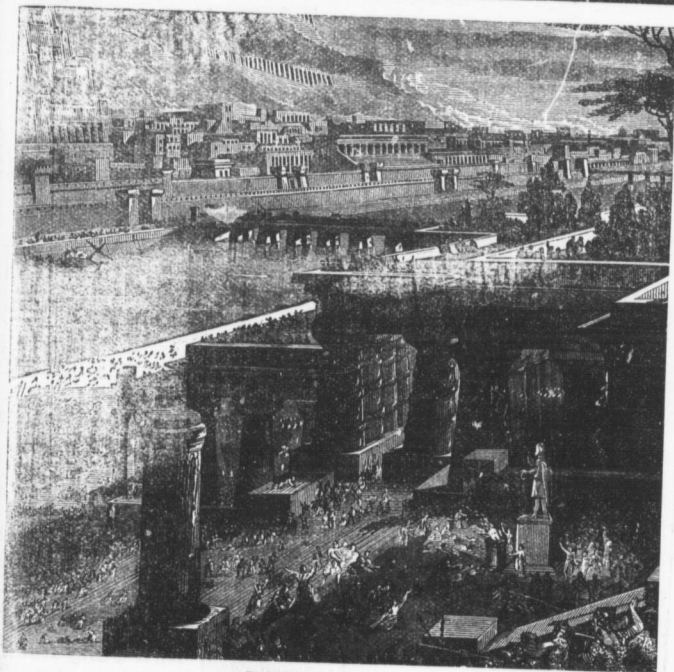


# Sunday School Banner

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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Vol. 39

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 39

SEPTEMBER, 1905

No. 9

## Judge Not.

BY THOMAS BRACKER,  
The New Zealand Poet.

Not understood. We move along asunder,  
Our paths grow wider as the seasons  
creep

Along the years; we marvel and we  
wonder

Why life is life? And then we fall  
asleep—

Not understood.

Not understood. We gather false im-  
pressions,

And hug them closer as the years go  
by,

Till virtues often seem to us transgres-  
sions;

And thus men rise and fall and live  
and die—

Not understood.

Not understood. Poor souls with stunted  
vision

Of measure giants by their narrow  
gauge;

The poisoned shafts of falsehood and de-  
rision

Are oft impelled 'gainst those who  
mould the age—

Not understood.

Not understood. The secret springs of  
action,

Which lie beneath the surface and the  
show,

Are disregarded; with self-satisfaction  
We judge our neighbors, and they often  
go—

Not understood.

Not understood. How trifles often  
change us!

The thoughtless sentence or the fancied  
slight

Destroy long years of friendship and  
estrangle us,

And on our souls there falls a freezing  
blight—

Not understood.

Not understood. How many breasts are  
aching

For lack of sympathy! Ah! day by  
day,

How many cheerless lowly hearts are  
breaking!

How many noble spirits pass away—

Not understood.

O God! that men would see a little  
clearer,

Or judge less harshly where they can-  
not see;

O God! that men would draw a little  
nearer

To one another, they'd be nearer thee—  
And understood.

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## Sunday School Banner

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1905.

### Church Libraries.

AT a recent convention some disparaging remarks were made about Sunday School libraries. This may have arisen from the class of books which are not acceptable to the scholars, or from the fact that the members of the school are not readers, or are spending their time on newspapers and magazines, at any rate the remedy lies with the school itself. It is quite easy to have a small committee appointed to be on the lookout during the year for the most suitable books and to add to them as funds are available. If there are good books in the library, then it is the duty of the teacher to know something about them and to recommend them to the members of his class. It is always in

place for a minister to recommend a good book from the pulpit. It is the duty of the church and Sunday School to mould character, and books strengthen or undermine manhood, and much of the flabbiness of will and the low ideals of youth are due to the fact that there is no one directing the selection of books, and the reading is scrappy and light.

Are we as moulders of character to allow this condition of things to go on? Visit the homes of the people and look at the family library. The people have no strong thoughts on theology, because our sermons are no longer doctrinal, and there are no theological works in the family library. We are greatly in need of church libraries, one in every church, and open on prayer-meeting nights, where strong books, such as the people do not buy, but which they ought to read, may be found. The theological habit of mind existing among Presbyterians is due in a great measure to the church libraries in connection with even the smallest churches in the old land. We have in mind a man who was nonplussed by an atheistic fellow-workman, who, whilst acknowledging defeat, went to the church library and secured Watson's Institutes of Theology, and studied the volumes, and then returned to gain a victory over his opponent.

We have known many working men who became local preachers, who could pass a severe examination on Wesley, Watson and Fletcher, but where will we find that to-day? We must not leave the world of books to the devil. Christ has his place in literature and he is speaking in much of the fiction of to-day, and while many of our people may not read the religious books of fifty years ago, there are classics of devotion and great biographies which will never grow old. How are the people, young and old, to know about these stimulating books in biography, history, sermons, essays and fiction unless some one instructs them, and who is better qualified to do it, and upon whom does the duty devolve but the minister and the Sunday School teacher. A dozen books may form a church library, and an address on books and reading at the prayer-meeting will give it a start, and one year's service will prove that it is beneficial, by more intelligent and interested Christians, better sermons and better hearers and greater work done for Christ. Enlarge, refine, and strengthen the library in the school, and help the people with a library in the church.

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## The Ne'er-Do-Weel.

BY REV. D. GIBB MITCHELL.

A QUAIN little booklet in paper covers, of some 40 pages, given us the Prodigal Son in text and sermon in the "Braid Scots," by Rev. D. Gibb in the "Braid Scots," by the Rev. D. Gibb Mitchell, of Cramond, near Dundee. It is published at John Knox's House, Edinburgh, at "sixpence net"; and a line at the top of the title page, says "Sermons in Braid Scots, No. 1," and we have had a private hint that all the series may not be by Mr. Mitchell. It would seem that the infection (some would call it an affection) of writing in Broad Scotch is spreading.

The author says in his little preface, "A man brocht up in a bonnie clachan, who keepit in his heart a' the quaint rale meanin words o' his kinsfolk, ae nicht ettled to crack wi' his flock in the braid Scottish tongue. He begude canny an' saft wi' a muckle wish to win in the thochts o' the lads an' lasses. They hearkened weel. The house was quate an' the hush bade to the hinneren' o' the hour. They gaed awa, illane to his hame, an' up the by-roads, thro' the glen, to the braes. Syne the preacher heard it was gude." From other sources we learn that he thus preaches occasionally to his flock at Cramond, and that when he does so, he uses for his Scripture—reading the Scotch-Canadian "New Testament in Braid Scots" of W. W. Smith. In the booklet before us he first gives eighteen verses of Luke fifteen, in his own style, as, "Sae he gaed and hired himself to ane o' the burgesses as an oorra-man, an' was budden gang ootby to fodder the swine. Fain wad he hae filled himself wi' the hools that the swine were eatin'; an' fient a aet did a body gie him." Then for sixteen small pages he comments on the parable and its lessons. And all in the Doric. His beginning is very beautiful. "We've a' had oor ain thochts aboot the wa-gang an' the hame-bringin' o' the Ne'er-do-weel. The spendthrift loon is kent be ane an' a'. We hae a bit o' him in oor ain hearts: that's what gars sae

mony o' us take to the story!" A little picture in the front shows the Ne'er-do-weel on a "whumm't trouch," with his elbows on his knees, and his fingers in his "towzie held," thinking. And then he starts home! "Hameward he hirlpes ower the lea, an' he hears the lowin' o' the kye, an' the bleat, bleat, bleatin' o' the sheep, a' bickerin' down the hillside—a fleecy drove—hame to their cosy pen to be fauldit frae the wolves for the night. Abune his held the wild birds screich, as wastlins they flee to their roost 'mang the weuld craggy rocks; an' far abune the sough o' the wind 'mong the pine trees the cushie doo coos an' coos, ower and ower again, as the big reid sun sinks oot o' sicht i' the rosy wad. A 'thing was shoutin' loud at th' pitch o' its voice, 'hame, hame, hame!' An' sae was the prodigal." A sixpence, with a "tippence" for postage, sent in British stamps to Wm. J. Hay, John Knox's House, Edinburgh, will bring to the Scottish reader a dainty "message frae hame."

The Home Department can interest some who have become indifferent. A county secretary writes of one man who had not entered a place of worship in twenty-five years, nor looked into a Bible through a similar period, but who has recently become greatly interested in the study of the Scripture lessons in his home through the efforts of a visitor, and has begun to attend church regularly. A gentleman who felt that he had not time for the half-hour of study required each week, was finally induced to undertake it, and he became so interested that he studied up the back lessons.—Epworth Era.

The striking title of Dr. Gladden's new book, "Where Does the Sky Begin?" suggests the obliteration of unreal distinctions and the union of realms and interests that have been unwisely divided. The sky comes down to earth, and so do many other things which our thought puts far away. The book is a series of discussions of the great themes of the spirit, and its purpose is to bring them very close to the daily life of man. It sums up the convictions and experiences of the author's active life more than any of his previous books have done.

## Missions and Sunday Schools.

The inquiry, "How the superintendent may deepen the missionary spirit in the Sunday School?" when translated into twentieth century gospel language, means, "How can the same good news of the kingdom of Jesus Christ that saves the heathen, when earnestly lived and taught, be lodged in the hearts of the individual members of the home school with such expulsive power that it will force itself beyond its own bounds and comprehend in its grasp the unsaved everywhere in the world?" No art of speech or mere observation of externals will reach the vital end in view. The missionary spirit must be begotten by the Holy Ghost in a genuine love for the souls of men without respect to earthly station or surroundings—a love that looks beneath rags or purple, pauper or prince to the soul for which Jesus Christ yielded up his life.—John R. Pepper.

I have hope that some one will speak the word which will awaken the Sunday School superintendents of this land to the responsibilities that rest upon their shoulders. Years ago it was the custom of our fathers to take the children and insist upon their going to church services—morning service, class meeting, and all the services of the church. It was the rule of the fathers of the past that they have family prayers in the home, and on Sabbath afternoon they gathered together about the home circle and taught the children the way of God, and instilled into their hearts the great fundamental principles of religious life and character.

Somehow the impression has gone out that we are not as careful in these directions as were our fathers; that the children of all these Christian homes have been turned over to the Sunday School and to the young people's societies, and the children's meetings for their religious instruction and training.

If these are the facts, then it seems to me that the Sunday School superintendent, looking out upon the homes all through the community, should realize that upon his corps of teachers rests the responsibility of laying the foundation of Christian character in the hearts of the young.—Willis W. Cooper.

## "He Shall Gather the Lambs."

The Shepherd stood waiting above  
The deep truly hollow;  
He beckoned in tenderest love—  
But the sheep would not follow.

Then he lifted them into the fold,  
And a little they lay there;  
But soon they were out on the world—  
The sheep would not stay there.

He said they would starve where they  
were.

And I saw his eye glisten;  
He pleaded, on fields green and fair,  
But the sheep would not listen.

Then he took up a lamb in his arm;  
"For," he said, "there is danger  
That this darling some tempest should  
harm,  
Or a wolf, or a stranger."

So he held it right up to his heart,  
And he petted and kissed it;  
And it nestled quite close, for its part,  
But the sheep—oh, they missed it!

It is safe on the bright hills above;  
But his tears are still glist'ning,  
And still he is whisp'ring in love—  
And the sheep are now list'ning.

They are seeking a rest, sweet and mild,  
In his wounded hand's hollow;  
They knew he has taken the child  
That the parents may follow.—Ex.

## A Memory.

Because my restless baby feet  
Grew weary in the fruitless quest  
For her whose lovely, silent form  
Had tenderly been laid to rest;  
I hold you close, my little one,  
And pray that you may never miss  
The clinging of a mother's arms,  
The blessing of a mother's kiss.

Because I spent long, lonely hours,  
In childish thought, and wondered  
much,  
And was not soothed and comforted  
By kindly word, or gentle touch;  
I joy to call you child of mine,  
And tighter clasp your chubby hand;  
You shall not lack for mother love,  
For now, at last, I understand.  
Toronto. M. J. B.

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Book Reviews.

"The Child as God's Child." By Rev. Chas. W. Rishell, Ph.D. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 181.

This book, says the author, in his preface, is a plea for the religious rights of the child. These are being more and more recognized as of paramount importance. It claims the right of childhood to membership in Christ's Church, their being trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It treats judiciously the Sunday School and other institutions. If its wise counsels could be but more widely followed it would be well alike for the child, the Church and the State. We commend it to Sunday School and day school teachers, preachers and parents as a help in the training of the young.

"The Cyclopædic Handbook to the Bible." An Introduction to the Study of Sacred Scriptures. By the late Joseph Angus, M.A., D.D. A New Edition. Thoroughly Revised, and in part Rewritten. By Samuel G. Green, D.D. New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company. Pp. xvi-832. Price, \$3.00 net.

The Bible is again in the crucible of criticism. It has been subjected to the most searching tests. The average lay mind, and some preachers as well, are puzzled by the conflicting theories as to its origin, age, integrity, and authenticity. An authoritative work, therefore, that will meet these difficulties, set forth the conclusions of the latest learning and investigation, and give the results of adequate scholarship, is an important desideratum. Such a book is furnished in this great work. It is a vigorous maintenance of what Mr. Gladstone calls "the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture." It treats in its first part the Bible as a book, the formation of the canon and text of both Old and New Testaments, its many versions, its interpretation, its study in relation to doctrine and life. Part II. discusses the books of the Old and New Testaments historically and critically, throws a flood of light on many difficulties, and enables the devout student to give a reason for the faith that is in him. So large a book at the low price of \$3.00 is a marvel of cheapness.

"How to Conduct a Sunday School; or, Twenty-eight Years a Superintendent." By Marion Lawrence. New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company. Pp. 279. Price, \$1.25 net.

Mr. Lawrence is a past-master in this most important art and science, for it is both. He has had over thirty years first hand experience with this problem with remarkable success. "His book," says his pastor, "is at once a history and a prophecy, a history of a splendid service and a prophecy of the better Sunday School that is to be." It is described as an encyclopedia of Sunday School wisdom written by the most experienced writer in the field. He has visited schools in every part of the world, and compared ideas with more workers than anyone person in the land, hence there is a breadth of vision and strength of treatment which makes this book a source of inspiration to all who will read it. It should be in every Sunday School and church library.

Methodist Magazine and Review  
for August.

The August number opens with a well-illustrated descriptive article on Labrador, by the Editor. Then follow illustrated articles on "The Schiller Centenary," "The Russian People," by Rev. R. O. Armstrong, M.A., B.D., and "Tolstoy To-day," by Edward A. Steiner. Our own land receives her share of attention in three well-written articles: "Canada, the El Dorado of To-day," by W. T. Stead, "Outposts of Empire," and "In the Canadian Lumber Camps," the latter an account of the establishment of libraries, night-schools, etc., in these isolated industrial communities. Professor F. H. Wallace completes his scholarly appreciation of "John Knox," and a paper on "The King as a Diplomatist," and one on "Sydney Smith," the "wittiest Englishman of his generation," with the usual departments of Current Topics, Religious Intelligence, etc., complete a capital number of this oldest Canadian magazine.

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## LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—THIRD QUARTER

**Lesson 1.** July 2.—SENNACHERIB'S INVASION. 2 Chron. 32. 9-23. *Commit vs.* 16-21a. (Study the chapter. *Read Isa.* chaps. 36, 37.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** With us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.—2 Chron. 32. 8.

**2 July 9.**—HERZKIAH'S PRAYER. Isa. 38. 1-8. *Commit vs.* 4-6. (Study Isa. 38. 1-23.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.—Psa. 46. 1.

**3 July 16.**—THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR. Isa. 52. 18 to 53. 12. *Commit vs.* 4-6. (Read Isa. 42. 1-12; 49. 1-13; 50. 4-11; 61. 1-3.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** The Lord hath said on him the iniquity of us all.—Isa. 53. 6.

**4 July 23.**—THE GRACIOUS INVITATION. Isa. 55. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 6-8. (Read Isa. chap. 54.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.—Isa. 55. 6.

**5 July 30.**—MANASSEH'S SIN AND REPENTANCE. 2 Chron. 33. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10-13. (Read the chapter.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.—Prov. 14. 34.

**6 Aug. 6.**—JOSHUA'S GOOD REIGN. 2 Chron. 34. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 1-3. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.—Eccles. 12. 1.

**7 Aug. 13.**—JOSHUA AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW. 2 Chron. 34. 14-28. *Commit v.* 21. (Read 2 Chron. chaps.

34, 35, and 2 Kings chap. 22.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** I will not forget thy word.—Psa. 119. 16.

**8 Aug. 20.**—JEHOIAKIM BURNS THE WORD OF GOD. Jer. 36. 21-32. *Commit vs.* 23-24. (Study the chapter. *Read Jer.* chap. 26.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God.—Jer. 26. 13.

**9 Aug. 27.**—JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON. Jer. 38. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 8-10. (Read Jer. chaps. 37-39.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5. 10.

**10 Sept. 3.**—THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21. *Commit vs.* 10-21. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Be sure your sin will find you out.—NUM. 32. 23.

**11 Sept. 10.**—THE LIFE-GIVING STREAM. Ezek. 47. 1-12. *Commit vs.* 3-5. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.—Rev. 22. 17.

**12 Sept. 17.**—DANIEL IN BABYLON. (Temperance Lesson.) Dan. 1. 8-20. *Commit vs.* 16, 17. (Study the chapter. *Read Dan.* 2.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself.—Dan. 1. 8.

**13 Sept. 24.**—REVIEW. **GOLDEN TEXT:** The Lord is thy keeper.—Psa. 121. 4.

## ORDER OF SERVICES—THIRD QUARTER

## OPENING SERVICE.

## I. Silence.

## II. Responsive Sentences. (Psa. 107. 1-9.)

Supt. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good:

School. For his mercy endureth forever.

Supt. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,  
School. Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

Supt. And gathered them out of the lands,  
from the east, and from the west,  
from the north, and from the south.

School. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

Supt. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

School. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

Supt. And he led them forth by the right way.

School. That they might go to a city of habitation.

Supt. Of that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,

School. And for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Supt. For he satisfieth the longing soul.

School. And filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

## III Singing.

## IV. The Ten Commandments, or the Apostles' Creed

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

## VI. Singing.

## LESSON SERVICE.

## I. Class Study of the Lesson.

## II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

## III. Recitation of the Title and Golden Text by the school in concert.

## IV. Review and Application of the Lesson by Pastor or Superintendent.

## V. Additional Lesson. (Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.)

## VI. Announcements (especially of the church service and the Epworth League and week evening prayer-meetings).

## CLOSING SERVICE.

## I. Singing.

## II. Responsive sentences. (Eccles. 12. 13, 14.)

Supt. Fear God, and keep his commandments:

School. For this is the whole duty of man.

Supt. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.

School. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

## 2 Chron. 36.

11 Zed-e-k when he began years in Je-r-

12 And he sight of the himself before from the mou-

13 And he chad-nez'zar, but he stiffer heart from tu-  
ne-l.

14 Moreover the people, tra abominations house of the Je-ru-sa-lem.

15 And the to them by hi and sending; i people, and on

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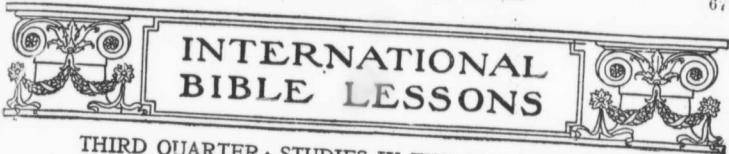
18 And all th great and small, of the LORD, and of his princes; lon.

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# INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS

## THIRD QUARTER : STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### LESSON X. The Captivity of Judah

[Sept. 3

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Be sure your sin will find you out. Num. 32. 23.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION**

**REVISED VERSION.\***

2 Chron. 36. 11-21 [Commit to memory verses 19-21]

11 Zed-e-ki'ah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Je-ru'sa-lem.

12 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Je-re-mi'ah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord.

13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchad-nez'zar, who had made him swear by God; but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.

14 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Je-ru'sa-lem.

15 And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chal'dees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Bab'y-lon.

19 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the walls of Je-ru'sa-lem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Bab'y-lon: where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

21 To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Je-re-mi'ah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years.

11 Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: 12 and he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah his God; he humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of Jehovah.

13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God; but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart against turning unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. 14 Moreover all the chiefs of the priests, and the people, trespassed very greatly after all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of Jehovah which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. 15 And Jehovah, the God of their fathers, sent to them by his messengers, rising up early and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: 16 but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and scoffed at his prophets, until the wrath of Jehovah arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or virgin, old man or hoary-headed: he gave them all into his hand. 18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. 19 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. 20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: 21 to fulfill the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years.

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## Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

*M.* The Captivity of Judah. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21.

*Tu.* Zedekiah's fate. Jer. 39. 1-10.

*W.* Judgment foretold. Jer. 5. 10-19.

*Th.* Great sin. Jer. 32. 26-35.

*F.* Rebellious people. Isa. 1. 1-9.

*S.* Mourning in captivity. Lam. 1. 1-9.

*S.* Rebellion punished. Luke 20. 9-18.

**Time.**—B. C. 597 to 586. **Places.**—Jerusalem and Babylon.

## The Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 98.

Depth of mercy, can there be  
Mercy still reserved for me?  
Can my God his wrath forbear?  
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 101.

Lord, in this thy mercy's day,  
Ere it pass for aye away,  
On our knees we fall and pray.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 100.

With broken heart and contrite sigh,  
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry:  
Thy pardoning grace is rich and free:  
O God, be merciful to me!

## Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *The Sin of Zedekiah* (v. 11-13).—How old was Zedekiah when he became king? How many years did he reign? What power had placed him on the throne? What oath had he taken? What was his character in the sight of Jehovah? What was his general conduct before Jeremiah? What was the special sin of his rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar? Why did rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar at this time imply rejection of the God of Israel?

2. *The Sin of the People* (v. 14-16).—In a theocracy who must be at least equally influential with the king? What is said of the chief of the priests? What did they mingle with the worship of Jehovah? How did they undo the

dedication and holiness of the temple? When the priests failed as messengers of the true religion whom did God send? What three wicked things did they do to God's messengers? What is the wrath of the Lord? What was the besetting sin of the common people of Judah?

3. *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (v. 17-21).—Who was the king of the Chaldees? In what sense did God bring him upon the Jews? How did he treat the people without regard to age or sex? In what sacred place did he kill many? What did he do with the sacred vessels of the temple? What did he do to the temple? How did he treat the remainder of the people? What is meant by "the sabbaths of the land"?

## Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *A Degraded King and People* (v. 11-14).—Who made Zedekiah king of Judah? How old was he when he began to reign? What was the work of Jeremiah, the prophet? How did the king treat the messages which the prophet spoke to him? Did he prove true to his word to Nebuchadnezzar? What is meant by "the abominations of the heathen"?

2. *The Wrath of the Lord* (v. 15-21).—How

did the Lord show his pity toward the people? How did they receive the words of love and favor which the prophets spoke? Why were they angry at these servants of God? Against whom were they fighting? Whom did the Lord bring upon them to destroy them? How far was this work of destruction carried? To what place were many of the people carried as slaves?

## Questions for Younger Scholars

What sad story have we to tell? Who was Nebuchadnezzar? How did he rule the captive nations? What change did he make in Judah? How old was Zedekiah when he became king? Whose grandson was he? Was he like his grandfather? What did he do? Who followed him? How did the Lord try to bring him back?

What did he have to do at last? What was the fate of Solomon's temple? Can you tell what they took away to Babylon? What about the people? What does Jeremiah tell us about it? Can you tell us the story of the escape? Where was the king taken? Why did all this trouble have to come?

## The Lesson Analysis

I. *The Apostasy of Judah.*

1. The king (verses 11-13). Zedekiah (note his age and length of reign), while (a) claiming Jehovah as his God, (b) "did that which was evil" in Jehovah's sight, and (c) rejected

the warnings of Jehovah's prophet. (d) Having secured the throne of Judah by solemnly swearing allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, (e) Zedekiah broke his oath; and thenceforth (f) his disobedience of Jehovah and his rebellion

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against Nebuchadnezzar were considered by the prophet as essentially one crime.

**2. The People (verse 14).** (a) The religious leaders of the nation and (b) the common people (c) indulged in vicious practices copied from the religion of their heathen neighbors, and (d) polluted Jehovah's temple by idol worship.

