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Presbyterian Church in Canada

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Editor & Business Manager
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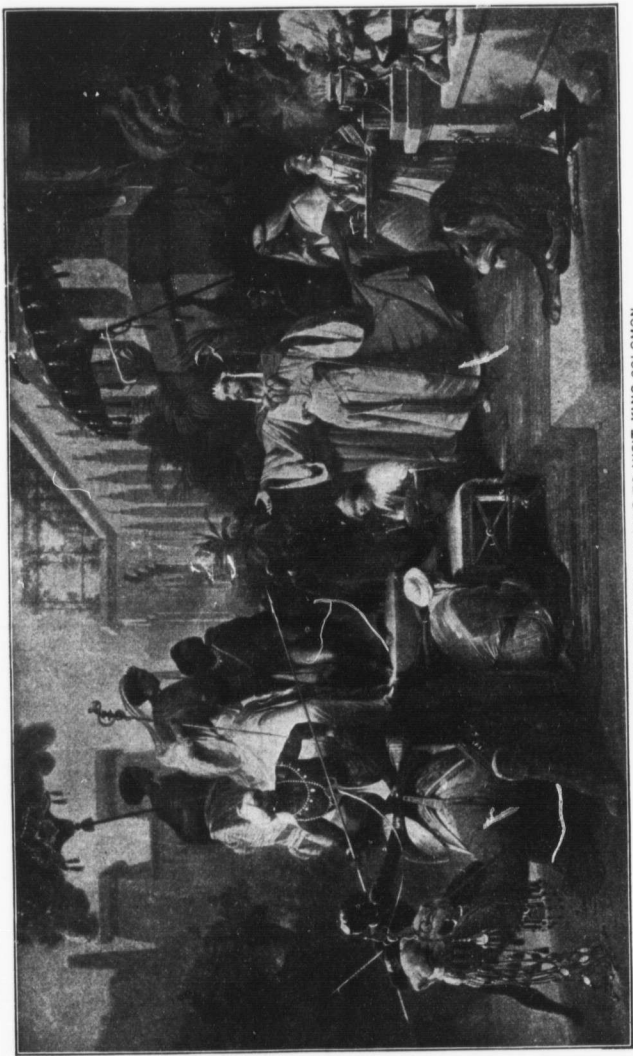
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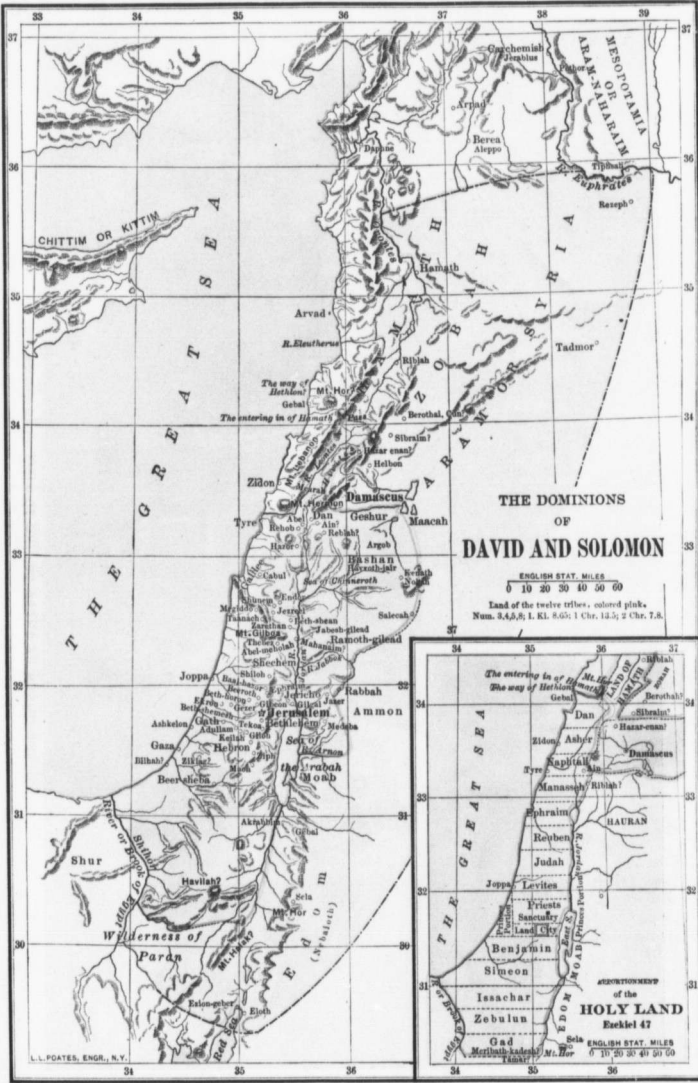
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The Teachers Monthly

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

Vol. IX.

October, 1903

No 10

We have drawers full of commendations of our Lesson Helps and Illustrated Papers, which friends, far and near, and from more than one continent have kindly sent.

Such expressions of favor we appreciated very highly, and our constant endeavor is to reach forward to better things. A practical form of approval, which we esteem greatly, is a trial of one or all of our publications.

It is always a pleasure to send sample copies, and we have a standing offer to send any of our publications FREE to any school where not now taken, and in sufficient quantities to supply teachers and classes: the **TEACHERS MONTHLY** and the **ILLUSTRATED PAPERS** for one month and the **QUARTERLIES** and **LEAFLETS** for three months. A full list of our own publications and of Sabbath-school supplies will be found on page 413.

A FISHERMAN'S FLY-BOOK

By *Frank Yeigh*

One can never tell what treasures lie hidden in the old storeroom. It is a mine that will often yield good results from a rainy-day digging. Thus it was that in an attempt to redd up a certain garret, an old fisherman's fly-book was found, once the property of a Scotch Isaac Walton.

Its weather-worn covers told how it had lain on the bank of many a Scottish stream, patiently waiting for its master to land a wily prize from the swift-running waters. Many of its hooks had apparently served their purpose in the long ago days, but

scores still remained, securely fastened in the flannel leaves of the book.

At first glance all the flies looked alike as to size and color, but a second look revealed an unsuspected individuality. There were hooks little and large; hooks single, hooks double, even hooks quadruple. There were flies red, flies white, flies gray and brown; hooks and flies to suit every piscatorial taste.

