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# THE TEACHERS MONTHLY

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Sabbath School Publications  
Presbyterian Church in Canada

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser  
Editor & Business Manager  
Confederation Life Building Toronto

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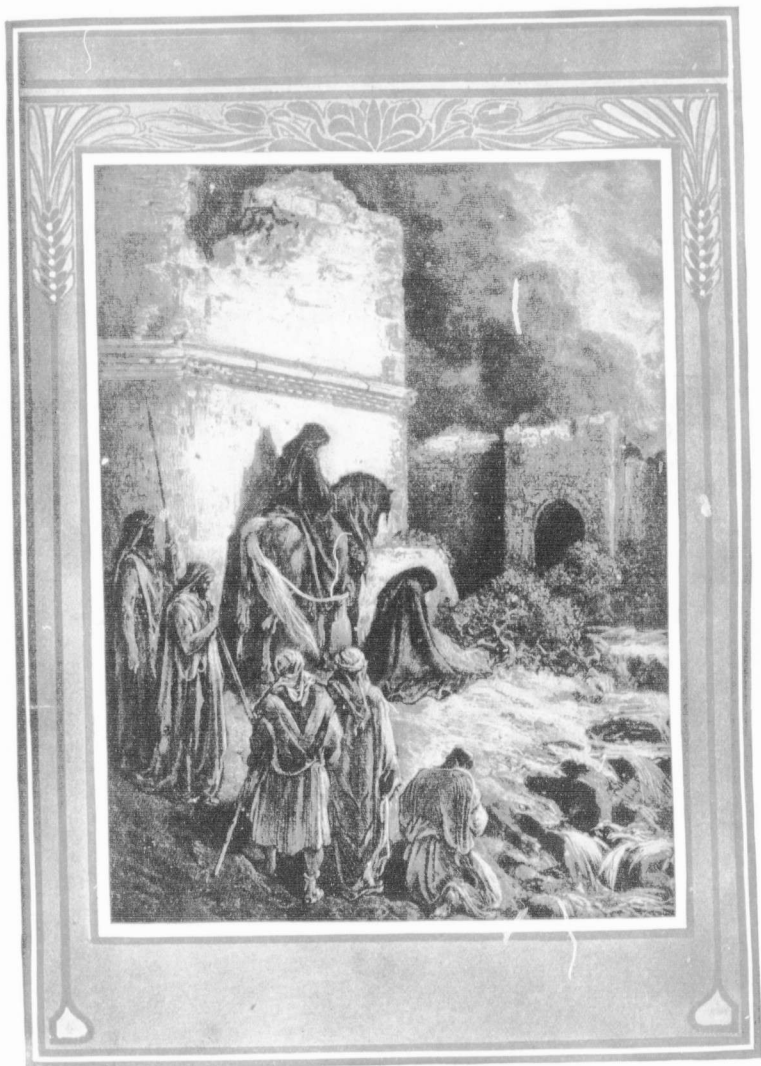
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Ed.

Here are four pages, two at the front and two at the back, which it is worth your while to read carefully. They concern our plans for 1906. These include something even "better than has been" for each of our nine Lesson Helps and Illustrated Papers, and still greater completeness in our lines of Sabbath School supplies.

THE TEACHERS MONTHLY for 1906 will have a specially strong list of writers. The Lessons are in the Gospels. Rev. Principal Falconer, of Halifax, will provide the Exposition; Rev. Clarence Mackinnon and Rev. J. W. Macmillan, of Winnipeg, the Application; Rev. John H. MacVicar, of Fergus, Ont., For Teachers of the Older Scholars; Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, For Teachers of the Boys and Girls; Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont., For Teachers of the Little Ones; and Rev. J. M. Duncan, Lesson Points, From the Library, The Catechism, and the Blackboard Review. The Editors believe that it would be difficult to find in any Sunday School magazine a more efficient staff of writers—each one an expert in his or her field—than they have called to their aid as mentioned above.

We are arranging for an Exposition of the Question on Missions each week—facts and figures and other material, which will help teachers and superintendents to explain the Missionary Question to the scholars. It ought to prove of much value as an aid in interesting the school in missionary work.

There will be about 120 pages in the year devoted to editorial and contributed articles outside the Lesson material. Three special SERIES of articles may be mentioned, namely, on The Teacher and The Poets; on The Geography of a Place as it Affects its History—illustrated from Bible places; and on The Evangelistic Side of Sabbath School Work; not to speak of a long list of articles now under way on the various problems of the pupil, the teacher, the superintendent, the officers, and on Sabbath School work in its wider denominational and inter-denominational ranges.

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TEACHERS MONTHLY, 50c. a year, two or more to one address; single copies 60c.

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# The Teachers Monthly

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A., Editor  
Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Associate Editor

Vol. XI.

October, 1905

No. 10

*Ed.*  
It is not too soon to think of supplies for 1906. Make up your list early. Send it in promptly, and there will be no trouble. Delay is unwise. Our invariable rule is to dispose of every order on the day on which it arrives; but towards the Christmas and New Year's seasons, the mails are very much crowded. Order early, and you will be safe.

*Ed.*  
The readers of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY will not fail to notice that this is a 64-page number, just double the size of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY to which they were once accustomed. The pages now never run less than 48; often 52 to 56; sometimes, as in this issue, 64. Every word of the supplement which is contained in the first two and last two pages should be read. It refers to our work and plans for 1906. We are laying ourselves out to serve our constituency even better than before, both as regards Lesson Helps and Illustrated Papers.

*Ed.*  
Children's Day of 1905 is past. Your school observed it. Have you made the returns of collections to the Treasurer, Rev. Dr. Robert H. Warden, Toronto? If not, it would be well to do so at once. The fund is one of the most useful of the church funds. It is by means of it that the general administration of Sabbath School work is done, including the support of the newly-appointed General Secretary for Sabbath Schools. It gives aid to new and needy schools to procure Lesson Helps and Papers, when otherwise they could not get them. This is true both of French and English schools. What remains after these expenditures, is divided among the missionary Schemes of the church.

Machinery without power is only in the way. The chief need of the Sabbath School is not better organization, but more of the blessed, mighty Spirit of God. The great aim of the Sabbath School is, not merely to teach, but to teach in order that it may win; and to win in order that those won may serve. The teacher's great object, then, is to reach the scholar's conscience and heart, that he may be brought to know Christ, to confess Christ, to serve Christ.

*Ed.*  
It is a mistake to suppose that power may dispense with machinery. God works in an orderly way, works through our skill and care, and the more perfect the teacher's preparation of the lesson, and the more complete the organization of the school, the more readily will the Spirit of God find access to the hearts of the scholars.

## "Must"

By Rev. J. W. Macmillan, B.A.

There are two classes of necessities in human experience, those which are the portion and lot of an unfortunate race, and those which are the imperative choice of each individual's free will. There is a "must" of fate, which all have to endure. And there is a "must" of purpose, which each man feels that he has to do. The former is appointed to man, as are his birth, death, or judgment. The latter he appoints to himself, as the experience he holds to be supremely desirable.

You can tell one man from another by the thing which he feels he *must* do. One *must* be amused, all serious things *must*

clear the track for fun. Another *must* have money, he goes away sorrowful from the high summons to lowly service, for he loves great possessions. Another *must* speak the truth; it may indeed be awkward, but he does not figure the result in his calculation; he cannot have one story in his heart and another upon his lips.

Most of us cheer ourselves with hope, even in the most critical and calamitous times. We imagine relief in the unknown, and weave visions of delight out of the vain fabric of our wishes. We say, "It is better farther on." When Napoleon crossed the Alps, or marshalled his legions on the pestilential shores of Syria, or planned the attack at Waterloo, he was sustained by the hope of glorious victory. He did not say to himself, "Soon all these brave fellows will be scattered or slain, my throne, overturned, and myself a captive!" But there have been times when men knew that it was worse farther on, and yet advanced. John the Baptist said, "I must decrease," and still preached his gospel of wrath to come. Jesus said, "The Son of Man must be put to death," and set his face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem.

It is false to say that Christianity does not count the cost. It is never reckless, but knows and accepts. Our Lord did not say, "I will do what is right, and never mind the consequences." He said, "I know the consequences, and I will do what is right."

Do not think, however, that the "must" which admits that the end of striving is the gloom of apparent defeat, is uttered with a sigh. It comes from a breast which is commanded by an imperative, not forced by an inevitable. Jesus went to His death like a soldier who broke down the enemy's walls even as he sank in blood, not like a felon who is led with pinioned arms to a scaffold.

There is an ardor and exultation in the acceptance of crushing imperatives which goes far to help us bear them. Sorrow carries its own distinction, and creates its own dignity. Duty calls her children with a voice loud as a trumpet, and sweet as a silver bell. A martyr generally sings at the stake. Men have never liked their religion diluted.

When the way of life is made broad and easy, the multitude scorn it. They know right well that no primrose path of dalliance leadeth unto life, but straight is its gate and narrow is its way.

It is the pettiness of our lives that afflicts us. In greatly living we shall find relief from fret. A noble purpose refuses to dwell with beggarly discontent. On the red cross shield of faith, the blazonry and the device of which advertises you to the world, let the apostles' heroic declaration be written clear and large, "We must obey God rather than men."

Winnipeg

### Safe 'in Saving

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

It is a natural impulse that sends the saved man to save others. John and Andrew no sooner find the Saviour themselves than they seek their brethren and bring them to Him. The woman of Samaria, having heard of the water of life from the wonderful Stranger, goes immediately to tell her fellow-countrymen. Saul of Tarsus, brought into the blessed freedom of the gospel, is driven forth to proclaim this glorious liberty to the whole world.

It is in saving others that we are safest ourselves. For one thing, temptations lose their power when we work for the salvation of others. "Clad with zeal as a cloke," writes the glowing Isaiah. Zeal for the highest good of others is like a fiery vesture wrapping us round and forming a sure defence against the attacking hosts of evil. Workers for the Master go down into the slums of large cities, where there is vileness unspeakable, and are kept pure by their great yearning to uplift the fallen. Foreign missionaries live in an atmosphere reeking with impurity. It is due largely to their high and noble purpose that they escape moral contagion. The teacher, instructing others in gospel truth, is, by that very process, safeguarded against doubt and confirmed in his faith.

A burning desire to save others is, moreover, a mighty incentive to the cultivation of all the Christian virtues. Example, we know, is of more value than precept. Our life has

more influence than our words. The eloquence of good deeds is more persuasive than any utterances of the lips. We shall draw men to the Saviour by showing them His likeness in ourselves, more powerfully than by anything we can say to them about Him. We want to make others pure—then we shall be pure ourselves. To make them kind—then we shall ourselves show kindness; truthful—then truth will shine out in all our words and deeds.

Christ, our highest Example, came into the world with the supreme purpose of being a Saviour. And because of this purpose He was safe. It was an impenetrable armor, against which the arrows of temptation fell harmless. It was an overmastering motive drawing Him on in the path of obedience to the Father's will—unhesitating, unafraid. And, like Him, we shall be safe in saving.

Toronto

#### All-round Addition

*By Rev. Henry Dickie, M.A.*

To grow a well-rounded, symmetrical Christian character is no easy task. It calls for life-long diligence and painstaking care. Peter makes this very clear when he says, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

The word *epichoregoe* here used and translated "add" in the Authorized Version, is well worth noting. It refers to a choir of well-trained singers. In Greek-speaking countries, in the Apostle's day, at the great national festivals, there were contests in music, as well as in athletics, oratory, etc. And we can readily understand the painstaking work the leader or *choragus* would bestow on a choir enlisted for such an occasion, in order to bring it to the degree of perfection that would entitle it to the first prize.

This brings home to the Christian the nature of the task to which he is called. It is no less than the training of a choir, a choir in which there are, or should be, seven parts, namely, virtue, knowledge, temperance,

patience, godliness, brotherly love and love. And just as the old *choragus* neglected no part of the choir under his tuition, but diligently strove to perfect every part in harmony with the rest, so should the Christian, in the development of his character, neglect none of these graces or virtues, but diligently seek to bring them all out, that he might present to the world a well-rounded and thoroughly symmetrical life.

The average Christian, we fear, gives far too little thought to this all-round addition in character-building. He grows up at random, and the result is a lop-sided character. What, undoubtedly, is needed, is more of that effort and painstaking diligence in the development of character, which the old *choragus* displayed in the training of his choir for a great musical performance. We see clearly enough, that in his case one bad voice would ruin the effect of the whole choir; but do we realise in regard to ourselves, that the failure to bring out one of these graces in our life may spoil the whole life?

There is a singular charm in the singing of a well-trained choir, where part blends with part in sweetest melody; and is there not also something wonderfully fascinating to the world about a symmetrical Christian life? The music that goes out from such a life, beyond contradiction has an irresistible attractiveness. And whenever each Christian shall be seen presenting to the world a life like that, then will Christianity make the progress in the world that it ought to make.

Toronto

#### Life's Half-done Things

*By Rev. W. H. Sedgwick, M.A.*

What a long list it is! The shadow of the undone falls darkly across our life: we have omitted many things that we ought to have done. In our life, too, is the stain of things done; we have done many things that we ought not to have done. We are distressed by the remembrance both of the word spoken and the word unspoken, the letter written and the letter unwritten, the inspiration obeyed and the inspiration disobeyed. But there is something beside all this,—life's half-

done things. The Master of all good workmen writes across our achievements,—“I have found no works of thine perfected before my God.”

God's work is perfect. You cannot paint the lily. Having begun a good work, God will perform it. Perfection is the hall-mark of His handiwork. But the world of man is the world of things unrealized. Life is full of half-done things. How account for it?

First, there is the limitation of human power. It is given to all of us to see how our day's work ought to be done. Our visions come to us, and they beckon us on. But how different the actual achievement! Beethoven's polished symphony is but an empty echo of the heavenly music he heard in his dream. There is always a sadness at the heart of success. To have done anything in the way which men call successful, is only to see more vividly how imperfect one's work remains. Because human power is limited, the true workman's ideal always outruns his actual.

Secondly, there is the limitation of time. Sir Walter Scott's last entry in his Journal reads: “We slept reasonably, but on the next morning—.” Thus death breaks off the sentence of man's career. Even those who live longest and work hardest are not able to round out all their projects. And so many are taken away while they are still attaining. For so many the sun goes down while yet it is mid-day. They live long enough to give large promise, and then their light goes out. We dare not say that their life-work was half-done, since “in short measures life may perfect be.” But their passing swells the tale of earth's half-done things. Heaven's perfect round may explain, but it does not remove, earth's broken arc.

Thirdly,—and it is this that we ought most seriously to lay to heart—there is the limitation of effort. It is not that our powers are limited, but we do not use to the uttermost the powers we have. It is not that our days are few, but we do not fill out with earnest effort the days we have. Because of this, our life is darkened and disfigured with half-done things. Often it is the lack of will to do things well, often it is the lack of perseverance, that leaves our task only half-advanced towards perfection. If only we would do with

our might what our hands find to do, do it in a way to satisfy our sense of how it ought to be done, there would be far less of the half-done in our life. It is no blame to a man, that after he has done his best, he is still far below the ideal which was in his mind. It is no blame to a man, that, as he bent all his energies to his day's task, his sun went down, leaving his task only half-completed. “Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing.” But it is to a man's shame that he has ever done less than his best. A man is to be blamed whose lack of will and lazy compliance with low standards leaves his life disfigured with things half-done.

Charlottetown, P. E. I.

### Equipped for Service

*By Rev. George Yule, M. A.*

God's service is a varied one; and God's servants are so fitted as to meet the requirements of their many-sided work. Each according to the measure of his gift must serve his fellows and be a channel of blessing to the world. Let no one then withhold his special faculty, for it is God's gift to the church.

There is, for example, the gift of speech—a very necessary gift for one whose office is to teach. We may not be eloquent. Few are. But we can give utterance to what is in our mind in a clear, concise way. In ordinary conversation we have no difficulty in expressing ourselves. What more is required in the class? What the boys and girls need are simple thoughts clearly expressed to help them to live aright. Then do not get discouraged, and say with one of old, “O my Lord, I am not eloquent.” It is possible to overestimate the value of human eloquence. At the right moment will come the Divine reply, “I will be with thy mouth.”

Again, there is the gift of writing. Have we got it? Are we able to put down our thoughts brightly on paper? Some have this gift to no ordinary degree, and use it too. We feel that their letters are almost better than themselves. If God has conferred this gift upon us, even in a feeble degree, let us use it for Him. Let us not be unnatural, forcing the pen to write what never really

sprang out of an honest heart; but let us not waste on trivialities what might bless and cheer many of those around us. Is there not a door of opportunity set open before us here? If wisely exercised, may not the use of this gift be productive of lasting good? The very fact that we take the pains to write them, convinces our scholars that our interest in them is more than official.

Once more, there is the gift of influence. This gift we certainly have, for "no man liveth to himself." For good or for evil we cast the shadow of our influence over those

with whom we come in contact. If we would do any good when we come to our class on Sabbath, we must bring to our work, not merely a prepared and well furnished mind, but also a living embodiment of the principles which we endeavor to teach. Our example will speak louder than our words. Let us remember that our gifts are not the measure of our real power, but in proportion as we have in reality the presence of God within us, there goes forth from us a silent, yet prevailing influence.

Springville, Ont.

## What Some Others are Doing

### Teacher Training in Ontario

A representative of the TEACHERS MONTHLY had the pleasure very recently of a chat with Mr. E. A. Hardy, the Teacher Training Secretary of the Ontario Sabbath School Association in regard to that most important branch of the Sabbath School work. Mr. Hardy is a Collegiate Institute teacher of long experience, and has been no for more than a year devoting himself heart and soul to the promotion of Sabbath School Teacher Training in connection with the Provincial Association.

When asked as to the need of teacher training, he replied: "The need of teacher training lies in these facts, the inestimable importance of the Sunday School teacher's work, the brief time each Sunday he has with his class, the few years his class is with him, and the peculiar value of childhood and adolescence for spiritual impression and direction."

"Of what advantage is the training to the teacher himself?"

"The advantage of the training, so far as the teacher is concerned, is, that it saves him time in the preparation of his lessons, gives him command over his lessons, his class, and himself, and fits him to utilize every precious moment for his class."

"What is the advantage to the class, of the trained teacher?"

"To the class, the obvious advantages are, better and larger knowledge, and the possibility of being held longer in the Sunday

School, especially the big boys, who, by the very force of this added power in the teacher, are in many cases permanently attached to the school."

"What is the readiest way to get at teacher training in the way of organizing classes?"

"Write the denominational Sabbath School Secretary:—in the case of your church, the Rev. J. C. Robertson, Confederation Life Building, Toronto—for Announcements explaining the course, examinations, diplomas, etc; or in case of union classes, write the Secretary or Teacher Training Secretary of the Provincial Association. In towns and villages, a union class of workers from all of the schools has been frequently found helpful, securing enthusiasm of numbers, and distributing the burden among the various pastors and workers. In most districts a good plan is for the class to meet at the homes of the members."

"What about the possibility of utilizing the Bible Class for teacher training purposes?"

"Every Sunday School of any size ought to have a class taking the Teacher Training Course along with the International Lesson or in the place of the International Lesson; that is, studying it on Sunday as part of the regular Sunday School work."

"What has been done in the Province of Ontario in the way of teacher training, that is, in connection with the Provincial Association?"

Mr. Hardy replied, "I have visited 34

counties up to August 1st, and expect to be in at least four more by the time of the Provincial Convention in London in October. There are enrolled on my list more than 40 classes, with over 700 students. We have given 27 examinations to 90 students (as you know, we gave examinations every month to any classes or private students on any subject of the course). These figures indicate only the beginnings of things, and we expect a great increase in the coming fall and winter. I have been able to hold three Institutes of three days each, and hope during the next year to give a large part of my time to Institute work."

"What about the outlook for teacher training?"

The outlook is most encouraging. There is great interest, denominational, Provincial, international. The appointment of your Mr. Robertson will prove a great uplift, not only to Presbyterian Schools, but to our undenominational work. There is the greatest harmony and spirit of co-operation between the provincial work and that of the churches, and we are always glad to be of service to the work of the denominations."

### The Work in Prince Edward Island

By Rev. A. D. Archibald, M.A.

Secretary, P. E. Island S.S. Association

[This is the first of a series of articles on the most marked or promising feature of work of the various Provincial S.S. Associations.—  
EDITORS.]

From the standpoint of organized Association work, the most promising feature of our work in Prince Edward Island is, that a small Province, with only 210 schools, has for the past three and a half years been able to keep a paid worker in the field all the time. This undertaking, which is certainly a heavy one, has been supported largely from the start by the generous gifts of interested friends. Now, the schools are taking hold of the finances and are trying systematically to raise the amount needed. They of course still receive help from friends, but the schools themselves are supporting it more directly. This could not be done, were it not for the fact that some of the

teachers are thoroughly interested in the work and are receiving benefit from it.

It is possible to come into closer touch with the teachers here than in some of the larger Provinces. Two Conventions are held each year in each of our fifteen districts, and as many other meetings as can be arranged. Our Conventions are taking on more and more the features of Institute work. Teacher training is emphasized, and definite instructions in teaching given. Simple lessons in mind study are given, and the teachers are shown how to present a lesson so that it will appeal most effectively to the intellect, feelings and will of the scholar. Teaching principles and laws are also given in a practical way, illustrated by actual lessons taught.