**3. God's Warning (verses 15, 16).** (a) Jehovah, who from Abraham's time had counted the Hebrews as peculiarly his own people, (b) sent prophet after prophet to warn and guide them, (c) had compassion on them in spite of their transgressions, and (d) on the temple "which he had hallowed in Jerusalem"; but (e) king, priests, and people mocked and scoffed at God's messengers, and (f) despised his words, until at last (g) "there was no remedy."

#### II. The Overthrow of the Kingdom.

**1. The Downfall of Jerusalem (verses 17-20).** Jehovah brought (a) Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Chaldeans, against Jerusalem, who (b) after a long siege captured the city.

(c) slaughtered its defenders, (d) showing no mercy to high or low. (e) Thus the heathen king wrought divine judgment on Jehovah's recreant people. Nebuchadnezzar (f) took as spoil the treasures of the city; (g) broke down its fortifications; (h) burned its palaces, and (i) carried captive to Babylon the citizens who had survived the sack of the city.

#### 2. The Ruin of the Temple (verses 17-20).

(a) The awful slaughter had been carried into the temple courts; (b) a little later the temple itself was destroyed by fire; (c) the various costly utensils consecrated to its worship were taken to Babylon as spoil, and (d) all that could not be thus made use of were destroyed.

**3. The Fulfillment of the Word of the Lord (verse 21).** (a) During all the years of his mature life Jeremiah had been calling attention of the people to the almost universal disregard of God's commands; but his words were unheeded. (b) Now that the temple was destroyed, Jerusalem ruined, and its people taken into exile, God's neglected commands were remembered while "the land" kept its sabbath.

### The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

**THE END.**—In the year 597 Nebuchadnezzar had sent Jehoiachin, together with many of the noblest of the Jews, into exile in Babylonia. In so doing and in exacting from Zedekiah, whom he placed on the throne of Jerusalem, a solemn oath of allegiance he evidently considered the humiliation of the kingdom of Judah sufficient to render it harmless in the future. The Jews, however, had a stubbornness and a power of resistance which he had underestimated, and scarcely had he returned with his army into Babylonia before the remnant of the nation at Jerusalem were again planning the overthrow of foreign supremacy. Zedekiah himself, as we have seen in a former lesson, was above all weak and vacillating, and finally yielded to the persuasions of his chief advisers and of the king of Egypt and, breaking his oath, again declared the independence of Judah from Babylonia. In 586 B. C., after a siege of one and a half years, Nebuchadnezzar again took Jerusalem, captured the fleeing king, blinded him, and sent him in chains to Babylon. The temple, the royal palace, and all of the finest buildings in the city were burned. The walls of the city were in a large part torn down, and some seventy or more of the higher officers and nobility were executed. Others of the remaining inhabitants suffered exile, and only a small remnant of the poorer classes was left in the city. Instead of a king a governor was appointed, Gedaliah, a trusted friend of Jeremiah, who made his headquarters not at Jerusalem, but at Mizpah. Finally Gedaliah was murdered by a revengeful prince of the house of David, but the usurpers, fearing the revenge of the Babylonians, fled into Egypt. The aged Jeremiah was against his will taken with this party.

**Verse 11. Zedekiah**—Compare Lesson Word Studies on preceding lesson.

**Eleven years**—From B. C. 597 to 586.

**12. Humbled not himself before Jeremiah**—The prophet had steadily and consistently advised Zedekiah to submit and surrender to the Babylonians (comp. Jer. 21. 1-7; 34. 8-22; 37. 1-10, 17; 38. 17-23). But the vacillating king though frequently asking the advice of the prophet, partly through fear of his princes and partly through elusive hopes of ultimate relief from Egypt, could never bring himself to surrender.

**13. King Nebuchadnezzar**—The more correct spelling substitutes an *r* for an *n* in this name. This was Nebuchadrezzar II, son and

successor of Nabopolassar. He was king of Babylon from 604 to 562 B. C.

**Had made him swear**—Ezekiel also mentions this oath of fidelity: "And he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty of the land" (Ezek. 17. 13).

**Stiffened his neck**—Was stubborn and proud.

**Hardened his heart**—Literally, *strengthened his heart*. That is, became altogether fixed in his purpose and determination not to humble himself before God nor to follow the advice of his prophet Jeremiah, to surrender to Nebuchadrezzar.

**14. Polluted the house of Jehovah**—To

what awful extent and in what manner is indicated in the following passage: "For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith Jehovah. . . . In the prophets of Jerusalem also I have seen a horrible thing; they commit adultery, and walk in lies; and they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that none doth return from his wickedness; they are all of them become unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah" (Jer. 23, 11, 14; comp. also Jer. 7, 9-11; Ezek. 8, 5-16).

**15. His messengers**—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Urijah, Habakkuk, and other prophets.

**Rising up early and sending**—Implying the urgency and importance of the message and the earnest solicitude of Jehovah who did not fail to warn and instruct his people by means of the messengers he sent to them both early and late.

**16. Mocked the messengers**—How Jeremiah was imprisoned, beaten, and threatened with death we have seen in a previous lesson. Urijah is reported in Jer. 26, 20-23 to have been put to death, and of the fate of Habakkuk, who also lived during the Chaldean period, nothing is known (comp. Hab. 1, 6).

**17. Chaldeans**—The land of Kaddu, from which the name Chaldean is derived, lay south-east of Babylonia proper on the seacoast. It became a part of the Babylonian empire, and the Chaldeans not only furnished the early dynasty of Babylon, but also migrated in large numbers into Babylonia. The founder of the new Babylonian kingdom, Nabopolassar, was a Chaldean, and from his time the term Chaldea was used to designate the whole of Babylonia.

**Slew . . . had no compassion**—The reason for this dire punishment is stated by Ezekiel as follows: "The iniquity of the house of

Israel and of Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of wrestling of judgment; for they say, Jehovah hath forsaken the land, and Jehovah seeth not" (Ezek. 9, 9). The punishment itself is described more in detail in verses 1-8, 10, 11 of Ezek. 9.

**18. All the vessels**—The spoilation of the temple and city is thus made complete by the carrying away of all the things of value which remained. An earlier spoilation had already robbed the temple of the greater part of its more valuable vessels (comp. verse 10).

**20. To him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia**—Three kings succeeded Nebuchadrezzar on the throne of Babylonia before the establishment of the Persian rule by Cyrus. Of these three kings the first, Evil-merodach, was the son of Nebuchadrezzar. The second, Neriglissar, seems to have been his son-in-law, though a usurper. Whether the third, Nabonidus, was a lineal descendant of the royal house is not definitely known.

**21. Word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah**—"And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylonia seventy years" (Jer. 25, 11). A promise of future restoration was also definitely given. "After seventy years are accomplished for Babylonia I will visit you and perform my good word toward you in causing you to return to this place" (Jer. 29, 10). The seventy years must be counted not from the final destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C., but from the time of the leading into captivity of Jehoiachin and the principal men of Judah with him in 597, from the time of which event onward the condition of Judah was one of absolute servitude to Babylonia.

## The Lesson Exposition

### A FALLEN NATION

The final overthrow of the kingdom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem was 388 years after the revolt of the Ten Tribes and the setting up of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam. This downfall was in the year 586 B. C. The kingdom of Israel fell one hundred and thirty-four years before, and its people were carried into a captivity from which they never returned, and in which their identity was completely lost, by the king of Assyria. The rulers of Judah, from Rehoboam, unwise son of Solomon, to weak and wicked Zedekiah, numbered twenty-one. Of these, ten were evil; that is, they were rulers who forsook God and either directly fostered or permitted idolatry. The history of the northern kingdom had been very

much worse than that of Judah. Its fall should have been an effective warning to Judah, but did not so prove. So at last God gave the nation into the hands of their enemies, and permitted city and temple to be burned and the walls broken down. It looked like utter and irremediable ruin.

### MORAL CAUSES OF THE FALL

The political overthrow was due to moral debasement. This is made very distinct in the history. This is the distinguishing peculiarity of the Bible records—they chronicle the political history of nations in connection with their moral history. A mere political historian might write the history of Judah and account for its final downfall without taking

the moral sufficient to which the policy of Babylon and religious re continued authority. B neither the servers saw and God v right-ousness secondary causes. T valuable bec some one gi to write th probably be connection events. Bu just as much Czar Nichol William and as he was in chadrezzar, affairs on ex then.

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the moral element into account. It might seem sufficient to describe the international relations which the kingdom sustained, and the unwise policy of the last of her kings. The king of Babylon did not make war on Jerusalem for religious reasons; it was simply because of the continued revolts of her kings from his authority. But there was a meaning in it that neither the king of Babylon nor general observers saw. The nation was morally corrupt, and God was dealing with it on a basis of righteousness. The political causes were only secondary and themselves the results of moral causes. The sacred history is particularly valuable because it shows us this relation. If some one gifted with spiritual perception were to write the history of our times, we would probably be startled by the revelation of the connection of moral principles with passing events. But we must remember that God is just as much in the world now in the days of Czar Nicholas, and the Mikado, and Kings William and Edward, and President Roosevelt, as he was in the days of Zedekiah and Nebuchadnezzar, and that he rules over human affairs on exactly the same principles now as then.

#### THE VOICE OF THE PROPHET

We are enabled to understand the character and work of the prophet by studying the relations which the prophets sustained to the history we have been following. The prophetic books of the Bible have little meaning if they are not studied in connection with the political history of the times in which they were written. All through those years covered by the history of Judah and Israel God's prophets spoke in warning and instruction to the people. They were commissioned to speak for God to the nation, and they dealt not with generalities and abstractions, but with the things that were being done before their eyes. These messengers of God never ceased to reprove and warn the evil kings of both kingdoms, and foretold with fearful vividness the retribution that would come upon kings and peoples if they persisted in their evil practices. Their preaching was intensely practical and present-day preaching. They seem never to have heard of the doctrine that religion has nothing to do with politics. They assumed, on the contrary, that religion should have everything to do with politics. Let every reader of the Bible in times in which the prophet lived and the events with which he was connected. Then it will be seen that the predictions of prophecy are always based upon current events.

#### HAS GOD ANY PROPHETS IN THE WORLD NOW?

Does God still send prophets into the world? Not in the sense that their words are to be put upon a level with the words of the prophets of

the Bible. There will be no collection of the writings of either the major or the minor prophets of this age to constitute another Bible for the generations to come. Nevertheless God has his prophets, perhaps a great many more of them now than ever in Bible times. Every man who is able to look out on the life of his day with spirit-illumined eyes and interpret the moral meanings of passing events and apply to the problems of the present the eternal principles of righteousness, is a prophet of the Most High. The prophet of to-day may be the editor of a great newspaper, the preacher in a great city pulpit, the writer of a great work of fiction, a statesman in Congress, or Parliament, the head of a great industrial or commercial establishment, or a teacher in some great institution of learning. Or he may not be in any high place at all, and may speak only to a few. But the "word of the Lord" still comes to men, and they still speak as they are moved by the Holy Ghost. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

#### GOD'S EMPLOYMENT OF THE HEATHEN

Through all this history we have been given to see how God used the heathen nations to carry out his purposes. He made the Philistines, and the Syrians, and the Assyrians, and the Chaldeans, and the Egyptians, and the Persians his agents for the discipline of his chosen people and for keeping the truth from dying out in the world. He spoke at times of heathen kings as his "servants" (Jer. 25, 9; 27, 6). Not that they were consciously his servants, but that he was making them such by his overruling providence. The Jewish people planted themselves upon the idea that would protect and preserve them always against the heathen. We heard much of the same thing in the beginning of the recent war between Russia and Japan. We were told that because in Russia the people worshiped at Christian altars and in Japan at heathen shrines, our sympathies should be on the Christian side. Forgetting that as between rulers and go their way to do the devil's work of oppression and injustice during the week, and heathen people who stand for justice and righteousness, God is likely to be on the side of the heathen.

#### GOD'S BENEFICENT USE OF WAR

War is unquestionably horrible, and it is an abnormal thing in the world. But so also are the surgeon's table and knife horrible and abnormal. But both war and the surgeon have to deal with abnormal conditions. The fundamentally abnormal thing is wrong and immorality. Eliminate moral evil and war and a thousand other dreadful things will disappear.

All difficulties between individuals and between nations could be settled if every man and all rulers were willing to do right. But all men are not willing to do right. The moral life of a nation sometimes can only be saved by the surgery of war. That was the case with the Jewish nation carried captive to Babylon. We are told very little about the war that ended in the capture of Jerusalem. But we are given a glimpse in verse 17 of the lesson of the horrible nature of the struggle. And when the captive people were led away, behind them lay the smouldering ruins of their homes, thousands

dead, the city walls broken down, their beautiful temple burned with fire. Nothing in all the awful scene suggested any possible good. And yet it was necessary to cure the nation of its idolatry and preserve it as the future medium of larger revelations of truth to the world. So, also, if we consider the great wars of the later centuries, we will see that through all of their carnage and misery God was working to a beneficent end. And we cannot too often remind ourselves that in God's sight war, with all of its dreadful features, is not so horrible as moral corruption.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

For our own country, and for all the nations of the world, we pray that they may not sin as the kingdoms of Israel and Judah sinned, by doing evil in thy sight and disregarding the voice of thy messengers. Fill the hearts of all rulers with reverence for thee and respect for thy law, that they may not lead the people to sin as the kings of Israel made their people to sin. Give us understanding that we may see that thou art still working among the nations of the world in the interest of righteousness, casting down the proud and exalting the humble, that all may be brought to know that thou art God, and that thy kingdom may be established over all. Amen.

### The Lesson Coin Thoughts

#### I

When the people of Judah went away from Jehovah they went into captivity.

Sin is sure to lead its captives into captivity. Unless the sin in you shall be cast out your sin will surely find you out.

Dissolution is as revelatory of death as creation is of a Creator.

It is by the presence of darkness that we discover the departure of day.

Melody is not surer proof that the harp is in tune than discord is that the harp is unstrung.

A man's *undoing* may be by the things that he leaves *undone*.

#### II

Destruction anywhere discloses a destroyer somewhere.

A crumbling character is a greater calamity than a crumbling kingdom.

No man's work is done so well that some man's sin may not undo it.

Though the sinner may be justified his sin can never be rectified.

You can draw out the rusty nail from the post, but you cannot draw out the scar.

You may "overcome evil with good," but you cannot substitute the one for the other.

#### III

Your *character* can never be good so long as your *choices* are bad.

If you sin every day you cannot be an everyday saint.

If Christ cannot save me from my sins he is inadequate, for that is the supreme need of my soul.

Nothing in the world but sin can spoil the success of the soul.

Sin is never so bad as when it gets to the point of appending good.

He is already a guilty pauper who can be persuaded to think that sin pays.

#### IV

A man will hardly reach his best till he knows the worst and masters it.

Flattery is a food that is meant for fools.

Your real friend will point out the facts, he will be too fair to flatter you.

Sometimes you will find the greatest secret of success in the footsteps of him who failed.

When you see wherein a man has failed you also see wherein he might have succeeded.

#### V

A polluted sanctuary will undermine the moral power of any boast.

Wickedness may boast and bluster, but wickedness is never essentially brave.

It may have the outward show of strength, but at heart wickedness is always weakness.

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Rebellion against the right is always the way to ruin.

No matter how it appears, no man was ever ruined while doing right.

## VI

The basis of God's love is in himself, and therein lies the sinner's hope.

The captivity of sin is the only captivity known to the soul.

It is only within the sphere of law that life knows freedom.

The life of love is the life of liberty.

To break with law is to break with life.

To break with the good is to break with God.

## VII

There is every reason why every sinner should fail; there is no reason why any sinner should succeed.

My wishes do not change God's winds.

He who is prompted by love will generally be prompt in the performance of duty.

Love is no laggard, it wings its way.

Like the firefly, love carries its own light with it on the darkest night.

Unlike the firefly, love shines with a steady glow, and not by flashes.

## VIII

Hope always sees a gleam through the gloom.

The day of God's mercy has never been far from the night of man's misery.

The very sufferings attendant upon sin are the sure signs of God's misery.

His mercy is so great that, if he must, he will sting us back to peace by the scourge of pain.

It is a sober truth that, oftener than anything else, the ministry of pain is the ministry of pity.

It was the painful plight of the prodigal which led him to say, "I will arise and go to my Father."

God loves us too well to let us sin without suffering.

## The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

"Whosoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This is God's unchanging law in the world of matter and of spirit. He that soweth to the wind shall reap the whirlwind. He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. It is the law of reward for the good, and terrible punishment of evil. The history of Judah's sin ending in her sad captivity is written for us that we may not make any mistake in the vital difference between sin and righteousness. This is a deceiving world. Its appearances are deluding, its voices are misleading. It is full of "opinions" and "theories" about right and wrong, but what are they worth? They change with climate, environment, education, association. Men and women believe what is convenient and popular. "Tossed about with every wind of doctrine," well describes human thought upon the most serious concerns of life here and hereafter.

There is no point of view which takes in the whole horizon except the view God gives us in His Word. He only knows how things began with us, what relation one bears to another, and how they will come out in that far future beyond our sight. His unchanging law of sowing and reaping is written in all the history of Israel and Judah; we have lost the meaning of these lessons if we have not learned this. This law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. O, do let us give heed to the teaching! If we go by the sight of our eyes it does look as if it might make no difference whether we please God or not. David was puzzled when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. He came

very near losing his faith and taking the world's way of enjoying life without regard to consequences. We are all in danger of the same temptation. Men grow rich and the world honors them without asking how they made their money; a girl is popular in society, although her intimate friends know she is selfish and insincere. The proud are happy, and they that work wickedness are set up. What profit is there in being good?

Sometimes we see the folly of such thinking in this present life. It is a healthy sign of ethical progress that the people are inquiring into business methods of men and corporations. But whether we see it now or not the time is coming when the difference between good and evil will be clear. Let me read to you a message from the book of Revelation: "And I saw from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things that were written, according to their works."

Standing before God! The light will be intense, searching. No one will say, "I never did that," or "I did not mean that." The judgment will be not according to what we profess, nor what others think, nor even according to what God chooses to say of us. It will be out of the things that are written in the books; things we are writing now, every day, in thoughts, words, and acts; yes, by what we

really *arc*. Do not let us be deceived. There is an eternal difference between right and wrong. Because God loves us too well to let us suffer the penalty of a law he cannot break, he warns, entreats, persuades us by his Word and his Spirit to hear what he says. He sent to Judah by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, or, as the Word says, "continually and carefully," because he had compassion on them. But they mocked his messengers, and despised his Word, until there was no remedy. They repaid what they sowed. And yet because he is the strong and mighty One, full of compassion, Judah was not left forever in

captivity, her harps silent upon the willows by the rivers of Babylon. She wept as she remembered Zion. Her retribution was severe, but beyond her sin and shame we hear "the sweet, the far-off strain" of her deliverance. For thus saith the Lord, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up into David, and Judah shall be saved, and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.

The law is not revoked; but there is always hope for a better sowing and a glorious reaping, for their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name.

### The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. "There is a time, we know not when,  
A point, we know not where,  
Which marks the destiny of men  
To glory or despair."

2. Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all.—*Longfellow*.

3. The great lesson to be learned from this destruction of Jerusalem is God's persistent and constant effort to prevent it.—*Bishop Wierceh*.

4. Verse 12. Zedekiah had the voice of God's prophet to guide him, yet he trusted rather to his own proud heart.

I am profoundly affected by the grandeur of prophecy. God unveils the frescoed wall of the future, not so much that we may count the figures, and measure the robes, and analyze the pigments, but that, gazing upon it, our imaginations may be enkindled, and hope be inspired, to bear us through the dismal barrenness of the present. Prophecy was not addressed to the reason, nor to the statistical faculty, but to the imagination; and I should as soon think of measuring love by the scales of commerce, or of admiring flowers by the rule of feet and inches, or of applying arithmetic to taste and enthusiasm, as calculations and figures to these grand evanishing signals which God waves in the future only to tell the world which way it is to march.—*Beecher*.

5. Of all the causes which conspire to blind Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind, What the weak head with strongest bias rules, Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools. Whatever nature has in worth denied, She gives in large recruits of needful pride: For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find What wants in blood and spirits swell'd with wind:

Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defense, And fills up all the mighty void of sense.  
—*Pope*.

6. Take some quiet, sober moment of life, and add together the two ideas of pride and man; behold him, creature of a span high, stalking through infinite space in all the grandeur of littleness. Perched on a speck of the universe, every wind of heaven strikes into his blood the coldness of death; his soul floats from his body like melody from the string; day and night, as dust on the wheel, he is rolled along the heavens, through a labyrinth of worlds, and all the creations of God are flaming above and beneath. Is this a creature to make for himself a crown of glory, to deny his own flesh, to mock at his fellow, sprung from that dust to which both will soon return? Does the proud man not err? Does he not suffer? Does he not die? When he reasons is he never stopped by difficulties? When he acts is he never tempted by pleasure? When he lives is he free from pain? When he dies can he escape the common grave? Pride is not the heritage of man; humility should dwell with frailty, and atone for ignorance, error, and imperfection.—*Sydney Smith*.

7. Verse 13. So grasping is dishonesty that it is no respecter of persons; it will cheat friends as well as foes; and were it possible, even God himself.—*Bancroft*.

8. Verses 14-16. "The way of the transgressor is hard."

Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would one day or other depend upon his winning or losing a game at chess. Don't you think we would all consider it a primary duty at least to learn the names and moves of the pieces? Yet it is plain that the life, fortune, and happiness of every one of us depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. The chessboard is the world; the pieces are the

phenomena we call the other side is always known, to a mistake, or ignorance, the highest stake is checkmate, My of the famous depicted Satan's soul. So that picture for love, than win, and human life.—

### 9. Verses

Once to every to decide, La the strife good or evil Some great each the l

1. Josiah, leader, a helper the throne of J son, who reigns six months, and "He did that of the Lord." W mothers these v tell how it came Josiah should l badly. The fact alled again an elsewhere, and more the lesson parentage is ro character and no shape a human tendencies, home the "atmosphere" rred by early co the personal co the man himself, ay set himself vantages again and, by the help sist of manfo in Caesar's l and out of entan and measure. T ay aptly arise in his note is this: find a devout mor usual church pri



phenomena of the universe; the rules are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient; but also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well the highest stakes are paid; and one who plays ill is checkmated, without haste, but without remorse. My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel, who is playing for love, as we say, and would rather lose than win, and I would accept it as an image of human life.—*Hurley.*

### 9. Verses 14-20.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,

In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;

Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,

Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right  
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand,  
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the dust against our land?

Though the cause of evil prosper, yet 'tis truth alone is strong.

And, albeit, she wander outcast now, I see around her throng

Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the benedictions see,

That, like peaks of some sunk continent, just through Oblivion's Sea;

Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry

Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers from whose feet earth's chaff must fly:

Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath passed by.

—*Lowell.*

### Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. Josiah, the good king, a reformer, a leader, a helper of his people, was followed on the throne of Judah by three sons and a grandson, who reigned in all twenty-two years and six months, and of each one the record says: "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." We do not know what sort of mothers these wicked kings had, nor can we tell how it came that such a good sovereign as Josiah should have sons who turned out so badly. The fact as thus indicated can be paralleled again and again in the Scripture, and elsewhere, and it serves to emphasize once more the lesson that something beyond good parentage is required in order to insure high character and noble manhood. The forces that shape a human life are manifold—ancestral tendencies, home training, parental example, the "atmosphere" of the ages, the influence exerted by early companions, and what is called "the personal equation"—the personality of the man himself, who with a will of his own may set himself in spite of all influences and advantages against the good; or, on the other hand, by the help of grace may escape from the midst of manifold disadvantages—like "the snail in Caesar's household"—and rise to sainthood out of entanglements and hindrances beyond measure. The personal reflection that may aptly arise in the mind of many who read this note is this: "In spite of a good father, and a devout mother, and a godly home, and unusual church privileges, I may go to ruin. I

must work out my own salvation, or I shall be lost!"