Sitting down on a neighboring trunk also filled with treasure trove, I became fascinated by the old fly-book. Though not a real fisherman by early training or natural bent, nevertheless the very sight of the array of tempting flies set one a-dreaming of certain streams in Highlands and Lowlands; they revived delicious memories of happy hours spent on the banks of Dee and Doon, of rambles in the vales of Esk and Tweed, when one played at fishing.

It set one a-thinking too; for the well-worn relic kept declaring it in the plainest of terms, that it was rich in suggestions for him who could appropriate them. There are sermons in fish hooks, it claimed, as truly as books—and fish—in running brooks.

And, true enough, there were hints in this book of hooks; hints, for example, to Bible class teachers, hints for solving the young man problem, the ever-pressing problem of how to catch, and having caught, how to hold the youth of to-day in Sabbath-school or Bible class.

For the ancient fly-book said, as I listened, and kept repeating the words:

"A fly for a fish—a fly for a fish—a special fly for a special fish!"

There it was, as plain as day: as there is

individuality in fish, so there is in people.

The genuine "Fishin' Jimmy" studies his individual fish,—its tastes, its whims, its character, and then tries to give it just the bait it wants.

Fish are no more caught in shoals at a time by hook and line, than men are held in Bible classes in the mass.

"A fly for a fish, the right fly for the right fish."

Thus the finny prizes are caught as units.

Ah, I think I see the point—as in reality I had; for at that moment, with my poring over the antiquated leather case, I accidentally caught a finger on a hook point, and found the latter was sharp, that once caught, it would likely hold its fish. Truly, a dull hook, when you come to think of it, would catch a fool fish.

Finally, the book opened its covers for a moment, to say, as I rose to leave the cobwebby attic:

"Remember, a fly for, a fish; a good fly for a good fish; a sharp fly for a sharp fish!"

Toronto.

A MAN OF GOD

By Rev. Robert Haddow, B.D.

The Hebrews were accustomed to express the veneration which they felt for their religious monitors and guides by calling them God's men. The first and greatest of the prophets is spoken of as "Moses, the man of God"; and the same august title is accorded to Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, and to others who figure anonymously in the historic tales.

No doubt the Israelites felt that the men so designated stood in a peculiar relation to Jehovah. In a special sense they belonged to God and were used by Him for His purposes. They enjoyed a unique intimacy with the Most High. In communion with Jehovah they learned His will and were able to declare it to their fellows. Their prayers for themselves and for their country were heard and answered in marvellous ways. As a result of their familiar intercourse with God something of the divine holiness necessarily passed into their characters.

The expression "man of God" is found also in the New Testament, being used in each of the letters to Timothy. It seems to be intended there to denote primarily a minister of the gospel. But the New Testament dispensation does not separate the ministry into a class or order distinct from other men, and there is nothing in the qualities or privileges named as belonging to the man of God which is not open to any believer. Every Christian may and ought to be a man of God. Could any object of ambition be higher or more inspiring?

There is a sense in which all men are God's, for He is the Creator and the rightful King of all. But there are many who do not acknowledge God's claims, and who, by their wilful alienation from Him, deprive themselves of the blessings which they might otherwise enjoy. The man of God, in the deep sense, is he who voluntarily surrenders himself to the heavenly King and enters into covenant to be His loyal servant. He goes continually into the divine presence to learn his Sovereign's will, and goes out to perform it faithfully. He does not seek God's face in vain. The door of the royal audience chamber is never shut upon him; he enters, and is not only told what he should do, but receives such strength and cheer from the King's countenance, that burdens are lightly borne and difficulties triumphantly overcome.

It is unspeakably blessed to be a man of God. The Lord is mindful of His own, and in all the errands upon which His servants are sent, in all the perplexities and perils through which they must pass, they are surrounded always by His most loving care. Thus it is that neither flood nor fire, plague nor famine nor earthquake, life nor death, things present nor things to come, have been able to dismay God's men or rob them of their conquering joy.

It is not difficult upon acquaintance to distinguish the man of God. He may be recognized by observing where his chief interest lies. He does not despise the world in which he lives, but moves among his fellows with delight in all that is beautiful and good. But his heart is not supremely set upon the objects of worldly ambition; and when a

choice must be made, neither wealth nor fame nor pleasure is the final and determining factor, but everything else must yield before the inward mandate of God's will.

He who would be a man of God must learn of Jesus Christ. None but He can take away the guilt of sin and break its power and bring men into that close and happy relationship to God, which was exemplified most perfectly in His own life upon earth.

Toronto

WITH CHRIST AT SEA

By Rev. W. McC. Thomson, M.A.

They were at the sea-side—Jesus and His disciples. They were weary, too, weary with the burdens of other lives. "Let us pass over unto the other side," He said. "Let us escape for a brief space from these busy scenes, that we may gather strength for the toils of the morrow."

Beautiful confidence! Jesus trusts Himself to the wisdom and sympathy and care of a few men who toil in the common places. Beautiful scene! In the full confidence that they will do their best, He commits Himself and the future into their keeping, and lays Him down to rest. "Jesus was sleeping in the hinder part of the ship!" I am sure those men said to each other, "It is good to be here." It was one of those days when the deep blue of Galilee glistened in the sunlight. No storm was brewing, no petrel uttered a warning note. Human hearts recked not of the future. Their thoughts were of the present. It was the atmosphere of the communion table, the meeting for prayer and praise and resolution. It was Christ without the storm.

Galilee has many moods. The quiet scene by the sea-side is changed in a moment. Down one of those gorges a violent wind sweeps like the sound of distant breakers heard in the stillness of the night. The purple clusters dropped from the vines; giant cedars swayed before the blast; with a creak and strain the flapping sail suddenly filled; little ripples became dark, angry, foam-crested waves. Over the ship the white foam sprayed, and old seamen looked anxiously into one another's faces. How they

toiled in that moment of peril to bring her to and make her answer the helm! Now on a crest and now in a trough of the sea, broadside, quarter, bow and stern, on, yet "Jesus was sleeping in the hinder part of the ship." Would they call Him to their aid, rouse Him from a slumber that He so much needed? Confess that they, old fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, were baffled, and only a miracle could save them from a watery grave? While they toiled in rowing Jesus slept. The ship was sinking, and "Jesus was asleep in the hinder part of the ship." It was the storm without Christ.

