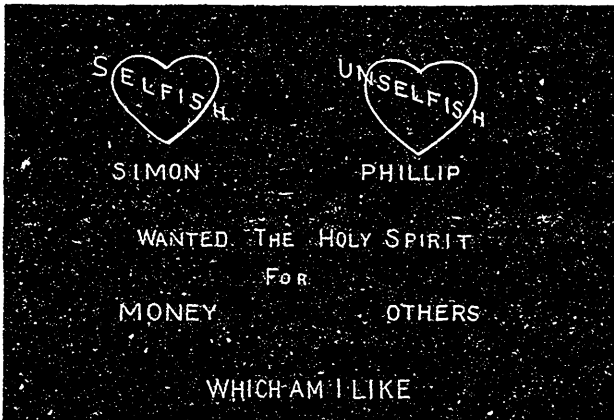
IV. REVIEW: (These questions are only suggestive. The central spiritual truth and its teachings ought also to be recalled).

1. Where was Stephen taken to be stoned?
2. For whom did he pray as he died?
3. What made Stephen so faithful?
4. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: The Holy Spirit overrules persecutions for the spreading abroad of his truth. At this time in the history of the church there arose a great persecution. Saul of Tarsus, figures prominently here, and becomes a leader against the Christian Church. The disciples were scattered abroad over the land, and went everywhere, first, preaching the Word—verse 4; second, preaching Christ—verse 5; third, preaching the kingdom—verse 12; fourth, preaching the gospel—verse 25; fifth, preaching Jesus—verse 35. Philip went down to Samaria, and there the people believed. After Peter and John went down and prayed for the people, the Holy Spirit fell upon them. One Simon, a sorcerer, professed to believe, but he could not have been a true believer, for he does not seem to have the same gifts as the others, and tried to buy them, but Peter rebuked him saying, “Thy money perish with thee,” etc., etc., verse 20-24.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Begin by teaching the Golden Text.
3. Tell the story of Solomon’s wise choice that we learned about last Quarter. 1 Kings 3rd ch. (a) His dream. (b) God’s offer. (c) Solomon’s thought for others and his wise choice. (d) God’s pleasure at Solomon’s unselfishness. (e) God gave Solomon riches and honour for himself, because of his unselfish thought for others.
4. Tell the story of Philip going to Samaria. (a) He tells them about Jesus. (b) He performed many miracles—drove out unclean spirits—healed the lame man, etc. (c) The people believed in Jesus. (d) There was great joy in the city. As you tell this story, hold in your hand, and then pin to the blackboard under the word Philip, a heart as described in Lesson II., VI., 5.
5. Tell the story of Simon Magus. (a) He was a sorcerer. (b) He had great influence over the people—verses 9, 10. (c) His pretended belief of baptism. (d) His motive—He wanted the Spirit of Love so that he could do the wonderful miracles that Philip did. As you tell this story, hold in your hand, and then pin to the board under the word Simon, another heart, as before described.



6. Why was the love of the Holy Spirit in the heart of Phillip and not in the heart of Simon? Let us look into the hearts and see. That is what God does. He looks into our hearts. Draw out from the inside of the heart of Phillip a paper with the word “unselfish” printed upon it. Phillip wanted to help others, he was not always thinking about himself. How different with

Simon. He was selfish, he wanted to be great for his own sake, and God would not give him the Holy Spirit of Love.

7. Which am I like? Phillip or Simon? Let us bow our heads and while we are silent let us open our hearts so that the Holy Spirit of Love may live in every part, that we may be made unselfish and thoughtful for others.

Teacher Training.

TEXT-BOOK : HOLBORN'S "THE BIBLE, THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEXT-BOOK."

Analysis by REV. PROFESSOR CAMPBELL, LL. D., Presbyterian College, Montreal.

B. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE SAME EPISTLES. *Clement of Rome* (1st century), in an epistle to the Corinthians, quotes 1 Cor. 1: 11, 12, and paraphrases Rom. 1: 29-32. *Polycarp of Smyrna*, a disciple of John, (died 168), in a letter to the Philippians, quotes Romans, 1 Corinthians and Galatians, and perhaps 2 Corinthians. *The Gnostic heretics, Marcion and Basilides*, made use of all four epistles as of apostolic authority (120-130 A. D.) *Three others, Valentine, Heraclion and Ptolemy*, refer to them (150 A. D.) (*Note: Mr. Holborn is in error in placing the two last in 150: they were earlier than Marcion, and flourished about 110 A. D.*) *All the fathers of the second half of the second century*, such as Theophilus of Antioch (168), Irenaeus of Lyons (177), Clement of Alexandria (200), and Tertullian of Carthage (200), shew the epistles to have been in use in all the churches. *The Syrian and Old Latin versions*, made toward the end of the century, contain translations from a much older Greek text of these epistles. This external evidence is stronger than that for any work of pagan antiquity. Evidence of the same kind exists for the other books of the New Testament, part of which will appear in the chapter on The Canon.

C. The Gospels and other Books of the New Testament. 1. *Are attested by the Epistles, the authenticity and genuineness of which have been established.* a. They have already proved the veracity of the Acts of the Apostles. b. Their style, idioms, arguments, and illustrations constitute a test of other epistles ascribed to Paul. c. They do not quote the Gospels, because these were not then written, but they refer incidentally to the main facts of Christ's history. Descent from David (Rom. 1: 3). Born of human mother, yet Son of God (Gal. 4: 4; Rom. 1: 4). Had human brothers (1 Cor. 9: 5). (*Note: These were only brothers by Jewish law.*) Led a life of self-denial, humiliation, poverty and persecution (Rom. 15: 3; 2 Cor. 8: 9). Conformed to laws of Moses (Rom. 15: 8). Had 12 disciples called apostles (Gal. 1: 17; 1 Cor. 15: 5, 7); to whom He gave power to work miracles (comp. 2 Cor. 12: 12 with Luke 9: 1, 2, and Mark 16: 14-18); of whom James, Cephas, and John were prominent (Gal. 2: 9); and Cephas called Peter was married, (comp. Gal. 2: 8-10, 1 Cor. 9: 5 with Mark 1: 30). Christ on night of betrayal instituted Lord's Supper with words of evangelists (1 Cor. 11: 23-25); was crucified and His death a ransom for many (Rom. 5: 6-8, Gal. 2: 20, &c., &c.); was buried, rose the third day, and was seen by apostles and other disciples living when Paul wrote (1 Cor. 15: 4-6); ascended to heaven (Rom. 8: 34); and was believed by early church to rule with all power according to His word in the Gospels (1 Cor. 15: 25). The main facts of Gospel history are thus certified by a contemporary living on the spot within thirty years of the crucifixion. The opponents of the Gospels admit the genuineness of the four epistles, but they attest the veracity of the gospel narrative, hence the supernatural events of the gospel are worthy of credit.

2. *Have internal evidence little inferior to that for the Pauline Epistles.* They have their undesigned coincidences. Though generally agreeing, they exhibit many small differences and apparent contradictions, which prove their independence. A comparison of their contents with the statements of non-Christian writers verifies many allusions to persons, places and events in Palestine. The simplicity, graphic description, and circumstantiality of their narratives indicate the information of eye-witnesses. They are quite unlike the fictions of a crude and unliterary age.