2. Blindness and hardness of heart on the part of the king and his people, especially those who were in the lead, are matters here emphasized. This doomed nation was not allowed to go to perdition without warning. In its worst calamities, in its sharpest crises, in its bitterest humiliations, there were wise, faithful, and vigilant messengers raised up to instruct the throne, plead with the priests, and exhort the people. The history of the two kingdoms, from the time of their separate establishment down to the day of their final downfall, is full of the gracious ministries of these messengers, whose treatment in return is graphically described by the lesson chronicler: "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and generation persecuted and rejected the Master; thus were the apostles also scoffed at and smitten. To-day the gospel is rejected after a different fashion: it is patronized, ignored, and diluted until there is but little left in the message that is alarming, stirring, majestic, commanding. A generation which rejects the gospel in a polite and complaisant way may incur just as much guilt as, or even greater guilt than, those who, in a darker age, scoffed at the prophets of Jehovah. Indeed, the sin of living in a state of indifference and carelessness and unbelief, in the midst of the light of the gospel,

may appear in the last great day as the crowning sin of the centuries.

3. Zedekiah's fate may be taken as a striking illustration of Prov. 29. 1, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be broken, and that without remedy," and of that other terrible declaration, "The way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13, 15). Retribution came upon him swiftly and in an extraordinary way. His city was taken by the sword; he and his family were captured; his sons were slain before his face; his own eyes were put out, and in blindness and bondage he was taken to Babylon and put in prison, and there made to work as a common slave, until death came to end his sufferings. Did he bethink himself of his sins, of his father's example, of Jeremiah's repeated counsels, of his wasted opportunities, of his offenses and his punishment, and did these meditations soften his hard heart, and bring him to repentance? Or did he maintain his wayward, weak, and wicked attitude to the very last? No one can tell. But he is set before us in the story in a pillory of infamy, the last, the weakest, and one of the most unworthy of the kings of Judah, his frightful punishment helping to immortalize alike his guilt and his doom.

4. "The Woe of Weakness. The life of this unhappy monarch is a piteous but powerful illustration of the misery of instability of

character, the sorrows that dog the footsteps of the infirm will. What men need, in order to be happier and better than they are, is not more knowledge of what is right—they are amply supplied with that; or the presence of plentiful good purpose and the desire to do the right—hell itself is paved with good intentions; but what is needed is strength of will, firmness and stability of character. It is for lack of that that men go so far wrong and make such a miserable confusion of their own life and of that of others. The history of Zedekiah illustrates all this."—*Professor T. K. Cheyne.*

5. Two seemingly discrepant utterances were made concerning Zedekiah before the final blow fell upon him: Jeremiah (34. 3), "Thou shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon;" Ezekiel (12. 13, speaking of Zedekiah), "I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there." When we recall how Zedekiah was taken to Babylon in blindness, and the other details of his capture, as related in 2 Kings 25, we see how the two utterances, both spoken in advance of the event, the one given in Jerusalem, and the other written hundreds of miles away, by the prophet of the Exile, near Babylon, harmonize with each other.

### The School of Practice

1. Zedekiah had the majority with him. What he did was not sin in the sight of men. But it was evil in the sight of the Lord his God. "This week, if I find by careful examination that something I am doing is not condemned by public opinion but is nevertheless not right in the sight of God, I will abandon it.

2. The king not only did things wrong in themselves, but added to his sin by disregarding the warnings which God sent to him by his messengers, the prophets. But the Bible bears God's warning to me. I pledge myself, therefore, to forsake any habit or practice which the Bible condemns.

### The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

#### General Preparatory Work

I. *The Lesson Material*: 2 Chron. 36. 11-21.

II. *Connecting Links and Paralleled Passages*: The lurid annals of the closing years of the kingdom of Judah are to be found in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and many details of the reign of Zedekiah, in the book of Jeremiah. From Second Chronicles we have already studied (Lesson V) Manasseh's perversity and (Lessons VI, VII) Josiah's noble career, and from Jeremiah (Lessons VIII, IX) Jehoiakim's defiance and Zedekiah's weakness. Now we turn again to Second Chronicles. Verse 13 and verses 17-21 of our lesson are paralleled by 2 Kings 25. 1-21 and Jer. 39. 1-14.

III. *Comparative Study of the Lesson Text*: Read "Jehovah" instead of "the LORD" throughout; in verses 13 and 15 "Jehovah the God" in place of "the LORD God." Verse 12: compare words spoken by Jeremiah to Zedekiah "from the mouth of Jehovah" (Jer. 21. 3-7). Verse 13: "against turning" instead of "from turning"; for light on Zedekiah's rebellion against King Nebuchadnezzar see Ezek. 17. 15. Verse 14: "chiefs" instead of "chief"; "trespassed very greatly" instead of "transgressed very much"; "heathen" instead of "nations." Verse 15: compare Jer. 13; "early" instead of "betimes"; the Revision places only a comma after "sending." Verse 16: compare with this verse the words of Wisdom, Prov. 1. 24-32; for a specimen of the mockery here referred to see Jer. 5. 12, 13; instead of "misused," "scuffed at"; "healing" instead of "remedy" (margin). Verse 17: here the Revision begins a new paragraph; for details of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar see 2 Kings 25. 1-7; instead of "Chaldeans,"

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"Chaldeans"; instead of "maiden," "virgin"; instead of "him that stooped for age," "hoary headed." Verse 18; concerning "the treasures of the house of Jehovah" see verses 7, 10. Compare with verse 19, 2 Kings 25. 9; Jer. 52. 13. Compare with verse 20, 2 Kings 25. 11; Jer. 27. 7. Compare with verse 21, Jer. 29. 10; Lev. 26. 33, and 25. 4.

IV. *The Lesson Passage Divides Naturally* after verse 14, verse 16, and verse 20. See the LESSON ANALYSIS.

V. *Other Study Material*: Read one of Sayce's books, or some other authority, respecting the Babylonian religion of the Exilic period.

### The Junior Grade.

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Berean Leaf.]

#### Preparing the Lesson.

For Study Material for the teacher see paragraph on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above.

Illustrative Material: **1.** The picture of the exiles crossing the desert; and **2.** The cover illustration—both in the Berean Intermediate Lesson Quarterly.

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#### Constructing the Lesson.

Arrangement of Lesson Facts: **1.** We have here the account of an event on which the course of history turns. The capture of Jerusalem was not, perhaps, the greatest achievement of Nebuchadrezzar's reign, but our times are hardly affected by his conquest of any other capital, while all modern civilization has been modified by his conquest of Jerusalem and his exile of its people. Because of the unusual historic importance of this story, therefore, it should be told with much emphasis, picturesqueness, and clearness. Boys and girls of the Junior Grade naturally take interest in character-sketches and in the tracing of cause and effect. The morally feeble king who was disloyal at once to God and to Nebuchadrezzar; the wickedness of priests and people; the patient endeavor of God to make them better; their mockery and "misuse" of God's prophets; the terrible doom of city, temple, king, priests, and people; and, most important of all, the fulfillment of the Word of the Lord—these are the historic features that should be impressed on the minds of our pupils: **1.** The King; **2.** The Nation; **3.** The Doom; **4.** God's Word Fulfilled. And each of these carries its own moral and spiritual lesson.

#### Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline:

**1.** King Zedekiah (verses 11-13). This son of the good Josiah did not come to the throne till his bad brother Jehoiakim and had nephew Jehoiachin had reigned. Note his age, his length of reign, his weakness of character. Show that his life was bad not because he had determined to be bad, but because he had not strongly determined by God's strength to be good. One of his worst sins was his breaking the oath made to King Nebuchadrezzar in the presence of God. Most boys and girls, like

Zedekiah, fall into sin by being inattentive or weak. No one need be weak; God will give all the strength we require.

**2.** The People and the Prophets (verses 14-16). Show the utter badness of priests and people; idols worshipped; God's house profaned; all kinds of wickedness prospering. Show the long-suffering of God—how he sent prophet after prophet to tell of his anger at sin and his love for sinners. And show how the people sneered at those prophets and increased in wickedness in spite of all warnings, so that at last "there was no remedy." Illustrations cluster thickly about this passage. See LESSON SIDE LIGHTS, and use also the simple figures which come to your own mind. Often these are better than any in print.

**3.** The Fall of Jerusalem (verses 17-20). Picture the coming of the Chaldeans, cruel and powerful soldiers. They killed all the people who resisted; they burned God's house; they took its treasures and the treasures of the king and princes to Babylon. They burned the palaces, destroyed all the beautiful things they could not take away; and the people that were not killed they kidnapped and took away with them.

**4.** The Fulfillment of God's Word (verse 21). Show that always it is fulfilled.

#### Home Work for Pupils.

Advance Work: Urge pupils to read the Home Readings, Berean Intermediate Lesson Quarterly, page 76. Induce as many as you can to study the Meanings Made Easy.

Review Work: Ask pupils who are fond of drawing to make an ornamental sketch of the Golden Text for Sept. 3. Induce as many as you can to learn by heart the Meanings Made Easy.

### The Intermediate Grade.

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years old, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

For Study Material for the Teacher see paragraph on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above.

#### Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: **1.** The picture entitled "An Ideal View of Babylon," Senior Lesson Quarterly, page 173, though without

historic value, will serve to show the flatness of Chaldea, the proximity of Babylon to the great river Euphrates, the regularity of the plan on which the city was built, and the prominence of its temples. 2. See also large frontispiece illustration in the senior quarterly, "The Road of the Captivity." 3. In the same Quarterly is a colored map illustrating the Captivity and a picture showing Assyrian soldiers carrying away spoils (page 175), and a view from a photograph (page 178) of the King's Gardens, through which Zedekiah sought to make his escape. 4. See also the cameo portrait of Nebuchadnezzar (page 185), and his signature (page 175). See note on CONSTRUCTIVE WORK, below.

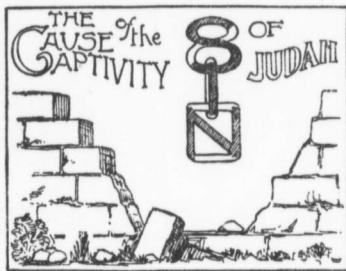
#### Constructing the Lesson.

Arrangement of Lesson Facts: 1. The Apostasy of Judah—the conduct of the king (verses 11-13), the conduct of the people (verse 14) and God's warning (verses 15, 16). 2. The Overthrow of the Kingdom (verses 17-20)—the downfall of Jerusalem and the ruin of the temple. 3. The Fulfillment of the Word of the Lord (verse 21).

#### Teaching the Lesson.

##### Suggestions for Developing the Outline:

1. The Apostasy of Judah (verses 11-16). Trace the nation's steady decay. First came friendship with pagans, and intermarriages; then a revival of early superstitions, adoption of pagan ideals, importation of pagan



priests. Soon pagan teachings crowded out the Ten Commandments, and for a while the worship of Jehovah was abandoned. The people had reformed since then, and reopened the temple, and now they were outwardly on the side of Jehovah, but this reform was only on the surface. Zedekiah, while professing to worship Jehovah, was wicked enough to break an oath that he swore by Jehovah, wicked enough to surrender the prophet Jeremiah to murderous enemies. Even the priests of Jehovah polluted the temple with heathenish abominations; the warnings of the prophets were unheeded (verse 15 notes the long-suffer-

ing of God); and the people in general were so untruthful, so dishonest, so licentious and disloyal, that the ruin of Jerusalem was a natural consequence of what went before it.

2. The Overthrow of the Kingdom (verses 17-20). Bring out the historic facts. Show that self-indulgence *always* leads toward ruin.

3. The Fulfillment of the Word of the Lord. Master the meaning of verse 21 as given in WORD STUDIES.

At the proper stages in the development of this lesson have your pupils inscribe on their pads the following sentences:

GOD'S COMMANDMENTS ARE OUR  
BEST DEFENDERS.

GOD'S MESSENGERS ARE OUR BEST  
ADVISERS.

GOD'S WORD SHALL BE FULFILLED.

The Golden Text and the Gist of the Lesson ("Consequences are linked to acts in a train of circumstances, as cars are linked to locomotives") should be memorized by each pupil. Home Work for Pupils.

Advance Work: Tell the pupils to read during the week the Home Readings, including the text for next Sunday's lesson, so as to be able to answer the following three questions, which you should have ready written on little slips of paper to hand to them: 1. What was the actual condition of the temple at the time of the prophet Ezekiel's vision? 2. Of what vision does the apostle John tell us in Rev. 22? 3. Set down any one spiritual truth which we may learn from this vision.

Constructive Work: Ask for neat copies of the map mentioned above, ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL, 3.

#### The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

The narrative falls into five principal parts: The wrongdoing of the king, the wrongdoing of the people, the patience of God, the inexorable-ness of judgment, and the fulfillment of the Word of the Lord. Those who wish to study historic details should turn to 2 Kings 25, 1-12. Trace the fate of the fugitives. Laughing and jeering at God's messengers does not change God's plans.

Zedekiah, whose name means *The-righteousness-of-Jehovah*, is conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, whose name means *Nebu-protect-my-boundaries*; but we are not left to infer that Nebu has overcome Jehovah. On the contrary, Jehovah has summoned Nebuchadnezzar to be the executor of divine judgments; and later Nebuchadnezzar is "judged" as Zedekiah is now.

The attitude of any nation toward God is

the most decay. "and in a even here recompens ward circ in effect solemn an Note the interchang was, with Laodicea, and moderi dilge in— judgments

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the most potent factor in its development or decay. "We live under a moral government and in a system of things so knit together that even here every transgression receives its just recompense—if not visibly and palpably in outward circumstances, yet really and punctually in effects on mind and heart, which are more solemn and awful."—*Maclaren*.

Note that worldliness and idolatry are almost interchangeable terms. The sin of Jerusalem was, with variations, the sin of Sardis and Laodicea, and is the sin that modern churches and modern Christians are most tempted to indulge in—conformity to the world. And God's judgments are the same through all time. "The

short-sighted view of history says, Nebuchadrezzar captured Jerusalem B. C. so-and-so, and then discourses about the tendencies of which Babylonia was creature and exponent. The deeper view says, God smote the disobedient city as he had said, and Nebuchadrezzar was the rod of his anger."

In all your teaching emphasize the divine reluctance to smite.

The four APPLICATIONS on page 179, Senior Lesson Quarterly, COIN THOUGHTS, and especially the LESSON EXPOSITION, suggest additional lines of thought which may be followed with profit. Emphasize the teachings of THE SCHOOL OF PRACTICE.

### The Responsive Review

1. What was the name of the last king of Judah? *Zedekiah*. 2. Was he good? *No, he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord*. 3. What did his people do? *They mocked the messengers of God*. 4. What did the Assyrians do? *They captured Jerusalem*. 5. What did they do with the people? *They carried them away to Babylon*. 6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? "*Be sure your sin will find you out.*"

### The Church Catechism.

53. Which, according to Holy Scripture, are the ordinances of the Christian Church? According to Holy Sacraments, and Church Discipline.  
Acts 2: 41, 42.  
Matthew 18: 17, 18.

## LESSON XI. The Life-Giving Stream

[Sept. 10]

GOLDEN TEXT Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. 22, 17.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

REVISED VERSION.\*

Ezek. 47. 1-12

[Commit to memory verses 3-5]

1 Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

2 Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

3 And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

4 Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

5 Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

6 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast

1 And he brought me back unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward for the forefront of the house was toward the east; and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar. 2 Then he brought me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looketh toward the east; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

3 When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the ankles. 4 Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the loins. 5 And afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.

6 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast

\* The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

thou seen *this*? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

7 Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: *which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.*

9 And it shall come to pass, *that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.*

10 And it shall come to pass, *that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-ge'di even unto En-eg'la-in; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.*

11 But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

### Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

M. The Live-Giving Stream. Ezek. 47. 1-12.

Tu. Opening of the vision. Ezek. 40. 1-5.

W. Living waters. Zech. 14. 4-11.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 82.

"Whosoever heareth," shout, shout the sound!  
Send the blessed tidings all the world around;  
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found:  
"Whosoever will, may come."

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 147.

God kindly keepeth those he loves  
Secure from every fear;  
From the eye that weepeth,

### Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *The Power of Divine Grace* (v. 1-6).—What was the "door of the house" in verse 1? What does the issuing waters represent? Whither did they flow? What does their increasing strength represent? What does water typify in the Old Testament? What are the points of comparison between this spring of water and salvation? What are the points of failure in the comparison?

2. *The Beneficence of Divine Grace* (v. 7-12).—What were seen at the bank of the

thou seen *this*? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the bank of the river.

7 Now when I had returned, behold, upon the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah; and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea shall the waters go which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be healed.

9 And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh.

10 And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it: from En-ge'di even unto En-eglain shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

11 But the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof, shall not be healed; they shall be given up to salt.

12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for food, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail: it shall bring forth new fruit every month, because the fruit thereof issue out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for healing.

Th. Ever fruitful. Jer. 17. 1-8.

F. A song of blessing. Psa. 1.

S. Water of life. John 4. 5-15.

S. John's vision. Rev. 22. 1-7.

**Time.**—About B. C. 570. **Place.**—The prophet in Babylonia sees a vision of Judah.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 107.

Lord, I hear of showers of blessing  
Thou art scattering, full and free—  
Showers, the thirsty land refreshing;  
Let some drops now fall on me—

1. *Water*  
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out? Whither  
guide? Whither  
stream?  
2. *The D*  
6-12).—Wh

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I. *The Ori*  
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II. *Its Life-*

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recent events, if any, in the church and world strengthen this hope? Compare this entire passage with the description in one of the psalms of a river which made glad the city of God. Compare it with our Lord's invitation (given

at Jacob's well and in the temple courts) to have human hearts turned into fountains of blessing. Compare it with the account of the river clear as crystal which flows through the streets of the heavenly city.

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *Waters from the Sanctuary* (verses 1-5) —What was shown to the prophet by his angel guide? From what place did the waters come out? Where was the prophet next led by his guide? What change did Ezekiel notice in the stream?

2. *The Desert Blossoms as the Rose* (verses 6-12).—What did the prophet's guide want him

to notice especially? What grew on the banks of the river? What was the effect upon life in the waters of the sea when this river flowed into it? What places would not be affected by the waters of the stream? What does this stream which the prophet saw in his vision stand for? What are some of the effects which the gospel produces in the world?

### Questions for Younger Scholars

What picture is found three times in God's Word? Where? What kind of a picture is it? What does it teach us? Where does the river flow from? How does it grow as it flows? Who was showing Ezekiel heavenly pictures? What did he make the prophet do? How deep was

the stream at first? The second time? The third time? And how deep after that? What grew on the banks? What can you tell about the fruit? About the leaves? Where did the waters go? What did they do? What do water and sunshine bring forth?

### The Lesson Analysis

#### I. *The Origin of the River of Life* (verses 1-5).

The prophet Ezekiel, exiled in Chaldea, sees in vision (a) the temple in Jerusalem, where Jehovah sits enthroned (sees it not in ruins, but in its ancient architectural glory). (b) An angel guides the prophet to the temple door and shows to him (c) a stream of water (the emblem of purity and abundance) pouring from under the threshold (a symbol that all blessings, of grace and of providence, proceed directly from God). (d) Ezekiel watches the stream; it flows directly toward the desert and the Dead Sea, where its beneficent effects are most needed. (e) It steadily increases in force and in volume (not in appearance only, but by most careful measurement) until at length (f) it is a river that cannot be passed over.

#### II. *Its Life-giving Power* (verses 6-12).

(a) On each side of this new river, where barren rocks had been, the prophet watches the rapid growth of very many trees. (b) The river fertilizes all the desert, and at length reaches the Dead Sea, which suddenly ceases to be "dead," either brackish in its waters or barren on its shores. (c) For now a great multitude of fishes swim in it and its shores teem with life. Indeed, (d) "wherever the river cometh everything liveth." (e) Places proverbial for barrenness become centers of production and industry. (f) The trees that grow on the banks have unfading verdure, and (g) perpetual fruit. (h) This fruit is for food, while the leaves are for medicine. (i) Meanwhile enough of the salt marshes are left to increase the general life and prosperity. (j) All this prosperity comes because the water issues out of the sanctuary—the holy place of God.

### The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

THE PROPHET AND HIS BOOK.—The name Ezekiel means "God is strong," or "God strengthens." The prophet was one of the temple priests and the son of a man named Buzi. He shared the banishment of Jehoiachin B. C. 597. Comp. Ezek. 1, 2, 3, and 2 Kings 24, 14-16. The greater part of the period of his prophetic ministry was spent in the exiled Jewish settlement at Tel-Abib, a place near the river Chebar, a canal tributary of the Euphrates in the vicinity of Babylon. This little colony of Jews, mostly from the ruling classes of Jerusalem, was granted much freedom and a large measure of self-government by the Babylonian monarch, and continued to cherish a passionate interest in the affairs of its native land. Its members confidently expected that in some way they would shortly be restored to their old place of power and authority at the head of the Jewish nation at Jerusalem. False prophets, such as those who opposed Jeremiah in

Jerusalem, fostered this delusive hope, and hence Ezekiel, the true prophet of Jehovah, whose message did not promise immediate restoration, was from the beginning of his ministry unpopular with his people. His work extended over a period of not less than twenty-two years, approximately 592-570 B. C. Concerning the book of Ezekiel it may be said that this book is one of those generally admitted by a large majority of the best scholars to have come down to us in essentially the form in which it left the hand of its author. Neither the unity nor the authenticity of Ezekiel has ever been seriously questioned. His writings on the whole may be said to be lacking in breadth and sympathy and evangelical freedom; nevertheless, his teaching in regard to the value of the individual soul, of repentance and the need of a new heart, and his representation of God as merciful and eager to forgive, furnish some of the finest passages to be found in the pages of prophecy.

**Verse 1.** The vision contained in verses 1-12 of this chapter is closely connected with what precedes. The prophet has shown by a variety of different representations the blessed results to Israel of Jehovah's reoccupying his temple. The kingdom of God now presented under the form of a spiritual house with the living God himself for the glorious inhabitant, and a royal priesthood for its ministering servants, is to be not of a restrictive but of an expansive character, and its influence for good is to flow forth with healthful and restorative energy from the sanctuary, investing with freshness of life and beauty the waste and desert places of the earth.

**He brought me back**—The guide first mentioned in 40. 3, "a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed." This guide had previously shown to the prophet other parts of the temple (compare visions recorded in chapters 40-46). The prophet apparently had tarried in the outer court of the temple, and is now brought back by his guide, who desires to reveal unto him a new vision.

**The door of the house**—The eastern door of the temple. The temple faced eastward, and consequently the court in which stood the altar was in front of the door to the east.

**Out from under the threshold . . . from the right side of the house**, as one passed out of the door eastward, and consequently **on the south of the altar.**

**2. Brought me out**—Out of the court of the temple; because in the court, surrounded with buildings and walls, the prophet could not see the farther course of the waters.

**By the way of the gate northward**—Through the north gate and around to the closed eastern gate opposite the door of the temple from which they started. Here the prophet beholds the stream emerge into the open at the south side of the gate.

**Ran out**—Literally, *trickled forth*, the stream being comparatively small at first, the waters increasing rapidly, however, in depth and breadth.

**The right side**—Facing eastward with the gate behind, hence, the south side of the gate.

**3, 4. Measured . . . again . . . again**—The point of the vision is the rapid increase in the depth of the waters on the one hand, and

the remarkable effect of the waters on the other, as shown in subsequent verses.

**5. A river**—Apparently the prophet is amazed at the depth of the river at this point, which reminds him of the impetuous rush of a mountain torrent.

**6. Hast thou seen this**—Hast thou observed the rapid miraculous increase in the volume of the waters?

**Caused me to return to the bank of the river**—From the deeper water into which, following his guide, the prophet had waded as far as was possible, until the stream became "a river that could not be passed through."

**7. Upon the bank of the river**—The same bank from which they had started to wade into the stream. The remarkable fertility on the bank had sprung into being as suddenly and miraculously as the waters had increased in volume. In this fact lies the point of the vision.

**8.** At this point the interpretation of the vision begins. It tells us concerning the course of the waters and the effects which they produced. These corresponded to the twofold direction of the prophet's observation.

**Arabah**—The whole valley of the Jordan, extending even beyond the Dead Sea, is geographically designated by this term. We are to think, however, of that portion of the Ghor just north of the Dead Sea.

**Into the sea**—The Dead Sea.

**Healed**—Changed from salt water to fresh, with the result mentioned in the next verse.

**9. A very great multitude of fish**—The Dead Sea, now entirely destitute of life, shall swarm with an abundance of fish, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh.