They were beaten on their own ground. Those seamen had faced many a storm, but this was the most stubborn in their experience. When He committed Himself to their skill, they were proud of the honor, were even ready to boast. They had handled the tackling of the ship with the hand and eye of experts. They had overhauled each part to make assurance doubly sure. Had any one questioned their ability to achieve the task imposed, they would have smiled at his incredulity. So do frail human hearts solace themselves when the sun shines and the wind is fair. But the future is fraught with so much uncertainty and mystery that none can say, "Go to . . . to-morrow I will enter into a certain city and buy and sell and get gain." Could they have foreseen how different, but—, it was one of those sudden appeals to human limitations that has prompted many an atheist to cry: "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat," a moment when we find, we know not how:

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."

"Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" No formal appeal this, but a poor heart that knows its limitations and believes that help is near. "Peace be still!" How wonderful it all seemed! The angry waves melted away, the wind folded its wings and dropped to sleep. There was peace upon the bosom of the deep, and a deeper calm and peace in frail human hearts. Jesus had spoken; it was Christ in the storm.

New Glasgow, N.S.

TEACHER TRAINING

By Professor Walter C. Murray

XXII. MOTIVES AND AGENCIES

What motives are most influential in bringing about the religious awakening that is called conversion? No question is more difficult to answer satisfactorily. The same motive has not the same influence over different men. Consequently, what is true for one may not be true for another. Nor is it an easy matter to read one's heart aright. Difficult as it is to read one's thoughts aright as they occur, still more difficult is it to be sure about them when they are called up from the depths of the memory. It is so hard to distinguish between fact and fancy, between what has been seen and what has been imagined. It is well to bear this in mind, when examining the reports of persons about experiences that may have occurred five, ten, twenty, or thirty years before.

Starbuck in his study arranged the motives that led to conversion in

EIGHT GROUPS.

The first group contained the fear of death, of future punishment, and of God's wrath. The second included other self-regarding motives, such as, "I wanted the approval of others," "I wanted to be the best, and therefore the strongest and happiest." The third and fourth groups were of a higher type, such as, "I wanted to exert the right influence over my pupils at school," or "I wanted to do more good in the world," or "It was love of God," also such motives as "I was moved by a feeling of duty," or "I had a yearning for a higher ideal of life." In the fifth group the different forms of remorse and conviction of sin were placed. These groups possess a common characteristic. They are subjective. They refer to influences from within. The remaining three are more objective. They refer to external influences. The sixth group may be styled, "response to teaching;" the seventh, "example and invitation;" the eighth, "urging and social pressure."

One is somewhat surprised to find that the last mentioned group—"social pressure" is, of Starbuck's eight

THE MOST COMMON.

According to Starbuck, one woman in every five and one man in every six acknowledges it to be the most prominent motive. Next to this group in importance is the fourth or "moral group," the desire for a higher life. The least frequent are the second, the desire to be better for the benefits that flow from it; and the third, the desire to exert a good influence over others.

The self-regarding motives—the fears and the ambitions—are at their height in early life, but from the eleventh year until the sixteenth they gradually decline in strength until the eighteenth year, when there is a brief revival in strength; this, however, is followed by a sudden decrease. On the other hand, the moral motives—the sense of duty and the desire for a higher life—steadily increase in strength and importance from the tenth to the nineteenth year, when they are all-important. Conviction of sin is feeble at ten, at its height at fourteen, and relatively less important thereafter.

Perhaps the strongest impression that one receives from a study of Starbuck's statements is that

MANY AND DIVERSE

are the motives that lead to the same result. We must not infer, that, because another does not think and feel about the great questions of life as we do, therefore his experience is a sham and he is a hypocrite. Nor should we despair because one kind of appeal is ineffective. There are more than two gates opening into the town of Mansoul.

Starbuck's study seems to indicate that external agencies, such as teaching, example, and urging, play a much more prominent part than we are inclined to admit. If his conclusions be correct, our responsibility is much greater than many of us care to acknowledge.

One of the agencies that plays a large part in the spiritual life of many communities is

THE REVIVAL.

Let us notice some of the effects of revivals reported by Starbuck. Naturally they lay stress on the social motives. Nearly one in every four, who attributed their conversion to a revival, admitted that the strong motive

was social pressure. Strange to say, the sense of sin is less intense in these cases than in the other; while the moral motives, the desire to better, are less prominent.

Again, while revivals hasten the effect of the motives, they shorten the period during which the sin-sick soul is in distress in the case of women and lengthen it in the case of men. The self-will of the men seems to increase at the suggestion of social pressure. The differences due to sex are still more marked, when the effect of revivals upon the intensity of the religious experience are considered. Revivals seem to intensify the experience of men and lessen that of women. Men seem to resist the appeal to their emotions which is made in the revival, until their feelings are wrought to the highest pitch.

Of the effect of such agencies upon

THE SUBSEQUENT RELIGIOUS LIFE

Starbuck says much. He gives the following table furnished him by a pastor in whom he had confidence. The first row of numbers refers to those who professed conversion under a "professional evangelist," the second to those converted in "regular church work (that is, at home, in Sunday School, and revival by pastor)."

Converts.	Number.	Lapsed before six weeks.	Received into full membership.	Relapsed since.	Now in good standing.
Revival.	92	62	30	15	12
Non-revival.	68	16	52	10	41

One must not infer from this that revival agencies are worthless. Twelve out of ninety, though too few, are still too many and too valuable to permit one to be indifferent to the agency that saved them. Yet, on the other hand, these statements are of sufficient importance to cause one not to rely too much upon revivals.

Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S.

The Teacher Training Course is resumed in this issue, the Department of Scripture being treated on pages 446-448, and the Department of Doctrine on pages 421, 429, 437 and 444.

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A-bi'-na-dab. A man of Kirjath-jearim, in whose house the ark found accommodation for twenty years after it was sent back by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 7: 1, 2; 2 Sam. 6: 3; 1 Chron. 13: 7.