With us, as in other places, some of the most earnest teachers have had few educational advantages. They, with others, complain that they find it hard to use their Lesson Helps as they should, in the preparation of the lesson. It is a well known fact that frequently the Helps are abused; but this is because the teachers have never been taught how to use them. We are trying to demonstrate their rational use. We believe this is a very practical matter, and we find it is appreciated by the teachers. For some of them a regular teacher training course is a little heavy at the start. Help in the actual preparation of the lesson seems of more immediate value, and they can grasp this. It serves as a starting point, and we hope to lead them on till they are ready to take a complete course of study.

The aim is to get the teachers dissatisfied with inferior ways of doing their work, and to stimulate them to better things. We endeavor to do this by showing them the better way. Some of our workers respond very well, and they are the ones who reap the benefit. In the comparatively short time our Association has been at work, enough has been done to encourage us. We do not expect perfection in a day: work of this kind moves slowly. A good beginning has been made, and we believe our schools will not be satisfied until they have teachers who are thoroughly equipped.

Summerside, P.E.I.

# Our Own Sabbath School Work

## A Look Forward

By *Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D.*

General Secretary for Sabbath Schools

We have a goodly heritage in our Sabbath School equipment. Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors. But just because so much has been done, there remains so much the more for us to do. Certain definite lines of action have been entered upon in the past, and we must follow these up to their natural conclusion, if we would secure the full benefits from the faithful work already accomplished.

Take for example one of the most important departments of our Sabbath School work, that of Teacher Training (and the illustration will hold equally good in any other department). Here, a very clearly defined course of action has been consistently followed for several years, and as a result we now have an admirable course in Teacher Training provided for our use, and easily within the reach of all. That much has been done, and well done. But for us, today, this brings with it the responsibility of using the course to the best possible advantage. We must take it up with all the enthusiasm which it so well deserves, and with the fixed resolve that we will not rest satisfied until every teacher, actual and prospective, in every school under the care of our church shall have become thoroughly familiar with the contents of the books of the course. This will take time, and much patient, faithful labor on the part of the leaders, but where could time and labor be given with better prospects of good and lasting results?

Nor let us suppose that the task is an impossible one. If we will all work together,—teachers, superintendents and pastors,—with the Committees of Presbyteries, Synods and the General Assembly, the result is easily within reach.

This, again, suggests another open door for advance. These various Committees are all well organized. That much has been done gradually, as the needs arose in different

ways in the past. But, the contact between the Committees, and more especially between the Committees and the Sabbath School, has not always been as close as it might be.

With our work extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it is of vital importance that there should be the closest possible bond of union between Schools, Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly, so that our vast extent of territory may be to us a source of strength, and not a weakness.

Enough has already been done along this line to reveal the greater possibilities for the future. Presbyterian and Synodical Institutes and Conferences have been held at different centres, bringing the Sabbath School work more closely into touch with the other departments of the church's activity. The Summer Schools in the Maritime Provinces have had their chief value in this very thing, that a living bond of union has been formed between Schools, Presbyteries and Synod, and that the Sabbath School, Church, and Theological College have been linked together as never before in their history.

Toronto

## A Look Chiefly Backward

By *Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A.*

The Sabbath School work of our church enters on a new phase by the appointment of a General Secretary for Sabbath Schools. Hitherto its administration has been in the hands of voluntary workers. Now, there will be a permanent officer, whose study and life work will be the promotion of the Sabbath School cause among us.

The vastness and variety of the issues at stake fully justify this new step. As far back as the year 1876 there was a call for such an appointment; but our church is slow to multiply its officers: sometimes, indeed, it allows important interests to suffer by reason of this slowness. But the work had grown so great—over 3000 schools, with well over 200,000 teachers, officers and scholars—and the special questions requiring

observation and action, such as Teacher Training, Supplemental Lessons, Missions in the Sabbath School, had become so urgent; that the appointment could no longer be delayed. The church is to be congratulated on having now one whose hands will be free to attend to this increasingly important section of its work.

There have been

#### SOME NOTABLE CONVENERS

of the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee. The first Convener after the union of the churches in 1875 was the Rev. Dr. John Thompson, of Sarina. His initial report on the state of the schools is a characteristically comprehensive, careful, statesman-like document. The questions that are acute still were discussed in those early days, such as, how to secure qualified teachers, and how to interest the scholars in the Schemes of the church. Indeed, the Assembly of 1876 recommended the forming of missionary Associations in connection with the schools, to increase the knowledge of missions and the contributions to them. The International Lessons, then but lately introduced, had come to be well nigh universal in the schools, and the report goes on to say that "many of our most prominent church members,—judges, lawyers, senators, members of parliament, professors, doctors, and editors, are found among the great band of instructors."

Rev. John McEwen, then of Ingersoll, appears as Convener in 1877, and as might be expected, the question of Teacher Training comes into immediate prominence. Mr. McEwen was a man of enthusiasms, but of enthusiasms tempered by wisdom. The impulse he gave, more than a quarter of a century ago, to the Sunday School work is not the least element in its present advanced condition. The Assembly recommended the establishing of Institutes or Normal Schools "in our cities and towns, and wherever they can be conducted with efficiency." The modest suggestion was also made, which the Colleges "in our cities and towns, and wherever they can be conducted with efficiency." The modest suggestion was also made, which the Colleges "in our cities and towns, and wherever they can be conducted with efficiency." The modest suggestion was also made, which the Colleges "in our cities and towns, and wherever they can be conducted with efficiency."

College course, "so that the Colleges might not only give out able preachers, but efficient teachers, as well."

It is rather surprising to find, as far back as 1880, a resolution from the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, asking for a course of Supplemental Lessons. The weak point in the International Series of Lessons had already become apparent—that it does not sufficiently provide for the systematic study of the Bible, or for the important work of memorization. It took twenty-five years for the Supplemental Lessons to arrive; but they are here to stay.

#### A TEACHER TRAINING COURSE

took shape, and in 1881 the Assembly Minutes give a list of Examination Questions on the life of Moses, and on the first 28 Questions of the Shorter Catechism, with the names of the successful candidates. These examinations seem to have soon died away.

In 1881, Rev. Allan Simpson, of Halifax, was associated with Mr. McEwen as Convener and became sole Convener in 1882. In 1885, 6, Rev. Dr. Jardine, of Brockville, was Convener, and in 1887, 8, Rev. James Fleck, of Montreal. Normal Classes and giving to missions were still urgent questions. In 1884 the Committee had recommended the issuing of a periodical, but the Assembly's mind was not clear. Indeed, in the year following, it expresses satisfaction with an "admirable series of Lesson Helps" from abroad, and with "the interesting children's papers supplied by enterprising publishers in great profusion." While the Assembly was thus halting, Rev. E. Scott, then of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, started *The Children's Record*, a capital little Monthly, on his own responsibility. It attained a large circulation. In 1890 Mr. Scott handed it over to the church, and Rev. W. R. Cruickshank, of Montreal, was appointed editor. The following year it was again placed in charge of Mr. Scott, who had meanwhile been appointed editor of the *Presbyterian Record*. In 1900 it was merged in *THE KING'S OWN*.

It would appear that some Presbyteries were allowing the matter of Sabbath Schools to go by default; for in 1886 the Assembly instructs them to appoint standing committees on this subject, and to report their



schools regularly on the proper forms. In the Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery holds the key to every situation. There is no more important step than to get the Presbytery interested in any question; and, in regard to the matter in hand, is there any more important task to which Presbyteries may devote their energies than to this same work of training the young?

In 1889 the question of a General Secretary was again up, and the first steps were taken towards the establishment of the scheme for

#### HIGHER RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

This was modeled somewhat on the lines of the work in the Scottish churches. It was a good Scheme, and gave a decided and abiding stimulus to Bible study and to better teaching. That it was abandoned at last was, perhaps, as much because there was no one free to give the time necessary for its administration, as for any other cause. Possibly also, it aimed at too many things. At any rate, the experiment paved the way for the present Supplemental and Teacher Training Courses.

The chief mover in Higher Religious Instruction was Rev. Dr. Fotheringham, of St. John, who had been appointed Convener in 1889, and who became a very notable worker in the Sabbath School field. A man of exact method, intense energy, and inventive mind, Dr. Fotheringham was not only far-sighted enough to discern that the church needed a series of Lesson Helps and Illustrated Papers of its own—alive with the spirit of our own church and of our own national ideals—but he also took steps to give form to the enterprise. THE TEACHERS MONTHLY, the QUARTERLIES, the LEAFLETS, for some years were almost entirely the work of this enthusiastic Convener's own hand. The Committee on Sabbath School Publications, on its appointment in 1898, entered on a field already surveyed and partly taken possession of by the efforts of this pioneer workman. They have now fair possession of the whole field, and have been able to render essential aid in the general cause. In its preliminary stages, for example, the Teacher Training work was made possible by the use of the pages of THE TEACHERS

MONTHLY, EAST AND WEST and THE KING'S OWN give information on missions that serves as fuel to the fires of missionary zeal. In these, as well as in the direct work of providing material for instruction, the Publications have filled, and are filling, a large place.

Rev. Dr. John Neil, of Toronto, succeeded to the Convener'ship in 1899. Dr. Neil's régime also has become historic.

#### THE GREAT LINES

on which, for years to come, the work is likely to follow, have been clearly laid down,—better Teacher Training; better teaching of the scholars; more, and more systematic, Bible knowledge; more, and wiser, memorising; greater knowledge of missions and more practical work for them; and more earnest and persistent effort to lead the scholars to the confession and service of the very Christ.

Some specially hopeful indications as to the immediate future should be noted. Presbyteries and Synods seem to be waking up. More care is being exercised by these in the appointment of Sabbath School Conveners, in whose hands the responsibility for progress to a very large extent rests. The Presbytery of Montreal has had now for a couple of years a Sabbath School Field Secretary, Mr. G. N. Burnie, a brisk and aggressive young business man, who is giving his whole time to this work. His services are being extended to the other Presbyteries within the Synod. His work has already been productive of much good.

In the Maritime Provinces the special note of progress is in the wonderful success of the Summer Schools. During the season just closed, these were held at four different centres, and must have reached at least a thousand teachers and prospective teachers.

In the West, the Home Mission Superintendents, Dr. Carmichael and Dr. Herdman, are entrusted also with a general care of Sabbath Schools, and report to the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee as well as to the Home Mission Committee. The Synod of British Columbia has been notably alive to the importance of pressing forward in this field of labor.

Provision is now made also in most of our

Theological Colleges for special training of the students in the principles of teaching, as applicable to Sabbath Schools. These are a few of the indications of the general forward movement.

Mr. Robertson, the new Secretary, comes to his duties at an inspiring time. He has a great work before him. The roots out of which the Sabbath School enterprise springs are these three,—instruction, impression, enlistment: instruction in the Word of God and in Christian doctrine; impression, through the great truths of the blessed gospel, that the heart may be won for the Saviour; enlistment, decision for that Christ as Lord and King, and the entering on His service. The home, the Sabbath School, the church, are all at the back of a leader in such a glorious enterprise as this.

Toronto

#### Ed. Our Teacher Training Course

The completion of the series of necessary Handbooks puts the Teacher Training Course in the best possible position for effective work. The examinations are held the first week of May. Papers are given on all the subjects, and any candidate may take any subject or subjects. A certificate is given for successful examination in each subject; and the General Assembly's diploma when all the subjects have been passed. Last year in the department of Scripture 92 passed, 44 of these with honors; in the department of Doctrine 105 passed, 99 of these with honors; in the department of the Art of Teaching 97 passed, 56 of these with honors. Since the organization of the Course three years ago, 33 persons have received diplomas.

#### How a Congregation Became Interested

By Rev. S. Lawrence

The Sabbath School is "not the children's church, nor even the children's school; but the church's school—the place where the whole church meets together to study God's word." The realization of that ideal would solve many of the problems which the church is facing to-day in its life and work. But how to attain it, is the question.

One of the stock phrases of Sabbath School conventions is, "The church in the Sabbath

School, and the Sabbath School in the church." That sounds very fine; but has it ever been attained, as it is generally understood? Everyone knows how little heed parents, and the congregation in general, give to invitations to come to the Sabbath School. It seems impossible to get the church into the school in that sense.

But there are other ways of getting a congregation interested in the Sabbath School and becoming in reality a part of it. In the pastoral charge of which I am minister, we have been following a course for over two years, which has been greatly blessed toward this end.

As to the method followed, in the first place, for the first scripture reading every Sabbath, the Sabbath School Lesson is read, and a five to ten minutes' comment given to it. Last year we followed the plan of taking the Lessons a week ahead. This year we have been reading the Lesson for the day. I think the former is the better plan. Secondly, at the end of each quarter we review the lessons with the whole congregation, the school occupying the front pews. This is made the service for the day. The whole service occupies an hour and a quarter.

As to results, the Session and Sabbath School staff are convinced that the gains have been rich and many:

Firstly, A real identification of the congregation with the Sabbath School, and a growing conviction of its great importance. The church is in the Sabbath School, and as all the children attend service, the Sabbath School is in the church.

Secondly, Greatly increased interest in the Sabbath School by the congregation in general. As evidences of this, the attendance at the review service is as large as at the ordinary service, and in some instances it has been larger; it is a common thing to hear it said, "It is a most profitable service," "One of the best services of the year," "I wish it were review day every Sabbath;" increased contributions through the Sabbath School—more than doubled in two years. The Children's Day Collections last year from the three schools in connection with this charge were over \$60. The congregation here is now, for the first time, paying half the running expenses of the school, so that the scholars may devote

a good part of their contributions to missions. The money must all come from the parents, etc., and when the pocket responds it is one evidence at least that the heart is interested.

Thirdly, More study of the Bible in the home. The knowledge which the children show of the lessons, the fact that at our last review every Lesson Plan was given, and every Golden Text recited without any looking at

Leaflets, goes to prove this. Such proficiency could only have been attained by the help of the parents—parents and children studying the lesson together. This is the best of all—more religious training in the home. Is there anything that is more needed to-day? If a method is helping toward that, it must be pronounced a success.

Cowal, Ont.

### OUR PUBLICATIONS

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### Lesson Calendar: Fourth Quarter

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM ISAIAH TO MALACHI

1. October 1.....Daniel and Belshazzar. Dan. 5 : 17-30.
2. October 8.....Daniel in the Lions' Den. Dan. 6 : 10-23.
3. October 15.....Returning from Captivity. Ezra 1 : 1-11.
4. October 22.....Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra 3 : 10 to 4 : 5.
5. October 29.....Power Through God's Spirit. Zech. 4 : 1-10.
6. November 5.....Esther Pleading for Her People. Esther 4 : 10 to 5 : 3.
7. November 12.....Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. Ezra 8 : 21-32.
8. November 19.....Nehemiah's Prayer. Neh. 1 : 1-11.
9. November 26.....Abstinence for the Sake of Others. 1 Cor. 10 : 23-33.
10. December 3.....Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem. Neh. 4 : 7-20.
11. December 10.....Reading and Obeying the Law. Neh. 8 : 8-18.
12. December 17.....Preparation for the Messiah. Malachi 3 : 1-12.
13. December 24.....The Character of the Messiah. Isa. 9 : 1-7.
14. December 31.....REVIEW.

## \*AN ORDER OF SERVICE: Fourth Quarter

## OPENING EXERCISES

I. SILENCE.

II. THE LORD'S PRAYER (in concert).

III. SINGING. Hymn 438, Book of Praise.  
(It is expected that this hymn from the Supplemental Lessons will be memorized during the Quarter.)

IV. PRAYER.

V. SINGING.

I hear Thy welcome voice  
That calls me, Lord, to Thee,  
For cleansing in Thy precious blood  
That flowed on Calvary.

*I am coming, Lord!  
Coming now to Thee!  
Wash me, cleanse me, in the blood  
That flowed on Calvary.*  
—Hymn 152, Book of Praise

VI. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Psalm 126.  
*Superintendent.* When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

*School.* Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing;

*Superintendent.* Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.

*School.* The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

*Superintendent.* Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.

*School.* They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

*Superintendent.* He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,

*School.* Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,

*Superintendent and School.* Bringing his sheaves with him.

VII. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

VIII. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

IX. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.  
(This Hymn may usually be that marked "FROM THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY.")

## CLASS WORK

[Let this be entirely undisturbed by Secretary's or Librarian's distribution, or otherwise.]

I. ROLL CALL by teacher.

II. OFFERING, which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions from the Supplemental Lessons.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

## CLOSING EXERCISES

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

II. SINGING. Hymn selected.

III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items: Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Question on Missions, Lesson Title, Golden Text, and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review: it should be pointed, brief and bright.)

IV. SINGING.

Simply trusting every day,  
Trusting through a stormy way,  
Even when my faith is small  
Trusting Jesus—that is all.

*Trusting as the moments fly,  
Trusting as the days go by;  
Trusting Him whate'er befall:  
Trusting Jesus—that is all.*

—Hymn 293, Book of Praise

V. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Isaiah 55: 6, 7.

*Superintendent.* Seek ye the Lord while He may be found,

*School.* Call ye upon Him while He is near:  
*Superintendent.* Let the wicked forsake his way,

*School.* And the unrighteous man his thoughts:

*Superintendent.* And let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him;

*School.* And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

VI. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

## Lesson I.

## DANIEL AND BELSHAZZAR

October 1, 1905

Daniel 5 : 17-30. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 29, 30.\* Read chs. 3, 4.

GOLDEN TEXT—The face of the Lord is against them that do evil.—Psalm 34 : 16.

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; <sup>1</sup> yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

18 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father <sup>2</sup> a kingdom, and <sup>3</sup> majesty, and glory, and honour :

19 And <sup>4</sup> for the majesty that he gave him, all <sup>5</sup> people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him ; whom he would he slew ; and whom he would he kept alive ; and whom he would he <sup>6</sup> set up ; and whom he would he put down.

20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his <sup>7</sup> mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him :

21 And he was driven from the sons of men ; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling <sup>8</sup> was with the wild asses ; <sup>9</sup> they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven ; till he knew that the most high God <sup>10</sup> ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he <sup>10</sup> appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this ;

**Revised Version**—<sup>1</sup> nevertheless ; <sup>2</sup> the ; <sup>3</sup> greatness, and glory, and majesty ; <sup>4</sup> because of the greatness ; <sup>5</sup> the peoples ; <sup>6</sup> raised ; <sup>7</sup> spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly ; <sup>8</sup> he was fed with ; <sup>9</sup> rulleth ; <sup>10</sup> setteth up ; <sup>11</sup> before him ; <sup>12</sup> inscribed ; <sup>13</sup> brought it to an end ; <sup>14</sup> purple ; <sup>15</sup> Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

## LESSON PLAN

I. Warnings, 17-23.  
II. Doom, 24-30.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—An impious feast, Dan. 5 : 1-9. T.—Daniel called, Dan. 5 : 10-16. W.—Daniel and Belshazzar, Dan. 5 : 17-30. Th.—The holy vessels, Jer. 52 : 12-19. F.—God forgotten, Luke 12 : 15-21. S.—Herod's punishment, Acts 12 : 18-23. S.—Fate of the wicked, Psalm 37 : 8-22.

**Shorter Catechism**—*Ques.* 96. *What is the Lord's Supper ?* A. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament,

wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

**The Question on Missions**—37. Why are we specially interested in India as a foreign mission field ? Because India has a population of nearly 300,000,000 souls, and three-fifths of these are under British rule, and, therefore, are our fellow-subjects.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 133; 136; 50 (Ps. Sel.); 511 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 148.

23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven ; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them ; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know ; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified :

24 Then was part of the hand sent from <sup>11</sup> him ; and this writing was <sup>12</sup> written.

25 And this is the writing that was <sup>12</sup> written, ME'NE, ME'NE, TE'KEL, UPHARS'IN.

26 This is the interpretation of the thing : ME'NE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and <sup>13</sup> finished it.

27 TE'KEL ; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

28 PE'RES ; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with <sup>14</sup> scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30 In that night <sup>15</sup> was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

## EXPOSITION

By Rev. James Wallace, B.D., Lindsay, Ont.

**Time and Place**—538 B.C.; Babylon ; Euphrates.

**Connecting Links**—Daniel (see Lesson XII., Third Quarter) gave proof of his wisdom by interpreting the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, chs. 2 and 4. After this we lose sight of him for some thirty-five years. The end of the seventy years' captivity (see Jer. 25 : 12 ; 29 : 10) is now drawing near. Belshazzar (see Light from the East) is ruling in Babylon, probably a regent for his father, Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon. At a great feast which he makes to a thousand of his lords, while they are carousing, the fingers of a man's hand appear writing on the wall, vs. 1-5. Belshazzar, greatly startled, calls for the wise men of the kingdom, to explain the

writing (vs. 6, 7); but they are unable to make out the meaning of the strange characters. At the suggestion of the queen mother, who comes in to the feast (vs. 10-12), Daniel is sent for and offered rich gifts, if he will explain to the terrified king the meaning of the writing seen on the wall, vs. 13-16.

## I. The Warnings, 17-23.

V. 17. *Daniel* ; now an old man, at least eighty. *Answered . . . before the king* ; showing due respect to the sovereign, though his character was unworthy of the kingly office. *Let thy gifts be to thyself*. Daniel has grown gray in the service of his adopted country. In any case he needs no reward to induce him to declare the truth. *I will read the writing*.

\*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Lesson Course are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. They will be found in the Supplemental Lesson Leader.

This brave man will speak out God's message, though the king may order his head off. Nor does Daniel boast of a power he does not possess. Before this he had seen the visions of chs. 7, 8.