3. *Have external evidence as valuable:* of which a few examples. *Papias of Hierapolis*, a disciple of John, collected the oral traditions of the discourses and deeds of Jesus, and says that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew and that Mark's was that of Peter. *Justin Martyr*, a native of Samaria, martyred at Rome in 166, in his Apology to the emperor, Marcus Aurelius,

refers to the celebration of the Lord's Supper according to the Gospels, and states that these were read in Christian assemblies together with the Old Testament Scriptures. *Irenaeus of Lyons*, repeats the language of Papias in regard to the gospels of Matthew and Mark, and adds that Luke's was that of Paul, while, last of all, John put forth his in Ephesus. *In answer to objections that few writers in the early part of the second century quote the Gospels*, it may be said: 1. Some slight references between Papias and Irenaeus have been passed over. 2. The number of Christian writers in that period was small, and the works of some, such as the Apology of Aristides, and the Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve, which speaks of the Gospels, have only recently come to light. 3. Copies had to be made by hand. 4. Facilities for communication among churches not organized into one body were imperfect. But to say the Gospels were not written till the middle of the second century is quite inconsistent with the fact of their universal recognition in the end of it.

4. *Have important negative evidence.* Sceptics confuse the real Gospels with the apocryphal ones of Thomas, Nicodemus, The Infancy, &c., compiled from tradition, myth, and imagination. Simple comparison show up their pretentious style, silly stories, immoral miracles, contradictions of fact, and non-Christlike character. They are unworthy to compare with the genuine in any feature.

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT. Mr. Holborn regards the strongest evidence for the trustworthiness and divine authority of the O. T. books to be their acceptance by Christ and the writers of the New Testament; yet he glances at their evidence. He allows that the antiquity of the books, the long period which their joint production covers, and the almost total absence of contemporary Jewish records, makes their cases more difficult than that of the N. T. books. But he finds **Internal Evidence** in the comparison of books covering the same ground, and in undesigned coincidences between the Psalms and the Prophets on the one hand, and the historical books on the other. He finds **External Evidence** in eastern traditions and in the widely diffused story of a deluge; in Egyptian testimony to Israel's bondage; in the Assyrian inscriptions of Sennacherib and others who mention kings of Israel and Judah; in the Arch of Titus at Rome commemorating the taking of Jerusalem; in the Septuagint or Greek version of the O. T. made at Alexandria in the third century B. C.; and in the Jewish history of Josephus of the first Christian century which closely follows the O. T. and cites its books by name.

Testimony of the New Testament to the Old. 1. Jesus Christ quotes or refers to the contents of the following books, as in the very partial references given: Genesis-Matt. 19: 4, 5. Exodus-Matt. 15: 4. Leviticus-Matt. 22: 39. Deuteronomy-Matt. 4: 4, 7, 10. 1 Samuel-Mark 2: 26. 1 Kings-Luke 4: 25, 26. 2 Kings-Luke 4: 27. 2 Chronicles-Matt. 23: 35. Psalms-Luke 20: 42. Proverbs-Luke 14: 8-10. Isaiah-Luke 4: 17-19. Jeremiah-Matt. 21: 13. Daniel-Mark 13: 14. Hosea-Matt. 12: 7. Jonah-Luke 11: 30-32. Micah-Matt. 10: 35. Zechariah-Matt. 21: 4, 5. Malachi-Matt. 11: 10.

2. The evangelists and apostles add the following books: Numbers-1 Cor. 10: 6-9. Joshua-Heb. 11: 30, 31. Judges-Heb. 11: 32. Ruth-Matt. 1: 5. Job-James 5: 11. Ezekiel-Rev. 22: 2. Haggai-Heb. 12: 26. Habakkuk-Rom. 1: 17. Joel-Acts 2: 16, 17. Amos-Acts 7: 42, 43.

3. Remarks. *a.* Thirty out of thirty-nine O. T. books are referred to as of divine origin and recognized authority. *b.* Christ associates Moses with the Pentateuch, and David with the Psalms, but does not say that either wrote all of the books counted to them popularly. Authors' names are rarely mentioned in quotation, the formula being "It is written," or "The Scripture saith." *c.* Prior to the time of Christ the O. T. books had been collected into a canon, with trifling and doubtful exception such as we have it. Christ's Bible, consisting of the Law, the Prophets, and the Sacred Writings, or Psalms, is our Old Testament.

d. Rev. Dr. Stanley Leathes regards the interdependence of the O. T. and the New as a unique phenomenon in the world's literature.

(To be continued.)