Ab'-sa-lom. The third son of David. His mother was Maacah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur. After his defeat in the rebellion against David, he was killed by Joab and his followers, while entangled by his hair among the spreading branches of an oak, under which he had been riding, his mule having run away.

A-hi'-ma'-az. A son of **Za'-dok**. He was the first to bring David tidings of the victory over Absalom.

A-hi'-o, Uzz'-ah. The two sons of Abinadab who drove the cart on which David was taking the ark to Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 6: 3, 4.

A-hi'-tho-pheh. One of David's counselors, a man of great sagacity, but morally untrustworthy. He joined in the rebellion of Absalom, and hanged himself when Hushai's counsel was preferred to his own.

Ba'-al-e. The same as Kirjath-jearim, a town of Judah.

Cush'-i. In 2 Sam. ch. 18, the Rev. Ver. substitutes for this name, "the Cushite," a native of Cush or Ethiopia, the country lying in Eastern Africa, south of Egypt.

Da'-vid. Son of Jesse and second king of Israel. According to the ordinary reckoning he reigned from 1055 to 1015 B.C. His life may be divided into four periods, namely: (1) Youth; (2) Years of wandering; (3) Reign over Judah; (4) Reign over all Israel.

E'-gypt. The country watered by the Nile, divided into Upper Egypt, or the valley of the Nile, and Lower Egypt, or the delta formed at the mouth of the same river.

Eth-a'-nim. The seventh month of the Jewish year, also called Tisri. It corresponded to parts of September and October.

Ge'-shur. A portion of Syria on the east of the Jordan adjoining the north border of the Israelitish territory. David married a daughter of Talmi, a ruler of this territory.

Gib'-e-ah. See 2 Sam. 6: 4, where this word occurs, the Rev. Ver. gives instead "the hill."

Gib'-e-on. A city of Benjamin in which the tabernacle was erected for a time in the reign of David and Solomon. Its modern name is el-Jib, about six miles north-west of Jerusalem.

Gi'loh. A village in the hill country of Judah.

Gi'lo-nite. A native or inhabitant of Giloh, an Ahithophel, 2 Sam. 15: 12.

Gitt'-ite. A native or inhabitant of Gath.

Heb'-ron. A town in the hill country of Judah, about twenty miles south-west of Jerusalem. It was David's capital during the seven and a half years of his reign over Judah. Here Absalom raised the standard of rebellion.

Ho'-reb. The mountain in the peninsula of Sinai where the law was given to Israel. The name is practically the same as Sinai.

Is'-ra-el. A name given to Jacob and his descendants.

Je'-ru'-sa-lem. The sacred city of the Jews, where David fixed his capital.

Jo'-ab. A nephew of David, and one of the leaders in his army.

Ju'-dah. The territory assigned to the fourth son of Jacob and occupying the greater portion of Southern Palestine.

Le'-vites. The men of the tribe of Levi, charged with the duty of helping the priests, by taking care of the tabernacle and making preparation for its services.

Mo'-ses. The great Israelitish leader and lawgiver. He was a Levite belonging to the family of Kohath.

Na'-chon, Pe'-rez-uzz'-ah. Nachon was the designation of a threshing-floor at which Uzzah was struck dead (2 Sam. 6: 6), and which was hence called Perez-uzzah, that is, "breach of Uzzah."

Na'-than. A well-known prophet in the reign of David and Solomon.

O'-bed-e'-dom. A Gittite living between Kirjath-jearim and Jerusalem, in whose house the ark was left by David.

She'-ba. A people and country of south-western Arabia. They traded, not only in the gold, precious stones and spices of their own country, but also in the products of India and Ethiopia. In the days of Solomon, like Ethiopia in the times of the Acts (Acts 8: 27), Sheba was ruled by a Queen.

Sol'-o-mon. The son of David and third king of Israel. He was born at Jerusalem, and became king in 1015 B.C., at the age of 18 or 20. He reigned forty years. He was famed for his wisdom and the splendor of his court.

Syr'-i-a. Properly Aram, a country occupying a plain to the north-east of Palestine.

Za'-dok. Early in David's reign joint high-priest with Abiathar and later sole high priest.

Zi'-on. One of the hills on which Jerusalem stood. After the building of the temple it included Mount Moriah, the temple hill. It is often used for the whole of Jerusalem.

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LESSON CALENDAR: FOURTH QUARTER

1. October 4 David Brings up the Ark. 2 Sam. 6: 1-12.
2. October 11 God's Covenant with David. 2 Sam. 7: 4-16.
3. October 18 David's Confession. Ps. 51: 1-17.
4. October 15 David's Joy Over Forgiveness. Ps. 32.
5. November 1 David and Absalom. 2 Sam. 15: 1-12.
6. November 8 David's Grief Over Absalom. 2 Sam. 18: 24-33.
7. November 15 David's Trust in God. Ps. 23.
8. November 22 The Curse of Strong Drink. Prov. 20: 1; 23: 20, 21, 29-35.
9. November 29 David's Charge to Solomon. 1 Chron. 28: 1-10.
10. December 6 Solomon's Wise Choice. 1 Kings 3: 4-15.
11. December 13 The Dedication of the Temple. 1 Kings 8: 1-11, 62, 63.
12. December 21 The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon. 1 Kings 10: 1-10.
13. December 27 REVIEW.

Lesson I. **DAVID BRINGS UP THE ARK** October 4, 1903

2 Sam. 6: 1-12. Study vs. 1-19. Commit to memory vs. 11, 12.
Read 1 Chron., chs. 13, 15, 16; also 2 Sam. 5: 17-25.

1 Again, Da'vid gathered together all the chosen men of Is'rael, thirty thousand.

2 And Da'vid arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Ba'ale of Ju'dah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim.

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abi'nadab that was in Gibeon; and Uzz'ah and Ahio, the sons of Abi'nadab, drove the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abi'nadab which was at Gibeon, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And Da'vid and all the house of Is'rael played before the LORD upon all manner of instruments made of fir wood, upon harps, and upon psalteries, and upon timbrels, and upon cornets, and upon cymbals.