Vs. 18-21. *The most high God*; whose hand had been felt by Nebuchadnezzar and was soon to be felt by Belshazzar, and before whom all heathen gods were as nothing. *Gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father.* See Light from the East. *His heart was lifted up.* Pride in his vast dominion (v. 19), and refusal to recognize God as the highest Sovereign, had brought Nebuchadnezzar to ruin. *Deposed. . . made like the beasts.* Read the story in ch. 4. How it illustrates Prov. 16 : 18.

Vs. 22, 23\* *Thou. . . O Belshazzar.* He had seen the result of sin in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, but had refused to take warning from it. Now he must himself suffer the punishment of sin. Sin is always the greater where there is full knowledge, Luke 12 : 47 ; James 4 : 17. *Has lifted up thyself*; defying and disobeying the God who had given him his kingdom and power. *Against the Lord of heaven*; whose greatness and purity and goodness and power surround men, as the sky envelops the earth. Belshazzar was guilty of three sins : (1) using the sacred vessels for a secular and base purpose ; (2) idolatry, praising dumb idols ; (3) neglect to render to Jehovah due worship and obedience.

## II. Doom, 24-30.

Vs. 24, 25. *Then was part of the hand sent.* See v. 5. In great mercy God delays the sentence of doom as long as possible, but to those who persist in sin it is sure to come. *This is the writing.* The three words written on the wall were probably the names of three weights. The puzzle lay partly in the form of the writing—an unfamiliar style of letter may have been used, or the words may have been written vertically instead of horizontally,—and partly in the difficulty of seeing any meaning in them when they were read. What could the names of three weights signify ?

Vs. 26-28. *This is the interpretation.* The riddle has a solution, and a terrible one indeed, for the doomed king. *MENE.* This word, besides being the name of a weight, means *numbered.* It is explained as teaching that

God has put a definite limit to the number of years the kingdom should last, and that this period is nearing its end. The repetition of the word in v. 25 denotes certainty. *TEKEL*; meaning *weighed.* As a counterfeit coin when placed in the scales is found to be too light, so Belshazzar's character and conduct, judged by the standard of God's law, were seen to be defective. *PERES*; the singular of "PHAR-SIN" (v. 25), the "U" signifying "and"—its meaning is, *divided.* The use of the plural in v. 25 is as if "peres" were written twice, like "mene," for emphasis. The interpretation has the sharper point because the letters in "peres," as written on the wall, were the same as those for "Persians." The three ideas in vs. 26-28 are : (1) that the time for judgment has arrived ; (2) that Belshazzar is unable to stand the test ; (3) that, this being so, he must suffer the consequences, *Medes and Persians.* The home of the Medes was north and north-east of Babylon, and south-west of the Caspian Sea. In 549 B.C. the Median soldiers deserted to Cyrus the Persian, so that the empire of the Medes passed into the hands of the Persians. The armies of these united nations were even now marching against Babylon.

V. 29. *Clothed Daniel with purple* (Rev. Ver.); the royal color. *A chain of gold*; a symbol of office as well as honor (see the case of Joseph, Gen. 41 : 42). "A golden necklace was worn by Persians of rank also ; and was given sometimes by the Persian kings as a compliment or mark of distinction." (Cambridge Bible.) *Third ruler in the kingdom*; probably next under Belshazzar himself, his father, Nabonidus, being over all. Thus the Persians, when they captured Babylon, found Daniel, not in obscurity, but holding a position of influence as an active statesman, and so able to help his people, the Jews.

V. 30. *In that night.* Swift and certain are the purposes of God. *Belshazzar. . . slain*; by the soldiers of Cyrus' army. "His name meant, 'Bel (a Babylonish deity) preserve thou the king.' But Bel bowed down, and Nebo stooped, and gave no help to their votary." (Expositor's Bible.) While indulging in his presumptuous revelry, Persian soldiery crept into the city through the empty channel of the Euphrates, hurried to the palace, and slew the king.

**Light from the East**

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London, Ont.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR—Was king of Babylon from 604 to 561 B.C. His father, Nabopolassar, had secured the throne in the weak years of Assyria, and married his son to the daughter of the king of the rising Median kingdom. The year before his accession, Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians in a great battle at Carchemish, and made the Babylonian power supreme as far as the border of Egypt; and the king of Judah became his vassal. Under him Zedekiah, after his rebellion and flight, was carried into captivity. He fortified and beautified the city of Babylon until he made it one of the

wonders of the world. He improved the country marvelously, with huge reservoirs for storing water, and canals for irrigation; and the many temples which he built and endowed indicate his strong religious feelings.

BELSHAZZAR—According to the inscriptions and the classic historians, the last king of Babylon, under whom it was taken by Cyrus, was Nabonidus, a usurper who had come to the throne through a revolution. But several tablets mention a son of Nabonidus by the name of Belshazzar, and it is generally supposed that he was acting as regent for his father, who was not in the city when it fell, and that the term "father" when applied to Nebuchadnezzar (v. 18) means "predecessor."

**APPLICATION**

By Rev. Clarence MacKinnon, B.D., Winnipeg

*Let thy gifts be to thyself, and keep thy rewards for another, v. 17.* The judge has a right to his pay, and the minister to his salary.

But the upright judge will reject

**Not For Sale** with hot indignation any offer

of a gift meant to influence his

decision. No amount of money can buy the silence of a true minister when duty requires him to rebuke iniquity. A fair day's pay for an honest day's work—this we can justly claim. But to swerve by a hair's breadth from the straight path of truth and honor—there should not be money enough in the world's mints to induce us to do this.

*The most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, v. 18.* When Gotthold stretched forth his hand to take an apple

**Loaded  
Branches**

from the overladen branch, the very action shook the tree, and several fell, leading the pious man to exclaim, "How like the incomprehensible and unmerited goodness of God, which presents its blessings upon loaded branches." It was with this lavish hand that God had bestowed upon the Babylonian king a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor, albeit the foolish ruler imagined he had achieved all this by the might of his own hand, and returned no thanks to the beneficent Creator. It is from the same divine hand, that men of wealth acquire their means, artists their accomplishments, scholars their talents, politicians their power. Let us be

more forward in our acknowledgment of the source from which they come, and not ungratefully imagine that we could have done anything of ourselves.

*His mind hardened in pride, v. 20.* The Roman poet Lucian tells of a beggar named Simon, who, out of the alms given him, had amassed a little wealth. He

**A Despicable  
Pride**

changed his name to Simonides, to distinguish himself from the numerous other beggars of the old name, and had the house burned in which he was born, so that no one might be able to point to it. He rid himself as completely as possible of all reminders of his dependence on the kindness of others. In his flinty bosom there were no sweet flowers of gratitude to his benefactors, or compassion towards others less fortunate. Oh, the pitiful meanness of pride like this! And what a wretched return we make for the sunshine and showers of divine blessing lavished upon us, if our hearts are like the hard granite rocks, yielding no response of humble, grateful acknowledgment to the Giver of all good.

*They took his glory from him: still he knew that the most high God ruled, vs. 20, 21.* There are many teachers in God's great school of life

**The Great  
Lesson**

Some of them are stern, and give us hard lessons to learn; but they are all kind. And the main thing they teach us is just what Nebuchadnezzar came at last to know, that God

rules among men. This is God's world, and they alone are safe and happy who obey Him. We may dwell behind the walls of His gracious protection, defended by His might, provided for by His loving care. But to open the gates of these walls we must bring the key of lowly, trusting submission to His authority. This will unlock the portals, and admit to the city where there is safety and joy.

*And thou his son, O Belshazzar, v. 22.* Like the searchlight on a modern vessel, darting its rays now this way and now that, revealing the smallest object hidden by the darkness, does the word of God penetrate into our souls, and bring our most secret sins into the open day. And for no one of them is there the least excuse. By teaching and example we have been warned against them. And be sure that it is in mercy that our sins are brought to light. God exposes them that He may remove them. He causes us to see them that we may hate them and forsake them. The moment we do this, the cleansing, joy-giving flood of His pardon flows into our souls. Strip us of wealth, evn of life—sin may do this in our case, as in Belshazzar's, but it can never prevent us from finding forgiveness, which God is ever willing to bestow.

*God . . . hast thou not glorified, v. 23.* During the last few months, Holman Hunt's great

picture, "The Light of the World," has been on exhibition in this country.

**The Claims of Christ** The reproduction of it in our Children's Day Service has carried it into tens of thousands of homes. What a wonderful figure of the Saviour, gleaming lantern in hand, knocking at the closed door. How sad if any who have seen this picture should refuse the Saviour an entrance into their hearts! To admire the skill of a human artist, and refuse due honor and love to the Christ he has portrayed—can worshippers of gods of silver and gold do worse than this?

*Weighed . . . and found wanting, v 27.* Every coin of gold or silver, when it comes out of the mint, is of a certain exact weight, no more, no less. But passing from hand to hand, the coin is worn and becomes lighter, until at last no one will take it at its face value. That light coin is a picture of our lives. In them traffic with the world has worn away truth and purity, so that, weighed in the scales of God's holy law, our whole character is below the standard. Is there, then, no hope for us? Yes, thank God, we have before us the perfect life of Jesus Christ. There is nothing wanting in Him. And for His sake God will accept us, and by His grace we shall win back all that sin has robbed us of.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

By Rev. W. H. Smith, Ph.D., Sydney, N.S.

Get the historical setting. The incident occurred at the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in the closing years of the exile. Much valuable information is found in the testimony of the monuments, inscriptions, and clay cylinders. This should be used, where available, in advanced classes, and compared with the Biblical records.

When Nebuchadnezzar died, Daniel seems to have lost his high office and to have gone into retirement. Nothing is heard of him for about 35 years. When he reappears, he has the same character. Note his fearlessness in declaring what was distasteful to the king.

(Compare Nathan before David (2 Sam. 12 : 1-10); Elijah before Ahab (1 Kgs. 17 : 1); John the Baptist before Herod, Matt. 14 : 4.)

Briefly review the scene in the palace. What was Cyrus doing? What light does it throw on Belshazzar's character to find him in these circumstances? Picture the revelry and drinking. Note the use of the sacred vessels, at the king's bidding, in the worship of idols (compare vs. 2-4 and 22, 23). Picture the handwriting on the wall (v. 5), and the effect on the king, vs. 6-8. Why such an effect? Note the failure of the wise men to interpret it, and the calling of Daniel, vs. 10-16. Have the class see the situation, and then turn to the lesson.

1. *The Message of Daniel*, vs. 17-28. There are four points in it : (1) His refusal to accept rewards as a condition of declaring the will of



God, v. 17. (2) His recital of God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar (vs. 18-21) : recall the story and compare. (3) He emphasizes Belshazzar's offence (vs. 22-24), wilful defiance of God, pride, profanation of sacred vessels, idolatry, neglect of truth. (4) The announcement of judgment, vs. 25-28. Dwell on this, its retribution, its finality, its personal meaning.

2. *The Exaltation of Daniel*, v. 29. A testimony to his fidelity to God and man. He had served a heathen people and maintained his faith in God. He clearly was a master among men.

3. *The Destruction of Babylon*, v. 30. Note the testimony of the inscriptions, and the death of Belshazzar (compare Isa., chs. 14 ; 21 : 1-9 ; Jer., chs. 50 and 51). (See From the Library.)

The lesson to be emphasized is the overthrow of those who array themselves against the will of God. The principle of Belshazzar's sin was a flippant, reckless defiance of God. The Golden Text is the heart of the lesson. Point out modern forms of this sin—the pleasure loving life which disregards God, the contempt for and sneer at sacred institutions such as the Sabbath, the church, the sacraments, the family, also devotion to the gods of wealth and selfishness.

Make clear the difference between the principle of Daniel and that of Belshazzar, and seek to win the scholars to the highest view of life.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A.

The Lesson is the story of a swift tragedy. Have the class read v. 1—a royal feast, imperial pomp, high revelry : Belshazzar, the chief figure ; and then v. 30—blood in the palace halls, Belshazzar slaughtered, a new king and a new dynasty on the throne ; and all in the flying hours of a single night.

The Lesson passage invites the backward look : indeed, it is impossible to break the chapter ; and there follow in succession *The Riotous Feast*, *The Mysterious Fingers*, *The Interpreter*, *The Interpretation*, and *The Falling of the Doom*. The teacher will need to have and to hold his material well in hand, if he is to reach the end of the story, and

unless he reach the end, the lesson is lost.

*The Riotous Feast*. The banqueting room, surpassingly magnificent ; the host, King Belshazzar ; the guests, a thousand of his lords, and the ladies of the court ; wine, and plenty of it, evidently too much, which led to the desecration of the holy vessels (v. 2), and the riotous worship of the false gods. At the very height of the mad gaiety—

*The Mysterious Fingers*, v. 5. The king's consternation is depicted in lurid colors, vs. 6-9. The awe and dread of the supernatural which possess us all, the sins of his past life, the failure of his "wise men" to explain the writing, even in the face of the splendid rewards offered, combine completely to unman him ; a helpless, pitiful object is he, albeit a king.

*The Interpreter*. What a grand old man, as he stands before the king. Get the story of how it came that he was sent for ; of his arrival ; and of the king's promise of reward, vs. 10-16. When did we see him last ? (Recall Lesson from ch. 1, the young lad Daniel.) Sixty-six years have passed. What do we find ? Ripened fruit. The brave, wise, God-fearing boy has become what v. 17 describes. Talk of independence ! He who trusts God neither fears nor seeks favor of man. It was as much as Daniel's life was worth to speak as he was about to do, but he did not flinch.

*The Interpretation*. To begin with, there is a reminder needed to show how just is the doom to be pronounced. A reminder, first, of how God had dealt with his great predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, vs. 18-21. (Make sure that the scholars grasp the point of Nebuchadnezzar's downfall. This is pressed home, v. 22.) Then, a reminder of his own evil ways and doings—a breaking of *our* First and Second and Third Commandments. With what sledge hammer force the king's sin is driven in upon him.

Following on the reminder, there are the words of the handwriting on the wall and their meaning. The scholars will be interested in the detail, as the words and their signification are brought out in the Exposition. "NUMBERED — NUMBERED — WEIGHED — DIVIDED"—is the gist of it. Could more dread words be spoken by God of any man

than those in v. 27? What can possibly make up for God's finding us wanting? Was the doom unjust, the taking away of the kingdom? It is only what we use, that we can keep. What we fail to use God takes away.

The doom is dreadful. It was an awful message to Belshazzar. He had sinned hope-

lessly. He was to lose all. There is, however, one bright spot, v. 29. The king remembers his promise. But it is a mere glimmer of light. The blow swiftly fell, vs. 30, 31. Have the scholars recite the Golden Text, Ps. 34 : 16, and then read the verse before it, v. 15. The application is evident.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Lesson Points

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

The faithful servant puts duty before reward. v. 17.

Many are the streams of human greatness, but their source is one. vs. 18, 19.

Earthly kingdoms are secure only when built upon the fear of God. v. 20.

Not destruction but instruction is the purpose of punishment from heaven. v. 21.

The blunders of the past are beacon lights for the present. v. 22.

Daily preservation is a reason for daily praise. v. 23.

God's messengers, whether of doom or mercy, always arrive on time. v. 24.

Since our days are counted, we should make each of them count. v. 26.

The way to win trust is to speak the truth. v. 29.

No kingly power can stand against the divine purpose. v. 30.

#### From the Library

It was one of the most courageous acts in history, and reminds us of Elijah confronting Ahab; and Nathan saying to David, "Thou art the man"; and Amos preaching their doom to kings and princes in Bethel; and John the Baptist reproving Herod; and Hugh Latimer preaching before Henry VIII.—Peloubet.

Nebuchadnezzar's illness is known as that form of hypochondriasis in which a man takes himself for a wolf (lycanthropy), or a dog (kynanthropy). Probably the fifth-century monks, who were known as Boskoi from feeding on grass, may have been, in many cases, half maniacs, who in time took themselves for oxen.—Farrar.

The discovery (from certain clay cylinders deciphered in 1854, and now in the British Museum) that Belshazzar was the eldest son of the king and associated with him in the government, is in exact accordance with the declaration that Daniel should be the third ruler in the kingdom. Belshazzar was the second (Nabonidus being the first), and therefore the next to him would be third. Higher than third Daniel could not be.—Rawlinson.

Washington Allston spent more than twelve years attempting to paint the scene of Belshazzar's feast, and then left his work unfinished (it is now in the Art Museum at Boston). It is said that the chief difficulty, which the artist's genius could not overcome, was that of depicting the despair of the doomed king. Well might it be so, for it was the despair of a lost soul brought suddenly face to face with the retributive judgment of God written by a mysterious hand from another world. What art *can* portray it in the look of a human face?—Professor Phelps.

A few words from Cyrus himself describe the conclusion of the campaign. "His wide-spreading host, whose numbers like the waters of a river were not known, girt with their weapons, march by his side. Without conflict he (Merodoch) made him enter this city. Babylon he spared from harsh treatment. Nabonidus, the king, who did not fear him, he delivered into his hand."—McCurdy's History, Prophecy and the Monuments.

That night they slew him on his father's throne;

He died unnoticed, and the hand unknown:  
Crownless and sceptreless Belshazzar lay,  
A robe of purple round a form of clay.

—Sir Edwin Arnold.

**Prove from Scripture**

That our actions will be judged.

**Lesson Questions**

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

**Juniors**—What city is the scene of the Lesson? How old was Daniel at this time?

17-21 Who had made a feast? What strange sight appeared? Who was sent for to explain the writing? About what king does Daniel speak? What had happened to him? Why?

22, 23 What vessels had Belshazzar used at his feast? Who had brought these to Babylon?

24-28 From whom did the writing come? Does God punish willingly? Why does He punish? Of what were the words written on the wall names? What did each mean? To whom was the kingdom of Babylon given? How was Daniel rewarded? What happened to Belshazzar?

**Seniors and the Home Department**—What interval between last Lesson and today's?

17-23 What gifts did Daniel refuse? Who in the New Testament offered money for spiritual blessings? What reply was made to him? (Acts 8: 18-20.) What is the purpose of God's long-suffering? (Rom. 2:

4.) The fate of the obstinately wicked? (Prov. 29: 1.)

24, 25 What class of sinners will be punished the most severely? (Luke 12: 47, 48.)

26-28 Why was Belshazzar's kingdom taken from him? What kingdom did Christ preach? (Mark 1: 14.) Where do we find the laws of this kingdom? (Matt. 5: 1-11.) From whom will it be taken away; and to whom given? (Matt. 21: 43.)

**The Catechism**

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

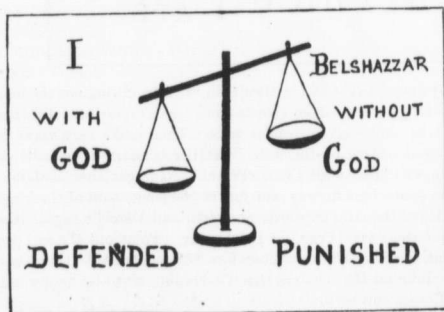
Ques. 96. *The Sacraments*—*The Lord's Supper*. The two most common titles of this ordinance are: (1) The Communion (1 Cor. 10: 16) and The Sacrament. The elements used in it are bread and wine. The actions performed are: (1) The "blessing" or prayer of consecration; (2) The breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine; (3) The distributing and receiving of the bread and wine. The Lord's Supper is intended: (1) To commemorate Christ's death; (2) To picture gospel truth; (3) To afford believers an opportunity of communion with Christ and with one another; (4) To be a badge of discipleship. "Not after a corporal ("bodily") or carnal ("fleshly") manner," teaches that Christ is present in the Lord's Supper, not to the sight, as is held by the Roman Catholic Church, but to the faith of the partaker.

**FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES**

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont.

*Subject for the Quarter*—God redeeming His people.

*Golden Text for the Quarter*—Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, Ps. 65: 11.



You remember God had punished His people for their sins. Now we shall see Him redeeming—bringing them back to Himself. In every Lesson we shall see God's hand reaching out to His people in love and mercy and helpfulness; bestowing good things upon them. Cut out the blackboard for each Lesson, and paste these on sheets of colored paper to be used for review—

*Lesson Subject*—God redeeming His people by punishing their oppressors.

*Belshazzar's Feast*—King

Nebuchadnezzar died, and there is a new king, BELSHAZZAR. Let us peep into his palace. This night he is giving a great feast to all his nobles, etc. The feast is in honor of their idols of brass and iron and wood and stone.

*The Grandeur of the Palace*—Describe the great dining hall, with floor of marble and white walls on which were painted in scarlet and all gorgeous colors, pictures of young men riding on beautiful horses, etc. Describe the men and women in gorgeous robes reclining at the table. See the great dishes of fruits etc.! Those tall jugs are full of wine. Watch the servants gliding about serving the guests! "What more can I do to make this feast the grandest ever given?" said the king to himself. Then he remembers the beautiful dishes that were stolen from God's temple (see Lesson X., Third Quarter). He orders them to be brought. Soon they are filled with wine, and held up in worship to the idols, while the wine is sipped and praises sung to the false gods.

*The Handwriting on the Wall*—See! The king's face turns pale. He jumps up, pointing to the wall. All eyes turn to look. There on the white wall above the painting, they see a hand writing words in letters of fire. Soon

the hand disappears, but the writing is there.

*A Great Reward Offered*—In great fear the king sends for his wise men. In they come and out they go. No one can tell what the writing means, v. 7. See, the door open and in comes the queen mother, vs. 11, 12.