**10. En-gedi**—To be identified with the modern Ain Jidy, "kid's well," on the middle west shore of the Dead Sea.

**En-eglaim**—This latter place has not yet been identified.

**The great sea**—The Mediterranean.

**11. Marshes . . . given up to salt**—The only boon which the otherwise harmful salt wastes and waters have furnished, that is, the salt supply itself, shall be preserved in sufficient quantities to supply the needs of all.

**12.** In this verse that of which the prophet

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obtained at first only a general view (comp. verse 7) is more fully pointed out to him in detail as the conclusion of the whole section. Viewed forward or backward, from the banks or from the midst of the stream, the waters are waters

of life, sustaining life and producing fruit, and this life and this fruit in turn shall be productive of more life, for **the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for healing.**

### The Lesson Exposition

#### THE PROPHET OF THE PLAINS

Ezekiel was among the company of those who were carried away by the king of Babylon with Jehoiachin, king of Judah, eleven years before the final destruction of Jerusalem and the general captivity, when Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, in fetters and with eyes put out, was taken with all his people to Babylon. That first company of exiles with which Ezekiel was deported consisted of the higher classes, the nobility, soldiers, and artisans. He was himself a priest, but doubtless of the highest order of the priesthood. But his lot was cast with his exiled people in the plains of the river Chebar—a plain that was flat and monotonous and hot and desolate; and the dull and depressed plain was a symbol of the sorrow and discouragement of the people. But Ezekiel became the Prophet of the Plains, not to lament and moan and aggravate the misery of his people by gloomy reflections, but to inspire hope, renew courage, and on those dull levels to see and describe visions of supreme glory.

#### THE SECOND EXODUS

We must keep in mind in reading Ezekiel that he is the prophet of the second exodus. The people of Israel were about to be delivered from bondage in Babylon as they had been delivered from bondage in Egypt by Moses. Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied of the captivity, Ezekiel of the restoration. And that made Ezekiel a prophet of hope. He was cast with his people in a state of utter humiliation and affliction that, if God had not given to him and them revelations of his gracious purposes, might well have reduced them to despair. But the captivity had no sooner begun than visions of the restoration began to be given. And so the spirit of the people was revived. And yet very few of those who went into the captivity were permitted to join in the return. Seventy years in bondage left but a small remnant of those who had seen the destruction of the holy city. It was a new generation that returned from Babylon, as it was a new generation compared with those who went out of Egypt, who entered into Canaan under Joshua. But the hope of the return thrived in the hearts of the people during all of those years.

#### VISIONS OF THE IDEAL

In no portion of the Scriptures is there such need for guarding against literalism in inter-

pretation as in the visions of the prophets, and in none perhaps so much as in Ezekiel. If we measure the landscapes of his vision with the surveyor's compass and chain, and interpret his words simply by the definitions of the dictionary, we will miss his meanings altogether. A vision is not necessary to convey knowledge of literal facts. Purely verbal dictation could have done that. Visions always imply something too high for literal description. They are intended as helps to the mind to rise to the conception of things which transcend the literal. They go beyond the attained, and often beyond what for a very long time may be attainable, and lift up and shadow forth the ideal. John's visions of the New Jerusalem, for instance, given in the last chapters of Revelation, are of this symbolic character. The literalist may say that if we do not take these descriptions just as they stand it amounts to saying they are not true. On the contrary to take them literally would be to miss the very truths which they were intended to express and make them false. Heaven, we may be sure, is something greater than the literal city which John described; and his vision was only intended to suggest the ideal glory of the perfect future state. So the visions of Ezekiel. The new temple which he describes in chapters 40-44 was a temple never to be literally and exactly built, but was rather a glimpse of a temple not made by hands, the ideal spiritual house of God. As a matter of fact it was never built and was impossible as an actual material structure. But in that fact lies its highest meaning. It was intended to be God's ideal, that should constantly lift the thoughts and aims of men toward the highest.

#### THE TEMPLE AND THE RIVER

If there remain any doubt up to the point of the present lesson whether Ezekiel's visions are to be taken literally, it must vanish when we come to this vision of the temple and the river. This is so clearly impossible literally that we look at once for its symbolic meaning. The temple—that wonderful ideal temple described a little while before—is the source from which the river issues. That temple, we know, stood for something vaster and greater than any local building however magnificent. It was the symbol of the kingdom of God in the world, the church in its universal spiritual nature, from which and through which God manifests his

grace and his power. If we stand back in thought and get the full perspective of that vision—a glorious temple on a high mountain, out from under the threshold of its forefront flows a stream, flowing down into the valley, at first shallow, but steadily deepening and widening until it becomes a great river that cannot be passed; upon its banks growing all manner of trees bearing many kinds of fruit; sweetening the salt-bitter waters of the Dead Sea into which it flows; by its margins fishermen spreading their nets, because its flood is filled with "fish of the great sea, exceeding many"; and along its entire course freshness, and life, and fruitfulness, and beauty, and gladness—we may say to ourselves, "That is the glorious symbol of the church of God and its power to bless and gladden and beautify the world."

#### THE HIGHER SOURCES

This thought should be laid hold upon in connection with this lesson, that the streams which keep human life fresh and make it fruitful have their sources in God, they come down from above. The natural world has many suggestions of this. The spring that breaks up out of the ground we know has its real source somewhere higher up. The streams which irrigate the plains have their origin among the snows far up on the crests of the mountains. And every rain that pours down a flood of refreshing water upon the earth, coming out of the sky, lifts our thoughts to the upper sources. So it is that the gracious influences without which human life would be barren, come into it from supernatural sources. Unless the natural life is flooded by supernatural influences it will shrivel and perish. The great and rich gifts of life do not spring up out of the earth, but they "come down from the Father of lights." For men to fancy that they can live

without drawing on the spiritual streams which come from the kingdom of God is as vain as it would be for them to suppose that their field could be kept fruitful without rain out of the skies or water from streams fed by mountain snows. A delightful book to read in connection with this lesson will be Van Dyke's *The Blue Flower*, in which will be found the story of a people who neglected the spring from which all the water for their homes and fields came, and gave themselves to digging cisterns. Life shut off from God is left without support.

#### THE CHURCH AS A SOURCE OF BLESSING

The meaning of Ezekiel's vision of the temple and the river is found for us in the Christian church. The church of Christ has taken the place of the Jewish church, and from it flows forth the influences represented by the river. Is the church such a source of blessing to the world as this symbol suggests? Does the grace of God flow out from it to refresh and give life to humanity? Not perfectly, it must be admitted. But we must remember that Ezekiel's vision was the vision of the ideal. We have not attained yet to that ideal. The Christian church has not realized Christ's thought. Nevertheless it is true that the church has been and is the source of the highest blessing to the world. Wherever the church has gone humanity has been greatly benefited. Everybody knows that if the moral influences which proceed from the church should cease, it would involve unspeakable ruin to the world. And like the deepening and widening stream which Ezekiel saw, the influence of the church has steadily extended and strengthened. And if the church, limiting as it does by its imperfections the operation of God's grace, is nevertheless so great a blessing, what would it be, what will it be, when it comes to God's ideal?

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

We are thankful for the voices and visions of hope which come to us in our misfortunes and afflictions. Our captivity of to-day shall be followed by a glorious restoration to-morrow. And though in this world we may not see the realization of our hopes, we thank thee, our Father, that by and by we shall see the King in his beauty and the land that is very far off. We thank thee for this vision which through thy prophet we have been given to see of the temple of thy kingdom, the church of thy Son, from which during all the years has been flowing with deepening and widening current the river of thy grace. We have been as trees planted by this river of waters, and we have eaten and been strengthened by the fruit which has grown upon its banks. We would have this stream of salvation flow on and widen until it shall cover all the desert places of the world. Amen.

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## The Lesson Coin Thoughts

## I

The divine river of salvation must be greater than all rivers of sin.

God is my soul's supreme sufficiency.

If "God is my strength," then *my strength* will not give out till *my God* gives out.

A man is as strong as the *strength* he can use.

## II

This "river of salvation" is manifold in its meaning.

It is a river of perpetual *Peace*.

It is a river of incorruptible *Purity*.

It is a river of unwaning *Power*.

This river of salvation symbolizes spiritual *Renewal*.

It symbolizes spiritual *Revelation*.

It stands for all the mighty moral movements among mankind.

## III

This blessed river of God is to overflow the world and wash away its wickedness.

It is to overflow all deserts of heathenism which shall blossom as the rose.

This river cannot be permanently obstructed by anything that man can do.

It stands for all the redemptive forces of the world.

It is a prophetic picture of the plenitude of Omnipotence.

It is a river that deepens and widens with "the process of the suns."

Every iota of your influence for good identifies itself with this river of divine influence in the world.

## IV

The prophet points out that there is mystery connected with this river of redemption.

But everywhere in man's experience he is met with the fact of mystery.

Mystery is a mental necessity always connected with the greatest magnitudes, spiritual or physical.

Mental growth is a process of pushing back the metes and bounds of mystery.

No mystery for man would be eternal monotony for man.

## V

The prophet points out that this river of salvation is beyond the measure of man.

I am glad that the mind of God is too great for man's mind to measure.

If the supply of God did not *surpass* any need it might not *meet* my need.

My greatest help comes from my superiors.

The strength to *go to God* must come from *God*.

## VI

He does not teach me whose knowledge is only equal to mine.

No matter how deep my sin, God's salvation is deeper.

No matter how great my guilt, God's grace is greater.

It is the hopelessness of my own heart that makes me hope in God.

*Self-conceit* is *self-deceit*.

He who does not trust some one greater than himself is untrustworthy.

Intelligent confidence is the supreme act of intelligence.

When a man gets to the place that he feels he cannot safely trust anybody it is certain that nobody can safely trust him.

The path of *knowledge* is just as much a path of *faith* as it is a path of *facts*.

## VII

We could not "go on to perfection" if we did not have some imperfections.

If we were fully grown, then we could not make any growth.

It is the glory of the Christian that "God's completeness flows around our incompleteness."

Though God's mercy compasses every man, no man can compass God's mercy.

Though "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing," it is the glory of man to find it.

I trust the strength of steam on a long journey, and that is far more intelligent than it would be to trust my own.

I always fall short of *wisdom* when I fall short of *faith*.

## VIII

This prophetic river is a picture of God's exhaustless grace.

It is a picture of his unending goodness.

It is a picture of his undying gospel.

It shows that his power is adequate to purge away the sins of all people.

God's omnipotence is more plentiful than man's impotence.

His holiness is more abundant than man's sinfulness.

## The Lesson Heart Talk

There is a glorious day coming to this sin-smitten earth. The prophet's vision of the healing waters will be fulfilled. Everything shall live whither the river cometh. "As truly

as I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with my glory." The redeeming work of the Lord Jesus is not a failure. The river of life shall flow down through the desert of

earth's pain, and heal the dead sea of its sin. The fishers shall stand upon it to spread forth nets and their fish shall be "exceeding many." Where is the place for discouragement, Christian worker, teacher, preacher, missionary? The river is flowing, deeper, wider, every year. We have only to make a way for it to come, and into every open channel it will roll, and on this side and that side shall grow all trees for meat whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; there shall be new fruit continually because it is the river of God, and the fruit shall be for meat and the leaf for bruises and sores. Why do we fret because the world's healing seems so long delayed, and because we seem ourselves to be so little helpful in its recovery? We mistake our mission. We are not sent to cure the world's sin or sorrow. We are sent only to open courses where the healing waters may flow. But here is where we fail. What are we doing to make a way for the beautiful stream to enter the desert of the city tenement, or the yet unfruitful moral fields of our vast country? What prayer or gift or work of ours is opening a way for the life-giving river to flow into the dead sea of heathen superstition? We are not responsible for the world's sin or sorrow, but O, we are responsible for the universal inflow of the healing waters. More and more we see the word come true; everything lives wherever the river comes. Faithful hands have prepared a way for it by years of patient toil in India, China, Japan, and the islands of the sea. It has entered as a little stream forcing its way through many difficulties, until it has risen to waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over. It has brought life to the dead nations. Scarcely one woman in those lands

could read fifty years ago. How utterly desolate and dark were their desert lives! But wherever the healing waters have found way the mind has awakened, the desire to know has taken the place of dull ignorance, and thousands of souls have come out of prison into freedom and hope and happiness.

The Lord Jehovah, whose glory filled the temple of Ezekiel's vision, is the Lamb of Saint John's vision from whose throne went forth the pure river of water of life. It is salvation. Jesus is its source; his people filled with the Spirit are the channels through which it flows to bless the whole world. "He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living waters." The river of God; God himself, flowing with ever-broadening way through the nations, healing and making fruitful wherever it flows—flowing in me, in you, with ever-increasing fullness, pouring life into the waters of death and restoring the soul whithersoever it cometh! A holy people through whom God in Christ shall be brought in touch with all nations and kindred and tongues; from each spirit-filled heart the river of life pouring itself out to others! Christ is the Temple filled with his own glory, from him salvation's river flowing; his temple filled with his Spirit, from us going forth living streams to make the world better and happier. We cannot fully understand the beautiful symbols, but we do see the river of God; we drink and are satisfied; we bathe and come forth cleansed; we open every avenue of our being that it may flow through us unhindered and through us find its blessed way to other souls. It is better thus to know than to understand, as the valley unknowingly rejoices in the fertilizing stream; better far spiritual food than spiritual analysis.

### The Lesson in Literature and Art

#### 1.

Blest river of salvation,  
Pursue thine onward way;  
Flow thou to every nation,  
Nor in thy richness stay;  
Stay not till all the lowly  
Triumphant reach their home;  
Stay not till all the holy  
Proclaim, "The Lord is come!"  
—Dr. S. F. Smith.

2. Ezekiel was a priest as well as a prophet, and alludes more frequently than any of the prophets to the ceremonial institutes of the temple. He was every inch a Jew; and none of the prophets possessed more attachment to their country, more zeal to their law, and more hatred to its foes. We know little of his history; but we cannot check our fancy, as she seeks to represent to us the face and figure of this our favorite prophet. We see him young,

slender, long-locked, stooping, as if under the burden of the Lord—with a visible fire in his eye and cheek, and an invisible fire about his motions and gestures, earnest purpose pursuing him like a ghost, a wild beauty hanging around him, like the silver on the blue cones of the pine, and the air of early death adding a supernatural age and dignity to his youthful aspect. We see him as he moved through the land, followed by looks of admiration, wonder, and fear; and, like the hero of Excelsior, untouched by the love of maidens, unterrified by the counsel of elders, undismayed by danger or by death, climbing straight to his object. Such a being was Ezekiel—among men, but not of them—detained in the company of flesh, his feet on earth, his soul floating amid the cherubim.—G. Gilfillan.

3. Verses 1, 2. As many vapors, rising

from the sea that clouded the sky, and those clouds were water, which the winds run in rivers, and the rivers are or should be the church. The severely as they should special vocation public use ultimately glory, from Bishop Hall.

4. James believer alike that "has taken of the men long ago have South Sea Islands their French Revolutions search of sky heavens and existence of a to human society man may live supporting and unpolluted infancy protected honored, guard—when skinnies square of his not gone, foundations at possible, it will liberal literature views."

5. Verse 5. out upon the

1. Those who the continent, v places set before the transforming in through irrigation of the desert. The first time to passing the Nile found for many ing far and wide that part of east the sagebrush an nothing was visible and, the embod little over a year same journey: it had taken place i

from the sea, meet together in one cloud, and that cloud falls down divided into many drops, and those drops run together, making rills of water, which meet in channels, and those channels run into brooks, and those brooks into rivers, and those rivers into the sea; so it either is or should be with the gifts and graces of the church. They all come down from God, divided severally as he wills to various Christians. They should flow through the channels of their special vocations into the common streams of public use for church or commonwealth, and ultimately return into the great ocean of his glory, from whence they originally came.—*Bishop Hall.*

**4.** James Russell Lowell shows infidel and believer alike that it has been Christianity alone that "has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their carcasses like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and turned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution. When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet ten miles square where a decent man may live in decency, comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolituted—a place where age is revered, infancy protected, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when skeptics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the gospel has not gone, and cleared the way and laid the foundations and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical *literati* to move thither and ventilate their views."

**5. Verse 5.** When one who has never sailed out upon the ocean stands on its shore and

watches the tumbling waves as they surge and break upon the sands, how little does he know of the majesty and grandeur of the great deep, of its storms, of its power, of its secrets, of its unfathomable chambers, of its unweighed treasures? He sees only the little silver edge that breaks at his feet. So we stand but where the Spirit of God breaks upon the shore of our world. We see its silver edge. We feel the plash of its waves upon our hearts. But of its infinite reaches and outgoings beyond our shores we know almost nothing. Yet blessed are they who even stand by the shore and lave their hearts in even the shallowest eddies of this divine ocean.—*J. R. Miller.*

#### 6. Verse 9.

Be not amazed at life. 'Tis still  
The mode of God with his elect,  
Their hopes exactly to fulfill,  
In times and ways they least expect.  
—*Dean Alford.*

**7. Verse 12.** The truest end of this life is to know the life that never ends.—*William Penn.*

**8.** Now, you know, the fruit of the tree is either for the continuance of its race, or for the good, or harm, of other creatures. In no case is it a good to the tree itself. It is not, indeed, properly a part of the tree at all, any more than the egg is a part of the bird, or the young of any creature part of the creature itself. But in the leaf is the strength of the tree itself. Nay, rightly speaking, the leaves are the tree itself. Its trunk sustains; its fruit burdens and exhausts; but in the leaf it breathes and lives. And thus also, in the Eastern symbolism, the fruit is the labor of men for others; but the leaf is their own life. "He shall bring forth fruit, in his time; and his own joy and strength shall be continued."—*Ruskin.*

### Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

**1.** Those who have in recent years crossed the continent, westward, have found in many places set before them amazing illustrations of the transforming influence of water when let in through irrigating ditches upon the wastes of the desert. Fifteen years ago a tourist for the first time took the California trip. After passing the Needles, on the Santa Fé route he found for many miles a dreadful desert stretching far and wide and occupying the whole of that part of eastern California. In places even the sagebrush and the cactus were absent, and nothing was visible but vast tracts of blistering sand, the embodiment of utter desolation. A little over a year ago the same tourist took the same journey: in the interval what a change had taken place in that part of the State! The

desert was now blossoming as the rose. Vineyards, olive orchards, orange groves, prune plantations, farms, and gardens radiant with the promise of all sort of fruit, and a genuine paradise of arboreescence and verdure were to be seen for scores of miles where for countless ages there had been absolutely nothing but a dreary desert. What had occasioned this marvelous transformation? How had the desert been made to bloom? The answer was to be seen everywhere in the dams and irrigating ditches and narrow streams, whereby water from the distant Sierras had been let in upon the desert sands. All that that rich, deep soil needed was water, in order to make it blossom abundantly and fill the parched ground with fruitfulness. The desert was healed of its

miseries and ugliness and wastes, and life and beauty were everywhere.

2. A vision like this the prophet beheld in his meditations. He saw a stream of water issuing from the temple, flowing down through the defiles of the hills, flooding the valleys, carrying fruitfulness and bloom everywhere, and finally renewing and cleansing even the briny and brackish waters of the Dead Sea. The part of Palestine through which he saw the healing waters flow is, and has been for ages, a complete picture of desolation, sterility, and ghastly loneliness. Now, in his vision, he sees all this region beautiful and fruitful with verdurous growths, abounding in life, and glorious with promise. The vision was a fuller unfolding of what Isaiah had seen in smaller degree (35. 1-7): "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . . In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand [the mirage] shall become a pool, and the thirsty lands springs of water." These visions also remind us of the description of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22. 2): "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

3. Now, of what is all this the symbol? What do these figures of speech mean? Toward what do they point? No one can easily go astray in trying to find out an answer to these inquiries. The rising and spreading waters issuing from underneath the altar in the temple area, and filling the desert with beauty and life—these, of course, prefigure the renewing,

refreshing, healing effects of the gospel. Just as the tourist on a Western prairie learns quickly that the thin thread of green at a distance denotes a watercourse, lined with trees and herbage, so the traveler in many lands comes at once to recognize by many tokens whether he is in a Christian, a Mohammedan, or a pagan community. He recognizes the presence of the gospel and its privileges by the prevalence of certain living institutions—hospitals, asylums, schools for the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, Christian journals and literature, institutions for the higher culture, noble ideals of character, great reforms, a new value placed upon human life, a new value stamped on childhood and womanhood, a quickened intellect leading to inventions and discoveries without number. All these phases of civilization in Christian lands afford us a modern illustration of the old saying of Ezekiel, written down by him in a period of privation and exile, when he was himself a man of poverty, of toil, and of suffering: "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh."

4. The stupendous changes wrought in law, education, art, literature, science, and life by the gospel constitute an argument of increasing value concerning its divine sanctions and origin. Such books as Uhlhorn's *The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*, C. L. Brace's *Gesta Christi*, and Storr's *The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by Its Historical Effects*, are full of data which reveal the transforming power wrought by the Christian religion. When illumined by the researches of the historian, which exhibit all life transformed by the gospel, the nineteen Christian centuries are seen in the retrospect to be but a fulfillment of the prophet's vision.

### The School of Practice

I. The temple and the stream described in this lesson represent the church of God and the blessings which proceed from it. If the church is such a blessing to the world, I ought to honor it and support it, and myself seek for the greatest good from it. And I will try henceforth to do this.

II. The influence of religion, as represented by the river, is healing, that is, it has power to cure the corruptions of society, as fresh water flowing into the salt marsh sweetens it. If I can this week I will seek to carry the gospel into some life or into some community that is like a desert for the lack of its influence.

### The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

#### General Preparatory Work

I. *The Lesson Material:* Ezek. 47. 1-12.

II. *Connecting Links:* The last visions of the prophet Ezekiel, beginning with chapter 40. (Compare LESSON WORD STUDIES.)

III. There is no *Parallel Passage*.

IV. *The Lesson Passage Divides Naturally* where paragraphs begin in the Revision, at verse 3 and verse 6.

V. *Comparative Study of the Lesson Text.* Verse 1: instead of "Afterward," "And"; instead of "again," "back"; instead of "stood," "was," and this clause is thrown into parentheses; instead of "at the south side," "on the south." Verse 2: instead of "of the way," "by the way"; instead of "about," "round by"; instead of "utter," "outer"; insert "of the gate" after "by the way"; instead of "eastward," "toward the east." The margin gives "rickled" instead of "ran out." Verse 3: omit "And"; instead of

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"that had the line in his hand went forth eastward," "went forth eastward with the line in his hand"; instead of "brought me through," "caused me to pass through." Verse 4: instead of "brought me," instead of "at," Verse 8: "forth" instead of "out"; "eastern region" instead of "country"; insert "shall" before "go down"; "the Arabah" instead of "the desert"; instead of "go into the sea: which made to issue forth; and." Verse 9: instead of "everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever," "are as so changed that verbal comparison cannot easily be made. See the printed text. Verse 11: instead of "marshes," "marshes." Concerning the "door of the house" see Ezek. 41, 2, 23-25. The idea of waters issuing from the house of God was a familiar one to Hebrew prophets; compare Psa. 46, 4; Isa. 30, 25; 55, 1; Jer. 2, 13; Joel 3, 18; Zech. 13, 1; 14, 8; Rev. 22, 1, 17. With verse 2 compare Ezek. 42, 1-4. The symbolism of forest growth occurs also in Isa. 60, 13, 21; 61, 3. With verse 8 compare Isa. 35, 6, 7; 41, 17-20; 44, 3. Concerning the healing qualities of the river (verse 9) compare Isa. 12, 3; 55, 1; John 4, 14; 7, 37, 38; Rev. 21, 6. With the figures of verse 12 compare Rev. 22, 2; Gen. 2, 9; Psa. 1, 3; Jer. 17, 8.

### The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Berean Leaf.]

#### Preparing the Lesson.

For Study Material for the teacher see paragraph on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above.

**Illustrative Material:** The picture of the angel explaining the meaning of the ever-growing river to Ezekiel, on page 78, Berean Lesson Quarterly may be of interest.

#### Constructing the Lesson.

Arrangement of Lesson Truths: The description of Ezekiel's vision in THE LESSON STORY, Berean Quarterly, page 78, furnishes an excellent introduction. **1.** In a vision Ezekiel talked with an angel who showed him a river which began at the temple door, flowed eastward and constantly increased in width and depth. **2.** This river filled the bad lands with fertility, and made the bitter waters fresh and full of fish. **3.** It was an emblem of the force and the goodness of God's grace.