6 And when they came to Na'choth's threshingfloor, Uzz'ah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

Revised Version—which is called by the Name, in the hill; 4 was in the hill with; 5 with; 6 and with; 7 with castanets; 8 stumbled; 9 broken forth; 10 called that place; 11 remained; 12 house; 13 And David; 14 joy.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 84: 4. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.

DAILY READINGS

M.—2 Sam. 6: 1-12. T.—1 Chron. 15: 1-3; 11-16. W.—1 Chron. 15: 25-16: 3. Th.—1 Chron. 16: 7-22. F.—1 Chron. 16: 23-37. S.—Psalm 132. S.—Psalm 84.

CATECHISM

Q. 96. What is the Lord's supper?

A. The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzz'ah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And Da'vid was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzz'ah; and he called the name of the place Pe'ez-uzz'ah to this day.

9 And Da'vid was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So Da'vid would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of Da'vid; but Da'vid carried it aside into the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite.

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite three months; and the LORD blessed O'bed-e'dom, and all his household.

12 And it was told king Da'vid, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of O'bed-e'dom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God.

13 So Da'vid went and brought up the ark of God from the house of O'bed-e'dom into the city of Da'vid with gladness.

even the name; 3 sitteth upon the cherubim; 4 was with castanets; 5 stumbled; 6 broken forth; 10 called that place; 11 remained; 12 house; 13 And David; 14 joy.

carinal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

TIME AND PLACE

About 1042 B.C.: Baale of Judah, generally supposed to be another name for Kirjath-jearim. The distance from Jerusalem was not more than eleven miles.

LESSON PLAN

I. A Pious Plan. 1-6. II. A Rash Interference. 6. III. A Severe Punishment. 7-10. IV. A Rich Blessing. 11, 12.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 389; 386; 98 (Ps. Sel.); 272; 536; 387.

EXPOSITION

By Rev. W. G. Hanna, B.A., Mount Forest, Ont.

Connecting Links—David was made king of all Israel by the consent of the other tribes, after he had reigned in Judah seven years and a half, ch. 5: 1-5. Having captured the stronghold Jebus (Jerusalem), he made it the capital of his kingdom, vs. 6-9. The Philistines, becoming alarmed at the

growing power of Israel, sought to establish their former supremacy. They were twice repulsed (vs. 17-25) and David's throne thus more securely established. He now resolved, therefore, to bring to Zion in Jerusalem, the ark of God, which was in the house of Abinadab. His intention was to establish a fixed

place of worship for the whole nation.

I. A Pious Plan, 1-5.

V. 1. *Again*. There had been an assembly for David's coronation (ch. 5; 1-3) and a muster of the tribes to meet the Philistines, ch. 5: 17-25. This new assembly was called to do honor to God.* (See 1 Chron. 13: 1-5.) *Chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand*. Representatives of all the people (compare 1 Chron. 13: 1) were gathered for deliberation, that the event might be truly national and unify the tribes.

V. 2. *Baale of Judah*; the same as Kirjath-jearim or "city of the woods" (Josh. 15: 9, 10), where the ark had been ever since its return by the Philistines about seventy years before (1 Sam. 7: 1), that is, twenty years to the victory at Ebenezer, mentioned in 1 Sam. ch. 7; forty years under Samuel and Saul; and about ten years under David. *The ark of God*. This was the sacred symbol of the throne of God, and contained the two tables of stone on which he had written the Commandments, Ex. 25: 16; 31: 18. His throne was thus represented as resting on His holy law. *Which is called by the Name* (Rev. Ver.). The ark bore the sacred name of Jehovah. It was to be a constant reminder of His covenant with Israel, and there by visible signs He manifested Himself to them. *The LORD*. When "Lord" is printed in capitals in the English Bible it stands for Jehovah. *Of hosts*. These are: (1) Celestial bodies, Gen. 2: 1; Isa. 40: 26; (2) Celestial beings, Josh. 5: 14; Ps. 148: 2. They are represented as a vast army, of which the Lord is the leader. *The cherubims*; winged figures made of gold, placed at the opposite ends of the mercy-seat, or lid of the ark, and representing, as some suppose, angelic beings; or the attributes of God; or the qualities of the true people of God.

Vs. 3-5. *A new cart*. They intended to do the ark honor by setting it upon a vehicle not desecrated by common use. It was contrary to the law to set it on any vehicle (see Ex. 25: 44, 15; Num. 4: 15). Instead of obeying the will of God, they were content simply to follow the example of the pagan Philistines, 1 Sam. 6: 7, 8. *The house of Abinadab*; whither it had been brought,

when the Philistines sent it back. *Gibeah* (Rev. Ver. "the hill"); some elevation near Kirjath-jearim. *Played*; marched in artistic figures, or danced to the accompaniment of joyous music. (Compare 1 Sam. 18: 3, 7.) This was usual in Oriental religious processions. *All manner of instruments*. See Light from the East.

II. A Rash Interference, 6.

V. 6. *Nachon's threshing-floor*. The exact locality is not known. In 1 Chron. 13: 9 it is called the threshing-floor of Chidon. It may have been known by both names. *Took hold of it*; an ordinary act of human prudence, but one showing ignorance or disregard of God's law, Num. 4: 15. David should have seen that the law was known and obeyed. *The oxen shook it*. Palestine roads are notoriously rough.

III. A Severe Punishment, 7-10.

Vs. 7, 8. *The anger of the Lord*; not passion, but righteous indignation (compare Deut. 4: 24; Heb. 12: 29). *God smote him there for his error*; "rashness." He died in the act of transgressing. It was the beginning of a new era in the religious life of the nation, and there was therefore the more need of enforcing the importance of obedience to God. *David was displeased*; with God, perhaps, with himself assuredly, for on sober thought he could not but blame himself for allowing the transgression of the law to occur. *Perez-uzzah*; the "bursting forth" (of Jehovah) upon Uzzah. The idea is that of a sudden attack upon a foe.

Vs. 9, 10. *Afraid of the Lord*. Feeling that Jehovah was offended, David began to regard the symbol of His presence with alarm. *Would not remove the ark . . . into the city*; fearing lest he might make some other mistake. *The house of Obed-edom the Gittite*; about three or four miles from Jerusalem; Obed-edom, who was afterwards made one of the door-keepers of the ark, was a Levite, 1 Chron. 15: 24-26. He belonged to a family originally entrusted with this duty, Num. 4: 15. Gittite means Gathite, a native of Gath-rimmon.