*The Meaning of the Writing*—Daniel comes, (recall Lesson XII., Third Quarter), and God gives him wisdom to tell the meaning. It is God's hand that wrote, to tell of the king's sin and the punishment that would come to him, verse 23. Daniel received the reward (describe), and that very night God's word came true, The enemies burst into the city. Belshazzar was slain, and the kingdom was divided between the Medes and Persians. So God punished those who did harm to His people. God defends those who love Him.

*Golden Text*—Repeat.

*Weighed in the Balances*—Outline a pair of scales. Describe their use. A pound must be a pound. We must be what God means us to be, or, like Belshazzar, we will deserve punishment.

*Something to Draw at Home*—Draw a pair of scales, and remember Belshazzar's sin and punishment.

*Something to Remember at Home*—God is MY DEFENDER.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST  
FEAR  
ATE

Go back to the description of BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST (Print) in vs. 1-4. Bring out the main points in the picture—the use of the gold and silver vessels from the temple (how did these come to be in Babylon?), and the praise given to false gods. Then make very vivid the sudden appearance of the man's hand writing on the wall. Get the scholars to describe the effect on the king (see v. 6). He was filled with FEAR (Print). Next get the scholars to explain Daniel's appearance on the scene, how he was sent for, at the suggestion of the king's mother, to explain the writing. Have the strange words repeated, and Daniel's explanation of them given. Then ask what was the FATE (Print) of Belshazzar. Point out the sad contrast between the king's feast and the king's fate. Wherefore this contrast? Emphasize the truth that it was due to sin. Remind the scholars that God wants us to be happy, and that sin is always the cause of suffering and sorrow.

## Lesson II.

## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

October 8, 1905

Daniel 6 : 10-23. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 21-23.

GOLDEN TEXT—The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psalm 34 : 7.

10 Now when Dan'iel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house ;<sup>2</sup> and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jeru'salem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

11 Then these men assembled,<sup>4</sup> and found Dan'iel praying and making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's<sup>6</sup> decree ; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save<sup>9</sup> of these, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions ? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Per'sians, which altereth not.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Dan'iel, which is of the children of the captivity of Ju'dah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the<sup>6</sup> decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased<sup>10</sup> with himself, and set his heart on Dan'iel to deliver him ; and he laboured till the going down of the sun to<sup>11</sup> deliver him.

15 Then these men assembled<sup>4</sup> unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that<sup>12</sup> the law of the Medes and Per'sians is, That no<sup>6</sup> decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought

Revised Version—And when ;<sup>2</sup> now his windows were open ;<sup>3</sup> and<sup>4</sup> together ;<sup>5</sup> making petition and supplication ;<sup>6</sup> interdict ;<sup>7</sup> an interdict ;<sup>8</sup> make petition unto any god ;<sup>9</sup> unto ;<sup>10</sup> Omit with himself ;<sup>11</sup> rescue ;<sup>12</sup> it is a law of the Medes and Per'sians, that ;<sup>13</sup> nothing might be changed ;<sup>14</sup> fled ;<sup>15</sup> near unto the den to Daniel ;<sup>16</sup> Omit for Daniel :

## LESSON PLAN

I. Accused, 10-13.

II. Sentenced, 14-17.

III. Delivered, 18-23.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—An unwise decree, Dan. 6 : 1-9. T.—Daniel in the lions' den, Dan. 6 : 10-17. W.—Daniel in the lions' den, Dan. 6 : 18-23. Th.—Daniel honored, Dan. 6 : 24-28. F.—Obedience to God, Acts 4 : 13-20. S.—Rejoicing in suffering, I Pet. 4 : 12-19. S.—A good report, Heb. 11 : 32-40.

Dan'iel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Dan'iel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den ; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords ; that<sup>17</sup> the purpose might not be changed concerning Dan'iel.

18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting ; neither were instruments of musick brought before him ; and his sleep<sup>18</sup> went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came<sup>15</sup> to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice<sup>16</sup> unto Dan'iel ; and the king spake and said unto Dan'iel, O Dan'iel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions ?

21 Then said Dan'iel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me ; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me ; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad<sup>19</sup> for him, and commanded that they should take Dan'iel up out of the den. So Dan'iel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he<sup>19</sup> believed in his God.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 97. What is required of the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper ? A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience ; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

The Question on Missions—38. Where are our India missions situated ? In Central India, where work was begun about thirty years ago.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 263 ; 275 ; 34 (Ps. Sel.) ; 293 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 260.

## EXPOSITION

## I. Accused, 10-13.

Time and Place—Shortly after 538 B.C. ; one of the capitals of the Persian empire, among which were Babylon and Shushan (ch. 8 : 2).

Connecting Links—When Cyrus had conquered Babylon (see Lesson I.), Darius the Mede, according to ch. 5 : 31, became its ruler, with the title of King. He was probably a colleague of Cyrus, exercising authority over the Babylonian portion of the Persian empire. Darius set over the kingdom 120 satraps or governors ("princes"), and over these, three presidents, of whom Daniel was chief, vs. 1-3. But the presidents and satraps were jealous of Daniel and sought to destroy him by having him cast into a den of lions, vs. 6, 7. The Lesson describes the result of their crafty and malicious plot.

V. 10. Daniel knew. He acted with his eyes open to his danger, not, however, in the spirit of a boastful martyr, but with a calm resolve to do right at any cost. That the writing was signed ; the decree which made it unlawful to offer a petition to anyone save Darius for thirty days (see vs. 7-9), under penalty of being cast into a den of lions. His windows being open in his chamber ("roof-chamber") ; "an apartment raised above the flat roof of a house at one corner, or upon a tower-like annex to the building, with latticed windows, giving free circulation to the air." (Cambridge Bible.) Toward Jeru-salem ; where the ruins of God's house were, —a recognition of the God of Israel ; of His promise to Solomon to make it His dwelling

place (1 Kgs. 8 : 30, 35, 47, 48; 9 : 3); and of His promise to bring His people back thither from captivity. *Three times a day*; like the psalmist (Ps. 55 : 17), morning and evening, the times of daily sacrifice, and at noon. *As he did aforetime*; making no parade of his prayers, but simply sticking to his habits and plans.

Vs. 11-13. *These men assembled*: "came thronging." They were waiting to pounce upon him. The phrase suggests the indecent haste of those who wish to entrap the object of their envy. *Found Daniel praying*. They would know his hours for prayer, and hence could catch him in the very act. *Hast thou not signed a decree... O king?* Under pretence of paying great honor to the king, they use him to help out their hateful scheme. *The law of the Medes and Persians*. See Lesson I. It was a rule among these peoples that a royal decree once issued could not be changed. To change a decree would be to acknowledge a mistake, which was held as unworthy of a king. *That Daniel, etc.*; whom they hated for his ability and uprightness. *Of the children of the captivity*. See ch. 1 : 1-3. Daniel was a Hebrew—an additional reason for the hate of these infirmers.

## II. Sentenced, 14-17.

Vs. 14-17. *Sore displeased with himself*; vexed that he had been induced to sign so cruel and unjust a decree. *Laboured... to deliver him*; but failed, because his efforts were made too late. Evil is hard, sometimes impossible, to undo. *Know, O king, etc.* The trap was skillfully laid, but those who laid it fell into it themselves in the end, v. 24. *Then the king commanded*. He spoke as a master, but he was really the tool of his crafty counsellors. *Daniel... into the den of lions*. Assyrians and Persians kept lions for the chase. The den was probably cistern-shaped. *Stone... laid... sealed*. "A bar would be fixed across the stone, fastened to either side of the doorway by thongs, the knotting of which was sealed with wax stamped with a signet. The double sealing was in order that not even the king might have power to tamper with it."

## III. Delivered, 18-23.

Vs. 18-20. *The king... fasting... his sleep*

*went from him*. The shame in his heart (v. 14), and his sorrow, kept him from food and sleep. *Neither were instruments of music*. So great was his grief that he refused his usual pleasures. *Arose... early, etc.* V. 19 is a vivid picture in words of the king hurrying from his restless couch to the den. *Cried with a lamentable voice*. Before he sees Daniel he cries to him, because, while he hopes, he still fears that the worst may have happened and that Daniel may have fallen a prey to the lions. *The living God*; for the same emphatic title see Deut. 5 : 26; Josh. 3 : 10; 1 Sam. 17 : 26, etc. *Whom thou servest continually*. Daniel's service was not intermittent, but constant. Only such service gives us the right to expect from God deliverance in time of need.

Vs. 21, 22. *O king, live forever*. Loyalty to our earthly king is a part of Christian duty. *My God... sent his angel*. Compare ch. 3 : 28; Gen. 24 : 7, 40; Ex. 33 : 2; Num. 20 : 16. *Shut the lions' mouths*. Compare Heb. 11 : 33. Daniel attributes his safety directly to God. *Innocency was found in me*. He possessed the joy and peace of an approving conscience. He had not failed in his duty either to God or to his king.

V. 23. *No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God*. It was his faith, his trust in Jehovah, that preserved him. The history of the church and our own experience here taught us that not all who trust God are freed from tribulations and trials. But if God does not at once deliver His people from these, He brings some blessing out of them that far outweighs any sufferings they may have to endure (see 2 Cor. 4 : 17, 18).

## Light from the East

WINDOW—At the present time in Eastern towns, in the houses of well-to-do people, there is usually a fair-sized window projecting over the doorway into the street, with shutters of lattice work which are opened only on ceremonial occasions. Wherever a house has a court, the windows of the lower story look into it. The houses of the very poor have only holes to let in light and air, and these are covered in cold weather with a piece of matting. In ancient Egypt the windows

were small openings in the walls, closed with folding valves, secured with a bolt or bar, and ornamented with carved panels or colored devices. In Pompeii near Naples, where the houses were sealed up with ashes and lava just as they were in A.D. 79, only a few of them have windows opening on the street, and they are high up. Glass has been

found in some of them. Glass-blowers are pictured on the tombs of Egypt thirty-five centuries before Christ, and vases of cobalt-colored glass for holding wine have been found in Babylonian ruins, a thousand years older than the time of Daniel; but there is no evidence in either country that glass was used in windows.

### APPLICATION

*Daniel knew that the writing was signed* v. 10. The result, to the outward eye, seemed so certain. On the one side was the

**What Faith Sees**

whole power of the Persian empire behind a cruel decree that could not be changed; on the other a man who stood alone in his loyalty to God. But to the eye of faith the outlook was very different. To this inner vision the whole universe was on the side of the man who dared to do right. Like Elisha and his servant at Dothan, troops of bright and powerful angels stood around him for defence. Not less certain to-day than in those days of old is it, that the path of duty is the path of safety. Thronged with perils it may be, but those who tread it with steadfast purpose will be delivered out of them all.

*He knelt upon his knees three times a day, and prayed,* v. 10. In modern forts there is a bomb-proof apartment. Here the harassed defenders can find protection from the storm of shot

**The Christian's "Bomb-Proof"**

and shell bursting round them. In the Christian life the habit of daily prayer is the "bomb-proof" against the temptations that assail us. The brave Origen had once to choose between bowing down to an idol and suffering severe punishment. In a moment of weakness he yielded, and afterwards, in his bitter penitence, he ascribed his fall to his neglect of prayer on the morning of the fatal day. On the other hand, the great Gladstone tells us how, on the morning of a day that was to test his powers to the utmost, the message came to him, "Hold Thou up my goings in Thy path, that my footsteps slip not." Strength and freedom of speech were given to him in a surprising measure. And he adds, "Many a prayer had gone up for me, and not, I believe, in vain."

*And gave thanks,* v. 10. Gratitude is ever linked with true petition. The quaint Puritan preacher, Goodwin, likened prayer and praise to the double action of the lungs, receiving the air from without and then breathing it forth. The gifts of God come to us in answer to our prayers, and we return to Him our grateful praises. And if Daniel, in the face of a fierce persecution and under the stern decree of a despot, found reasons for thanksgiving, in the favor and friendship of God, how much more should we in these happier days of peace and freedom in which our lot is cast.

*As he did afortime,* v. 10. There is a straight path in life before each of us. It leads right onward to safety and honor.

**Only One Straight Path**

We shall never miss it if we follow conscience. Other paths may seem to be more pleasant and promising. They allure us with their prospect of pleasure or profit or power. But there is no departure from the right way that does not end in shame and loss.

*The king . . . was sore displeased with himself,* v. 14. The boomerang of the Australian native rushes through the air, and returns to the feet of the thrower. So

**Sin a Boomerang**

every sin, soon or late, comes back to the sinner, bringing with it the bitter fruit of remorse. A hard-hearted oppressor evicted from their lowly cottage a helpless widow and her four fatherless children. Afterwards he seemed to hear the sobbing of his victims in the murmur of the stream, while the rumble of the thunder sounded like the voice of approaching doom. The consequences of sin pursue us. There is no escape save in breaking with sin itself.

*Cast him into the den of lions,* v. 15. No real harm can come to the good man. For

him the poison is extracted from every persecution, and the very den of lions is made a gateway to glory. "You have not yet tasted the bitterness of death," shouted a bystander to a prisoner for conscience' sake. "No, nor ever shall," was the reply, for Christ hath promised that those who keep His sayings shall never see death."

*Thy God . . . he will deliver thee*, v. 16. "Courage, till to-morrow," adds the Greek version of the scriptures, called the Septuagint.

And in God's to-morrow there is always hope. "This, too, will pass," said one who was greatly tried, when some new affliction came. However dark the present, the future, for those who love and serve God, is radiant with promise and hope. The best things are yet to come. We have not left behind us, we are moving forward to, the golden age.

The Powerlessness of Persecution

*My God hath sent his angel*, v. 22. Not always after the same manner does God deliver His people. He did not, to take an instance from English history,

Two Kinds of Deliverance

rescue Ridley and Latimer from the fires of martyrdom. But He used their death to do more than a long life could have done, to further the cause of freedom and spread His truth. They were brought safely through the brief shame and agony, to be crowned with a glorious and deathless fame.

*No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God*, v. 23. An old writer pictures a man, intending to kill another,

Pelted with Jewels

pelting him with precious stones. So may God's people enrich themselves out of the very sufferings inflicted upon them; gathering the priceless jewels of confidence in God's promises, and a growing fitness for His glorious inheritance.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Briefly review Daniel's fidelity to God under the Chaldeans. This is a study of his fidelity under his new masters, the Medes and Persians. Note the re-organization of the kingdom under Darius and the position offered Daniel (vs. 1, 2), also the ability of Daniel which prompted Darius to make him his prime minister, v. 3. Study the fact that it was on account of his ability, upright character and righteousness, that his enemies wished to destroy him. Observe their plan. First, to find dishonesty in his administration, v. 4. This failed. Secondly, to trap him in his religious life. Carefully follow his enemies, their flattery of the king, their craftiness, their faith in Daniel's integrity, and their seeming success.

1. Bring out Daniel's unswerving devotion to God. There was no compromise. The peril did not in any way influence him. He did not parade his religion, neither did he accommodate it to suit his personal convenience. Refer to the plan of his house (Exposition), and why his enemies could see him. Make clear that prayer after this sort was Daniel's life habit.

2. Note the delight of his enemies. See the way they press their victory, and how they force the king's hand. Why were they so eager?

3. Observe the king's sorrow, and his efforts to save Daniel. Note the ground of his regret. He had allowed pride and flattery to sacrifice justice, and he is too weak to do what is right. Follow him in his prolonged misery, and consider its cause.

4. Then turn to the den. This method was in accord with the usage in Babylon, as seen in the inscriptions. Note the security against any interference. What was the seal? Its power? The plan of the enemy has succeeded—and they rejoice in the triumph of their malice.

5. Discuss the deliverance of Daniel, and the protection of God's messengers. This brings up the question of the supernatural in aiding God's people in the hour of need. View it as a doctrine, and its bearing on the possibilities of life.

Having presented the main facts, turn to the lesson that God delivers His faithful servants. Call for other instances, as Paul, Peter, Silas, the Israelites. Call for instances where they were destroyed, John the Baptist, James, Stephen, Paul, the martyrs. How



reconcile? Was their life destroyed? Or defeated? Was their faith of no value? Examine the principle of God's kingdom—the victory of truth. The ideal life is not mere existence here, or happiness, but blessedness because of harmony with God. The duration of life here is secondary, and in God's care, to be disposed of as perfect love and wisdom may direct. Hence the life of faith is victorious, whether it leads to deliverance from death here, or not.

The practical application should be made—trust in God at all times. Daniel's principle is best for the individual and the world. Urge the class to adopt it.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

It is worth while to take a preliminary two or three minutes of this Lesson to show how the trappers were trapped. They began by being jealous. Hence the plot and the trap, vs. 6, 7. (What a splendid testimony, by the way, to any man, is v. 5!) Verse 24 writes down the terrible, but almost ludicrous, outcome of the plot—the trappers trapped: and the lesson is obvious.

But the main point of interest is this Daniel of v. 5. It is nothing new. We have seen his courage as a lad (Lesson Sept. 17), and as an aged counsellor 60 odd years later (Lesson of last Sabbath). He will not fail now; nor will the God, for whose honor he has stood and in whose commands he has walked all these years, fail him.

Verse 10 is a whole Lesson in itself. It might be taken up word by word. "Now"—in the face of the plot against his life. "When Daniel"—that great counsellor of state and man of God. "Knew that the writing was signed"—and, therefore, the next step, so far

as human eye could see, death. "He went into his house"—not stirred one hair's breadth from his daily routine. "Windows open to Jerusalem" (God's dwelling place)—he will make no concealment of his worship. "Kneeled upon his knees"—in the sight of all who chose to look. Then, "three times a day"—abating no jot of his devotions. "Prayed"—took his whole case to God. "And gave thanks"—perhaps by faith already seeing his deliverance; in any case, sure of God's favor. "As he did aforetime" It takes more than a band of plotters to break a good man's habit of prayer.

We may pass rapidly over the springing of the trap upon the king, vs. 11-13. But pause at v. 14. Here is an instance of a man good in spots. He was weak and vain; hence the decree of v. 7. But he had sense enough to know the value of an honest counsellor, and justice enough to wish to spare the life of an innocent and good man.

Picture the malignant triumph of these petty plotters, vs. 15, 16, and the sadness and shame of v. 16. But Daniel believed in his own prayer. At any rate, he hoped that it might be so.

The plotters spent the night, likely, feasting, the king fasting—the rebuke which his foolish pride had received drew him closer to God. Picture his eager haste, and the broken voice of v. 20. Peep into the den. There had been a visitor. The lions' mouths were shut. Daniel was safe. And to God is given all the glory. It was a glad pair—the king glad, because Daniel was safe, and Daniel, because God had once more shown His power among the heathen. Are we wrong in supposing that some were drawn to the true God by this wonderful deliverance of His servant?

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Lesson Points

He who does the will of God need not dread the wrath of men. v. 10.

Prayer is a protection against every peril. v. 10.

Cowardly concealment of our religion is as bad as a boastful parade of it. v. 10.

The sincere man will not be put to shame

when his deeds are brought to the light of day. v. 11.

Wicked ways are always down hill—it is easy to start but hard to stop. v. 14.

God's honor is pledged for the safety of those who trust Him. v. 16.

No human plan can stand against a divine purpose. v. 17.

A disturbed conscience makes a restless couch. vs. 18, 19.

While God lives His people cannot perish. v. 20.

The faithful servant of God is a loyal subject of the king. v. 21.

We have the right to use the possessive pronouns concerning all that God has promised. v. 22.

### Prove from Scripture

That the Lord is on the side of right.

### Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

**Juniors**—Who had conquered Babylon? What place was given to Daniel? How did the new king's officers feel towards him?

10-13 What had King Darius forbidden his subjects to do? Who had enticed him to this? How were any who disobeyed to be punished? To whom did Daniel pray? In what attitude? How often? Who were watching? Whom did they tell?

14, 15 Did the king wish to save Daniel? When is it easiest to keep from doing wrong? 16, 17 What did the king command? What was done to Daniel? What was the den like?

18-23 How did the king feel? When did he come to the lions' den? In what way had God saved Daniel?

**Seniors and the Home Department**—Name two of the capitals of the Persian empire. Describe its government under Darius.

10-13 What gave rise to the Jewish custom

of praying toward Jerusalem? (1 Kgs. 8 : 35, 38, 44, 48.) Which of the apostles refused to obey the civil authorities, and on what ground? (Acts 4 : 18-20.)

14-17 To whom should rulers be a "terror"? (Rom. 13 : 3.) What should they be to the good? (1 Pet. 2 : 14.) How did Darius prove himself a coward?

18-23 Show that the angels protect those who fear God. (Ps. 34 : 7.) What are the angels called in Hebrews? (Heb. 1 : 14.) Where in the New Testament is the Lesson incident referred to? (Heb. 11 : 33.)

### The Catechism

*Question 97. The Lord's Supper—its worthy partakers.* Four things are required of those who would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper: 1. *Faith.* We must discern the Lord's body in the sacrament; that is, we must see through the bread and wine the great fact of Christ's death for our sins, and trust Him as our Saviour. 2. *Repentance.* By sitting down at the Lord's table we profess to be His followers. What a mockery, unless we have forsaken sin and turned to God! 3. *Love.* Jesus made love the test of a true disciple, John 14 : 15. 4. *Obedience.* This is the proof of our love to Christ. Now the question says we should examine ourselves, that is, test ourselves, as metals are tested, to see if these four things are in us.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God redeeming His people by saving them from danger.