#### Teaching the Lesson.

**Suggestions for Developing the Outline:**

1. Before the coming of the river a rocky desert sloped down from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea—a sea so salt that no fish could live in it, and surrounded by barren marshes; no trees on its banks; no fish in its waters; no birds in the sky above. Barrenness was all that Ezekiel or anyone else could see until God's angel pointed to the tiny stream flowing from under the temple threshold; with its steady growth came unmeasured blessings.
2. It was not a real river, but a dream river. But this dream was full of meaning. The pure waters meant purity, holiness, goodness. They sprang from God's house; what simple lesson does that teach? They flowed out toward the rocky desert where they were most needed; what does that teach? They grew wider and deeper as on they flowed—like all God's blessings. We know that wherever in this world

there is plenty of water flowers are likely to bloom and trees to grow, and we are not surprised, therefore, to read that on each side of this river were many trees. Its waters turned the desert into a garden; they made the salt sea fresh, but enough salt marshes were left on its shores to produce the salt that was needed for flavor and as a preservative. The last place on earth to which anyone would have gone for fish was the Dead Sea; but when the river reached it it became full of fish. The fruit of the trees that now grew on its shores and in the desert was good for food, and their leaves were good for medicine. All the year round the leaves were green and the fruit was ripe.

#### Home Work for Pupils.

**Advance Work:** Request each pupil to study the MEANINGS MADE EASY, and urge the use of the HOME READINGS.

**Review Work:** 1. What is the Golden Text for September 10? 2. Through what sort of country did the river of Ezekiel's vision run? 3. What blessing did it bring to the land? 4. What blessings did it bring to the water? [Let the teacher write these questions, and give a copy to each pupil, expecting answers to be brought in next Sunday.]

### The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

#### Preparing the Lesson.

For Study Material for the Teacher see paragraph on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above.

**Illustrative Material:** The Moslem surroundings of the temple area at the present time, and its Byzantine architecture, bear no resemblance to its appearance before the exile and in Ezekiel's vision; but a picture of the mosque at present occupying the site of the temple would be of interest.

The traditional tomb of Ezekiel the prophet is pictured in the Senior Quarterly, page 183.

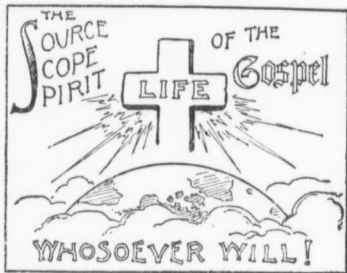
*Constructing the Lesson.*

Arrangement of Lesson Truths: **1.** Waters from the Sanctuary (verses 1-5), representing the gospel of Christ, the source of salvation and blessing. **2.** The Desert Blossoms as the Rose (verses 6-12)—a picture of the transforming effect of the gospel upon the world.

*Teaching the Lesson.*

Suggestions for Developing the Outline:

**1.** Waters from the Sanctuary (verses 1-5). In barren Palestine there could be no greater boon than an abundance of water. It was the source of all national and individual prosperity. This stream began at "the door of the house," "the gate of the temple"—where, in a profound sense, all the blessings of this world, spiritual and temporal, begin. Compare the story of Acts 3. From God's house and God's book and God's Son, who was the



incarnation of all that the book teaches and all that the house stands for, proceeds the river of blessing which flows through the centuries. From the holy of holies, the innermost sanctuary, the throne-room of God (whether thought of as in heaven or on earth), the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeds (Rev. 22, 1, 2). Fed by no streams or showers, it constantly increases in majesty and power. So the gospel of Christ is indebted for its growth and its helpfulness to no earthly source.

**2.** The Desert Blossoms as the Rose (verses 6-12). A notable lesson comes to us, from the fact that Ezekiel himself (good man as he was) did not observe the beautiful trees which sheltered him from the withering sun until the angel called his attention to them. So we are all apt to enjoy God's blessings without thought or gratitude. Wherever the river came it brought life and health and comfort. The sea that is so salt and barren that it is called the Dead Sea becomes the center of life. It is all a wonderful picture of the transforming effect of the gospel upon the world. The usefulness of trials is shown in the preser-

vation of certain "miry places" and "marshes" for the production of salt. The trees are not simply for shade and beauty, but for food and medicine. The healthful influence of the river has chased away winter, and the leaves of the trees never fade nor is the fruit exhausted.

The whole lesson shows the bounty and goodness of God as manifested in the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

Ask the pupils to print near the center of their pads:

**THE WATER OF LIFE**

Show what this is, whence it comes, what it brings. Show how a resident of the wilderness of Judea might draw a little channel of water from such a river as is here described, and irrigate his arid home acre. Then observe how by our Golden Text he is invited so to do. And so are we invited to take the real water of Life. Print the word TAKE before, and FREELY after, THE WATER OF LIFE. Next inquire precisely who are invited, and above the clause already printed place the first part of our Golden Text:

**WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM**

*Home Work for Pupils.*

Advance Work: Urge the HOME READINGS and the memorization of the GOLDEN TEXT for next Sunday. Give to each pupil the following questions written, with a blank space after each, and ask for written answers next Sunday: **1.** About how long had the temple been in ruins when Ezekiel saw it in vision? **2.** How long after it was destroyed was it rebuilt? **3.** Mention one or more blessings that the gospel has brought to men?

Review Work: Ask the pupils to recollect the Golden Texts for the month of August, so as to be thoroughly ready for our Quarterly Review.

**The Senior Grade**

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

The LESSON ANALYSIS, page 685, gives the natural divisions of the lesson narrative. Almost every detail is symbolic and conveys spiritual truth. Among the most notable teachings are the five outlined under the heading THE LESSON APPLIED, Senior Quarterly, page 184.

**1.** Every good and every perfect gift comes from God the Father (James 1, 17). None of this world's contributions to the welfare of mankind—such as artistic expression, ingenious invention, scientific acumen—have been of real value except as they have been modified and controlled by heavenly influences. Physical prosperity and intellectual development are, indeed, curses wherever they exist without that spiritual blessing which is figured here and in Rev. 22 as the water of life.

**2.** God's heavenly blessing is for the poor, the lowly, the with a path to the gate of life directly or benevolent activities of men. The trees of the gospel river, lives even of are never the (The truths emphatic teaching)

**3.** God's grace has been Christ moral reform there is danger of the water rapidly, in the golden coin of love of God for another can be

**4.** God's gifts waters leave abundance the touched by its sands and mire sum, are the regions unafflicted **5.** God's grace all sorts of finally all sort medicinal leave have forgotten been divided by illustratively the Jesus, and the

**1.** What did the stagnant sea? **4.** What may the one will, let him take

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8 But Dan'iel could not defile himself with the king's meat, nor before he required much that he



2. God's house is the earthly source of heavenly blessings. Even before gospel times the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind with a pathetically clear logic clustered about the gate of the temple. The church of God is, directly or indirectly, the source of all the benevolent activities of the world. The charities of modern life are the medicinal leaves of the trees which grow on the banks of the gospel river. Nearly all the blessings of the lives even of people who never come to church are nevertheless derived from that church. (The truths of this paragraph especially need emphatic teaching.)

3. God's grace is *God's gift*. So generous has been Christian appreciation of all help in moral reform and civilizing advancement that there is danger of our forgetting that the river of the water of life can never be increased, in rapidity, in depth, or in width, by showers of golden coin or by streams of learning. The love of God flowing from one human heart to another can be increased only by more love.

4. God's grace fertilizes every shore its waters lave. Other Scriptures show us in abundance that there is no human heart untouched by its enriching currents. Rocks and sands and mire, salt, bitumen, and miasmatic sum, are the best products that come from regions unaffected by the river.

5. God's grace has various manifestations—all sorts of fishes, all sorts of fruits, inferentially all sorts of vegetables, too, and of medicinal leaves. Because Christian men often have forgotten this the church of Christ has been divided by disastrous schisms. Compare illustratively the cure of three blind men by Jesus, and the different means he took with

each. What if any one of them had doubted the experiences of the others because they differed from his own? It is doubtful whether the experiences of any two Christians are closely similar.

6. God's grace is unremitting. This river never ceases flowing. On its banks it was always harvest time. In its waters fish could always be caught. We should never forget that God's love never ceases.

7. God uses religious forces and organizations already in existence as conveyancers of his choicest spiritual blessings. The stream which came from the threshold of God's house was destined to sweeten the waters of the Dead Sea, and we might therefore expect it to flow directly eastward into that sea. But through the centuries the waters of the Jordan had been pouring into that sea. True, they were too feeble to change its bitter and unwholesome character. They were nevertheless doing what they could, and their message to the Dead Sea, though ineffective, had always been one of sweetness and of life. It is man's method to discard ineffective means, but God directed his supernatural stream into the Dead Sea *by way of the Arabah*; in other words, he poured it first into the Jordan, and made that hitherto ineffective river the means of transforming the sea of death. More than one spiritual lesson buds forth just here.

8. The river (Psa. 46, 4) which made glad the city of God; the river clear as crystal which in John's vision flowed through the streets of the heavenly city (Rev. 22); and our Lord's invitation at Jacob's well and in the temple courts, may profitably be compared with this passage.

### The Responsive Review

1. What did the prophet see? *A spring of water flowing from the sacred place.* 2. What effect had it upon the stagnant sea? *Its waters were healed.* 3. What then grew on its banks? *Trees whose leaf did not wither.* 4. What may the righteous man be said to be? *A tree of life.* 5. What is the gospel invitation? *"Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."*

### The Church Catechism

54. How are the ordinances secured in perpetuity in the church? The ordinances are secured in perpetuity in the Christian Church through men called of God and ordained by the church; and through the co-operation with them of evangelists, teachers, and other labourers, according to the gift and grace of God.

## LESSON XII. Daniel in Babylon

[Sept. 17]

GOLDEN TEXT. Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Dan. 1, 8.

### AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study the chapter. Read Dan. 2]

Jan. 1, 8-20

[Commit to memory verses 16, 17]

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

### REVISED VERSION.\*

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's dainties, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. 9 Now God

\*The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

9 Now God had brought Dan'iel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Dan'iel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse looking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Dan'iel to Mel'zar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Dan'iel, Han-a-ni'ah, Mish'a-el, and Az-a-ri'ah.

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Mel'zar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Dan'iel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Neb-u-chad-nez-zar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Dan'iel, Han-a-ni'ah, Mish'a-el, and Az-a-ri'ah; therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

made Daniel to find kindness and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your food and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse looking than the youths that are of your own age? so would ye endanger my head with the king.

11 Then said Daniel to the steward whom the prince of the eunuchs had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenances of the youths that eat of the king's dainties; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he hearkened unto them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer, and they were fatter in flesh, than all the youths that did eat of the king's dainties.

16 So the steward took away their dainties, and the wine that they should drink, and gave them pulse.

17 Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 And at the end of the days which the king had appointed for bringing them in, the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm.

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

- M. The captivity. Dan. 1. 1-7.
- Tu. Daniel in Babylon. Dan. 1. 8-20.
- W. The Rechabites. Jer. 35. 1-11.

- Th. Commendation. Jer. 35. 12-19.
- F. For the sake of others. 1 Cor. 8.
- S. Walking wisely. Eph. 5. 6-21.
- S. God giveth wisdom. Prov. 2. 1-9.

Time.—Conjecturally B. C. 605. Place.—Babylon.

The Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 218.  
Be it my only wisdom here,  
To serve the Lord with filial fear,  
With loving gratitude.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 351.  
When times of temptation bring sadness and gloom,  
I will tell it to Jesus, my lord;  
The last of earth's treasures borne out to the tomb.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 211.  
Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me!  
Come, Great Deliverer, come!  
My soul bowed down, is longing now for thee.

Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *Loyalty to Principle* (v. 8-10).—Who was Daniel? How came he to be in Babylon? Why was he placed in the king's palace? What commended him to the royal favor?

What temptations would naturally surround one at such a court?

2. *Faith in the Outcome of Righteousness* (v. 11-16).—How could a choice of vegetable

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1. *Consci* was Daniel Hebrews wen wish to do v verses 3-6.) and his comp king's meat What was t himself and

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1. *Holy Pur* (a) Daniel v 11) was a cap rezzar, in Baby were candidates of the nation, direction that t Babylonian food ses doubtless it sciences of Jews heart" that he and would reject this purpose himself until h plainer food. friends, brought the prince of the oversight of the of the command feared to give p friends. (i) It they could thrive gain food as on

diet relieve Daniel from the danger of acquiescing in idolatrous customs? What was Daniel's character as shown in our lesson? What may we learn from the use of the word "purpose"? Why did he abstain from the king's food? In what sense would the king's meat have defiled Daniel? What is it to be true to God? Is conscience always right? What can we do to make it right? Why was the "prince of the eunuchs" afraid of the king? What is the meaning of "worse liking"? What is the meaning of "your sort"?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *Conscience Triumphant* (v. 8-16).—How was Daniel brought to Babylon? What three Hebrews were with him? What did the king wish to do with these four young men? (See verses 3-6.) What was the purpose of Daniel and his companions? What was there in the king's meat that would make him unclean? What was the food which Daniel chose for himself and his companions? How did these

four compare with the rest at the end of ten days?

2. *God's Gift of Learning and Understanding* (v. 17-20).—What was the object of the three years' training of these young men? What gift did God bestow upon them? What special gift was bestowed upon Daniel? What lesson of God's care is taught in this history of the young men?

### Questions for Younger Scholars

Whom did Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, carry away from Jerusalem as captives? What can you say of some of them? What did the king of Babylon want to do? What did he want them to learn? Why did he want the wisest of them to become still wiser? *That he might use their wisdom for his own purposes.* What four princes were the flower of them all?

What new names were given to them? *Belshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.* Who was the wisest of the four? What did he ask of the prince who had charge of them? Could he grant this request? What did Daniel ask Melzar to do? Did he do it? How did he find them at the end of ten days? What is a straight path to honor? *Temperance.*

### The Lesson Analysis

#### I. *Holy Purpose* (verses 8-13).

(a) Daniel with three Jewish friends (verse 11) was a captive at the court of Nebuchadnezzar, in Babylon. (b) These four young men were candidates for places among the wise men of the nation. (c) The king had given careful direction that they should be fed on the best Babylonian food. (d) But this food, delicious as doubtless it was, was "unclean" to the consciences of Jews. (e) Daniel "purposed in his heart" that he would do right at any expense and would reject all "unclean" food. (f) Having thus purposed, he kept his determination to himself until he could deferentially request plain food. (g) God, who gives us our friends, brought Daniel into friendship with the prince of the eunuchs, the officer who had oversight of the four young men. (h) Because of the command of Nebuchadnezzar this officer feared to give plain food to Daniel and his friends. (i) It did not seem probable that they could thrive better or even as well on plain food as on the rich viands and luxurious

liquors of the court. (j) But Daniel respectfully insisted that the experiment be made, (k) having full confidence that God would make all things work together for good.

#### II. *The Experiment* (verses 14-16).

(a) At length the prince of the eunuchs consented to try the experiment for ten days. (b) At the end of that time the four young men were in better health than any of the other candidates. (c) They were therefore permitted to eat the food that their consciences demanded.

#### III. *Complete Success* (verses 17-20).

(a) Meanwhile God gave these four devout youths "skill in learning," and to Daniel especially he gave supernatural insight. (b) The time came for their examination before the king. (c) Nebuchadnezzar talked with them and these four youths surpassed all competitors. (d) They showed greater wisdom than even the experienced counselors of the kingdom. By one means or another God always honors those who honor him.

## The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

**INTRODUCTORY.**—The consensus of opinion among modern biblical scholars of to day is that the book of Daniel, at least in its present form, is of much later date than the time of Daniel himself, dating probably from the early part of the second century B. C. From the apocalyptic structure and content of the book it is inferred that the purpose of the author was to bring a message of consolation to his fellow countrymen in a time of sore trial and persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, about 168-165 B. C. Daniel and his three friends are ideals of fidelity to Jehovah and to truth under the most trying circumstances. God honors the loyalty of these men and grants to Daniel prophetic visions touching the ultimate redemption of his chosen people.

Space clearly does not permit our entering upon a discussion of the points at issue here.<sup>1</sup> We can only remind the student that the worth of the narrative we are about to study has always been primarily in what it teaches, and that its rich and profitable teaching is unaffected by considerations of date, authorship, or literary form. Concerning separate historical allusions of the narrative we shall have occasion to speak in our treatment of the several lessons taken from the book.

**Verse 8. Daniel.**—The traditional author and hero of the book bearing his name. A Hebrew youth of noble descent, highly endowed both physically and intellectually, carried into captivity to Babylon by Nebuchadrezzar, in the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, together with a larger company of other youths from Jewish nobility. All that we know concerning Daniel is related in the book of Daniel. Here we are informed that he was a prominent figure during the greater part of the seventy years of captivity, and that he was a contemporary of five Babylonian kings (comp. Dan. 4, 1; 2 Kings 25, 27; Dan. 5, 1, 31; 6, 28). An early tradition says that Daniel died and was buried in Susa, to which city Cyrus, king of Persia, had transferred his royal residence.

**Defile himself with the king's dainties.**—The royal menu might contain the meat of animals not slaughtered in the proper manner (Deut. 12, 23, 24), or of such as were prohibited to the Jews as food (Lev. 11, 4-20). The food and wine might both have been consecrated to heathen divinities by an offering of a portion to them in sacrifice, as was customary, in which case the partaking of such food would amount to a recognition of the heathen god. The Jews, especially in later times, attached great importance to dietary laws. In the Jewish centers of the great cities even to-day one may still find conspicuously placed on the window or door of shop and restaurant the short Hebrew word כֹּשֶׁר or its English equivalent KOSHER, or both, signifying that the meat sold or the food served in that establishment has been prepared in compliance with the proper ritualistic requirements.

**10. For why should he.**—The literal rendering of an Aramaic idiom meaning "lest he should."

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion of the questions of date, authorship, and historicity the student is referred to Whedon's Commentary on Daniel, by Camden M. Coburn, D.D., and to the volume on Daniel in the Cambridge Bible, by S. R. Driver, D.D.

**Faces worse looking.**—Showing marks of neglect and hunger.

**Endanger my head with the king.**—Literally, *make my head guilty*, that is, bring guilt and the forfeit of life upon my head. The officer may have feared that the king would accuse him of having appropriated unto himself funds or food intended for the young men under his care.

**11. Daniel had appealed first to the chief of the eunuchs and had gathered from his reply that he was unwilling to himself assume the responsibility of granting the request, though not necessarily viewing the request itself unfavorably. He therefore turns from the chief of the eunuchs to a subordinate officer who has the immediate charge of himself and his companions, and proposes to him that he make a temporary test with vegetable diet. The experiment proves successful and the royal food is dispensed with altogether.**

**The steward.**—Heb. "Hammelzar"—Melzar being the title of some officer or attendant of the court; but what officer is intended is uncertain.

**Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.**—Three intimate friends of Daniel who were later cast into the fiery furnace at the command of the king and miraculously delivered from the furnace by Jehovah (comp. chap. 3).

**12. Ten days.**—A round number of days long enough to test the results of the proposed change in diet. For a similar use of the expression compare Gen. 24, 55 and 31, 7.

**Let them.**—The proper persons appointed for that purpose. A Hebrew idiom which in English we might more properly express by using the passive: "Let there be given us."

**Pulse.**—Vegetable food in general.

**13. Daniel's proposition is that at the end of a reasonable period of time, during which they have been permitted to live on this simpler diet, a test of the results be made and that the officer making the test be guided by the out-**

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come. The proposition implies an agreement on the part of Daniel and his companions to submit to the result of the test.

**14. So he hearkened unto them**—The officer himself was taking no risk in the matter, since ample time would remain to overcome any possible evil effects of the experiment before the time set for the appearance of the young men in the presence of the king.

**16. Took away**—That is, permanently, permitting Daniel and his friends to subsist upon the simpler diet during the entire three years (comp. verse 5).

**17. These four youths**—Daniel and the three others mentioned in verse 11.

**Skill in all learning and wisdom**—

### The Lesson Exposition

#### THE TEST OF CALAMITY

Daniel was subjected in the first years of his captivity in Babylon to a variety of severe moral tests. The first was the test of calamity. He evidently belonged to the nobility, possibly was one of the princes of Judah. It was an overwhelming calamity, therefore, when with others of his countrymen he was carried away as a captive to Babylon. It was the sudden passing from freedom and plenty into slavery. He was torn away from all the sacred associations of his life, and thrown into the midst of a people of strange speech, cruel temper, and heathen religion. As a Hebrew it might have seemed to him that the God of Israel had forgotten his covenant with the nation, and that it was useless longer to serve him. The effect upon many minds would have been exceedingly discouraging, and would have resulted in moral indifference or desperation. But the strength of Daniel's character appears at the outset in that his calamity did not shake his moral integrity nor weaken his faith in God.

#### THE TEST OF CONFORMITY

In the new situation in which Daniel found himself he might very easily have persuaded himself that many of his former moral obligations were annulled. Morality, he could have argued, as many now argue, is largely a matter of custom. The society in which we live, he might have said, sets us the standards for our conduct; and, therefore, when we pass out of one social environment into another, the rules of the former are no longer binding; indeed, it may be our duty to conform to the new social order. Or, even if it did not occur to him to endeavor to confuse his moral sense with such sophistries as these, he could have found in what might have looked like necessity a justification for conforming to the habits of others. It was perilous to refuse as profane the food furnished by the king. Or at least it might in-

Wisdom is here used in the sense in which we use the word *science*, to designate an intelligently arranged body of principles.

**And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams**—In this point Daniel excelled the rest. His special gift is pointed out here as introductory to the narrative which follows and which hinges largely upon this special gift.

**19. Communed with them**—That is, with a large company of youths mentioned in verses 3-5.

**20. Magicians and enchanters**—The wise men of ancient Oriental courts. The precise sense in which the words are to be understood is difficult to determine.

cur the displeasure of those under whose charge he was placed. Simple practical common sense, a reasonable regard for good policy and self-interest, might have seemed to justify, even to demand, conformity in the matter of eating and drinking. But Daniel was not moved by any of these things. His conscience, like the magnetic needle, was not influenced by new surroundings, but held steadily to the pole of duty. There was a higher law than social custom. Duty did not cease to be duty because it involved danger, and principle was not a pliable thing to be bent according to the demands of policy. Daniel endured the test of conformity; but we see many who break down under its pressure.

#### THE TEST OF THE MINORITY

It was not simply that Daniel found himself among a heathen people whose customs and conceptions of duty differed from his. He was put to the further test of finding himself with the minority of his own people. With the exception of three other young men all the other Israelites brought into the king's house appear to have accepted the meat and the wine. This himself peculiar. Not unlikely it subjected him to the criticism of his friends. To many his course would seem unreasonable and hyperconfection on their own conduct. Others may have looked on his nonconformity with apprehension lest it should excite the displeasure of the king against the whole company of Israelites and bring trouble upon them all. It must be appreciated that Daniel's course was not a commonplace eccentricity. It does not take any courage to be eccentric. Eccentricity may be nothing more than an exhibition of personal conceit which seeks to attract a cheap public attention. But a man will not go in the face of the sentiment of his friends in a serious matter, and take the risk of incurring their ill-

will and poor opinion, particularly when his own safety is put in jeopardy, simply to be eccentric. Eccentricity may even be cowardly, but moral independence requires courage. Daniel's action had that quality of courage. The common thought is right in singling out as his great characteristic the fact that he "dared to stand alone." He was brave enough to risk his fate on God's side though the great majority stood on the other side. There are a few verses in Lowell's *The Present Crisis* which teachers of adult classes, especially of young men and women, should read.

#### LAWS OF NATURE ON THE SIDE OF TEMPERANCE

Daniel put the question of the superiority of a simple temperance habit to the test of experiment. "Try it for ten days," he said to the king's officer, "and see how it works." That was a submission of the case to nature, and nature gave her answer in the fairer, healthier faces and superior physical condition of those who abstained from the king's meat and drink. And nature still vindicates temperance. Physicians bear unvarying testimony to the advantage to health which comes from abstinence from intoxicating drink and from sumptuous diet. The tables of the insurance companies show that intemperate habits shorten life on the average by many years. The young man who begins the use of intoxicating drinks may be sure at the outset that whatever else may result it is practically certain that he will be in his grave much sooner than would otherwise happen. The physical effect of strong drink is not its worst, but if there were nothing more or worse this should be enough to deter every rational person from its use.