IV. A Rich Blessing, 10, 11.

Vs. 11, 12. *The Lord blessed Obed-edom*; showing him such favor as attracted the

attention of all. His family afterwards became distinguished, 1 Chron. 26 : 4-8. *David . . . brought up the ark.* He had learned that God must be obeyed, and perhaps during these three months had studied the law regarding the ark. He had learned, too,

that the presence of God brings blessing. *With gladness; in joyful procession with music and dancing.*

Verses 12-19 describe the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem. Every detail of the law concerning it was observed. (See 1 Chron. 15.)

APPLICATION

Rev. W. J. Clark, London, Ont.

Again, David gathered, v. 1. There is no greater blessing for any people than to have their leaders seekers after and worshippers of God. King David was not only a warrior and ruler, but a leader of the people in the worship of Jehovah. It is given to us as Canadians, under existing forms of government, to choose our leaders. Sometimes we are tempted to think it is sufficient that those who represent us in Provincial Legislature or House of Commons should be clever men. But much more important is it that they should be of high moral and religious character. It is righteousness that exalts a nation.

And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, v. 3. There are two ways of going about work for God. We may make a plan for ourselves and bend all our energies to the task of carrying it out. Or we may humbly wait upon God, asking Him to show us how He would have us do His work. It is only in the second of these two ways that we can please God. Only thus shall we be followers of Jesus, who had no plan of His own, but sought simply to do the Father's will, John 6 : 38.

And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord, v. 5. God intends that His children should be glad. He has made abundant provision for filling our lives with joy. Nature, with its bright flowers and singing birds, with its varied beauty of earth and sea and sky, calls upon us to be joyful. Joy springs out of our relations to our family and our friends. But it is grace that gives us our sweetest and most satisfying joy. For if the slave, whose fetters have been struck off, leaps for very gladness, how shall not we be filled with joy, who have been set free from sin and brought out "into the glorious liberty of the children of God!"

Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God. Well meant, but none the less arrantly foolish; for it was presuming to be wiser than God. Perhaps Uzzah said to himself, "What can it matter whether or not it be a Levite that shall touch the ark?" It mattered this, that God had so appointed it; and when God's command is clear and unmistakable, the only safe course is to obey.

The anger of the Lord was kindled, v. 7. Forgetfulness or neglect of any divine law cannot fail to bring upon us the divine displeasure. It may seem a trifling thing that we are commanded to do. We may think it matters little whether we do it or leave it undone. But the spirit of obedience is the same in small things as in great. The one who obeys minute requirements may be trusted to obey larger ones. If we despise the lesser laws, who will rely upon us to regard the more important commands? It is the obedient spirit which God values, whatever be the forms of its expression. The lack of such a spirit He is sure to condemn and punish.

And the ark of the Lord continued, v. 11. The ark was only the sign; the reality was the presence of the Lord. The sign has passed away; the reality remains. We may still enjoy the presence of the Lord. And the condition is the same for us as for Obed-edom. We have but to open our hearts to Christ, as he received the ark into his house, and the blessed Son of God will come in and hold fellowship with us, Rev. 3 : 20. If we keep the words of Christ, as Obed-edom obeyed the requirements relating to the ark, both the Father and the Son will make their abode with us, John 15 : 23.

The Lord blessed Obed-edom and his household, v. 11. If it be in the simplest possible form, every home should have in it the worship of God. And where such worship is

earnestly and sincerely engaged in, it is not difficult to see the way in which the blessing will come. For the remembrance of God at stated seasons leads those who engage in it to manifest a spirit to their fellows that will result in the gaining of their favor. And this remembrance will also be an armor against the temptations which beset us all. Nor is it possible that the blessing can be confined to the one home; for human society is so knit together that where one household is thus reverently waiting on God, its influence will surely affect a wider circle. It cannot be hidden. Its power will spread, and that power will be for good.

The Lord hath blessed, v. 12. A recent magazine article recounts the triumphs of medical science during the last half-century. It is related, for example, that recent discoveries have practically eradicated cholera and yellow fever from civilization. Diphtheria has been robbed of more than half its terrors by the discovery of anti-toxin. The prediction is confidently made, that the victory of science over disease will one day be complete. Whether this prediction shall be fulfilled or not, it is certain that there is a remedy for all spiritual ills, and this remedy is found in the abiding presence and favor of God.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

By The Associate Editor

National piety is the strongest bond of national unity. v. 1.

A pious purpose does not excuse careless conduct. v. 3.

True religion intensifies, while it purifies, human joy. v. 5.

We are not to save, but to be saved by, Christianity. v. 6.

Rashness is likely to lead to ruin. v. 7.

Failure is half overcome when it is traced to its true source. v. 8.

The cause for terror lies not in God, but in our sin. v. 9.

It is wise to delay until our duty is plain. v. 10.

Happy is the home in which God abides! v. 11.

Patience in learning the lessons of defeat ensures success at last. v. 12.

It is often said that it does not make any difference what a man believes or does, if he is only sincere. David was perfectly sincere, but he was wrong—and it made a great deal of difference both to him and to Uzzah. David was to blame for his ignorance. He had the means of enlightenment. If men to-day are ignorant of what is in the Word of God and suffer for it, it is their own fault. They cannot blame God for it, though they would often like to.—Torrey.

"A king is made glorious by the obedience of the subjects throughout his realm. He is

honored in that way. The parent is honored by the child. How? Not by his running around the neighborhood and saying, 'Oh, what a great man my father is!' or, 'What a beautiful woman my mother is!' or, 'What a splendid house my father has to live in!' For a child to do that would be ridiculous. An affectionate, loving child does honor his parents in the eyes of all the neighborhood. The teacher is honored, not by what a pupil says, but by what he does. Find out what they want, who are put over you, and do that; and then you honor them. And we honor, or what is the same thing, we glorify God by fulfilling His known commands."

That fire burns forever—the divine fire of God; the fire not of hatred, but of love to mankind, which will therefore punish, and, if need be, exterminate all who shall dare to make mankind worse, whether in body, or soul, or mind.—Charles Kingsley.