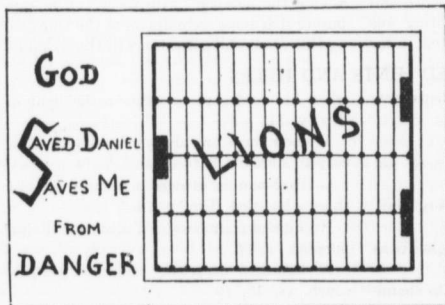
*Introduction*—Show a picture of a lion. Perhaps you have seen a lion in a cage.

None of us would like to meet a lion. If we should hear his great "roar," I am sure we should all run away as fast as we could, for fear he would eat us.

*Review*—Recall Belsazzar's feast, and the division of the kingdom.

*Lesson*—The new king made Daniel the greatest man in the kingdom next to himself. The princes were angry at this, and made up their minds they would get rid of Daniel, but they could find no fault in him vs. 4, 5.

*A New Law*—They go to the



king, asking him to make a law that if any person shall ask anything from any god or man, except the king, for thirty days, the person who does so shall be cast into a den of lions to be eaten up. The king made this law.

*Daniel's Prayers*—Away in that heathen city amongst idol worshippers Daniel, every day, morning, noon and night had kneeled and prayed to the true God. (Never forget to pray.) Will Daniel obey this new law, or will he go on praying to God and receive the punishment? I think we all know what Daniel will do. You remember he had a purpose in his heart to do right. So we are not surprised to find him in his room, with his window open, looking toward his old home, Jerusalem, praying to God, as he had always done. A voice within him told him he ought to do this. It was the voice of conscience. And Daniel must obey this voice even if so doing displeased the king.

*Daniel's Punishment*—Some of those who disliked Daniel "peeked" into his room, and saw him praying. They ran away to the king to "tell on" Daniel. Tell the rest of the story, vs. 12-13. Tell of the king's love for Daniel, and his wish to save him. As he was bidding good-by to Daniel, he whispered in his ear, "Thy God will deliver thee." With what a trusting heart Daniel walked

into the great enclosure or cave where the lions were kept! He is not afraid. He knows God will save him from danger.

*Daniel Safe*—Tell of the king's anxious night. He cannot sleep. When daylight comes, he hurries to the lions' den. He can scarcely even think that Daniel may yet be alive. He calls, "Daniel, is your God able to save you from the lions?" Listen! Yes, it is Daniel's voice. Strong and well as ever, not a scratch upon him vs. 21-23.

*Golden Text*—Repeat and explain.

*God Saves from Danger*—A great many children dread a thunder storm. A little girl learned the verse, "The God of glory thundereth." Now when she hears "that awful thunder," she "just knows it is God." One day when her mother was out, the little girl heard a noise upstairs. She was frightened, till her father's voice called out, "Don't be frightened, girlie, it's only father." So now when it thunders very loud, it always seems to her as if she heard God say, "Don't be frightened, it's only Father."

*Something to Draw at Home*—Draw a Lions' Den.

GOD SAVED DANIEL  
SAVES ME

*Something to Remember at Home*—God saves Me from danger.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

KING; OR CONSCIENCE?

What do we call the ruler of the British Empire? Yes, a KING (Print). Have a little talk about King Edward, and the great powers kings even now have. Point out the duty of subjects—loyalty to the sovereign and obedience to his laws. Now Daniel lived under Darius the king of the Persian Empire. Was he loyal to the king? Refer to his services (see vs. 1-3). Ask about the decree which the king was induced to make. Did Daniel obey this decree? If he had obeyed it what would he have disobeyed? Yes, his CONSCIENCE (Print). This was the choice which Daniel had to make. He must choose to obey king OR (Print) conscience. Refer to other similar cases, such as that of Peter and John, Acts 5:29. Make it clear that we ought to obey our earthly king, so long as his commands are not contrary to our conscience. But whatever happens, conscience must be obeyed.

## Lesson III.

## RETURNING FROM CAPTIVITY

October 15, 1905

Ezra 1 1-11. Commit to memory vs. 5, 6. Read ch. 2 : 64-70 and Psalm 126.

GOLDEN TEXT—The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.—Psalm 126 : 3.

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremia<sup>h</sup> might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem, which is in Ju<sup>d</sup>ah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem, which is in Ju<sup>d</sup>ah, and build the house of the Lord God of Is<sup>r</sup>ael, (he is the God,) which is in Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Ju<sup>d</sup>ah and Ben<sup>j</sup>amin, and the priests, and the Le<sup>v</sup>ites,

Revised Version—accomplished; 2 All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord, the God of heaven, given me; 3 in; 4 Whosoever there is; 5 the; 6 Omit the; 7 is left; 8 heads of fathers' houses; 9 even all whose; 10 stirred; 11 round about them; 12 bowls; 13 when they of the captivity were brought.

## LESSON PLAN

- I. A Divine Purpose, 1, 2.
- II. A Royal Command, 3, 4.
- III. A Willing Response, 5, 6.
- IV. A Just Restitution, 7-11.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Returning from captivity, Ezra 1 : 1-11. T.—Jeremiah's prophecy, Jer. 29 : 10-14. W.—Isaiah's prophecy, Isa. 44 : 21-28. Th.—God's Word to Cyrus, Isa. 45 : 1-13. F.—Prayer for restoration, Dan. 9 : 16-25. S.—Help from the Lord, Psalm 124. S.—The joy of deliverance, Psalm 126.

## EXPOSITION

**Time and Place**—538 B.C.; Babylon or Achmetha (Ecbatana), another of the capitals of the Persian empire, ch. 6 : 6.

**Connecting Links**—In Lesson X., Third Quarter, we studied the story of the Babylonian Captivity; and the intervening Lessons have given us a glimpse of the life and experience of some distinguished characters among the Hebrew exiles, especially of Daniel. We now come to the story of the Return. When the power of Babylon was broken by Cyrus, that great king adopted a different policy in dealing with conquered peoples from that of the Babylonian monarchs. (See Light from the East.) Note that, while the government of Babylon seems to have been placed in the hands of Darius the Mede (see Dan. 5 : 31), the real power belonged to Cyrus.

## I. A Divine Purpose, 1, 2.

V. 1. Now. The Book of Ezra takes up the threads of history where Chronicles ends. (See 2 Chron. 36 : 22, 23.) In the first year of

with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem.

6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.

7 Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Ju<sup>d</sup>ah.

9 And this is the number of them : thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basins of gold, silver basins a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Baby<sup>l</sup>on unto Jeru<sup>s</sup>alem.

12 All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord, the God of heaven, given me; 13 is left; 14 heads of fathers' houses; 15 when they of the captivity were brought.

**Shorter Catechism**—Ques. 98. What is prayer? A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

**The Question on Missions**—39. What kind of climate has Central India? There are three well-defined seasons. The hot season: from March to June, when all vegetation has died away; the rainy season beginning in July, when all nature quickly revives; the cold season beginning in October.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 389; 385; 98 (Ps. Sel.); 583 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 268.

Cyrus; his first year at Babylon, which was the first year of his rule over the Jews : it was 538 B.C. That the word of the Lord; the divine purpose of mercy towards the captive Jews. By the mouth of Jeremia<sup>h</sup>. See Jer. 25 : 12; 29 : 10. Might be fulfilled. The 70 years of captivity predicted by the prophet Jeremiah, may be considered a round number for the period beginning with the fourth year (606 B.C.) of Jehoiakim (Jer. 25 : 1), and ending with 538 B.C.—actually 68 years. So long had the captivity lasted. The time for the promised return was now at hand. King of Persia; so called, in all probability, because Persia was now his chief possession. "In character he was ambitious, bold and chivalrous, clement and considerate to the fallen princes over whom his arms had been victorious, and conciliatory towards the populations whom his conquests had given him for subjects." (A. B. Davidson.) The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus; (1) influencing him

directly by the Holy Spirit ; (2) guiding him by His providence to see the wisdom of permitting the Jews to return to their own land ; (3) perhaps instructing him through such prophecies as Jeremiah's, or those of Isaiah, Isa. 44 : 26-28 ; 45 : 1-13. The king's attention may have been called to these prophecies by Daniel or some other prominent Jew. *Made a proclamation...put it also in writing.* The king's purpose was first made known by heralds, and then a record was made, to be kept among the official state papers.

V. 2. *The Lord God of heaven.* It was Cyrus' rule to accept the gods of the nations which he conquered. We may see in this title the truth, that all earthly power comes from heaven. *Hath given me*, etc. Considering that it was by the power of his sword Cyrus had conquered and annexed so many kingdoms, he shows in this expression a most remarkable degree of pious humility. *He hath charged me*, etc. Consciously or unconsciously, Cyrus fulfilled the mission described in Isaiah's prophecies cited above. *Jerusalem, which is in Judah.* The ruined city was so far forgotten that a particular description of its situation was necessary.

#### II. A Royal Command, 3, 4.

V. 3. *Whosoever...of all his (God's) people* (Rev. Ver). The edict referred only to the exiles of the Southern kingdom carried away by Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. 1 : 1 ; 2 Kgs. 24 : 14 ; 25 : 8-11). Probably those of the Northern kingdom deported by Sargon, the Assyrian, in 721 B.C., had been absorbed by the people among whom they settled. *Let him go up* (Jerusalem was on a higher level than Babylon). Besides, it was the Jew's way of referring to his Holy City, Ps. 122 : 3, 4). *and build the house.* Permission is given to do two things : (1) return to Jerusalem. (2) rebuild the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kgs. 25 : 9. *The Lord God...in Jerusalem* ; as the chief seat of His worship.

V. 4. *And whosoever is left* (Rev. Ver.) ; that is, of the captive Jewish people. *In any place where he sojourneth, let the men...help*, etc. The meaning is : "In any place where survivors of the Jewish captivity are to be found sojourning, there let the natives of the place, the non-Israelite neighbors, render

them all assistance" in returning to their own land. *Beside the freewill offering.* Cyrus was about to make a freewill offering of gold and silver vessels for the temple service. The decree suggests that his subjects might follow his good example.

#### III. A Willing Response, 5, 6.

Vs. 5, 6. *Then rose up* ; in glad response to the royal summons. *The heads of fathers' houses* (Rev. Ver.) ; that is, of the separate families making up the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which together formed the Southern kingdom of Judah. *The priests, and the Levites* ; who were specially interested in the temple as having charge of its services. *Even all whose spirit God had stirred* (Rev. Ver.). Not all the Jews returned to Judah. Many remained in Babylon because they were unwilling to give up their property. Those returned whom God had moved to make sacrifices for His glory. *And all they that were about them* ; their neighbors and friends, as in Egypt at the time of the Exodus (see Ex. 11 : 2, 3). *Precious things.* They must have had a great deal of personal property, for when they arrived at Jerusalem they gave \$400,000 in gold and silver for rebuilding the temple, ch. 2 : 69. There were 736 horses and 245 mules belonging to the richer people of the returning exiles; 435 camels on which rode the aged, the weaker women and the children; 6,270 asses used, partly for riding, and partly for carrying goods. This made only 7,686 beasts of carriage for 50,000 people, so that most of them must have travelled on foot (see ch. 2 : 64-70).

#### IV. A Just Restitution, 7-11.

Vs. 7-11. The holy vessels of the Lord's house taken by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kgs. 25 : 13-15), Cyrus now restores. *Numbered them unto Sheshbazzar.* They were 5,400 in all, v. 11. Cyrus was a man who did his work in a business-like way. It is well to have every cent, as well as every precious vessel, accounted for in our church work. Sheshbazzar (fire-worshipper) was the Persian name of Zerubbabel, the leader of the return to Judah (compare chs. 5 : 16 and 3 : 8). He was a prince descended from King David. The vessels, which may have been on Belshazzar's table (see Lesson I.), were now to be used again in God's holy service.

### Light from the East

CYRUS—According to the monuments, was King of Ansan, a province of Elam, and once he calls himself King of Persia. He first conquered the Medes, and then directed his energies against Babylon. Nabonidus, the king, had absented himself from the city for some time, and had alienated the people by neglecting their feasts. His son Belshazzar, who commanded the army, made several unsuccessful stands against Cyrus. The Accadians or North Babylonians first revolted, and one city after another opened its gates to the conqueror, and finally he entered Babylon in 538 B.C.; and, according to his own inscriptions, was received as a liberator with

every manifestation of joy. His proclamation declares that he himself was a worshipper of Bel-Merodach, the god of Babylon, who was angry with the former king, and gave the empire to Cyrus. His restoration of the Jewish exiles was not due to any special sympathy which he had with their religion, but was part of a general policy which he mentions in one of his inscriptions. Experience had taught him, that it is dangerous to have a foreign and hostile people living in a country which may be invaded by an enemy. He reversed the policy of denationalization which the Babylonians followed, and sent back the captive nations with their gods and sacred vessels.

### APPLICATION

*That the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, v. 1.* Two Jewish rabbis, Joshua and Eliezer, saw a fox running from Zion Hill. Rabbi Joshua wept, remembering the words in Lamentations (ch. 5: 18),

“Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.” But Rabbi Eliezer laughed, for he said, “I see with mine eyes that not one of God’s promises will fail, and He is ever more ready to show mercy than judgment.” The rabbi had reason for his joy. How much more have we, with all the glorious promises of the New Testament, as well as of the Old, before us. And if we should fall into doubt of any of these promises, we have God’s gift of His own Son to make us sure that He will not keep back from us any good thing.

*The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, v. 1.* Phillips Brooks, the famous American preacher, preached once in England, in Westminster Abbey, on “The Candle of the Lord.” In closing, he likened Great Britain and the United States to two golden candlesticks holding aloft the glory of the Lord. This is the noblest mission any nation or individual can have, to make God’s glorious character known throughout the world. In Him is the light to illumine all dark and joyless places. Whoso obeys Him will become the bearer of a brightly lighted candle that will help to dispel the surrounding gloom.

*Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, v. 2.* Like some skilfully contrived machine, with its numberless parts carefully placed and exactly fitted, God’s plans always work smoothly and surely. In the days of Cyrus, Egypt was becoming a great power. Sooner or later, a conflict was sure to come between this nation and Persia. It suited Cyrus to have the Jews established as a friendly kingdom in Palestine between his own empire and its coming rival. And it was just at this juncture that God had determined to bring His people back to their own land. So, above all earthly kings and counsellors sits the King of heaven, watching all their movements and using them to further His own blessed purpose. Human kingdoms speedily perish, but His kingdom endures forever, and will in the end include the whole world within its boundaries.

*The Lord God of heaven, v. 2.* What a glorious title! And, as our knowledge grows, it becomes more and more wonderful to us.

The heavens, so the astronomers tell us, stretch away above the earth, uncounted millions of miles. Now take the best man you know or can think of, the most just and pure and loving. God is more just and pure and loving than he, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Who can know Him without trusting and loving and adoring Him?

*Who is there among you, his God be with him, v. 3.* The healthy man loves tasks that

The Two  
Rabbis

The Candle of  
the Lord

Kingdoms and  
the Kingdom

The Highest  
One

try his strength. The yachtsman welcomes the wind that swells the sails and calls for all his quickness and nerve. The mountain climber is eager to attempt the highest peak. To the real student hard problems are a joy. The man who loves his business or profession is never so happy as when wrestling with its duties. In attaining to His heavenly kingdom, God has a task for each of us that will give exercise to our highest faculties. It will test to the utmost our resolution and endurance. It is work that will make the best of all that is in us and that will do good, as no other work will, to others. In this work all are volunteers. We enter upon it of our own choice. And the success of it—how gloriously sure this is, since the power for the work comes from God Himself.

*Let the men of his place help him, v. 4. "When I dig a man out of trouble," said one, "the hole he leaves behind him is the grave*

*in which I bury my own trouble." There is no way to happiness so sure as being helpful. Every word or deed that helps another is like a stone built into a beautiful mansion of bliss for our own soul to dwell in. The house in which we live may be a very plain one, and its surroundings far from desirable. But we may make for ourselves a spiritual palace lovelier than any reared for an earthly sovereign. It will get its strength*

The Palace  
Beautiful

and beauty from the kindness we have shown, the encouragement we have given to those about us. And around it will cluster the blessed memories in human life—those of days spent in loving service.

*Willingly offered, v. 6. A willing soul and the willing God—it is the meeting and the communion of these two that makes true religion. God gives Himself to us in Christ freely and without reserve. And we, not compelled, but sweetly constrained by His love, give ourselves and all that we have to Him and His work. It is all so simple, and yet so great.*

*The king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, v. 7. Like those holy vessels so long kept within a pagan temple and dishonored by use in pagan rites, all our talents and energies belong to God. These are all stamped, like the coins of the realm, with His image and superscription. Have we been using them in the service of self and sin? Then have we been robbing God of His due. It is only honest in us to bring back our powers to our Maker, and ask Him to use them for His own glory. Doing this, we shall find a place and work in a temple far more glorious than the one reared in Jerusalem—the temple of the great spiritual kingdom that shall fill the whole earth, bringing all nations under its blessed sway.*

The Heavenly  
Owner

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

This study requires a much broader treatment than the Lesson text. Trace briefly the events leading to the Captivity. Then examine the causes which prepared for the return. The writings and work of the great prophets should be noted (compare Isa., chs. 40 to 66; Jer., chs. 24, 25, 29 to 33, 50; Ezek., chs. 11 and 36.) Grasp the situation as given in Ezra and Nehemiah. Before the Captivity there was a promise of restoration, Isa., chs. 10, 11. Ezekiel lays great stress on the new heart as necessary for the return, Ezek., chs. 11, 36, 37. The people

must first renounce their sin. The exile had brought this about, and they were now prepared for the restoration. Consider:

1. *The decree of Cyrus, vs. 1-4.* Contrast the national policy of Nebuchadnezzar (deportation) with that of Cyrus (conciliation). The decree has four points: (1) Its inspiration. Note the fact that God influenced the mind of Cyrus. How? What light does this cast on inspiration? (2) Its object—to build God's house (see Isa. 44:28; 45:1-13). (3) Its method—a call for volunteers. (4) Its appeal to others to assist. This whole section affords a good opportunity of considering the influence of literature and godly living on non-Christian peoples, and the over-riding hand of God in human history.

2. *The Return.* The leaders were the heads of Judah and Benjamin, Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Note what is said about them. There are three points in the Return: (1) The number, about 50,000 (compare chs. 2: 64, 65, 70). (2) The assistance received. (3) The recovery of the sacred vessels. Name these and their history. The number returning was small—only about one-sixth of the whole Jewish population. Why? The second return took place under Ezra, ch. 8.

3. *The spirit of the Return* (see Ps. 126 and Isa. 40-66). Trace the causes of gratitude. Note one especially, the deliverance from exile and restoration to God's favor.

The lesson to be considered is, that the restoration was a sign that the punishment was over; and it marked the beginning of a new spiritual history. It therefore occasioned great joy. The Return was the birth of a new type of religious life, which developed into Judaism, and made Christianity possible.

The Lesson should be placed in relation to national life to-day. Nations can only be restored to God's favor when they are weaned from sin. Emphasize this personally. Discipline from God's hand is for the purification of the soul and, when its cleansing work is done, it brings great joy. The great movements of God in history illustrate the same principles of moral and spiritual life as rule the destiny of the individual.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The first thing to do in this lesson is to pick up a thread. The two last verses of 2 Chron. are practically the same as the two first of Ezra: Ezra takes up the detail where Chronicles leaves off. Between vs. 21 and 22 of that last chapter of 2 Chron. there are 70 years, the years of the captivity in Babylon.

Now for *A bit of prophecy.* Who had foretold and timed the return? See 2 Chron. 36: 21 and Jer. 29: 10. The time has come; and God never forgets.

*A bit of geography and history.* On a modern map, a line between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf will pass through Media and Persia, and the capitals Ecbatana and Shushan, in the western part of the present Persia. The Persian empire of that time also included Afghanistan. The Persians had

conquered Babylon, and this was Cyrus' first year there as king.

*A bit of theology.* The Lord had promised by Jeremiah, v. 1; ask again for passages given above. And the Lord now takes the fulfilment in hand. An instance of God's rulership in the earth. He misses nothing—keeps track of the calendar as well as of the people. Note how majestically He works, and how simply. He breathes upon a great king, the greatest king in his time, and the king's heart turns to God's people. Cyrus had made a study of the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah (see Isa. 44: 26-28; 45: 1-13).

*A bit of practical service.* Take this up point by point:

(1) Cyrus sees God's will. He proceeds to do it, and is thereby in the way of blessing (compare John 7: 17). Let Cyrus' clear conception of his duty and privilege be brought out: he has learned his lesson well. V. 2 states the case—God has given me; God has charged me to build. (Compare Matt. 28: 18, 19.)

(2) Cyrus enlists co-workers. Good policy for a king: "broad based upon the people's will," a king's power is not only secured, but multiplied. Good policy for all leaders in Christian work: more than half the failures are because one man tries to do ten men's work, instead of rallying the ten men to his aid. V. 3 is the call to those who will go, and v. 4 to those who may not go, but can help. (For who the people thus appealed to were, see Exposition.)

*A fine response,* vs. 5, 6. Study out who the "chief of the fathers" were, and "the priests and the Levites." These were the leaders: it is a glad day for the church or for any good work when its leaders *lead*, as these appear to have done. Those who have a taste for figures should consult ch. 2: 64-69 for the number that returned, and the number of the beasts of burden, and the value of the treasure, which last was close to half a million dollars of our money.