#### THE DEADLIER EFFECTS OF DRINK

It is fair to point out that Daniel's refusal to drink of the king's wine was not simply on the principle of total abstinence. The wine and the meat of the king's house were first offered as sacrifices to idols, and therefore were in the sight of Daniel unholy, and to have re-

ceived them would have worked religious defilement. Nevertheless his abstinence is a very proper lesson in temperance in our present sense of the word. And it should be remembered that there are greater evils resulting from inebriety than the physical effects. It impairs the mental powers. It unbalances the judgment. It weakens the will. It inflames all the animal passions. It dulls the conscience and blinds the moral vision. It gives rein to all sensual impulses. It lowers self-respect and tends to bestialize the life. It wars against the spiritual nature and kills out reverence and prayer. It corrupts the imagination and fills the mouth with the speech of folly and madness. It causes friendship to be forgotten and love to be trodden under feet. The whole wide field of its history is strewn with homes ruined, lives wrecked, the victims of manifold crimes, trusts betrayed, prisons filled, high positions dishonored, and graves filled with the untimely dead. Into the spirit of wine Satan seems to have breathed the essence of all evils for the corruption and ruin both of the souls and the bodies of men.

#### THE HIGHER BLESSINGS OF DANIEL'S FIDELITY

As there are deeper and deadlier effects of inebriety than its physical results, so there are higher and richer blessings than bodily health which come from sobriety and temperance adopted as a moral choice. The case of Daniel illustrates this. His simple diet brought to him the advantage of greater physical soundness and health as compared with others. But that was the least part of it. His choice bravely taken and nobly maintained secured for him the favor and blessing of God. God gave him "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." The young man who takes a courageous position on the matter of drinking, and stands by it in the face of all influences and temptations, receives a general moral uplift and strengthening that will give higher tone and worth to his whole life.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father, grant that we may fix in our hearts the purpose that sustained Daniel under temptation, not to defile ourselves by any act in conflict with the highest sense of duty. May we carry this purpose with us in all our relations and in all of our work. May we hold moral defilement to be the greatest evil, and a conscience void of offense to be the highest good. May our bodies with all their passions be brought into subjection to the Spirit, and may we be made free through an unflinching obedience to thy will. Our strength is not sufficient to support us in temptation. Be with us in the hours that come for our testing, and strengthen our hearts and keep our feet from falling. Amen.

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## The Lesson Coin Thoughts

## I

He who is purposeless is powerless.

The triumph of the soul means much more than the triumph of the sword.

It takes a kingly character to defy the customs of kings in the interest of righteousness.

Doing right at any cost is the essence of heroism.

*Caterers are never conquerors.*

He who trifles with moral character cannot be a moral conqueror.

No man's conquest is ever complete till he conquers himself.

The man with a great purpose never parleys nor plays with great principles.

## II

However a man may blunder, it can never be *ill* to purpose *well*.

A man may spoil the finest practice by a bad purpose.

*Good purposes and bad practices* are not compatible.

He who has a high purpose in his heart cannot live a low life.

The way to hell is not "paved with good intentions," but bad purposes.

## III

"God had brought Daniel into favor;" that is better than a "political pull."

We are sure to fare well when God favors us.

The path of pain is often the path to peace and power.

Singularity is not strength, but a man's strength may make him singular.

Peculiarity is not power, but unusual power may make a man peculiar.

## IV

It is only the powerful that know the perils of power.

The greatest scepter comes at the price of the greatest suffering.

Daniel won the *love* of the eunuchs before he won the *rule* of them.

The way of sacrifice may be steep, but the end thereof is sweet.

There is nothing wicked in *wine* till it gets into a *man*.

## V

Only the man who trusts God can stand supreme tests.

"God gave them knowledge and skill;" yes, but they had also given themselves to God.

God will always give us what we need to do his will.

## VI

"Therefore stood they before the king;" I am glad the record did not make them *run*.

Men who stand for the King of kings do not often run from corrupt kings.

We need not fear the evil if we are fearless in doing the good.

God, who is our Friend, is greater than any man who is our foe.

Our fears often harm us more than the *foca* we fear.

## VII

"Ten times better;" God's plans are always better than men's.

It is because God's way is perfect that it is perfectly wise to choose God's way.

In everything God's will and way are many times better than mine.

But the secret of God's will is with the heart, and not with the lead.

When we love the *God of law* it is easy to love the *law of God*.

## VIII

Here are the characteristics of courage: Conscience, character, convictions, cheerfulness, faith, fervor, persistence, power.

The strongest man is never self-centered, he is God-centered.

The way of self-will is never the way to God's will.

To be self-satisfied is sure proof of superficiality.

Nothing but God is great enough to satisfy the soul.

## The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

It is good to know these four fine young fellows in long-ago Babylon. I am glad there are so many like them in the world now. I wish it could be said of every one, as I rejoice to know it can be said of some, He has purposed in his heart that he will not defile himself." There are two strong pillars upon which a pure, noble, influential personality rests. They show grandly in the conduct of Daniel and his friends. They are the personal consciousness of

a personal God, and a proper appreciation of the dignity of manhood. Character firmly built upon these convictions will stand the stress and strain of temptations besetting young men and women to-day, the same as those which tested Daniel's moral fiber. He had been taught the pure Hebrew faith in childhood; but now he was in heathen Babylon. It surpassed any modern city in temptations to self-indulgence and vice of every sort. Here he was tempted

by his youth, his inexperience, social customs, his position and his prospects of promotion, and by the fact that he was away from home and home influence. This covers every situation in which a young person may be placed. But he had a principle within himself, and adhered to it. He believed certain things were wrong, and instead of adjusting his conscience to his surroundings he settled himself upon his own convictions of duty and so inclosed himself in a fortress secure from the enemy. Duty once clearly settled, the whole course of conduct is settled. There was a strong temptation to compromise, for his friend at court who had been kind to him said perhaps he would lose his own head if the king should be displeased with Daniel's decision. But he had the spirit of Faber's vigorous verse,

"For right is right since God is God,  
And right the day must win;  
To doubt would be disloyalty,  
To falter would be sin."

And so without stopping to reason about it (where the tempter so often gets the better of us) he said, "Prove us for ten days and see." It is safe to test a question of duty on the side of conscience. Some one has wisely said, "Never go over to the devil's ground to fight his battles; he gets the advantage there." It would have been a sorry experiment for Daniel to have said, "Let us try the king's meat and wine for ten days; perhaps it will do us no harm, and we would better keep good friends with these people we have to live with." A different story would be told of his life if the foundations had so given way in his youth. Temptation met and conquered, duty clearly seen and faithfully done, he went from strength to strength; to the

beauty of a perfect manhood and a courageous and influential old age.

With faith in God, not traditional, dogmatic, or doctrinal, but real and personal; and with a purpose to live such a life as will honor him and be worthy of one created in his image, we are safe in every place and under all temptation. Daniel's test proved and developed the strength of his principles. You are not to grow morally strong by never facing the tests the world presents, but by meeting and overcoming them. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne." You cannot be an overcomer, unless you have met something to overcome. You cannot be a victor if you have never fought and won a battle. The glory of living is to be "a hero in the strife"; not to bemoan the fact that there are temptations, but to purpose in your heart that you will not be defiled by them. This is what the world around us needs—the resisting life of souls fixed in purpose for righteousness. I saw lately as I crossed the continent many fences set up here and there without any apparent reason for their location nor any great strength in the way they were put together. But I was told they were there to arrest the snowdrifts; even those slight structures shielded the railway from the force of winter storms. You need to stand where you are as a fence to defend others who are exposed to destructive opinions, customs, and social tendencies. We may think ourselves of too little consequence for people to notice what we do or say. But no one can live a true life without adding to the forces that uplift and save the world. It will cost something; but the gain far outweighs the cost; for the word is always proved true, "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

### The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. What men want is not talent—it is purpose.—*Balzac.*
2. Learn to say No! and it will be of more use to you than to be able to read Latin.—*Spurgeon.*
3. A man without decision can never be said to belong to himself; he belongs to whatever can seize him.—*Foster.*
4. I consider the temperance cause the foundation of all social and political reform.—*Colden.*
5. Temperance puts wood on the fire, meal in the barrel, flour in the tub, money in the purse, credit in the country, contentment in the house, clothes on the back, and vigor in the body.—*Franklin.*
6. There is not a thought in a hog's head of beer. Nothing of merit was ever written under

the inspiration of lager beer. It stupefies, and its effect on the brain is to stagnate thought.—*Roosevelt.*

#### 7. Verse 8.

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be?  
It is the generous spirit, who, when brought  
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought!  
Whose high endeavors are an inward light;  
That makes the path before him always bright.  
Who, with a natural instinct to discern,  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to  
learn:  
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,  
But makes his moral being his prime care.  
—*Wordsworth.*

8. When Kossuth was an exile in Turkey the government was strongly pressed by Russia and

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Austria to give him up. The expedient was resorted to, by the Sublime Porte, of making his continued protection contingent on his embracing Mohammedanism. Hear his reply: "My answer does not admit of hesitation. Between death and shame the choice can neither be dubious nor difficult. Governor of Hungary, and elected to the high place by the confidence of fifteen millions of my countrymen, I know well what I owe to my country, even in exile. Even as a private individual, I have an honorable path to pursue. Though once the governor of a generous people, I leave no inheritance to my children. They shall at least bear an unsullied name. God's will be done! I am prepared to die."—*Bishop Foss.*

**9. Verse 9.** "They are rich who have friends."

**10.** "Sentiments of friendship which flow from the heart cannot be frozen in adversity."

**11.** True friends visit us in prosperity only when invited, but in adversity they come without invitation.—*Theophrastus.*

**12. Verses 9-16.** Popular opinion is the greatest lie in the world.—*Carlyle.*

**13.** I do not regret having braved public opinion, when I knew it was wrong and was sure it would be merciless.—*Horace Greeley.*

**14.** Temperance is reason's girdle and passion's bridle.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

**15.**

Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,  
As if she would her children should be riotous  
With her abundance. She, good catersess,  
Means her provision only to the good,  
That live according to her sober laws,  
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.  
If every just man that now pines with want  
Had but a moderate and beseeching share  
Of that which lewdly pampered Luxury  
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,  
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed  
In unsuperfluous even proportion.  
And she no whit encumbered with her store;  
And then the Giver would be better thanked,  
His praise due paid; for swinish gluttony

Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,  
But with besotted base ingratitude  
Crams, and blasphemous his feeder.—*Milton, in  
the Lady's Reply to the Solicitations of Comus.*

**16.**

Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty;  
For in my youth I never did apply  
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood,  
Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo  
The means of weakness and debility;  
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,  
Frosty, but kindly.—*Shakespeare.*

**17. Verse 17.** The more we know, the greater our thirst for knowledge. The water lily, in the midst of waters, opens its leaves and expands its petals at the first pattering of showers, and rejoices in the raindrops with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert.—*Coleridge.*

**18.** Virtue is an angel; but she is a blind one, and must ask of knowledge to show her the pathway that leads to her goal. Mere knowledge, on the other hand, like a Swiss mercenary, is ready to combat either in the ranks of sin or under the banners of righteousness; ready to forge cannon balls, or to print New Testaments; to navigate a corsair's vessel or a missionary ship.—*Horace Mann.*

**19. Verse 19.** Could I obtain a hearing of the young men and young women who thus seek the city, I would say to them, not as some might, "Flee for your lives back to your homesteads and villages," for theirs is a noble and a worthy ambition. But I would say to them, "Put on the whole armor of God, seek out the society and sustaining friendship of the virtuous, attend the house of God, and cling to that teacher who most sensibly touches your soul. . . . Keep strictly to the early teachings of religious parents, forget not your early prayers; and, in company where there may be sneerers, skepticism, or atheists, who disdain the acknowledgement of a Supreme Being, have the courage and resolution to proclaim your belief, and in reply to their taunts and sneers show them that you can be more affable, more agreeable, and more attractive in company with your belief than they with theirs."—*Beecher.*

### Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

**I. Boys Away from Home.** The verses show us four young fellows far from home, and in circumstances of allurements and peril. They have been reared in homes of piety in the land of Israel; now they are in Babylon, the worst place in the world, away from the restraints of home life, remote from the privileges of the sanctuary, with no priest or parent to warn, instruct, or comfort them. And, while they are exiles and in bondage, their peculiar privileges

as residents in the royal palace, and invited to share in the dainties and luxuries of the king's household, make their situation more perilous. They bring to mind the situation of boys and young men who for the first time go away from home—to school, to learn a trade, to undertake work for themselves, to earn a living. The habits they form, the associations and friendships they make, the purposes they cherish at such a turning point in their lives will

have a bearing for good or evil on their whole after career. The example of Daniel and his three companions ought to serve as a blessing and an inspiration for all young people away from home.

**2. Tact.** The leader of this little body of youths had that almost indescribable quality which has in all realms of life a singular value—tact. Instead of acting stubbornly, and making a pretentious show of his scruples, and thereby awakening instant opposition, he made a simple and tactful request of the prince who was over them: "Try us for ten days on vegetable food, and see if we do not thrive. It will not cost you anything to make the experiment, and we are anxious, as well as you, to make a good showing of the results. Try the experiment, and determine for yourself whether we will not thrive on the food we have been accustomed to eat." There was a quiet shrewdness, a subtle, frank, and winning wisdom, in this request that won immediate acquiescence, under circumstances where abruptness, unruliness, or untactful behavior would have brought humiliation and punishment. Some one has suggested this motto as embodying the tactful principle, "Grant graciously what you cannot safely refuse, and conciliate those you cannot conquer." One of the definitions of tact is this: "The ready power of appreciating and doing what is required by circumstances." That adept in Sunday school work, Marion Lawrence, says: "Tact is that quality which makes one master of the situation. It is something like that quality in a cat which makes him light on his feet when you drop him. It is an art worth cultivating." Daniel possessed this quality in his boyhood and youth. He cultivated it in mature life.

**3. William Morley Punshon,** in his lecture on "Daniel in Babylon," has this to say with regard to this opening scene in Daniel's career: "Look at him as he is first introduced to our notice. He was lonely, he was tempted, he was in peril. Loneliness, temptation, danger—these are words which, perhaps from painful personal experience some of us can understand. Add to these the further condition of bondage—a word, thank God, whose full meaning a free people does not understand—and you have some conception of the position of Daniel when we first become acquainted with him in the palace of the king of Babylon. . . . He made the stand at once and resisted on the earliest occasion of encroachment upon conscience and of requirement to sin. 'He purposed in his heart that he

would not defile himself with the king's meat, nor with the portion of wine which he drank.' Now, as a true Hebrew, bound by the rescripts of the Mosaic law, certain meats were forbidden to him which other nations ate without scruple. Moreover, the chances were that the bread and the wine had been idolatrously consecrated, for those old pagans were not ashamed, as we are, to pervade the common things of life with their religion. To Daniel, therefore, these things were forbidden, forbidden by their ceremonial uncleanness, forbidden equally by their idolatrous associations, and it was his duty to refuse them. . . . It is against the beginning of evil, the first breach upon the sacredness of conscience, that you must take your stand. It is the first careless drifting into the current of the rapids which speeds the bark into the whirlpool's wave. Yield to the temptation which now invites you and it may be that you are lost forever."

**4. George Gilfillan,** in his now almost forgotten but very eloquent book, *The Baris of the Bible*, says of this character whom we are studying: "Daniel, the dignified counselor, the fearless saint, the ardent patriot, the blameless man, the magnificent dreamer, was certainly one of the most admirable of our Scripture worthies. His character was formed in youth; it was retained in defiance of the seductions and the terrors of a court. His genius, furnished with every advantage of education, and every variety of pagan learning, was consecrated to God. The window of his prophecy, like that of his chamber, opened toward Jerusalem."

**5. Daniel,** in youth, middle life, and old age, affords us a shining instance of "saints in strange places." The Bible gives many specimens of men and women whose lot was cast amid untoward circumstances, who were deprived of the "means of grace," as we are accustomed to style them, and yet who developed the highest sort of courage, fidelity, devotion, and admirable and exemplary character. He stands before the ages as an illustration of the great truth that the richest graces and the noblest manhood, by the nourishing kindness and care of God, can flourish in strange, unkindly, and even hostile soil. Let, therefore, no man ever plead that he is hindered by his circumstances, or debarred by his lot in life, from serving God, when the examples of Joseph in Egypt, Obadiah in the court of Ahab, the wife of the steward in the palace of the wicked king Herod, Zacchaeus the publican, and Daniel in Babylon, are set before us, in the Bible, for study and emulation.

### The School of Practice

I. Daniel simplified his future course by putting himself on record at the beginning as unwilling to compromise his conscience. I will also take a firm stand against the first step in every proposed wrong course that may come to me.

II. Daniel stood firm against the influence of associates and the fear of possible personal harm.

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pledge myself this week to refuse to be turned away from any duty by the influence of friends or enemies, or any selfish consideration.

III. Temperance means not only abstinence from the use of strong drinks, but moderation in all physical appetites. I will this week and always strive to keep my bodily life subject to the life of the soul.

## The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

### General Preparatory Work

- I. *The Lesson Material*: Dan. 1, especially the printed verses 8-20. Read also chapter 2.  
 II. There is no *Parallel Passage*, nor any direct *Connecting Link*. Concerning *Daniel himself and the Book* which bears his name see the *LESSON WORD STUDIES*, page 698.  
 III. The lesson passage naturally falls into *Three Divisions*: verses 8-13; 14-16; 17-20. See the *LESSON ANALYSIS*, page 697.

IV. *Comparative Study of the Lesson Text*: Verse 8: instead of "portion of the king's meat" read "king's dainties" (here and in verses 13 and 15); the law of the clean and the unclean is given in Lev. 11; prophecies of the defilement incidental to the exile are given in Ezek. 4, 13, 14; Hos. 9, 3, 4. Verse 9: instead of "God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with," "God made Daniel to find kindness and compassion in the sight of"; compare Psa. 106, 46; Prov. 16, 7. Verse 10: instead of "meat" read "food"; instead of "children," "youths," here and in verses 13, 15, and 17; instead of "of your sort," "of your own age"; instead of "then shall ye make me," "so would ye." Verse 11: instead of "Melzar," "the steward" (here and also in verse 16); instead of "set," "appointed." Verse 12: instead of "pulse," "the herbs" (Margin); see also verse 19. Verse 14: instead of "consented," "hearkened." Verse 15: insert "they were" before "fatter." Verse 16: instead of "meat," "dainties." Verse 17: insert "Now" before "As." Verse 18: instead of "Now," "And"; instead of "that the king had said he should bring," "which the king had appointed for bringing." The "days" were three years. Verse 20: instead of "all matters," "every matter"; instead of "that" "concerning which"; instead of "astrologers," "enchanters." In the Revised Version paragraphs begin with verse 8, verse 14, and verse 17.

### The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Berean Leaf.]

#### Preparing the Lesson.

For Study Material for the Teacher see paragraph on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above.

*Illustrative Material*: The picture of Daniel making his request of the prince of the eunuchs, Berean Institute Quarterly, page 80, may be found of service.

#### Constructing the Lesson.

*Arrangement of Lesson Facts*: The story concerning Daniel's three friends, to be read on Wednesday; the story of how the king of Babylon lost his mind, to be read on Thursday; and the Captives' Psalm, to be read on Sunday; and the found helpful in providing a background. The simple outline suggested in the GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above, will help the teacher to present the lesson story in vertebral fashion. But we should never forget that always when skeletons are exhibited in public they are will imperil the vitality of your teaching.

#### Teaching the Lesson.

*Suggestions for Developing the Outline*:  
 1. The Boy Who Trusted in God. We will say, rather "the Boys," for doubtless Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah joined in Daniel's request, as they afterward shared in his reward. Our

WORD STUDIES, page 698, help much to an understanding of the details of this story. 1. Remember that young Daniel was a captive—the slave of King Nebuchadrezzar, dependent for his "chances in life" on the whim of that king. That, at least, is what most people thought, not taking God into account. Nebuchadrezzar might have chosen to make a soldier out of Daniel, or a merchant, or a street sweeper. He determined, however, to make him (in a professional sense, of course) a "wise man"; for just as we train certain young men to be ministers, so the people of Babylon trained certain young men to become "wise men," so that when they grew up they could give good advice to the king and people. But really it was God's Spirit that led Nebuchadrezzar to make this decision about Daniel and his three young friends. 2. Nowadays people often forget that food and drink wonderfully affect our tempers and our thinking. In those old days people were careful to feed the boys that were to become "wise men" with the food and drink that they thought was best for them. But like some people nowadays they made a terrible mistake, and thought wine and rich food were good for the health, although really they are very bad for it. The careful teacher will explain *kosher meat* (see WORD STUDIES) only to those pupils who can clearly understand the bearing of Jewish restrictions on the teachings of this lesson. 3. Who gave Daniel favor with those about him? Verse 9. 4. Observe (verse 8) that while Daniel deter-

ained never to eat the king's meats nor drink his wine, because he believed God wished him not to do so, he did not begin by saying, "I want," but very politely he asked the prince who took care of him for plain food. 5. Daniel trusted in God; he was sure that God would somehow provide for him and for his three friends. So he asked that a fair trial should be made, for ten days, of pulse (that is, of vegetables and breakfast food) and water. There is opportunity here for strong temperance teaching.

**2. The First Effect of Trust in God.** 1. God's Spirit touched the prince's heart so that he consented that the four boys should for ten days have only pulse to eat and water to drink. 2. I do not think it needed any miracle to make these four boys healthier-looking at the end of a week and a half than the boys who had been fed on indigestible food and intoxicating drink. 3. But miracles are not the only evidences of God's power. Every rose that blooms on a bush or vine is God's handiwork just as really as it would be God's doing if a rose grew on a cow's horn. For who but God can make a rose grow anywhere? And so, though pulse and water are very good, who but God could make Daniel and his three friends fairer and fatter than the other boys? and who but God could make the prince willing to give them the good food they desired? God honors those who honor him.

**3. The Second Effect of Trust in God.** 1. God not only gave these boys clearer complexions than others; he gave them clearer minds also. He does so now. Nobody but a fool would take beer or whisky just before he had to do some difficult figuring. 2. Besides giving Daniel good sense God made him able to explain visions and dreams. 3. When King Nebuchadnezzar examined the four young men he found them wiser and clearer-minded than any of the older "wise men" whose heads were gray. Always God honors those who honor him. Read the quotation from Shakespeare respecting abstinence in THE LESSON IN LITERATURE AND ART.

#### Home Work for Pupils.

Advance Work; Urge the scholars to use the HOME READINGS for each day and ask them to draw a sketch of the Golden Text for next Sunday.

Review Work: Ask each pupil to bring in next Sunday the other names of Daniel's three friends; also to try to be able to give the Golden Texts of the lessons of the past quarter.

#### The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quar-

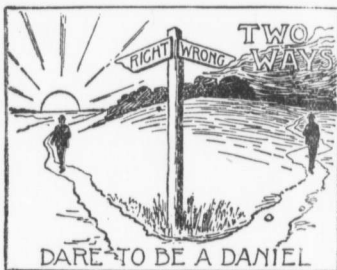
terly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

#### Preparing the Lesson.

For Study Material for the Teacher see paragraphs on GENERAL PREPARATORY WORK, above. Illustrative Material: 1. We have already called attention to the ideal view of Babylon, Senior Quarterly, page 173, and the frontispiece map of the captivities in the same number. See also pages 185 and 188 for a portrait of Nebuchadnezzar and a view of the traditional site of the tomb of Daniel. The lives of men who have championed great moral issues under the most adverse circumstances, as say Wilberforce and the abolition of slavery, and Howard's advocacy of prison reform, can be used effectively as illustrating the triumph of character and of right.

#### Constructing the Lesson.

Arrangement of Lesson Facts: 1. Conscience Triumphant, verses 8-16; "Be true to God, then



wilt thou be true to thyself." 2. God's Gift of Learning and Understanding, verses 17-20; "Them that honor Me I will honor." Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline: Having thoroughly entered into the spirit of the lesson, and made it vivid in every part, the teacher may confidently turn to the Golden Text, which points to these three essentials of a holy and successful life. 1. Will power; 2. Right affections; 3. Right conduct—all three, of course, based upon confidence in God.