"Our lives are songs; God writes the words,

And we set them to music at pleasure;
And the song grows glad or sweet or sad,

As we choose to fashion the measure.
We must write the music, whatever the song,

Whatever its rhyme or metre;
And if is sad we can make it glad,
Or if sweet we can make it sweeter."

"Why did you not come to church last night," said one working man to another,

on a Monday morning; "our minister was preaching a third sermon on the duty of family religion; why did you not come?" "Because," was the reply, "I was at home

doing it." I would like to see not less earnestness in attendance upon the regular ordinances of the sanctuary but more of this "at home doing it."—Dr. W. M. Taylor.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST

By Rev. Professor Ross, D.D., Montreal

INSTRUMENTS—The Egyptians had two kinds of harps, one standing six feet high like the modern harp, and the other held in the hand. The Hebrew harp was somewhat like our lute, and was suspended from the performer's neck. All the different forms of it had a rudimentary sounding board and from three to six strings. The psaltery was very like a guitar, and had from six to twelve strings stretched over a shallow, skin-covered drum, and was played like a harp with the fingers. The timbrel was really the modern tambourine, a ring of wood or metal covered with a tightly drawn skin, with small pieces of metal hung around the rim. It is still held in one hand and

struck by the other by all female dancers in the East. Castanets were small cymbals, such as the Arab women use on their fingers and thumbs, and sound by striking their hands together. But the Hebrew word more likely means the regular cymbals, large concave plates of metal, held by a handle on the convex side and the edges struck together. The word here rendered cymbal was probably the *sistum*, a triangle of metal with a handle on one corner and rods of iron loosely placed through holes in it and rings on their ends, which made a jingling noise when shaken in time with the other music. This instrument was used in Egypt in connection with public worship.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

By The Associate Editor

The teaching of the lesson may be gathered round the ark of the covenant. The description in Exodus of the sacred chest, its materials, shape, construction and contents should be recalled, as well as the history in 1 Sam. of its capture by the Philistines, its return, and its being brought to Kirjath-jearim.

But our interest in the ark lies chiefly in what it represented. It stood for the presence of God among His ancient people. It was to them what churches and Sabbath services and sacraments are to us, signs that God is in the midst of us. Let THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN HUMAN LIFE be the topic for consideration.

1. *God in the life of the nation.* David had conquered the Philistines, those old enemies of Israel. His throne was no longer threatened by outward foes. But he felt the need of something more, if his kingdom was to be strong and prosperous. The nation must be

united in loyalty to God as well as to the king. The people require something to remind them that Jehovah is their supreme Ruler. What can better serve this purpose than the divinely appointed symbol of the Lord's nearness? Turning to our own times, it may be pointed out how much real national greatness depends on reverence for the Bible and the Sabbath. The ruler who desires the true welfare of his country should aid in spreading the knowledge of this Holy Book, and in preserving the sanctity of the Holy Day.

2. *God in the life of the church.* While the ark was lying neglected in the house of Abinadab, religion had come to a low ebb among the people. They were in danger of forgetting their great mission, to serve God and make Him known. They needed a spiritual awakening. Their great want was to feel anew the throb of the divine life. The want of the church to-day is the same. If all the members of the church realized the nearness of God, and were filled with His Spirit, how mighty an impulse would be given to all its work at home and abroad!

3. *God in the life of the home.* What a

beautiful picture is that of Obed-edom's home into which the ark was gladly received! It was not the mere presence of the ark that brought blessing. It had been long enough in the house of Abinadab without producing any good result. Obed-edom and his family were blessed because they understood and rejoiced in the real meaning of having the ark amongst them. A like blessing may be enjoyed in every home where God is worshipped and honored. The importance of family religion should be emphasized and illustrated.

4. *God in the life of the individual.* The nation, the church and the family are made up of individuals. The stream cannot rise higher than its source. If God is to be honored and His power felt in the wider spheres, He must first be enthroned in the centre of our personal life. The noblest life for each of us is that outlined in the statement that "man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."

It is supposed that the Twenty-fourth Psalm was written for the occasion of the ark's entry into Jerusalem. How loudly it calls upon us to open the "gates" of our hearts, that "the King of glory" may enter and reign in them!

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By The Editor

The lesson begins with a great muster, 30,000 "chosen men." The scholars may be made to feel a thrill of something unusual about to happen. There had been previous musters—for the coronation, vs. 1-3; for battle against the Philistines, once, twice, vs. 20, 25. These were memorable occasions. Here is one grander still, because for a grander purpose—to bring up the ark of God to Jerusalem. The teacher will explain what the ark was, and how necessary that this central piece of the sanctuary should be in its proper place, symbolizing as it did the presence of the Lord Himself in the midst of His people, v. 2.

It was the case of a good deed badly done. Verse 3 describes the plan. It was all a mistake. There were plain directions as to the handling of this sacred chest. Ex. 25: 14, 15 describes the staves by which it was to

be carried, and Num. 4: 15 tells who were to carry it. But the ark had lain so long, 20 years (1 Sam. 7: 1, 2), in the house of Abinadab, that the old regulation had been forgotten; and both human and divine law punishes for sins of ignorance where we ought to have known.

God was forbearing, as He ever is. He bore with the cart, when the ark should have been carried by hand; and the joy of David and of the people was very real and very proper, as they played their instruments of music (see *Light from the East*) and danced. Our worship should brim over with joy.

But Uzzah went too far, v. 6. Go back again to the directions in regard to the carrying of the ark—only by the Levites, and among them the sons of Kohath; by the staves, the ark itself not to be touched. The command was plain and precise. Here was a direct, flagrant breach of it. Uzzah "took hold" of the sacred vessel, thus profaning it by his touch. God keeps His word. What else for Uzzah than swift judgment?

David was "displeased" (v. 8) at God; but "afraid" (v. 9) as well. Fear is often wholesome. It led here to three things—(a) self-examination (v. 9, latter clause), (b) delay, till the right course should be made plain, (c) doing the right thing in the right way, 1 Chron. ch. 15. The great lesson is—We cannot keep too close to God's way in God's worship and work.