*Honorable restitution.* Cyrus did not stop at talk. He issued his proclamation (v. 1), but he also gave up the temple property which was in his hands; he gave treasure as well as good words. This is the first men-



tion of Zerubbabel (the same as Sheshbazzar of v. 8), see ch. 5 : 16 and 3 : 8. Again the mathematical scholar will have his chance, and the one who wants to know the use of each of the vessels mentioned, but what is even more to the purpose, is the close count which was kept. God's work should be

carried on as systematically as ordinary business, and in the handling of any trust funds or property, there should be the most scrupulous care. They are not ours : that is the best reason for exactness.

A very happy company they would be in these preparations, as the Golden Text tells.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Lesson Points

What the Lord has purposed He will surely perfect. v. 1.

In every Christian enterprise the real motive power is from above. v. 1.

Earthly sovereigns, like their people, are subjects in the kingdom of heaven. v. 2.

A willing heart makes the road easy and the burden light. v. 3.

Helpfulness is heaven's law for human lives. v. 4.

The true servant is quick to hear and prompt to obey his Lord's command. v. 5.

We can often help others to do the work we cannot do ourselves. v. 6.

Restitution is proof of righteousness. v. 7.  
God should be worshipped with our wealth as well as our words. vs. 8-10.

Those who trust will in the end triumph. v. 11.

#### From the Library

The king used his own judgment and acted on his own opinions ; yet the impulse that drove him was from God. That was everything. We live in a God-haunted world. Why then are we slow to take the first article of our creed in its full meaning ? Is it so difficult to believe in God when all history is alive with His presence ?—Expositor's Bible.

Rawlinson speaks of "the deep religious feeling and great goodness of heart which characterized Cyrus alone of Persian monarchs." "Among the Greeks," he says, "Eschylus, who first speaks of him, calls him 'kindly' or 'gracious'; Herodotus says he ruled his subjects like a father ; Xenophon makes him a model prince ; Plutarch observes that in wisdom and virtue and greatness of soul he excelled all other kings ; Diodorus ascribes to him a remarkable power

of self-control, together with good feeling and gentleness. The Latin writers, Cicero and others, add their meed of praise ; and altogether it may be said that, so far as the evidence reaches, no nobler character appears in ancient history."

Writing was probably of recent introduction into Persia ; but there is positive evidence of its use by Cyrus. His proclamation was probably issued in at least two languages, Persian and Chaldee.—Pulpit Commentary.

The captives were sifted in their return by the call for volunteers, who would naturally be the most religious, the most zealous, and the most vigorous ones. Some one has said that in looking for seed to plant New England two and a half centuries ago, the Lord sifted two kingdoms (England and Holland) for the best they had. With equal truth it may be said that the Lord of Providence, on the same wise principle, sifted the Jewish people twice over to get out the best seed for replanting the land of promise.—Cowles.

Through a thousand trials, a thousand purifications, numerous exiles and infinite selection, the flock required for the divine work was set apart. The elimination of the dross was complete. . . Here on its way is the band of saints who will realize the ideal dreamed of by two centuries of Puritans. It was the greatest triumph of faith. . . God alone can work these miracles.—Ernest Renan.

By far the greater number, and especially those of the wealthier classes, preferred to remain behind, to hold the property which they had acquired, and pursue the avocations to which they were accustomed on a foreign but now friendly soil. It has been calculated that those who returned stood to those who stayed behind in the proportion of six to one.—Rawlinson.

By a singular coincidence, the new Exodus took place in the same month as that in which Israel had fled from Egypt, 800 or 900 years before.—Geikie.

### Prove from Scripture

That Christ gives true freedom.

### Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

**Juniors**—By what king was Babylon captured? How did he feel toward the Jews?

1, 2 Where were the Jews in captivity? Who had said they would be brought back to their own land? After how long? Who gave them leave to go? Why? What does Cyrus call God?

3, 4 What two things were the Jews permitted to do? How were their neighbors to help those who went to Jerusalem?

5, 6 What two tribes here mentioned? What kingdom did they form? Did they wish to go back to their own land?

7, 11 What king had taken the temple vessels from Jerusalem? Who was now to take them back?

**Seniors and the Home Department**—Give the date of Cyrus' decree. How did he show his friendliness towards the Jews?

1, 2 What story does Ezra continue? What did Isaiah prophesy concerning Cyrus?

Show that God rules over nations. (Ps. 22 : 28.)

3, 4 To whom was the king's decree addressed? From whom were the returning Jews to get help? How did the Egyptians help the Israelites in their escape from Egypt? (Ex. 12 : 35, 36.)

5-11 How many classes mentioned in v. 5? By whom were they influenced? How are Saul's followers described? (1 Sam. 10 : 26.) Who gives power for Christian service? (Acts 1 : 8.) Who was the leader of the return from captivity?

### The Catechism

Ques. 98. *Prayer—its definition.* 1. To whom should we offer prayer? To God only. Not to angels, for, though they minister to us (Heb. 1 : 14), we are never told that we can speak to them. Nor to saints : we shall go to them (Luke 16 : 9), but they never come to us (Luke 16 : 27-31). But to each of the three Persons in the Godhead we may pray—to the Father (Matt. 6 : 9); to the Son (Acts 7 : 59); to the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8 : 26). What authority have we to pray? Our authority comes from Christ. We may pray in His name, and God will answer as if Christ Himself were asking. In what spirit should we pray? With submission to God's will, being willing that our prayers should be answered in His time and way, not ours.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God redeeming His people by giving them freedom.

*Introduction*—Have you ever been away from your own home among strangers in a



strange place? Did you not wish very much to get home again? I have seen little people who did not even like to be in a strange house while mother made a call. "I want to go home, mother; come home," they cry. Did you ever hear that beautiful old song :

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

The children of Israel have been away from home, you remember. Where have they

been? Where was their home? Who took them away? God has been watching over them all this time. Now He puts it into the heart of **KIND KING CYRUS** to let them go back to their home.

*The Proclamation of King Cyrus* (see ch. 6)—Draw a roll. King Cyrus made a great speech, and ordered that it be written on a roll. Messengers were sent all over the kingdom with this message from the king. (Read verses 2-4.)

*Getting Ready for the Journey*—Let us try to think how glad these people would be when they heard these words. We may be sure they hurried to get their things all tied up in bundles to be put on the asses' backs. (You remember there were no railway trains or street cars, no carriages to take them home. All the people must walk except those who are rich enough to have horses or mules to ride upon; and the old people, the weaker women and children, who ride on camels; while beasts of burden must carry all that belongs to them. (see ch. 2 : 66, 67).)

King Cyrus had told his people to give the children of Israel gold and silver money and all sorts of "goods" and animals to carry their things. The people gave all that was needed, besides freewill offerings of money to

help to pay for rebuilding the temple. See, they are ready to start! Here come more beasts of burden from King Cyrus, laden with great bundles! What do you think is in the bundles? Why, the "vessels of the house of the Lord," v. 7.

*Review*—Some of you can tell us how King Belshazzar had used these dishes, and the punishment that God sent upon him for his wickedness. (Recall Lesson.)

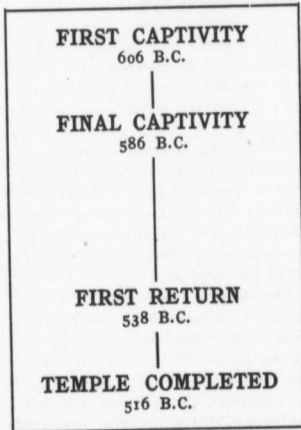
*The Journey Home*—We can imagine we see that happy procession of men, women, children and camels travelling along, hot and tired and dusty many a day, but never grumbling. "Are we not going home?" "Is not God very good to us in letting us go free?" they would say, and thus cheering one another, they journeyed along till at last they reached their old home city, Jerusalem.

*Golden Text*—Repeat. This is a song we may all sing as well as God's people of olden days. Is not God every day doing "great things" for us? Let us print some of these great things. The very greatest thing God has done for us, we all know, I am sure. It is this: He sent a Saviour to free us from sin.

*Something to Draw at Home*—Draw a roll. **PRINT GOD'S PEOPLE ARE FREE.**

*Something to Remember at Home*—Jesus makes ME free.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW**



Make this a brief historical review. Fix the date of the **FIRST CAPTIVITY** of Judah in the minds of the scholars. Connect it with the names of Jehoiakim in whose reign it took place and Daniel who, with his companions, was then taken to Babylon. Deal in the same way with the **FINAL CAPTIVITY**, linking it with the name of Zedekiah. Fresh from the study of the Lesson, the scholars will readily tell about the **FIRST RETURN**. Go forward to the date when the **TEMPLE WAS COMPLETED**. Now read the first verse of the Lesson, and impress the truth that God's hand was in all this history, and that He has always a loving purpose towards His people. Ask the scholars to repeat the Golden Text. Remind them that God wants us to be glad. Religion is not a cause of gloom. It brings the sweetest and most lasting joys into our lives. None are so happy as those whom the Saviour brings back from wandering in sin.

Ezra 3 : 10 to 4 : 5. Study ch. 3 : 1 to 4 : 5. Commit to memory vs. 10, 11.  
Read chs. 5, 6 and Haggai, chs. 1, 2.

**GOLDEN TEXT**—The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.—1 Corinthians 3 : 17

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Le'vites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of Da'vid king of Israel.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Is'rael. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Le'vites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy :

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

**Revised Version**—order; one to another in courses; the old men; a; the; drew near; Assyria.

#### LESSON PLAN

- I. The Work Begun, 10-13.  
II. The Work Hindered, ch. 4 : 1-5.

#### DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. E. Association)

M.—Worship commenced, Ezra 3 : 1-9. T.—Rebuilding the temple, Ezra 2 : 10 to 4 : 5. W.—Opposition, Ezra 4 : 6-16. Th.—The building stopped, Ezra 4 : 17-24. F.—Prophecy of gladness, Jer. 33 : 7-14. S.—Longing for God's house, Psalm 84. S.—The living temple, 1 Cor. 3 : 6-17.

**Shorter Catechism**—Ques. 99. *What rule hath*

Ch. 4 : 1 Now when the adversaries of Ju'dah and Ben'jamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Is'rael;

2 Then they came to Zerub'babel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of E'sar-had'don king of As'sur, which brought us up hither.

3 But Zerub'babel, and Jesh'ua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Is'rael, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Is'rael, as King Cy'rus the king of Per'sia hath commanded us.

4 Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Ju'dah, and troubled them in building,

5 And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, even until the reign of Dari'us king of Per'sia.

praising; saying, For he is; heads of fathers' Assyria.

*God given for our direction in prayer?* A. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called *The Lord's Prayer*.

**The Question on Missions**—40. How many missionaries have we in India at the present time? There are 46 in all, including 13 wives of missionaries and 18 unmarried lady missionaries; 3 of the men and 6 of the unmarried ladies are medical missionaries.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 197; 193: 31 (Ps. Sel.); 388 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 17.

#### EXPOSITION

**Time and Place**—537-521 B.C.; Jerusalem and its neighborhood.

**Connecting Links**—According to the official lists (ch. 2 : 64; Neh. 7 : 66), the number of Jews who left Babylon to return to Jerusalem under Sheshbazzar, or Zerubbabel (see Lesson III.), was 42,360. The returning exiles reached Jerusalem in the summer of 538 B.C. In the autumn they rebuilt the altar of burnt offering, and observed the Feast of Tabernacles, vs. 1-4. The winter was occupied in making preparations for rebuilding the temple, and in the following spring the foundations were laid.

#### I. The Work Begun, 10-13.

V. 10. *The builders.* Some suppose that the workmen are meant; others, Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Joshua), the high priest (Zech. 3 : 1), as the leaders in charge of affairs. *Laid the foundations.* Cedar wood from Lebanon had been purchased from the Tyrians and Sidonians (v. 7), and floated down to the Jewish seaport of Joppa; while

stones had been dug out of the ruins. *Set the priests in their apparel;* the splendid priestly robes of blue and scarlet and purple, adorned with gold and gems, Ex., ch. 39. Compare the occasion of a church opening among ourselves. *With trumpets;* not used for music, but for summoning assemblies (Num. 10 : 2, 3), and proclaiming joyous events, 2 Kgs. 11 : 14. *Sons of Asaph with cymbals.* David had assigned instrumental music to the Levites and the cymbals particularly to the sons of Asaph, 1 Chron. 16 : 4, 5; 25 : 6. The priests were specially commissioned to blow the trumpets (Num. 10 : 8), perhaps as an instrument of greater dignity than the cymbals.

V. 11. *They sang one to another* (Rev. Ver.). There may have been a choir with two parts, one singing the first clause of each verse in such a psalm as the 136th, and the other responding with the second; or perhaps the chant of praise by the choir was answered by a great burst of chorus, the substance of it

being some well-known popular refrain (compare Ex. 15 : 20, 21). *Praising . giving thanks . shouted . praised the Lord.* Words are multiplied to describe the gladness of the people. *Because,* etc. The temple now commenced was the outward sign of God's presence with His people, and from His presence flows an unfailling stream of blessing. With good reason, therefore, were the people joyful. They knew now that God's mercy never fails, although, like the prodigal (Luke 15 : 11-24), they had wandered far from Him.

Vs. 12, 13. *Many . that had seen the first house* (the first temple, built by Solomon, 1 Kgs., ch. 7, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kgs. 25 : 9, in 586 B.C., now fifty-one years ago) . *wept.* The cause of their tears is not far to seek. They recalled the misfortunes of their youth, their sorrows in exile, the friends they had lost. Besides, no new building could have for them the associations of the old. Then, too, it was now "the day of small things," Zech. 4 : 10. The numbers and resources of the returned exiles seemed sadly inadequate to the great task before them. *Many shouted . for joy.* The younger people had no such sad memories as the older ones. They were bubbling over with gladness at their deliverance, and the future for them was rosy with bright anticipations. *Noise . of joy . noise . of weeping.* The one was as loud as the other. *Shouted with a loud shout.* "This, which would scarcely be possible among ourselves, was not unnatural in the East, where those who lament utter shrill cries, instead of weeping silently." (Pulpit Commentary.)

## II. The Work Hindered, Ch. 4 : 1-5.

Ch. 4 : 1. *The adversaries . heard ;* that is, the people living in Palestine at the time of the Jews' return. They were a mixed people made up of : (1) the descendants of those belonging to the Northern kingdom who had escaped captivity; (2) colonists from Babylonia, Persia and Elam, who had been sent to Palestine by Sargon (2 Kgs. 17 : 24), Esarhaddon (v. 2), and Assur-banipal (Asnapper) (v. 10), kings of Assyria. These people were called Samaritans from the old capital of the Northern kingdom. *Children (people) of the captivity ;* a title recalling their past calamities,

as "children of the province" (of Judah, now part of the Persian empire), in ch. 2 : 1, indicates their new position in their old home.

Vs. 2, 3. *Came to Zerubbabel ;* the leader of the Jewish people and Governor of Judah under King Cyrus. (Compare *Light from the East.*) *Then they said . Let us build with you.* This might have seemed a tempting offer to those who greatly needed help. But no real assistance in God's work could come from such a source. *For we seek your God.* These people sought to be reckoned amongst the worshippers of Jehovah, while at the same time they worshipped idols, 2 Kgs. 17 : 41. But the Lord will not share His glory with another, Isa. 42 : 8. *Since the days of Esarhaddon* (the successor of Sennacherib, see Lesson I., Third Quarter), *king of Assur* (Assyria). See on v. 1. *Our God.* Sent into exile as a punishment for idolatry, the Jews returned hating idols and worshipping only the true God. *As king Cyrus . commanded.* The Jews back their refusal by referring to Cyrus' decree (see Lesson III.), which gave authority to build the temple exclusively to themselves. At the same time they distinctly refuse to admit that the religion of the Samaritans is the same as theirs.

Vs. 4, 5. *The people of the land ;* the Samaritans as opposed to the Jews. *Weakened the hands ;* by a continuous policy of terrifying and bribing. *Troubled ;* terrified. *Hired counsellors.* The meaning is, that they paid officials (probably connected with the satrapy of Syria, to which Palestine belonged), to make an unfavorable report about the Jews to the Persian Court. Cyrus died in 529 B.C.; and his son and successor, Cambyses, reigned till 522 B.C., when Darius came to the throne. Thus the opposition of the Samaritans lasted fifteen years, from 536 B.C. to 521 B.C., the second year of Darius (see v. 24).

### Light from the East

ZERUBBABEL—Has usually been identified with Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah already mentioned as the official leader of the exiles in their return; but the tendency among modern scholars is to deny the identification. The names are both foreign, not Jewish, and there is no hint in the narrative that they belong to the same person. If Sheshbazzar

could be identified with Shenazar of 1 Chron. 3 : 18, one of Jeconiah's sons, and the uncle of Zerubbabel, the case would be clearer. Perhaps the truth is, that the foundations of the temple were really laid by Sheshbazzar and his companions, in the second year after the return, that is in 537 ; but owing to the activity of the enemies of Israel the work was delayed fifteen years. It was revived again under the repeated appeals of Haggai and

Zechariah, when in all likelihood Zerubbabel succeeded Sheshbazzar, and when a series of revolts throughout the Persian empire seemed to promise some success in setting up an independent kingdom of Judah. And the founding in 537 may have been so purely formal as to be left out of account altogether by Haggai and Zechariah. It is remarkable that Zerubbabel himself drops suddenly and entirely out of Jewish history.

### APPLICATION

*They set the priests . . . and the Levites . . . to praise the Lord, v. 10.* There is a special joy in beginnings. This belongs above all to the

Joy in  
Beginnings

young. Before them life with its bright prospects and its golden opportunities is just opening out. Theirs is the eager enthusiasm that presses open the door leading into the rich storehouse of knowledge, theirs the hopeful confidence that starts out fearlessly on new and untried paths, theirs the keen vision that sees better things ahead, and the bold aggressiveness that resolves to reach them. Nor is there any fear of failure and disappointment in the end, if only our plans please the Lord. When our work is such as He smiles on, we may well praise Him at the beginning. For He will prosper us and give us good success. No enterprise can fail in which He is a Partner.

*They sang together . . . in praising and giving thanks, v. 11.* Yonder yacht lies becalmed in the middle of the lake. Motionless it rests

"If You Can  
Sing"

on the glassy surface, mocking the impatience of the sailors. But at last the wind rises and fills the sails, and then the boat dances swiftly and merrily over the waves, as if some power had suddenly endowed it with life. Like the breeze that propels the vessel, is the gift of sacred song in the church. It awakens the sleeping energies of its members, it incites them to enthusiastic effort which no hindrance can withstand. "The devil cannot bear singing," said Martin Luther ; and when Mr. W. T. Stead, after visiting Wales, was asked if the revival would spread to England, he replied, "If you can sing."

*The old men . . . wept with a loud voice (Rev. Ver.), v. 12.* The present is like an island in

the great ocean of life. Here we just touch,

"The Best is  
Yet to Be"

to set out again at once for the rest of the voyage. We look back, and, forgetting all the storms and hardships, remembering only the gentle breezes and the sunny days, we wonder whether the future can be as good as the past. Like these old men, we may linger over the memory of joys that are gone, and be filled with dread of the unknown track that lies before us. But for the child of God nothing behind can be as blessed as what awaits him. Our cup may have been full of God's goodness, but never has there been offered to us so sweet a draught as we shall quaff when it is filled from heaven. The poet truly sings :

"Grow old along with me,  
The best is yet to be."

*The children of the captivity builded a temple unto the Lord (Rev. Ver.), ch. 4 : 1.* Our churches and schools are like twin fountains

Church  
and School

in the land. From them flow streams that sweeten and purify national life. The church teaches us that the highest and noblest aim for men is to honor and serve God ; while the school stores the mind with knowledge and trains its powers for the work of life. The fear of God and all kinds of true learning go hand in hand. Piety and intelligence are close companions. The best educated man is the one who does the will of God, not blindly, but because his reason, as well as the Bible, tells him that so he will find real happiness. Of the nation where church and school work in blessed partnership, Whittier says that it—  
"Nor heeds the sceptic's puny hands,  
While near the school the church spire stands.  
Nor fears the blinded bigot's rule,  
While near the church spire stands the school."

*Let us build with you*, v. 2. It is a good thing to wish to help in the work of the church. How natural and right for one with

**The First Thing**

a good voice to desire a place in the choir, or for one who has a talent for business to aspire to a share in the management of the congregation's finances. But the very first thing for us to do, if we wish to have any part in God's service, is to give ourselves to Him. Then His blessing will rest upon us as we seek to use our talents for Him.

*Ye have nothing to do with us*, v. 3. We need not expect God always to accept our offers of service immediately. Joshua at first

**Must Ring True**

declined the offer of the Israelites to serve the Lord, Josh. 24 : 19. And our Lord Himself repelled at the outset a man who wished to

follow Him, Luke 9 : 57, 58. In both cases, the refusal was intended as a test. Those who would serve God must be sincere. We must be ready to do His whole will from the heart, or we cannot be numbered among His servants.

*The people of the land weakened the hands . . . troubled them . . . hired counsellors against them . . . until—*, vs. 4, 5. Yes, there is always an

**God's "Until"**

"until" to opposition against any good cause. The enemies, for example, of temperance and of Sabbath observance may seem to be having things all their own way. Timid, faint-hearted people may fear that their foes will triumph. But they have power only "until" God puts forth His might and sweeps their plans into wreck and ruin. The final victory is for the good.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Connect this Lesson with the last. The Jews found Jerusalem in ruins, the walls and gates were broken down. It was a most disheartening spectacle. Note the fact, that in the beginning of their new life they gave special attention to religion. They erected an altar on the site of the former altar. They also offered sacrifices, began the celebration of the great festivals, and called for free-will offerings for the building of the temple, ch. 3 : 1-5. Their first need was to provide homes for themselves, and to this they gave their early attention. They commenced the building of the temple in the month of May in the second year of their return. This is called Zerubbabel's temple, as he was the leader in promoting its erection.