The discussion of will power gives a rare opportunity to the teacher. The normal youth and maiden earnestly desire strength of will though they may have confused thoughts about what it is. A rereading of John Foster's matchless essay on Decision of Character (a book which in these days of public libraries is within reach of most) will help greatly in teaching this lesson. The force of will that is allied with God, as Daniel's was, is in no danger of degenerating into stubbornness. Have each pupil print on his pad (in the class)

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But we cannot well do what we *will* to do except we *want* to do it. Men often perform difficult tasks which they would greatly prefer not to have to do: but they never succeed in any endeavor until their hearts are enlisted. Daniel's purpose would not have amounted to much if it had not been reinforced by his holy desire. Print

### IN HIS HEART

Right conduct, therefore, springs from strength of will and rightness of affection. But what is conduct? It is the outcome of purpose and feeling. It is "fruit." As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Where his determination and his affection go, there the man goes. The gist of our lesson story is that Daniel had been taught that a certain course of behavior would defile him, and that with all his soul and all his strength of character he resolved

### THAT HE WOULD NOT DEFILE HIMSELF.

The teacher must beware here lest he do incidental harm to some sensitive soul. Call attention to the proverb that tells of a just man falling seven times and rising again. Members of the class may feel that their will has failed and their affection has been fitful. What then? Simply begin again with faith in God. Mr. Beecher wittily said that if on an icy morning, on his way from his parsonage to the ferry, he should slip and fall, he might be blameworthy, or he might be only an object for pity; but if he fell where he fell he would be either dead or a fool and a nuisance to others. There is no intimation in the text that Daniel was sinless. He doubtless had his struggles with himself as well as with others.

#### Home Work for Pupils.

Advance Work: Ask each pupil to bring in writing next Sunday the initials of each lesson title, as, for example: Lesson I, S's I.; Lesson II, H's P.; and also to bring in their minds the Quarterly Golden Text. Urge the Home

Readings.  
Review Work: Give to each pupil a writing tablet with the following questions, and ask for written answers next Sunday: 1. Define, if you can, the meaning of *kosher meat*. 2. Think out God's purpose in establishing for the Jews restrictions on eating. 3. Give reasons for say-

ing that it was Daniel's duty to do as he did.  
4. Can you see any way in which all this applies to the modern temperance reform? Select a LESSON COIN THOUGHT for each pupil, and ask for its memorization during the week.

### The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

Loyalty to Principle (verses 8-10). Consider Daniel's inexorable conscientiousness. Try to understand his conception of defilement by eating the king's meat and drinking his wine. Consider the defilement of modern drinking. Observe that his conscientiousness was interwoven with such graciousness of heart and manner that it won the respect and liking of those who did not share his scruples. On decision of character all worldly success depends. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," said Jacob to his firstborn son, and James wrote, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." Decision of character is also the condition of success in spiritual exercises and growth in grace. Read what James says about the double-minded man. Application to the temperance problem.

Faith in the Outcome of Righteousness (verses 11-16). Daniel knew he was right, for he was following the requirements of God's Word. Strength of purpose when not allied with righteousness works deplorable harm. Daniel believed in God and believed in himself so thoroughly that he was willing to have the most perilous of tests applied to his conduct. He had reason for the faith that was in him. The highest human reason and the deepest faith in God go hand in hand. Application to the temperance problem. Study closely THE LESSON IN LITERATURE AND ART and LESSON SIDELIGHTS.

The Gift of God (verses 17-20). Every talent and opportunity is a gift from God. We are not rewarded or punished for the number of our talents or opportunities. We are rewarded or punished for our use of them. Application to the temperance problem.

Or, if preferred, follow THE LESSON ANALYSIS, with which the thoughts of the LESSON EXPOSITION and THE LESSON HEART TALKS, may edifyingly be combined.

### The Responsive Review

1. Who was Daniel? *A young Jewish captive in Babylon.* 2. Where was he taken to be educated? *To the palace of the King.* 3. How did Daniel act in the palace? *He was faithful to his God.* 4. How did he show his faithfulness? *By refusing to drink the King's wine.* 5. Why did he thus refuse? *GOLDEN TEXT: "Daniel purposed in his heart," etc.* 6. How did God reward Daniel for his faithfulness? *He gave him wisdom and honor.*

### The Church Catechism.

55. How is the Word of God to be used as a means of grace? The Word of God is to be used as a means of grace by the private study of the Scriptures, and by diligent attendance upon the public reading and preaching of the Word in the Church.

## LESSON XIII. Third Quarterly Review

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord is thy keeper. Psa. 121. 5.

## Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

- M. Hezekiah's Prayer. Isa. 38. 1-8.  
 Tu. The Gracious Invitation. Isa. 55. 1-13.  
 W. Manasseh's Sin and Repentance. 2 Chron. 33. 1-13.

- Th. Josiah's Good Reign. 2 Chron. 34. 1-13.  
 F. Josiah and the Book of the Law. 2 Chron. 34. 14-28.  
 S. Jehoiakim Burns the Word of God. Jer. 36. 20-32.  
 S. The Life-giving Stream. Ezek. 47. 1-12.

## The Lesson Hymns

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 216.  
 Nearer, my God, to thee,  
 Nearer to thee;  
 E'en though it be a cross  
 That raiseth me.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 115.  
 Take my life and let it be  
 Consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
 Take my moments and my days,  
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 219.  
 More love to thee, O Christ,  
 More love to thee;  
 Hear thou the prayer I make  
 On bended knee;

## Questions for Senior Scholars

Lesson I. *Sennacherib's Invasion* of Judah came happily at a time when a God-fearing ruler was in control of the affairs of the Jewish state. Who was that ruler? How did he show his loyalty to and his confidence in Jehovah? What was the outcome? In what sense does God fight our battles?

In Lesson II, *Hezekiah's Prayer*, we have an illustration of a direct answer to prayer. Relate the story. Does God answer prayer as definitely to-day? May we approach God with confidence in times of distress? Could a kind and just God grant all our requests? What may we be sure he will always do for those who pray with faith?

Lesson III, *The Suffering Saviour*. The writer of this chapter has been called the evangelical prophet. Why? What historic character is described in this lesson? Mention any incidents of our Lord's life or death which seem to be pointed to beforehand by these words.

What connection in thought is there between Lesson IV, *The Gracious Invitation*, and the preceding lesson? To whom is the invitation given? To what are those addressed invited? Is the invitation important to-day? What does a rejection of the invitation involve? Does all this apply to the individual to-day?

Lessons V and VI, *Manasseh's Sin and Repentance* and *Josiah's Good Reign*, present typical passages of Jewish history. What were the facts about each reign? In what sense are these typical of Jewish history? Repeat the Golden Text for each of these lessons.

Lesson VII, *Josiah and the Book of the Law*,

continues the story of the only good reign in Judah after the time of Hezekiah. Why were not the reforms instituted by Josiah more permanent in their effect upon the national life? Of what was the changeable attitude of the nation toward the laws of Jehovah an indication? How did Josiah's successors treat the Book of the Law?

Lesson VIII, *Jehoiakim Burns the Word of God*. What events intervened between those of Lesson VII and those of Lesson VIII? What was Jehoiakim's character as man and as king? Repeat the Golden Text. Who succeeded Jehoiakim on the throne?

Lesson IX. Why was *Jeremiah in the Dungeon*? By whose order was he there? Who rescued him? What was the political situation at the Jewish capital at this time? What types of men are presented in this lesson? What is the Golden Text?

Lesson X, *The Captivity of Judah*. When did it occur? What king was on the throne at Jerusalem? What king captured the city? What was the fate of the captive Jewish monarch? Could that fate have been averted? How? What were some of Zedekiah's characteristics? Was Jeremiah naturally a strong man? If both were naturally gentle and unadapted to times of struggle, what made the great difference between Jeremiah and the king?

In Lesson XI, *The Life-giving Stream*, we have a prophetic vision of the restored nation and temple. Give the main features of the vision and their interpretation.

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With Lesson XII, *Daniel in Babylon*, we began the study of a new epoch of Jewish history. Did the captivity have a wholesome

influence upon the religious life of the Jews? What should be the dominating motive of our lives? Repeat GOLDEN TEXT for the Quarter.

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars

Lesson I.—*Sennacherib's Invasion*. 2 Chron. 32. 9-23.—Of what great country was Sennacherib king? What message did he send to the king and people of Jerusalem? How did he try to take away the people's faith in Hezekiah? What great prophet was the friend of Hezekiah? What greater favor did the Lord show to Hezekiah and the people?

Lesson II.—*Hezekiah's Prayer*. Isa. 38. 1-8.—What was the trouble with Hezekiah that made him pray so earnestly? Why did he speak of his past life? What reasons did the Lord give for answering Hezekiah's prayer?

Lesson III.—*The Suffering Saviour*. Isa. 52. 13 to 53. 12.—Whose message was Isaiah giving to the people? What would lead many to be astonished at the Saviour? To whom would the blessings of his work of redemption come? Who despised and rejected Jesus? Did the Jews understand this message of their great prophet? Can anyone truthfully say that he does not need a Saviour? For whose sins was Jesus crucified?

Lesson IV.—*The Gracious Invitation*. Isa. 55. 1-13.—To whom is this invitation given? What is meant by "spending money for that which is not bread"? What does God promise to do for the soul that seeks him?

Lesson V.—*Manasseh's Sin and Repentance*. 2 Chron. 33. 1-13.—After whom did Manasseh copy in his conduct as a king? What was the worst thing he did in his idolatry? Did God send punishment upon Manasseh without giving him warning?

Lesson VI.—*Josiah's Good Reign*. 2 Chron. 34. 1-13.—How old was Josiah when he came to the throne of Judah? Whom did he choose as his model? What did he believe was his first duty as king? Why did he burn the bones of the priests of idol worship? What was his purpose in restoring the temple? Who helped Josiah in carrying out his plans?

Lesson VII.—*Josiah and the Book of the*

*Law*. 2 Chron. 34. 14-28.—Who collected the money for repairing the temple? What was found in the temple? Who explained the book to Josiah and the people? What did Huldah praise in Josiah? What promise did she give him?

Lesson VIII.—*Jehoiakim Burns the Word of God*. Jer. 36. 21-32.—What was Jehudi sent to bring to the king? Whose message was it? What did the king do with it? What was in the message which made Jehoiakim so angry? What did God command Jeremiah to do after the roll had been burned?

Lesson IX.—*Jeremiah in the Dungeon*. Jer. 38. 1-13.—What was the message of Jeremiah to the king and people? What did the king think Jeremiah was? Where was Jeremiah imprisoned? What shows that Zedekiah was a very weak man? Through whose influence was Jeremiah set free from the dungeon?

Lesson X.—*The Captivity of Judah*. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21.—Who made Zedekiah king of Judah? How did the king treat the messages which the prophet Jeremiah spoke to him? How did the people receive the word of love and favor which the prophet spoke? To what place were many of the people carried as slaves? How long were the Hebrews in captivity?

Lesson XI.—*The Life-giving Stream*. Ezek. 47. 1-12.—Where was Ezekiel in exile? To what place was he taken in a vision? What was shown to the prophet by his angel guide? From what place did this little stream come forth? What does this stream which Ezekiel saw stand for? What are some of the effects which the gospel produces in the world?

Lesson XII.—*Daniel in Babylon*. Dan. 1. 8-20.—How was Daniel brought to Babylon? Who were companions of Daniel there? What did the king wish to do with these young men? What reason did Daniel give for refusing to eat and drink what the king had ordered? Tell the rest of the story.

### An Analysis of the Quarter's Lessons

#### I. The Lessons in Time.

During the last three months we have had twelve lessons on the decline and fall of the kingdom of Judah and the exile. Our last lesson from the Old Testament, December 11, 1904, a study of the Captivity of the Ten Tribes, was dated about 721 B. C. Lesson I of the Third Quarter, *Sennacherib's Invasion*, we

may date about twenty years later than that, perhaps B. C. 701 or 699. Hezekiah's Sickness and Prayer (Lesson II) came shortly after B. C. 701, and perhaps three or four years earlier than the prophecies of the Suffering Saviour (Lesson III) and the Gracious Invitation (Lesson IV) had been spoken. Manasseh (Lesson V) reigned fifty-five years, from about

B. C. 694 to B. C. 640. During the month of July, when all these lessons were studied, we compassed perhaps sixty historical years. In Lessons VI and VII Josiah's reign came under our survey. He reigned thirty-one years, probably from B. C. 639 to 608. In the thirteenth year of his reign Jeremiah began to prophesy. The book of the law was discovered in the eighteenth year of his reign, B. C. 621. Lessons VIII and IX give us glimpses of the long and heartbreaking struggle of the prophet Jeremiah against the bitter opposition of Josiah's wicked and foolhardy successors. The burning of the roll by Jehoiakim is dated B. C. 604, and Jeremiah's confinement in the dungeon or cistern of Malchiah B. C. 588. These four lessons were studied in the month of August. September brought us three lessons; Lesson X, the overthrow of Jerusalem and the exile of Judah, covered B. C. 597 to 586. The prophecy from Ezekiel to which we give the title "The Life-giving Stream" was spoken about B. C. 570. And if an historical date is to be put to the Temperance lesson it will not probably be very far from B. C. 605.

#### II. The Lessons in Place.

Lessons I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X are all dated from Jerusalem, with other geographical connections, however. Lesson I refers to the siege of Lachish by Sennacherib. The scene of Lesson II is the king's palace, Jerusalem; and of Lessons III and IV probably in the residence of the prophet Isaiah. Lesson V begins in the royal palace in Jerusalem and

brings to view horrible rites in the valley of the son of Hinnom, the taking of Manasseh in fetters across the desert to Babylon, his penitence there, and his restoration to Jerusalem. In Lesson VI we journey with Josiah from the royal palace through all Judah and the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and Naphtali. Lessons VII and VIII show us the temple in Jerusalem as well as the royal palace. In Lesson IX we are conducted from place to place within the besieged city of Jerusalem to the king's palace, to the dungeon of Malchiah that was in the court of the prison, to the gate of Benjamin where the king sat, and back to the court of the prison. Lesson X describes the exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Lesson XI is in or near Tel-abib, on the river Chebar, in Babylonia; and Lesson XII in Babylon.

#### III. The Teachings of the Lessons.

The Golden Text for the Quarter contains the gist of all teachings, "The Lord is thy keeper," the keeper of all those who trust in him. The overthrow of Sennacherib, the cure of Hezekiah, the promise of the Saviour, and his gracious invitation, the forgiveness of even such a hardened sinner as Manasseh, the providence which preserved the book of the law in the ruined temple and reproduced the burned roll, the loving-kindness manifested to the prophet in the dungeon, the exiles' journey across the wilderness, Daniel in Babylon, the vision of the life-giving stream with its promises—all these indicate that Jehovah is the keeper of those who trust in him.

### The Lesson Coin Thoughts

#### I

God is the great Overseer of the things of the soul.

He always has the *right* to rule—because he is always *right*.

God is the faithful Keeper of those who keep faith with him.

We are reviewing his doings as the Superintendent of souls.

His keeping process is twofold: He can keep his word with man on condition that man keeps his word with God.

#### II

"The Lord is thy keeper"—*when thou dost keep the way of the Lord.*

No man in sin can claim the safe-keeping of God.

Subjectively there are certain experiences by which God keeps us.

We are kept by the processes of *prayer*.

We are kept by communion with his Word.

We are kept by *keeping* his Word.

We are kept by *hope* in the heart.

We are kept by *spiritual convictions*.

We are not kept by our understanding of things, but by *faith* in the Maker of things.

#### III

A man's character is to be completed by co-operation with his Creator.

God's programmes are all *planned*—they do not *happen*.

Man's body may be a machine, but his soul is a mechanic.

"God is not the author of confusion," but of cosmic order.

God himself *cannot* do what he cannot do *right*.

We will come out all right if we let God have his way, for his way is always right.

#### IV

No man can be physically kept by disregarding physical laws.

No man can be mentally kept by disregarding mental laws.

No man can be spiritually kept by disregarding spiritual laws.

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A man is lawfully kept as a result of his keeping the law.

Trees grow in certain soil conditions; men grow in certain soul conditions.

We may conform to God's plans though we cannot change them.

It is often the wisest to *choose what we get* though we may not always *get what we choose*.

## V

We may learn to *adapt* ourselves to some things which we do not care to *adopt*.

It can never be said of a man, "All things are yours," till it can be said of him, "All your things are God's."

If all our *to-days* are beautiful all our *tomorrows* will be.

We will believe God more when we know more of God.

The *things of God* may not appear right to me because I am not right with the *God of things*.

## VI

It is a man's moral purpose that puts him in touch with God's moral power.

A man is always puny when he breaks his hold on power.

The mighty man must keep in touch with the mighty.

If we look at our failures in the right light they will point us to success.

Even a good man may *stumble toward the goal*.

A man may continue in *well-doing* though he may not continue in *complete doing*.

## VII

We might be "full and wanting nothing" if we were only as willing to receive freely as God is willing to freely give.

We should be stronger if we better understood the permanency of God's power.

It is I that change when I slip, not gravitation.

The sun seems changed when I look at it with tears on my lashes; the change is in me, not in the sun.

The old house and the old orchard are just the same, but the boy has changed to a man.

The river still flows between the same banks, but the child that played along the river has changed.

I am changeful, God is changeless; therefore I *fix* my faith on *him*.

## VIII

There is no condition which is not blessed if it only bring us nearer to God.

The earth gets more refreshment from the dark cloud than it does from the naked sky. Shadows as well as sunbeams are the servants of the soul.

Frost and snow  
Melt and flow  
To make the flowers grow.

## The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

Our Golden Text is like the fundamental chord in a piece of music. Seeming discord and soothing melody are held in harmony with this controlling note. We have heard, in the lessons of the past quarter, the despairing dirge of defeat through sin, and we have heard, too, the song of victory through the Deliverer. It is for us a psalm of life. Through all its variations this is the fundamental chord—"The Lord is thy keeper."

The one hundred and twenty-first psalm belongs in the Song Book of the Pilgrims—songs that were sung by exiles returning from captivity. Read them over and over—the one hundred and twenty-first to the one hundred and thirty-fourth psalm, and they will make melody in your heart, my fellow pilgrim. Six times in this one short psalm is the thought repeated that God is the keeper of his people, and of each separate soul. This quietness is our strength. No matter where or when the psalmist wrote, whether in far-away Babylon or in sight of Jerusalem, circumstances matter nothing; anywhere, everywhere, God keeps, and the singer

sings because he looks away from the valleys to the heights.

The beautiful thing about the good cheer of God's Word is that it is sincere. He does not say, "Never mind; your trials are not worth thinking of; go right on as if they did not exist." He recognizes the real conditions of human life in such an honest way that we can patiently and hopefully listen when he bids us, even when circumstances are really distressing, to look up, cheer up, bear up, believe, hope, rejoice. Why? Because the source of this soul exhilaration is God himself. The storm may have left not one tiny twig on which to sit and sing, yet I will sing! "He is my green bough where I will rest; he is the soul of my song; he is my song without words, for words could never reach the heights or depths of the harmonies he creates. I will hope without reason, as Abraham, who in hope believed against hope, being fully persuaded that that which God had promised he was able also to perform." He is the God of all comfort, and he is thy keeper. War, suffering, death, anxiety, exile, this is the

tale of the years; the world would die of grief if there were no knowledge anywhere of such a God as this.

Let us lift up our eyes. It is a bad habit to walk with our eyes on the ground. We miss seeing many pleasant things, and we may pass friends without recognizing them. It makes a difference, too, in our appearance. We make a better impression on others when we walk with head and eyes up. There is a great deal in resolution; I *will* lift up my eyes—to the hills, to the heights, above the mists of the valley to the mountain tops of promise in God's eternal sunlight. When unbelief asks the question the king of Babylon asked Daniel, "Is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee?" let us answer with another question, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety beside

him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long. He is thy shade so that the sun shall not smite thee by day. O the comfort of that shadow of the Rock in a weary land! In the desert men have dug down deep to find a secret underground river; in the desert of sorrow and temptation the "glorious Lord is for us a place of broad rivers and streams." The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, he shall preserve thy soul. It means exactly what it says. Jesus prayed to the Father for his own, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Shall not his prayer be answered for you, and for me? The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore. Toil and rest—thy going out to life's work and life's temptations; thy coming in to heaven's rest and safety.

### A Convenient Review Scheme

"The Lord is thy keeper."

No.	TITLES	GOLDEN TEXTS	WHAT ABOUT	FOR ME
I.	S's I.	"With us is—"	God defending Jerusalem.	The Lord is my defense.
II.	H's F.	"God is our—"	God healing Hezekiah,	The Lord is my helper.
III.	The S. S.	"The Lord hath—"	A prophet's vision.	The Saviour of the world is my Saviour.
IV.	The G. I.	"Seek ye the—"	A prophet's invitation.	God calls me to him.
V.	M's S. and R.	"Righteousness—"	A wicked king.	<i>I need not be bad.</i>
VI.	J's G. R.	"Remember now—"	A good king.	I can serve God now.
VII.	J. and B. of L.	"I will not—"	Finding God's Word.	I will read and love the Bible.
VIII.	J. B. the W. of G.	"Amend your—"	Burning God's Word.	I will stand up for the Bible.
IX.	J. in the D.	"Blessed are they—"	A prophet in a pit.	I will not let anyone frighten me from doing right.
X.	The C. of J.	"Be sure your—"	Captives.	I will always trust in God.
XI.	The L.-G. S.	"Whosoever will—"	Another prophet's vision.	I will try to be useful.
XII.	D. in B.	"Daniel purposed—"	A noble boy.	I will choose the best things.



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RESPONSIVE REVIEW SERVICE FOR THE THIRD QUARTER

*S*uperintendent. Give title and Golden Text of Lesson I.

*Loys.* Sennacherib's Invasion.  
*Girls.* With us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.

*Supt.* Lesson II.  
*Boys.* Hezekiah's Prayer.  
*Girls.* God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

*Supt.* Lesson III.  
*Boys.* The Suffering Saviour.  
*Girls.* The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

*Supt.* Lesson IV.  
*Boys.* The Gracious Invitation.  
*Girls.* Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.

*Supt.* Lesson V.  
*Boys.* Manasseh's Sin and Repentance.  
*Girls.* Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

*Supt.* Lesson VI.  
*Boys.* Josiah's Good Reign.  
*Girls.* Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

*Supt.* Lesson VII.  
*Boys.* Josiah and the Book of the Law.  
*Girls.* I will not forget thy Word.

*Supt.* Lesson VIII.  
*Boys.* Jehoiakim Burns the Word of God.  
*Girls.* Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God.

*Supt.* Lesson IX.  
*Boys.* Jeremiah in the Dungeon.  
*Girls.* Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Supt.* Lesson X.  
*Boys.* The Captivity of Judah.  
*Girls.* Be sure your sin will find you out.

*Supt.* Lesson XI.  
*Boys.* The Life-Giving Stream.  
*Girls.* Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

*Supt.* Lesson XII.  
*Boys.* Daniel in Babylon.  
*Girls.* Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself.

LESSON I. SENNACHERIB'S INVASION

*Supt.* And the Assyrians spake against the God of Jerusalem.

*Scholars.* And for this cause Hezekiah the king and the prophet Isaiah prayed and cried to heaven.

*All.* And the Lord sent an angel which cut off all the mighty men of valor, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the King of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land.

LESSON II. HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER

*Supt.* In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying,

*Scholars.* Go and say to Hezekiah, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

*All.* And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.

LESSON III. THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

*Supt.* He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

*Scholars.* Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

*All.* But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

LESSON IV. THE GRACIOUS INVITATION

*Supt.* Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat.

*Scholars.* Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

*All.* And let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

LESSON V. MANASSEH'S SIN AND REPENTANCE

*Supt.* And Manasseh did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

*Scholars.* Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters and carried him to Babylon.

*All.* And when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God.

LESSON VI. JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN

*Supt.* Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

*Scholars.* And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

*All.* For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

LESSON VII. JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW

*Supt.* And Hilkiah said, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.

*Scholars.* And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.

All. And the king commanded Hilkiah, Go inquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord.

#### LESSON VIII. JEHOIAKIM BURNS THE WORD OF GOD

*Supt.* Now the king sat in the winter house: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

*Scholars.* And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed.

All. Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

#### LESSON IX. JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON

*Supt.* Then took they Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon, and they let him down with cords. And in the dungeon was no water, but mire. Ebed-melech spake to the king, saying,

*Scholars.* These men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is.

All. Then the king commanded, Take up Jeremiah out of the dungeon before he die.

#### LESSON X. THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

*Supt.* But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people.

*Scholars.* Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden.

All. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire. And them that escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon.

#### LESSON XI. THE LIFE-GIVING STREAM

*Supt.* And when the man that had the line in his hand measured a thousand cubits, the waters were to the ankles.

*Scholars.* Again he measured a thousand; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand; the waters were to the loins.

All. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over. Then said he unto me, Everything shall live whither the river cometh.

#### LESSON XII. DANIEL IN BABYLON

*Supt.* But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank.

*Scholars.* And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

All. And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams

#### PRACTICAL LESSONS

##### LESSON I

"The refuge which prayer affords is not the refuge of cowardice, which shuts its eyes to danger, but of courage, which looks it full in the face."

##### LESSON II

"Does God always answer your prayers?" one child said to another. "Yes, he always answers; sometimes he says, 'Yes,' and sometimes, 'No.'"

##### LESSON III

The Saviour chooses suffering and death that the sinner may choose life and blessing.

##### LESSON IV

"Forsake! Repent!" are the merciful invitations of grace. Do you call them severe and harsh? You might as well say it is cruel to guide one from a burning building.

##### LESSON V

Manasseh was the Prodigal Son of the Old Testament. If he could be restored, there is no one against whom the door of repentance is closed.

##### LESSON VI

"It is not enough to be destructive, tearing down the false; but we should always be constructive, building up the true."

##### LESSON VII

I think it may safely be said that every great reformation or revival has been due to a rediscovery of the Word of God.

##### LESSON VIII

Only fools imagine that stopping the fire bell will put out the fire. Refusing to hear the warning against evil conduct will not prevent the consequences.

##### LESSON IX

One with God is a majority in a prison or on a throne.

##### LESSON X

"The great lesson to be learned from the destruction of Jerusalem is God's persistent effort to save it."

##### LESSON XI

The change produced by the river is the emblem of the work of the church. Its business is to flow through the worst regions and transform them.

##### LESSON XII

All who would become strong and useful must gain their power largely through victory over temptation.

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# Primary Teachers' Department

## The Primary Department and Home Missions

The work of Home Missions is especially adapted to the children since it is work within our own borders, and since the little ones can attend to it without going far from home. Especially in communities where there are Homes or training schools, or where there are deaconesses in active service, the little people can often assist in their blessed work from house to house. I know of one deaconess who finds much work for the wee ones to do.

When Queen Victoria was a child she wished to purchase a doll, but had reached the end of her spending money; accordingly she asked the merchant to keep it for her. As she went later for it she saw a poor half-starved man and gave him her money, again asking the merchant to hold the doll. The poor man said to her, not knowing who she was, "If the Lord Almighty had made you a queen it would have been no more than you deserve."

And it is God's desire to make many queens of the little girls of the church.

ALICE M. DOUGLAS.

## Primary Briefs

HALF the happiness in living  
Comes from willing-hearted giving.  
Comes from sharing all our pleasures,  
From dividing all our treasures.  
And the other half is loving  
All things tame and all things roving;  
Loving skies, too, and the mountains,  
Woods and waters, fields and fountains.  
So each good child should be sowing  
Love seeds while his life is growing;  
For all happiness in living  
Comes from loving and from giving.

—Selected.

RALLY DAY is at hand, when the Sunday school family comes together for glad greeting and renewal of the home ties. For it is true that the Sunday school is often the only spiritual home known to the child—the one place in which he hears of God and heaven and his immortal destiny.

"WELCOME home" is the thought of the day, and through it all should run, like a golden thread, a clear note of thankful praise to the dear Father who has kept us in life and given us home and friends and happy privileges. The littlest ones are not too young to understand to whom they owe all the joys that come to them.

The Autumn Rally means much more than appears on the surface. It is the teacher's

opportunity for entering the home of every child in her class—if not in person, then through the written or printed message. It is her opportunity to show the parent that there is real love and careful oversight of their children in the Sunday school. It is the time to seek newcomers, to replenish the Cradle Roll list, and to bear loving remembrance to any who may be ill. Or, if the death angel has borne away any of the little flock during the days of separation, here is the teacher's opportunity to pour in the balm of sympathy.

THE Sunday school was gathered in the beautiful chapel for its Children's Day exercises. The primary class sang several times to the delight of the audience. Two of the pieces sung were church hymns, and it can safely be said that "Sun of my soul," and "Love divine, all love excelling," never sounded more sweetly than when softly sung by these childish lips.

"Too old for such little children," some said, but a primary teacher of other days listened with glad approval. What if the words are not all comprehended now! Stowed away in the memory, the heart will some day awake to their beauty and power; and who can tell to what helpful ministry they may be called. Says a German writer, "The hymns drilled into the memory in youth remain as a spiritual and sentimental solace to the end of time." Teach the little ones at least two good hymns each year, and the time and effort will be well spent.

## The Child's Church

SAID a pastor some years ago to his daughter, aged ten, as Children's Day approached, "Mabel, dear, do you not think that this Children's Day would be a good time for you to join the church?" The child looked up at him in open-eyed wonder and replied, "Why, papa, don't I belong to the church?" There was explanation to the child, but a vast illumination to the father. In the new illumination he saw many other children besides his own.—*Central Christian Advocate.*

GIVE to me a cheerful spirit,  
That my little ones may see  
It is good and pleasant service  
To be ever taught of Thee.  
Father, order all my footsteps,  
So direct my daily way,  
That, in following me, the children  
May not ever go astray.

# International Bible Lessons

## THIRD QUARTER

### LESSON X—September 3

#### THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "Be sure your sin will find you out." Num. 32. 23.

#### Primary Notes

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON



In the three remaining lessons before the Review, emphasize clearly the fact that the Lord is our Keeper, no matter where or what we are, but that he will not keep us free from hard things, if we refuse to obey him. The

two lessons about captivity show the difference in the captives. The people of Judah were faithful, while Daniel obeyed when absent, as faithfully as at home. Between these two lies the lesson of the Life-giving Stream, which shows how freely God gives. Tell these lesson-stories in such a way as to impress throughout, the thought of our Father's nearness, power, and loving interest in us always and everywhere.

**Approach to the Lesson.** Aim to leave in young hearts the deep impression that our Father's heart is grieved when we disobey, and he has to hurt us to make us remember, and do better. Do not use Golden Text to frighten the children, and make them feel as if pursued by some avenger, but tenderly impress the uselessness of trying to hide anything, when our loving Father must surely see everything, or he would not be greater than we are. This should make us try hard not to grieve him. It is because we are his, that he does so much to make us better.

Some boys were playing in the street before a house. They got to quarreling and making a loud, angry noise. A gentleman came out of the house, took one of the boys by the hand, and led him in. There he talked to him about doing wrong, told him how sorry he was, and then punished the boy. Why did not this man speak to all the boys, and punish them? Because the one he brought in was his own boy, and the rest did not belong to him. He was more sorry about his own son, and besides, it was his business to look after his boy and help him to do better. If he had not cared for him and loved him, he would have let him alone to go on and be as bad as he pleased.

**A Disobedient King.** When the one who has

a chance to be a leader does wrong he has a chance to do more harm than if he was one of the followers, because he makes others disobedient, leading them astray.

The country of Judah had now a king who disobeyed God and did evil in his sight. Wherever he was and whatever he did, God could see and he would not have been the great God, and so the story says that King Zedekiah did evil in God's sight. The Lord sent Jeremiah, the prophet and teacher, with messages to this king, but he would not listen, and kept on proudly in his own way. He made his heart hard, so that the Lord's word would not touch or soften it, and he refused to bend his will to God's will. He planned to do just as he pleased. As God saw all this, his holy and loving heart was grieved and sorry.

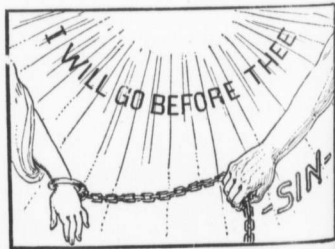
**A Disobedient People.** As the leader took the wrong way, his followers went after him. They did not need to do this. They might have done right, no matter how much evil their king did, but they were disobedient in heart, and it was easy to follow the king, so they did.

They set up idols and prayed to them, and broke God's commandments. They did many, many wicked things. It was not because they knew no better, for God kept sending messengers to them, whom they would not hear. They mocked these prophets, and treated them shamefully and went on in their evil ways.

**What Sin Brought.** Sin brought sorrow—sorrow to God's heart, and sorrow to the people, too.

To show them how dreadful sin was, the Lord punished the people by allowing their enemies to take them away from their own country to a strange land. The beautiful temple was burned with fire, and Jerusalem's wall was broken down. The king and people had not kept God's Sabbath day, and now God said the land should rest seventy years, to make up for all these lost days of rest and worship, even as Jeremiah told them, speaking the Word of the Lord.

What do you think of these people? Do you



wish to be like them? We really know better now than they did what God wishes us to do

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since Jesus has lived on earth. It is worse for us to disobey now.

*The Lord Our Keeper is Grieved when We Sin.* It is because our Father loves us so much, and has done so much for us, that it hurts him when his children disobey. If our hearts are full of love to him we cannot bear to grieve him.

*Thought for Teachers.* It is often a little hard to convince children of sin. Their little naughtinesses and disobediences may be brought home to them, it is true, but let us use the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," and show how that has been broken, and how it grieves the loving heart of God. We can't keep this from him. He knows and is sorry.

LESSON XI—September 10

THE LIFE-GIVING STREAM. Ezek. 47. 1-12

GOLDEN TEXT: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22. 17.

Primary Notes



*Approach.* There was once the queerest country you ever heard of, in the Land of Make-believe. There they never gave anything away. Whoever wished a drink must pay for it, each time. If anyone wished

to rest on a neighbor's porch, he must pay for it. Nobody asked for a kindness, but bought it, if he wanted it. No flowers were given away—all were sold. Nobody had either the pleasure of giving or of taking. It was nothing but buy and sell—buy and sell. If one were too poor to buy he went without. And the people were all selfish and cared nothing for love's sake, because they never did anything for love's sake. It was all for money, money. Would you like to live in that country in the Land of Make-believe? I am sure you would not, and neither would I. We are all very glad that it is only to be found in the Land of Make-believe, which nobody ever sees or finds.

It is a beautiful thing to give, for love's sweet sake, and to take, for love's sweet sake. Lead the children to speak of the things that can never be bought with money, but which are continually given, as mother's care, father's love in working for them, teacher's kind words, presents given and taken for love, services done for love.

How does love give? Does it ask pay? Do you buy it? Does love give just a little? Do you measure the love you give mother and father, in a pint cup, or a thimble? Can you

tell just how much it is? Can they tell how much they love you? How do they show it? By what they do.

Aim in this lesson to show how abundantly and freely God gives that he may save and help us, and how gladly and freely we ought to receive.

*The Story.* Tell of Ezekiel, another prophet, teacher, and good man whom God used as a messenger, while his people were in Babylon.

*The Vision.* Tell of the vision or sort of waking dream the prophet had, when he seemed to be in Jerusalem, with a man to show him about, and describe what he saw. There was the house of God, with gates, north, south, east, and west. The man with Ezekiel had a line to measure, and the prophet saw that from under the door of the house, eastward, came flowing waters. Describe the increased flow of these waters, the man measuring and showing Ezekiel, till by and by there was a great stream, "waters to swim in," a "river that could not be passed over."

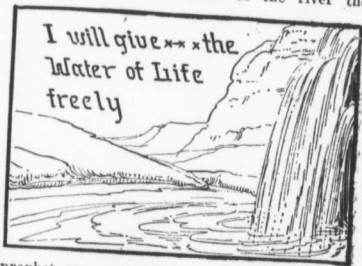
Stop to ask how much water is in a river, and if we could dip it all up with a little cup? Speak of the good rivers do, how they water the earth and give water for man and beast to drink. How free the water is, too. If we have a river near us, we did not pay to have it there.

Describe the good done by this river as it flowed along, how the trees grew on its banks, and how everything was healed and made sweet and whole, and good, where this river came. It was a wonderful picture. Now what does it mean?

*God's River.* This river that could not be crossed is just a picture of God's love and goodness. Who can measure this? Who could ever buy it? Who can ever tell how much good it does?

Draw out from class the parallels, and show how God's love is like this great, wide, free river, that makes things grow and heals everything it touches.

The trees on the banks of the river the



prophet saw were always green and fadeless, and so God will keep us in his love forever—more if we only trust him.

*The Lord Our Keeper Gives Freely.* Make this clear. Then ask, "How are we to get what is so freely given?" Standing by the river will not quench thirst. Looking at it will not. We must take and drink. We must let God's love come into our hearts, to make us clean and strong and safe.

*Thoughts for Teachers.* We need to take to our own hearts the comfort of the assurance, "Everything shall live whither the river cometh."

Not our efforts, but the Life-giving Stream must be our hope for the children so soon to pass from our care. To show them this, bring them to it, and show them how to take, must be our aim.

## LESSON XII—September 17

### DANIEL IN BABYLON. (Temperance Lesson.) Dan. 1. 8-20

GOLDEN TEXT: "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." Dan. 1. 8.

#### Primary Notes



sweet. Daniel was not a reformed man, but one who did not fall. He began right and kept on right, and to picture this beautiful life is better than dwelling upon the sad details of the drunkard's downward course. We must warn against the evils and dangers of strong drink but, with it all, let us exalt above all, the ideal of the sound, clean body and beautiful, strong, useful life.

Once upon a time a king who wished to reward a friend of his for some service, gave him, as a gift, a lovely home. It was all of pure white marble, and was just large enough for the man's needs. Outside and inside it was clean and beautiful, and so convenient that everything anyone could wish to use, that it was a perfect home. The king had it built and gave it to his friend, but who, now, must care for it? The new owner, of course. He could not possibly make such a house himself. He was not rich enough to pay for it, nor wise enough to build it, but when it was given him, he was bound to take care of it. If he spoiled it and allowed it to get dirty and broken, if he invited into it those who would break it down and fill it with uncleanness, whose fault would it be? The king's? No, indeed, the new owner's.

*Our King.* God himself has given us this beautiful house of the body, which we could not make or buy. What ought we to do? Take care of it, surely, and keep it clean and strong, and use it for him. What would you think of the man to whom the king gave a house if he had never invited the king to come into it, and had filled it up with rubbish so that there was no room fit for the king? If we do not take care of our bodies, and keep them sweet and clean for Jesus to live in our hearts is it not a sin?

*How Daniel Kept the House of His Body.* Make the most of this picturesque story in the telling. Tell who Daniel was, mention his friends, his youth, the sad fact of captivity, his good looks, and strong body, and the favor of the king. Make the scene of this youth's temptation and resistance to live before the children, as the history of the change in diet is told. Explain that Daniel would not defile himself by the king's wine and meat, which had very likely been offered first to idols, because he wished to keep body and soul clean for his God, and while the food might be clean in itself, it would not be good for him, but would hurt his body, while the feeling that he was doing wrong would hurt his soul, and so he could not be clean. All this would be like a blot on white paper. It would show in all its blackness and spoil all the white. As ink blots a white page, so sin spoils the spirit and the body.

Show how God helped Daniel and his friends and blessed them in their purpose to honor God and keep their bodies clean and strong and not do anything that would be wrong. At home they knew they would not be allowed to eat and drink the meat and wine offered them here, and they were so brave that they would not do in a strange place what they could not do at home.

God showed by his blessing upon them what he thought of the brave purpose of these young



men. Explain purpose, as making up the mind.

*The Lord Our Keeper Will Help Us to Be Strong.* Daniel was strong. He would not do

wrong. If God can make him the same hearts, to

*Thoughts for Teachers.* part of a boy. Approuching a imitate th

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wrong. He would not do what would hurt him. If God could keep him from strong drink, and make him strong and clean, he can and will do the same for us. Shall we "purpose" in our hearts, to please God and trust him to help us.

**Thought for Teachers.** Love of the heroic is part of the child's inheritance, especially of the boy. Appeal to this instinctive hero-worship in arousing admiration for Daniel and resolve to imitate this bright example.

Ask scholars if they imagine Daniel would smoke cigarettes. Impress the uncleanness and dire evil of narcotics as well as alcoholics, for alas, boys often begin to use them at nine.

LESSON XIII—September 24

REVIEW

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord is thy keeper." Psa. 121. 5.

Primary Notes



**Approach.** There was one time a nice mother hen who had a great many little chicks. She loved them all, and had such warm, feathery, fluffy wings that she could keep them all safe, if they only cuddled un-

der. Mother Hen used to give a little cluck, which her children understood, when she wished to call them to come under her wings. If they obeyed her call she cuddled them all safe. One day a big black hawk came sailing along, wishing to eat some little chickens for his dinner. Mother Hen saw him and called all her little ones to come under her wings, where Mr. Hawk could not get them. All but one came hurrying to the mother, and were soon safe, but this one little chick was so far away that when he heard Mother Hen's call he thought little about it. He believed he was big enough to take care of himself, and did not even look round to see what his mother meant. His mother could not keep him safe if he would not come under her wings, and so this foolish, proud little chick lost his life. It wasn't because his mother did not care, or did not call him, or could not keep him safe, but just because he would not come.

Do you know that when Jesus was here on earth he said that some people were like the foolish chickens that would not come under the mother hen's wings. He said to them, "How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not." He meant that he would keep safe all those who would come to him and stay close, but if they would not come how could he keep them?

As boys and girls and grown folks know more than chickens do, they are more to blame if they do not obey Jesus's call than chickens are that do not run at their mother's call.

These lessons we have been studying show that the Golden Text for the quarter is true—"The Lord is thy keeper." Some of those we have learned about were kept safe and in peace because they trusted God, while others, who refused to obey and believe and come close, got into trouble. They did not ask to be kept, nor let the Lord keep them. We ought to do both of these things. The little hymn verse (tune, "Dornance") is a prayer for this keeping:

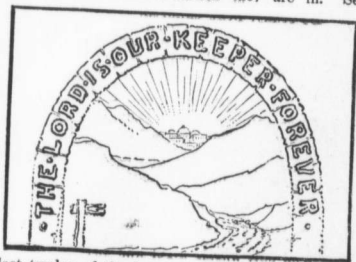
Dear Lord, our Keeper, Saviour, Friend,  
Teach us thy love to know,  
O, keep us daily in thy way,  
And lead us as we go.

Drill on Golden Text for Review, and sing this verse, as preparation for reviewing the lessons, with this one thought of God's keeping in mind, as it has been all along.

The "Lesson Thoughts" in connection with the text, "The Lord is thy keeper," are all personal, and should recall the fact that each child for himself must listen, learn, love, trust, and come close, in obedience to God's call, in order to be kept from harm and from sin.

These "Thoughts" in succession are: (1) The Lord Our Keeper Gives Help. (2) Hears Prayer. (3) Forgives Sin. (4) Invites Us. (5) Says, "Repent." (6) Says, "Remember." (7) Says, "Hear My Word." (8) Says, "Obey." (9) Saves in Trouble. (10) Is Grieved by Sin. (11) Gives Freely. (12) Will Help Us to Be Strong. (13) Review: The Lord is Our Keeper Forever.

For a little change, the teacher might introduce the military feature into the actual review of these "Lesson Thoughts" in connection with the lesson stories. Explain that a military review means the passing of many soldiers, in companies, before the King, or some great general who wishes to see them, and find out what condition they are in. Se-



lect twelve of the larger scholars, and call them captains. Give them little banners, bearing

number of the lesson and truth taught. After a few general questions on each lesson call for the truth. Let each soldier respond, and take a place in front as he does so. At close of class let these soldiers march around the room with their tiny banners. After each truth is given let class repeat in concert. Call the class the company. It must be the company for each captain.

*Thought for Teachers.* As a foolish, frightened little chick may be taken up in a tender hand and gently placed under the protecting mother-wings, so it may be our privilege to bring the children to Him who is our Keeper, and theirs, for evermore.

### Men in Sunday School

A VIGOROUS lawyer stood on the street corner one Sunday morning. As the children hurried joyously by on their way to Sunday school, he said to a friend, "I do love to see the young people going to Sunday school." His friend made the very natural and just reply, "Well, if you believe in it so much, how is it that you do not go yourself?" The lawyer's answer was, "O well, if other people did not go and keep up the Sunday school, I would go myself." There are scores of men just like this lawyer; they believe in the Sunday school, and are anxious for it to prosper; they think it can get along without their personal support, and allow it to do so.—*Selected.*

### Whisper Songs for September

#### TENTH LESSON

BE faithful, little children,  
The way of life to keep;  
Be careful lest you wander where  
You miss the heavenly Shepherd's care,  
Like lost and foolish sheep.

#### ELEVENTH LESSON

Be ready, little children,  
The Holy Spirit comes;  
It springs a fountain from the Lord,  
And, flowing through his Holy Word,  
It comes to bless your homes.

#### TWELFTH LESSON

Have courage, little children,  
And let your hearts be strong;  
Whatever may betide you here,  
Your Saviour lives, you need not fear,  
And you to him belong.

#### THIRTEENTH LESSON

Be trustful, little children,  
Your Saviour never sleeps;  
And holy angels night and day  
Are round your bed, beside your way,  
While Love his vigil keeps.

### Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

#### Third Quarter

(Strike the bell softly three times. At once begin to repeat, children following:)

The bell has struck its one, two, three:  
"Be still!" is what it says to me,  
For this is God's most holy day,  
And I am here to learn his way.  
So now, with all my heart, I'll seek  
To hear the words that he will speak.

*Teacher.* The Lord is in his holy temple.

*Class.* Let all the earth keep silence before him. (All fold hands and bow heads.)

*T.* Dear Lord, bless our Sunday school today.

*C.* Amen.

*T.* This is the day which the Lord hath made.

*C.* We will rejoice and be glad in it.

SINGING. A familiar praise song.

WHISPER PRAYER. (After teacher.)

Lord, help me, when I try to pray,  
Not only mind the words I say,  
But may I try with watchful care,  
To have my heart go with my prayer.

PRAYER.

CREED.

BRIEF REVIEW.

GIVING SERVICE.

*T.* What does our Lord say about giving?

*C.* It is more blessed to give than to receive.

BIRTHDAY OFFERINGS.

CONCERT RECITATION.

We bring our gifts to Jesus,  
And lay them at his feet;  
O, give them, Lord, some work to do,  
Some holy service sweet;  
Our hearts, our lives, our offerings take,  
And bless them for our Saviour's sake.

ADDITIONAL LESSON.

MOTION EXERCISE.

Take my hands, dear Jesus,  
(Hands outstretched.)  
Let them work for thee;  
Never let them idle,  
(Drop hands)

Or in mischief be.  
Let me lift them humbly,  
(Lift hands)

As I now draw near,  
Let me fold them softly  
(Fold hands)

As thy Word I hear.

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

*T.* Little children, love one another.

*C.* Even as Christ hath loved us.

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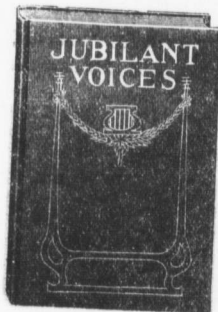
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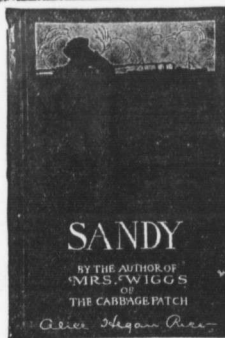
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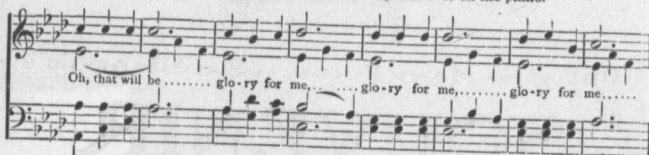
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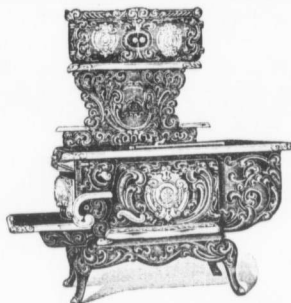
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