1. Note the laying of the foundations, and the mingled emotions, vs. 8-13. See the arrangements and ritual followed. Why? Observe the great joy of the people. What had the captivity done for them? Why did the young men rejoice, and the old men weep? Note the place of emotion in the religious life.

2. Consider the hindrances, ch. 4 : 1-5. What was the origin of the Samaritans? (Compare 2 Kgs. 17 : 24, 33.) Their religious life and influence? Grasp fully the position

of the Jews. Was it justifiable? Trace the effect on the building of the temple and the subsequent political jealousies. Note the policy of the enemy and their influence at court. How account for the indifference of Cyrus? What was the effect on Israel?

3. Follow the progress of the building, ch. 5. Notice the zeal of the leaders. Observe the part that Haggai (Hag., chs. 1, 2) and Zechariah (ch. 12) had in stirring up the people. The new ruler was also favorable to the work, and it was rapidly pushed forward. The dedication took place with great joy (ch. 6 : 16) in 516, just 70 years after the final destruction of the city.

Review the place the temple had in the religious life of Israel. It was necessary for the continuity of the spiritual life on their return. It is well to note the Jews' conception of the temple, and the reason why its dedication was the occasion of great joy.

Next discuss the influence of the temple in New Testament thought (compare 1 Cor. 3 : 10-16) and organization. Note the spirituality and universality of the New Testament ideal of the temple, the human spirit. Teach the necessity of having this temple worthy of God, and the joy that comes when it is God's abode.

The practical application is to consider whether our lives are being builded for God.

Urge the importance of keeping the life ready for God, and especially of repairing any defects that may occur in the spiritual temple of the soul.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

A piece of building begun, but not finished, is the day's lesson. To the questions: Where was it? What was it? Who had it in charge? When was it? there should be precise answers. Get at these by a review of last Sabbath's Lesson, with God's work in the spirit of Cyrus, the king's proclamation, and the response to it; drill the class also in the facts contained in Connecting Links. A few questions too on what purpose the temple served: why it was of such supreme importance in the spiritual and national life of the people; also on the services of the temple; will help. Anything, indeed, that will impress on the scholars the cardinal importance of not only individuals', but a nation's recognizing God and worshipping Him in the way of His own appointment.

Now for the foundation laying. Little about the actual stone and mortar business (see v. 7); but some most interesting details of what accompanied this, vs. 10-13.

"The builders," v. 10. Is it the leaders, Zerubbabel and Jeshua (see Exposition), who are meant; or the mechanics and laboring men? What matters it? They were all working together, as should leaders and the rank and file in every great enterprise.

"The priests in their apparel." See Exposition for details. Their very best array was not too good when God's house and work were in the case.

"With trumpets"—to summon the multitudes (see Exposition). The trumpet call

was like our hymn, "Come, ye that love the Lord, And let your joys be known!" Religion is not the concern of the few but of all; and all should take a share in the work to be done.

"The Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord." The margin gives the chapter and verse of David's ordinance. The spirit of it was that church music needs study and practice, and is worthy of it. Choirs are, in their way, as important as Boards of Managers or Missionary Committees.

"They sang together," v. 11. The technique of it is described in the Exposition: it was "responsive" singing. Again, the spirit of it, which is the great thing, was spontaneous and hearty.

"Because." Dwell on this. It's a wholesome enthusiasm that is elicited by work for God actually undertaken or done. The enthusiasm of mere song, or even of prayer, may go off in vapor. The old men's tears and the young people's shouts of joy are easily understood. It is the difference between looking backward at one's shadow, and turning one's face to the light.

A good work is almost sure to have its marplots. They were thick here, as ch. 4:1 declares. Who they were the Exposition tells. They showed a fair face, v. 2. But Zerubbabel and Jeshua were discerning men, who knew that it was quality, not quantity, that told; so the offers were rejected. Malicious opposition was the result, and for 15 long years (see Exposition); but God's people have to be anvil as well as hammer—and God is not asleep. He will bring about His purpose in spite of all opposition, as we shall see later.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Lesson Points

None have greater reason for gladness than those who work for God. v. 10.

Unchanging mercy calls for unceasing praise. v. 11.

He who would have happy memories must live a holy life. v. 12.

The best witness for Christ is a joyful Christian. v. 12.

Wherever men dwell, there the gospel should be heard. v. 13.

Sooner will the dashing of the waves wear away the solid rock than will opposition to God's cause prevail. ch. 4:1.

Those who would work for God must first give themselves to God. v. 2.

Church officers should be of a charitable spirit, but they should also be faithful. v. 3.

Human malice against heaven's might—who can doubt the result? v. 4.



The God who sets bounds to the sea can limit the power of the wicked. v. 5.

### Prove from Scripture

That our bodies are God's temples.

### Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

**Juniors**—Who led the Jews in their return from Babylon? What building did they commence soon after their return?

10, 11 Who directed the building of the temple? What sort of wood was used? Where was it got? Where did the builders get stone? How were the priests clothed at the foundation laying? What sort of music was there?

12, 13 Who in the company were sad? Wherefore? Who were joyful? How did they show their gladness?

Ch. 4 : 1-3 Who offered to help in building the temple? Why was their offer refused?

4, 5 Did these people hinder the building of the temple? To whom did they accuse the Jews? Of what?

**Seniors and the Home Department**—How many Jews returned from the captivity? What was the first provision made for worship? When was the rebuilding of the temple commenced?

10, 11 When was the first temple built in Jerusalem? (1 Kgs., ch. 7.) The second? (Ezra 6 : 15.) The third? (John 1 : 19, 20.)

Where is work for Christ likened to building? (1 Cor. 3 : 10-17.)

12, 13 Show that we should love God's house. (Ps. 26 : 8.) Should worship be joyful? (Ps. 122 : 1.)

Ch. 4 : 1-5 What are the Samaritans called in v. 1? The Jews? Why? Explain the origin of the Samaritans. Their religion. Were the Jews right in rejecting their assistance? (Rom. 16 : 17 ; 2 John 10.) How long did their opposition last?

### The Catechism

Ques. 99. *Prayer—its rule.* The Question gives us a twofold rule for prayer : (1) A general rule. (2) A special rule. The general rule is "the whole word of God." This guides us in our prayers, by teaching us what God is, by showing us our own sinfulness and need, and by telling us how to approach God. Then, in the Bible, we find examples of what our prayers should contain—adoration, confession, petition, thanksgiving, consecration, communion. Besides, in all parts of the Bible, there are invitations to pray, and encouragement to believe that our prayers will be answered. The special rule is "the Lord's Prayer," so called because Jesus taught it to His disciples. This is not a form we are bound always to use, but a guide to direct us. It contains three parts : (1) The Preface. (2) The Petitions. (3) The Conclusion.

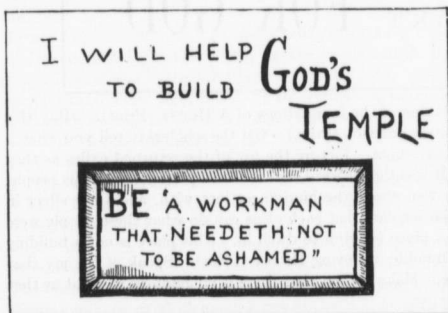
### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God redeeming His people by enabling them to rebuild the temple.

*Introduction*—Have you ever floated bits of stick in the water? Perhaps you have seen

a lumberman's "boom" of logs, and know the way the big trees are chopped down in the woods and floated down the stream to the sawmill, where they are sawed into boards ; or you have seen the quarrymen taking great stones from the quarries, to build houses with.

*The Old Home City*—Outline some hills with some houses amongst them. Here is Jerusalem. Walls broken down ! No temple ! Few houses left ! This is what the old home city looked like when God's people



got back from Babylon. Do you remember how they were sent back? (Recall Lesson.)

*The Altar Built*—Here we see them gathered in Jerusalem. An altar (outline), is built, and offerings placed on it (explain), and God is worshipped again on the old temple hill. But they must also rebuild the temple.

*Getting Ready to Build*—When we want to build a church, what do we do? Get money? Yes, people should be glad to give money to build a house for God. Then we get the material (explain). Next we get the masons, who build with stone or brick, and the carpenters who build the wooden parts. Then we lay the foundation. Then the walls are built up, etc., and the building is ready.

*The Timber Floated to Joppa*—The people in Jerusalem hired masons and carpenters. Then they went to the men on the sea coast and gave them provisions (food, drink, oil), and sent them away up to the mountain of Lebanon (map), to bring down logs of cedar to the sea. These were floated down to Joppa, and then drawn up to Jerusalem.

*Laying the Foundation*—Describe (using blackboard, sand tray, or building blocks) the scene when the foundation is laid. See the priests in their splendid robes, with trumpets blowing and cymbals clashing, all praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, "for His mercy endureth forever." "And the

people shouted," etc. See those old grey-haired men! If we look closely, we shall see tears in their eyes. They are both glad and sad; glad that the new temple is to be built, sad when they remember the beautiful old temple which they had loved.

*Golden Text*—Our Golden Text tells us of another kind of temple. Explain that the body is the house in which God puts our soul.

*A Good Foundation*—Little people, just beginning life, are just laying the foundation of the "body temple." We must do all we can to make a good strong foundation, by taking great care of our bodies. Plain food, fresh air, and exercise, are good foundation stones. Then we can, with God's help, build up a beautiful character inside our body temple. OBEEDIENCE, REVERENCE, HELPFULNESS, are some good foundation stones. (Print on oblong blocks.)

*Helping in God's Work*—Another method may be used, and ways named, in which little ones may do actual work in connection with the work of God's house.

*Something to Draw at Home*—Draw a foundation stone. Print, "I'LL HELP TO BUILD GOD'S TEMPLE."

*Something to Remember at Home*—I may help in God's work.

*Hymn*—Sing, with appropriate gestures, Hymn 532, Book of Praise.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

## A HOUSE HEART FOR GOD

The Lesson tells us about the laying of the foundations of A HOUSE (Print). But this was no ordinary house. It was a house FOR GOD (Print). Get the scholars to tell you what it was called, where it was built, and by whom. Picture the joy of the returned exiles as they began the building of the temple. It was the outward sign of God's presence with His people, and for this they were glad. Ask, too, about the hindrances met with, and their effect in stopping the work. Now remind the scholars that each of us can do what these people were so glad to do—we can offer to God a place for Him to dwell in. This place is not a building of wood or brick or stone: it is a humble, believing HEART (Print). Speak of the joy that God's presence in the heart will give. Make it clear that there is no gladness so great as that which He gives.

## Lesson V.

## POWER THROUGH GOD'S SPIRIT

October 29, 1905

Zechariah 4: 1-10. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 8-10. Read chs. 1 to 8.

GOLDEN TEXT—Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.—Zechariah 4: 6.

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.

2 And I said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have <sup>2</sup>looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with <sup>2</sup>a bowl upon the top of it, and <sup>2</sup>his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying,

Revised Version—<sup>1</sup>he; <sup>2</sup>seen; <sup>3</sup>its; <sup>4</sup>there are seven pipes to each of the lamps; <sup>5</sup>And I; <sup>6</sup>headstone with shoutings of; <sup>7</sup>even these seven, which are;

## LESSON PLAN

- I. The Vision, 1-3.
- II. The Explanation, 4-7.
- III. The Promise, 8-10.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Power through God's spirit, Zech. 4: 1-10.  
 T.—Fear not! Zech. 8: 1-13. W.—Recommencing the building, Ezra 8: 1-5. Th.—The building finished, Ezra 6: 13-22. F.—Encouragement to work, Haggai 1: 1-15. S.—God's presence, Haggai 2: 1-9. S.—Power in weakness, 1 Cor. 1: 18-31.  
 Shorter Catechism—Ques. 100. What doth the

This is the word of the Lord unto Zerub'babel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerub'babel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the <sup>6</sup>headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

8 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

9 The hands of Zerub'babel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.

10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerub'babel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

are seven pipes to each of the lamps; <sup>5</sup>And I; <sup>6</sup>headstone with shoutings of; <sup>7</sup>even these seven, which are;

preface to the Lord's prayer teach us? A. The preface of the Lord's prayer (which is, Our Father, which art in heaven) teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.

The Question on Missions—41. Give the names and population of the seven central stations where our missionaries live and work. Indore City, 83,000; Mhow City, 27,000; Neemuch City, 20,000; Rutlam City, 21,000; Ujjain City, 33,000; Dhar City, 18,000; Amkhat District, with Bhil population of 218,000.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 272; 251; 44 (Ps. Sel.) 116 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 111.

## EXPOSITION

Time and Place—November, 520 B.C.; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—During the rest of the reign of Cyrus, who died in 529 B.C., and that of his son and successor, Cambyses, the opposition of the Samaritans to the Jews continued, and nothing was done towards proceeding with the building of the temple, the foundation of which had been laid in 537 B.C. In 522 B.C. Darius Hystaspes (a different person from "Darius the Mede," Lesson II.) became king. In the second year of Darius (521 B.C.) God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the people and quicken their zeal. To the young Zechariah were given in a single night a series of eight visions, recorded in chs. 1-8. The Lesson is from the fifth of these.

## I. The Vision. 1-3.

V. 1. The angel; sent to explain the visions to Zechariah, ch. 1: 13, 14, 19; 2: 3; 4: 1, 5; 5: 10; 6: 4. The vision was one method by which God conveyed His messages to men. To understand His visions the prophet needed divine guidance, as we do in our study of God's

word. Came . . . and waked me. He had slept after the first series of visions. Now a new series is beginning. To take these in he must be roused to the keenest attention.

Vs. 2, 3. What seest thou? A question to cause the prophet to look more closely at the vision. A candlestick (see Light from the East) all of gold. The Hebrew word here used for "candlestick" is always used for the candlestick in the Tabernacle, which also was all of gold (Ex. 25: 31) and is estimated to have been worth over \$25,000. Solomon's temple had ten such candlesticks, 1 Kgs. 7: 49. Zerubbabel's had but one. A representation of this candlestick is found on the Arch of Titus in Rome, which commemorates his destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. A bowl upon the top; a reservoir or tank for a reserve supply of oil. Seven pipes; a pipe for each lamp, connecting it with the reservoir. No special significance is given in the angel's explanation to the pipes and reservoir. They do, however, picture: (1) The connection between believers and Christ, John 15: 4; (2) The common Source (John 8: 12)

from which all must draw who are to give light to the world, Matt. 5 : 14. *To each of the ("seven") lamps* (Rev. Ver.). God always provides an abundant supply for human needs. *Two olive trees*. The oil usually burned in lamps was olive oil. These olive trees were to supply a perennial flow, an unending spring of oil, through the two pipes (see v. 12) connecting them with the reservoir. The olive is an evergreen, bearing a bluish black fruit like a small plum. Oil is extracted from the olives by pressing them.

### II The Explanation, 4-7.

Vs. 4-6. *What are these, my lord?* Here, as elsewhere, the meaning of God's message does not lie on the surface. It requires diligent search to find it. *Knowest thou not?* Those who seek are sure to find. *This is the word of the Lord.* The vision was the way in which God chose to speak. *Unto Zerubbabel.* "Zerubbabel was apparently no David. He was not the man for a great emergency. . . Born a captive, the son of a captive, he seemed to have inherited or acquired something of the craven spirit of the slave. . . And naturally enough his own feeling of insufficiency infected the people with timidity and doubtfulness." (Dods.) The vision was meant to give leader and people a firm confidence that they would succeed in their work, notwithstanding the opposition of their enemies (see Lesson IV). *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit.* This is what God would say. Not by wealth, nor armies, nor numbers, nor the greatness of material things, can the work before the people be accomplished. God is in the matter, and He can accomplish the mightiest results by the feeblest instruments. "You cannot ever measure the light by looking at the wick, or at the amount of oil each bowl can contain; but only by looking at the source whence the oil is supplied." (Dods.) *Lord of hosts*; that is, as the "One who is supreme over untold 'hosts' of spiritual or other agencies, whom He can employ to give effect to His purposes." (Hastings' Bible Dictionary.)

V. 7. *Great mountain.* The mountain in this case was poverty, ruins, opposition, hatred, indifference, together with ever present indolence, timidity, unbelief and selfishness. *Become a plain*; that is, be swept out

of the way. *Bring forth the headstone*; that is, bring the work to a completion, put on the top stone that would complete the building. *Grace, grace unto it*; the pæan of joy over the completed work. It is "as if they had said, 'How beautiful! How God's gracious favor rests upon it!'" (Peloubet.)

### III. The Promise, 8-10.

Vs. 8, 9. *Moreover.* God had spoken to the prophet in a picture. Now He will declare His purpose in plain words. *Hands of Zerubbabel.* . . finish it. If Zerubbabel had made a failure in the past, as likely he had, it will be different in the future. What a difference there is, not only in a man's life, but in his work, when the Spirit of God takes possession of him! *Thou shalt know.* When he should see the fulfilment of this prophecy, Zechariah would have full assurance that the angel's message had come from Jehovah.

V. 10. *Who hath despised the day of small things?* In territory, in population, in resources, in power, it was a day of small beginnings with the Jews. But God was with them, and that made their success certain. *They* (that is "the eyes of the Lord") *shall see the plummet.* See Light from the East. The plummet was the symbol of the head builder or architect. Thus we have here a renewed assurance that Zerubbabel will successfully complete the work he has begun. *Those seven . . . eyes of the Lord.* Compare ch. 3 : 9. The "eyes" stand for the universal providence by which God governs all things. This is exercised on behalf of Zerubbabel; therefore the people should have confidence in him and in the success of his undertaking.

### Light from the East

CANDLESTICK—Wherever this word occurs throughout the Bible we should read lamp. The ancients had no such thing as our candlestick. This lamp, or more properly lampstand, was modeled upon the one in the temple, whose six branches were all hollow and were connected with the central hollow stem, which formed the seventh, so that the oil poured into it rose to the top of them all and was burned by a wick laid in a tiny spout. The olive trees growing so near, indicate the perennial source of the oil which is the symbol of the Spirit.

**PLUMMET**—The plumbline used by the masons of Syria and Palestine to-day consists of a small cylinder of wood, about three inches in length. In the middle of it there is a hole through it crosswise, through which a cord passes freely, and one end of this cord is attached to a ring in the base of a hollow cone of copper filled with lead. The diameter of

the base of this cone is exactly the same as the length of the piece of wood. One end of the wood is pressed against the top of the wall and the weight is allowed to descend slowly. If the rim of the base just touches the stones all the way down, the wall is perpendicular. To test the wall in this way was the finishing touch to the building.

### APPLICATION

*The angel that talked with me*, v. 1. This same angel and multitudes of his glorious companions are still doing their work for men. Are they not all "ministering spirits" to the "heirs of salvation"? The messenger who announced to the watching shepherds the Saviour's birth, the strong helper who came to Jesus in the agony of the garden, the bright heralds of the resurrection, the heavenly guide of the God-fearing Cornelius, not one of these is idle, nor any of the great host that throng the courts above. At the command of their Lord they come, swifter than the wind, bringing instruction and comfort and cheer to every child of God. With these guides and protectors at our side, every path is safe and happy. Perils are thick about them, but they can never perish.

*Waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep*, v. 1. "For so He giveth unto his beloved in sleep," we should probably translate Ps. 27 : 2. And beautiful as the old translation is, there is even more in the new.

While we sleep, physical refreshing and renewal come to us. Without our care or watching, the grain grows for the morrow's food. And more than this, God often gives to us in sleep joyful thoughts, and makes known to us, as we slumber, His holy will. It was growing late one Saturday night, Mr. Spurgeon tells us, and his sermon would not come. He retired to rest, and awakened late, thinking there was now no time to prepare. But he was told that he had preached the sermon in his sleep, and the one who had listened, while he was all unconscious of his speech, reported it to him.

*What seest thou?* v. 2. Revelation does not dispense with man's faculties. The angel's information, valuable as it was, could

only be of service to the prophet as he stirred himself to learn it. No one can see with another's eyes. To the botanist the veriest weeds by the wayside have an interest all their own and a story to tell. But only he can read it who has opened his eyes from the sleep of self-satisfied ignorance and stopped to behold it. Nor is our case different in the study of God's word. It is full of glorious truths and sublimest images, but they lie hidden from the casual and inattentive glance. Before the angel speaks to us, he asks, "What seest thou?"

*A candlestick all of gold*, etc., v. 2. The Christian religion is the only true and perfect light in the world. It shines both through the Bible and the life of Christian people. How needful that nothing should distort or obstruct its ray! When the machinery in a lighthouse had become deranged, the men themselves by their own strength kept the great light revolving, and even when wearied, kept toiling at their task, for they said a hundred men on the dangerous deep had their eye upon that light, and if it proved false in its revolutions, it would deceive them and a hundred lives would be the penalty. Let us see to it that the Light of the World be not dimmed by our misdeeds nor distorted by our misrepresentations of it, but shine in all its scriptural clearness and brilliancy, for by it alone can the millions tossed on the restless sea of time find the haven of peace and life.

*Two olive trees by it*, v. 3. These olive trees gave of their life to feed the lamps. And it is personal power that counts in spreading the gospel. The gospel started from a living Person, Jesus Christ. His words had power because He lived them before He spoke them

Unseen  
Helpers

With Opened  
Eyes

Gifts  
in Sleep

A True  
Light

Personal  
Power

And when He sent men forth to preach, He imparted to them a power that changed their own lives. Men believed the gospel they preached, because they saw what it had done for them and in them. We can all do something to increase the influence of the gospel. But first we must get linked with Christ, as the machine to the dynamo. Then behind all our efforts will be a force that cannot fail.

*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit,* v. 6. One of the greatest of modern preachers had a stained glass window placed in the robing room of his church.

**The Touch that Quickens** The picture was that of Jesus and the man of Galilee "that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech." At the left stands Jesus, His arms stretched out that His fingers may touch the lips of the man who has just been brought to Him. This was the preacher's way of reminding himself and all his successors that the power to speak wisely and strongly comes from God alone.

*The day of small things,* v. 10. The wide fields of golden harvest began first with a few ripened grains; the snow storm that accumulated the mighty avalanche on **Small Beginnings;** the mountain side began with **Great Endings** few fleecy flakes; a few humble fishermen first preached the gospel that is to command the listening ear of all the world;

Geddie arrives in Aneityum alone, and in time all on that island become Christians; Mackay shows his watch to some frightened boys in Formosa, and inaugurates a mission that is destined to sweep thousands into the kingdom. Great movements have their day of small things. It is not the size of the undertaking, but the power that is behind it that is of the greatest moment. The might that moves the world is with every Christian worker.

*Who art thou, O great mountain? . . . thou shalt become a plain,* v. 7. Within the last century how many mountains that blocked the way of missionary progress have been levelled. There is the mountain of distance.

Steamships and railways have made rapid and easy the journey to heathen lands, once so long and wearisome. There is the mountain of approach. At the beginning of modern missions many lands were closed against the missionary. Now almost every country is open, so that he may enter freely and declare his message. There is the mountain of language. Instead of a few translations of the scriptures a century ago, there are now four hundred. Looking at these mountains become plains, who can doubt that every hindrance to God's work will vanish. The joy of success will be theirs who serve Him.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades of the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

It is important to keep the historical background clearly before the class. The foundation of the temple had been laid, but the work had been seriously hindered. Zechariah took a deep interest in urging the completion of the building. It is well to cast a glance at the eight visions, and the special difficulties they had in view. Briefly note Zechariah's parentage and position, ch. 1 : 1; Ezra 5 : 1. The vision of the lesson was given to encourage Zerubbabel in his work. This was a great undertaking, with few workers, limited resources, and half-hearted supporters.

1. Describe the "vision, going into details. Use a sketch or picture. Compare with the

golden candlestick in the tabernacle and those in Solomon's temple. Note the seven lamps, the seven pipes leading to the lamps and the two olive trees.

2. Turn to the interpretation. It symbolized the Jewish nation as the representative of God's kingdom. Its mission was to shine. The object was to teach Zerubbabel to rely upon God. Just as the lamps are not supplied by human hands, but are fed from the olive trees, so Zerubbabel is to learn, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Had the Jew been eager for great material aid or wealth or power? This was to encourage him to trust in God. He was taught that God's power was equal to his needs, and that he should go forward. In view of this divine help, why should Zerubbabel be discouraged? Who was the moun-

tain? Did it mean Persia, the apostate Jew, the Samaritan, or all combined? These would disappear as Zerubbabel went forward. The copestone would be laid with rejoicing. Verse 7 expresses this in plain language. Evidently Zerubbabel has been despised by the people, and this would inspire confidence.

Having grasped the central truth, place it in relation to present conditions. To the Jews it meant, that, with limited resources, by God's help they could build the temple. To us it means, that the Holy Spirit is necessary to build up character for God. The symbol of light is common in scripture (compare Matt. 5 : 14-16 ; John 8 : 12).

Teach two lessons :

(1) The source of power is God's Spirit. This does not do away with human power, but directs and perfects it. History supplies many illustrations where obstacles have been swept away by revivals of spiritual power.

(2) The necessity of human co-operation. Man must be in spiritual communion with God (compare John, ch. 15). Apply this to the life and work of the church now confronting many problems. We need more God-directing influence. True success is not based upon material things, but on spiritual principle. Emphasize the truth that every life needs this power, and can have it.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Turn to Matt. 5 : 14, and have the class read the first sentence of the verse. It is Christ's own saying of His followers. It was a bright day for the world when they began to be ; and dark would the world be to-day and all the days without them. The scholars will accept the fact ; and will feel, too, the responsibility.

But there is a deeper question. How is the light enkindled, and how kept up? The Lesson to-day helps to the understanding of this, especially to the understanding of how that divinely kindled light is sustained.

It was a Lesson partly to the eye and partly to the ear, and altogether to the spirit within.

The "angel" of v. 1, is already a tried teacher. Four lessons (the four preceding visions) he had already given—wonderful things shown and explained. No wonder the astonished and enraptured prophet felt the

need of "recess"; and no wonder he fell asleep (see Luke 9 : 32). Poor human nature can only take in so much before becoming exhausted.

"Waked me"; for there was still more to be seen and heard. When God takes in hand to teach a man, He will not cease until the whole lesson has been given.

"What seest thou?" And what did he see? It would be difficult to make a picture of it with pen or pencil. Beyond the seven-branched candlestick, or lamp-stand, with whose shape and appearance we are familiar, and which is readily drawn, it is best not to try. But drill the scholars thoroughly in the items of what the prophet saw.

"A candlestick"; or lamp-stand such as was in the Tabernacle and the temple. Does it mean the church as a light-giver, giving forth to the world God's light of holiness, love, mercy, and helpfulness? "All of gold"—the most precious metal, indestructible : a fit image for God's church, which is the highest and most glorious of earthly societies, and the only one which will outlive all change and is eternal.

The "bowl" is for the oil to feed the "lamps"; the lamps are "seven," the perfect number. Do the lamps stand for God's servants, who make up the church? And is not the oil from the "olive trees" the blessed Holy Spirit of God, the source of the light—its beginning and its continuance. Who are the "two olive trees"? The prophet presses the question, vs. 11, 12. The answer is in v. 14—Jeshua, God's priest to atone, Zerubbabel God's minister to instruct and guide. Through these the knowledge and the Spirit of God came to the people. And do not these two unite in Christ Jesus, our priest and prophet, in whom the Spirit dwells and through whom He descends upon God's children.

It is all a little dazzling and puzzling? So it was to the prophet; and so is the sun in the heavens, when you try to gaze with open eye into his burning face. But a little bit is revealed, vs. 6, 7. Have the class read these verses, and bring out by questions who Zerubbabel was, and why he needed encouragement. How would the great message of v. 6 encourage him? What may we learn from it when fighting the Lord's battles against foes within

or without ; and when doing the Lord's hard work ? And one little bit more—just what Zerubbabel and the people in their discouragement needed to know, vs. 9, 10 : the work in hand would be brought to a successful end ; the present beginnings were small—nothing more than a mere laying of founda-

tions ; but the plummet (see Light from the East) would finally demonstrate the whole building completed according to God's plan and in God's providence. (The "seven eyes"—see also ch. 3 : 9—represent God's providence).

The Golden Text sums up the teaching.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Lesson Points

Only those who listen learn the meaning of the heavenly message. v. 1.

The supply of strength from the living Saviour is sufficient for every kind of service. v. 2.

Behind the lips that proclaim, there should be a life ruled by, the gospel. v. 3.

Heaven has an answer for all human questions. v. 4.

He who knows his ignorance is on the path to true wisdom. v. 5.

The arm of the Lord is mightier than the armies of men. v. 6.

No difficulty in the path of duty is so great that it will not disappear before the man of faith. v. 7.

God always gives in overflowing measure. v. 8.

Work commenced with confidence in God will surely be crowned with success. v. 9.

The eyes that see guide the hand that saves. v. 10.

#### From the Library

The Scripture allusions to the olive are very numerous. It is the first tree, of those now known, mentioned in the Bible, Gen. 8 : 11. Its wealth of nourishment made it a natural candidate for the position of king of trees, Judg. 9 : 8, 9. It is an emblem of peace and prosperity (Ps. 52 : 8 ; 128 : 3) and beauty, Jer. 11 : 16 ; Hos. 14 : 6. . . The oil is kept in jars, or in large reservoirs hewn out of the rock, or built with great exactness, and well pointed at the joints, or plastered within. It is used extensively as food, and large quantities of soap of most excellent quality are made by boiling it with crude soda.—Hastings' Bible Dictionary.

That the candlestick is all of gold indicates its excellence—the value, in God's sight, of the church, and of living, shining Christians.—Cowles.

Who raised Joseph from the prison, David from the sheepfold, Daniel from slavery, and converted the world by the fishermen and the tentmaker, having Himself first become the Carpenter ? "Wouldst thou become great ? Become little." "Whenever," said Saint Theresa, "I am to receive some singular grace, I first annihilate myself, sink into my own nothingness, so as to seem to myself to be nothing, be capable of nothing."—Pusey.

The sculptor and the chisel are not two, but one ; it is the unit which they make that carves the stone. We are but the chisel to carve God's statues in this world. Unquestionably we must do the work. But the human worker is only the chisel of the great Artist. The artist needs his chisel ; but the chisel can do nothing, produce no beauty, of itself. The artist must seize it, and the chisel lay itself into his hand and be obedient to him. We must yield ourselves altogether to Christ, and let Him use us. Then His power, His wisdom, His skill, His thought, His love, shall flow through our soul, our brain, our heart, our fingers.—Phillips Brooks.

An enthusiastic religious life is not merely the only saving religious life, it is the only religious life that is safe. The defensive energy of character is born out of its own heat. . . A fiery heart, by the energy of its own heat, creates a self-preserving atmosphere against the devil.—J. H. Jowett.

The duty which falls on the possessor of the power of the Spirit is that of "witnessing." "Ye shall be My witnesses," a testimony for Christ which cannot be given fully till the



power has come, and which will be given in many ways after it has been received.—Dr. J. Elder Cumming.

### Prove from Scripture

That the Holy Spirit gives power.

### Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

**Juniors**—From whose prophecies is the Lesson taken? How many visions had he?

1, 2 Who talked with Zechariah? What was seen in the Lesson vision? How many lamps on the candlestick? Whence did oil for the lamps come? How was it conveyed to the lamps?

4-6 Who was governor of Judah? What building had he commenced? Who were his enemies? From whom was he to get strength to overcome them?

7 To what were Zerubbabel's difficulties likened? What would this mountain become? What would the people shout when the temple was completed?

8-10 Who was watching over the building of the temple? Why was the work sure to succeed?

**Seniors and the Home Department**—Give the date of the Lesson. Who was king of Persia at this time? Who was Zechariah?

1-3 How did the candlestick of Zechariah's vision differ from that in the tabernacle? Of

which divine Person is oil an emblem? (Acts 10: 38; 1 John 2: 20.)

4-7 For whose encouragement was the vision given? How do we enter the kingdom of God? (John 3: 5.) Show that God is the author of all our good acts. (Phil. 2: 13.) Mention Zerubbabel's difficulties.

8-10 What vision of Daniel refers to the growth of God's kingdom from small beginnings? (Dan. 2: 29-45.) What parable of our Lord? (Matt. 13: 31, 32.)

### The Catechism

Ques. 100. *The Lord's Prayer—its preface.* Note three points in this Question: (1) *The Fatherhood of God.* Even the heathen had some dim idea of God as a Father in the sense of being our Maker, the One to whom we owe our existence. (See Paul's address on Mars' Hill, Acts 17: 28.) In the Old Testament, God is more clearly revealed as a Father in such passages, especially, as Ps. 68: 5; 103: 13. In the teachings of Jesus recorded in the Gospels, God's Fatherhood is very prominent (see Luke 12: 32; Matt. 11: 27; John 1: 12). So also in the Epistles (see Gal. 4: 3-5; 1 John 5: 1; Rom. 8: 16, 17). (2) *The Greatness of God.* He is "in heaven," far above us. We must come to Him with reverence, Ps. 11: 4; 123: 1. (3) *The Unity of Believers.* God is "our" Father. Then we are all brethren, Matt. 23: 8, 9.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God redeeming His people by giving them the Holy Spirit.

*Introduction*—We shall print the names of two men who were the chief men in Jerusalem

when the temple was being rebuilt—ZERUBBABEL (the Governor) and JOSHUA (the High Priest).

*Lesson*—In our Lesson to-day we hear about a wonderful message that God sent to Zerubbabel through the prophet Zechariah. Zechariah had a vision. While he was sleeping, an angel came and wakened him, and talked to him. "What do you see, Zechariah?" the angel said. Describe what Zechariah saw (verses 2, 3) (using blackboard). "What do these things mean?" Zechariah asked the angel.



*A Message from God*—Zerubbabel had been getting the temple rebuilt. The foundation was laid (recall last Lesson). It was a great building, and away up on the hill, and the stone and wood and other material had to be brought so far. It was slow work. Perhaps Zerubbabel was getting discouraged.

*Golden Text*—Repeat. The angel gives Zechariah this message from God to Zerubbabel. God said that all the difficult work would be done, and Zerubbabel would finish the temple and even put on the very top stone (as we finish our churches with a tower or spire), and there would be great rejoicings amongst the people.

*God can use the Smallest Things in His Work*—God meant the message for us too. We must never be discouraged when doing work for Him. Even if the beginnings are small, He can make them big enough if the workers are filled with His Spirit. Nothing is too small for God to use. He will give the Holy Spirit to all who ask Him, and then work will go on. Big things, or big people, cannot do God's work unless they have the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

*The Power of a Seed*—In far away India there is a heathen temple in which idols are worshipped. On the roof, some years ago, a

little seed was dropped (outline seed with roots growing from it. It slipped in between the stones. God made it grow, and it sent its roots away down through the mortar, slowly, silently, separating the great stones, until now that idol temple is ready to fall into a mass of ruins.

*A Missionary Thought*—Even little ones, with God's Spirit to help them, may do great work in helping to crush out idol worship amongst the heathen people, and teaching them to love our God. God can make you as useful as he made the little seed in destroying the idol temple. (What can you do?)

*The Golden Candlestick and Olive Trees*—

God wants his people to shine like lights in the world. This they cannot do unless He gives them power, as the oil came from the olive trees.

*Giving of Ourselves for God's Use*—Pipes or tubes lead from the olive trees to the candlestick. God sends His Spirit to give His people power, and they, in turn, do their part, by giving themselves and all they have for God's Use.

*Something to Draw at Home*—Draw a seven branched candlestick, with a tree at each side.

*Something to Remember at Home*—God will make me strong.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

— —THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS?  
 — —O GREAT MOUNTAIN?  
 NOT BY—, NOR BY—, BUT BY—  
 SAITH— — — — —

Print on the blackboard,—THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS? Get the scholars to complete the sentence. Remind them how it was the day of small things with Zerubbabel—"small beginnings, a small people, a small kingdom, small wealth." Next print,—O GREAT MOUNTAIN? and have the sentence completed as before. Point to some of the difficulties that rose up like a mountain before Zerubbabel, such as the poverty, the ruins, the indifference of many Jews, the opposition of the Samaritans, etc. The outlook was surely dark and discouraging enough. But all the same success was certain. Why? Print, NOT BY —, NOR BY —, BUT BY —. The scholars will once more fill in the missing words. Who was on the side of Zerubbabel? Print, SAITH. Who is the Speaker? None other than "THE LORD OF HOSTS." It matters not what the difficulties are when we have His strength. Impress the truth that with the very smallest resources, we can do great things with God's help.

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**A-ha'-va.** A place nine days' journey distant from Babylon (Ezra 7 : 9; 8 : 15, 31), giving its name to a river or canal on which Ezra assembled the people who proposed to go to Jerusalem with him, Ezra 7 : 28; 8 : 31.

**Am'-mon-ites.** A tribe dwelling east of the Jordan who opposed the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah.

**A'-ra'-bi-ans.** Natives of Arabia, the most westerly of the three great peninsulas in southern Asia. Some of them joined the Ammonites in their opposition to Nehemiah.

**Ash'-do-dites.** Inhabitants of Ashdod, one of the chief cities of the Philistines.

**As'-sur.** The same as Assyria, a country on the river Tigris. For 700 years after 1300 B.C. it was the leading power in the East.

**Bab'-y-lon.** The capital of the Babylonian empire, a city on the river Euphrates, 500 miles east of Jerus. lem.

**Bel-shaz'-zar.** The son of Nabonidus who usurped the throne of Babylon. Belshazzar was slain on the night that Babylon was captured by the Medes and Persians, Dan. 5 : 1-31.

**Chal-de'-ans.** A people dwelling originally on the shores of the Persian Gulf, who conquered Babylonia, and afterwards gave their name to the whole of that country.

**Cy'-rus.** King of the Persian Empire from B.C. 558 to 529. Having become ruler of Babylon by conquest, he allowed the captive Jews to return to their own land.

**Dan'-iel.** A Jewish youth carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. He rose to one of the highest positions in that kingdom.

**Da-ri'-us.** Called Hystaspes. He became king of the Persian empire in 522 B.C.

**E'-sar-had'-don.** Son of Sennacherib who became king of Assyria about 680 B.C. He was eminent as a general and a political ruler.

**Es'-ther.** A beautiful Jewish maiden brought up in Susa (Shushan) by her cousin Mordecai. She became the wife of Ahasuerus the Persian king and saved her people from a plot to destroy them (see Mordecai).

**Ez'-ra.** A Jewish priest, who in 458 B.C. led 1,500 of his countrymen back to Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon.

**Hash-a-bi'-ah.** One of the twelve Levites who, along with twelve priests, acted as guardians of the treasure which was being conveyed to Jerusalem by Ezra (see Ezra 8 : 19, 24, etc.). Another of these Levites was Sherebiah.

**Ha'-tach.** An officer of King Ahasuerus who was appointed to attend Esther (see Esth. 4 : 5, 10).

**Jer-e-mi'-ah.** A great prophet, who prophesied for about forty-one years, in the reigns

of Josiah, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, kings of Judah.

**Jesh'-u-a.** Or Joshua, the great military leader who succeeded Moses as the ruler of God's people.

**Jor'-dan.** The most important river in Palestine, flowing through the land from north to south.

**Ju'-dah.** The name of the southern kingdom of the two into which Solomon's kingdom was divided, and after the exile a part of a province of the Persian empire.

**Medes.** A nation belonging to Asia, south of the Caspian Sea, who took part with the Persians in the capture of Babylon.

**Mid'-i-an.** A region east of the Jordan, whose army was routed by Gideon, Judg., ch. 7.

**Mith'-re-dath.** Treasurer under Cyrus, king of Persia, through whom the sacred vessels were restored to the Jews, Ezra 1 : 8.

**Mor-de-ca'-i.** A Jew dwelling in Susa (Shushan), who discovered a plot devised by Haman, the king's favorite, against all the Jews in the Persian empire. He made his discovery known to Esther, the queen, by whom it was defeated. Haman was hanged on the gallows he had erected for Mordecai, and Mordecai became the second man in the kingdom.

**Naph'-ta-li.** The tribe descended from Jacob's sixth son. Their territory was in northern Palestine.

**Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar.** The king of Babylon who carried the people of Judah captive to Babylon in 587 B.C.

**Ne-hem-i'-ah.** A Jew of the captivity who was cupbearer to the king of Persia, and who was appointed governor of Judah. Under him the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt and a political and religious reform effected.

**Nun.** The father of Joshua.

**Per'-sia.** A country in western Asia whose king, Cyrus, conquered Babylon in 538 B.C.

**Per'-sians.** The inhabitants of Persia.

**San-bal'-lat.** One of the leaders in the opposition to the building of the walls of Jerusalem under Jeremiah. Associated with him was Tobiah.

**Sher-e-bi'-ah.** See Hashabiah.

**Shesh-baz'-zar.** The Babylonian name of Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, who in 538 B.C. returned to Jerusalem and laid the foundations of the temple.

**Shu'-shan.** Or Susa, a city and royal residence in the Persian empire.

**To-bi'-ah.** See Sanballat.

**Ze-bu'-lun.** The tribe descended from the tenth son of Jacob. The territory assigned to them was in the northern part of Palestine.

**Ze-rub'-ba-bel.** See Sheshbazzar.

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"A study in black and white"—so the preface describes **Saints and Savages: The Story of Five Years in the New Hebrides**; by Robert Lamb,

M.A. (New Zealand), M.B., Ch.M., B.D. (Edinburgh). Formerly Superintendent and Hon. Superintendent Medical Mission, New Hebrides (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 313 pages, \$2.00). Black enough the savages are painted, as they were before the gospel reached them. But the author shows that "God Almighty's white is hard to beat." This white of heaven's grace he saw in many a heart beating under a dusky skin. It is not only the natives who are photographed for us in this singularly vivid and unaffected book. The camera is turned on the commanders and sailors of war-ships, and the traffickers in labor for the Australian plantations. We see in the picture all the forces of good and evil at work for the making or the marring of human life in these islands of the sea. And for a central figure we have a New Zealand lad, who heard at a missionary meeting the ringing cry from a speaker, "Give us a whole man," and gave himself for the redemption of the New Hebrides. How this lad, William Goddard, struggled to get an education, first in his own and then, as a medical student in Edinburgh, is a tale to nerve and inspire all those beginning life amidst difficulties and obstacles. Then his few short years on the Island of Ambrym, so spent, that when he died, the sailors of the men-of-war, admiring man who could handle a boat as well as any of them, carved in his memory a lectern in oak with the inscription, "He gave his life for the reorganization of these islands"—all this is told in a style so manly and natural, so free from anything approaching the "goody-goody," that it furnishes a model of missionary biography.

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