Some Test Questions

- Whom did David gather together?
- For what purpose?
- Where had the ark been?
- Another name for this place?
- How was it carried?
- What law was broken?
- What instruments were played?
- What was Uzzah's sin?
- How was he punished?
- Describe the effect on David?
- In whose house was the ark left?
- With what result?
- How long was it there?
- Whither was it finally brought?
- Explain "the city of David."

What do we learn as to :

- (1) Peril of neglecting God's commands.
- (2) The place of joy in religion.
- (3) How the Lord regards irreverence?
- (4) Religion in the life of the home?

Prove from Scripture

That the Lord's presence brings blessing.

For Special Study

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The ark of the covenant and its wanderings.
2. The value of music in religion.
3. Religion in the state.

The Catechism

By the Associate Editor

[For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.]

The Sacraments—The Lord's Supper. The two most common titles of this ordinance are "the Communion" (1 Cor. 10:16), which points to the fact of fellowship between Christ and His followers and amongst all who are members of Christ's body, the church; and "the Sacrament," as being the most prominent and frequently observed of the two New Testament sacraments.

Other names are, (1) "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11:20); (2) "the Lord's Table" (1 Cor. 10:21); (3) "the Cup of Blessing" (1 Cor. 10:16); (4) "the Breaking of Bread" (Acts 2:42); (5) "the Eucharist," from a

Greek word "to give thanks." This designation is derived from the fact that the Lord in instituting the Supper (Matt. 26:26,27), "blessed" the bread, and "gave thanks" in presenting the cup.

Our directions for the observance of the Lord's Supper are found in Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26. From these passages we learn, that the materials to be used are bread and wine; and that the essential actions are: (1) the "blessing" or prayer of consecration; (2) the breaking of the bread and pouring of the wine; (3) the distribution and reception of the elements.

The purposes of the Lord's Supper are, (1) To commemorate the death of Christ; (2) To furnish a picture of gospel truths; (3) To supply a means of communion of Christ with His disciples, and of the disciples with one another; (4) To constitute a badge of discipleship.

In the words, "not after a corporal and carnal manner," we are warned against the error of believing that the actual body and blood of the Lord are present in the bread and wine. This is held by Roman Catholics. The true view is that Christ is present in the Sacrament only to the "faith" of the partakers. It is the soul, not the senses, that feeds upon Him.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

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

Introduction—In our lessons this quarter we see God with His people in mercy and love, guiding, forgiving, blessing, counselling, helping. We have before us prominently two

persons, King David and King Solomon. Let us take a crown for our symbol for the quarter. Outline a large D with a crown above it. Let each child tell you something about the splendid kings of whom we have been hearing.

A Strange Church—Outline Mount Zion—"the city of David"—(a few marks for dwellings). Outline a large tent—tabernacle—or prepare a cardboard model with a court surrounding it. Explain the origin of this house of the



Lord. For description, see Ex. chs. 25-27.

The Ark—Prepare a cardboard model covered with gilt paper, or show a picture, or draw outline (small wooden models may be had from some of the Sunday-school supply agencies). Describe (Ex. 25 : 10). Be careful that the little ones do not confuse the "ark of the covenant" with, to them, the more familiar Noah's ark. Explain that on the mercy seat God Himself talked with His people, Ex. 25 : 22. Describe the contents of the ark, the two tables of stone, the pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded.

Teachers should read carefully 1 Sam. chs. 4-7 to understand how the ark came to be taken from place to place.

Lesson Subject—God showing His love by teaching His people reverence.

Lesson Story—When David became king, one of the first things he did was to go and bring the ark to Mount Zion.

Here is a new cart drawn by oxen. See it there in front of the house of Abinadab! See the two drivers, Uzzah and Ahio! When the ark is placed on the cart, Ahio walks ahead to clear the way (picture v. 5). Have you seen a teamster with a load of furniture, when he came to a rough place, putting his hand on the furniture to steady it? This is just what Uzzah did to the ark.

God punished him for doing it, so that he died on the spot.

Reverence—Why was it wrong! God had forbidden any one to touch the ark. It must always be lifted by the poles placed through the rings at the sides. Because the ark was holy, because God dwelt there, all were to reverence it. Where does God meet with us now? In church, in the Sunday School, wherever prayer and worship are being offered, God wants quietness, reverence in His presence. John always stepped quietly going in and out of church, sat quietly, listened well. He knew that God was there.

Teach reverence for the house of God. The church is not like an ordinary house. It is a sacred place. The things in it are not to be injured by careless hands.

Golden Text—Repeat—Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house.

What I Have Learned—I should be reverent.

Blackboard—On a crown print DAVID BRINGING UP THE ARK (outline of ark).

A large paper or card may be used for review. Make this as attractive and suggestive as possible. The crown may be of gilt paper pasted on the card, the ark of gilt paper also, the lettering in bright colors.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

By The Associate Editor

A PLAN PROPOSED PREVENTED PERFECTED

Ask for the PLAN PROPOSED by David. Question about the ark of the covenant, what it was, what it contained, where it was intended to be kept, of what it was the sign, how it came to be in Kirjath-jearim, why David wished to bring it to Jerusalem. Next bring out by questions how David's PLAN was PREVENTED. The right way to carry the ark, the way in which it was carried, the sin of Uzzah, the Lord's anger, the displeasure, the leaving of the ark with Obed-edom are the points. Lastly, the PLAN PERFECTED. Get the scholars to tell all about Obed-edom, the family he belonged to, how he received the ark, what blessing it brought to him. Then have them describe how David heard of the blessing brought by the ark, and his coming to take it to Jerusalem. Bring out the lesson, that our plans succeed when they are God's plans too. Otherwise they are sure to fail.

Lesson II.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

October 11, 1903

2 Sam. 7 : 4-16. Study vs. 1-29. Commit to memory, vs. 8, 9. Read 2 Sam. chs. 8-10.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying,

5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle,

7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies about of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people

Revised Version—1 the same; 2 for; 3 an; 4 have ye not been; 5 from before thee; and I will make; 6 ones; 7 their own place; and be moved; 8 at the first; 9 from the day; 10 I will cause; 11 Moreover; 12 the Lord;

GOLDEN TEXT

2 Sam. 7 : 16. Thy throne shall be established forever.

DAILY READINGS

M.—2 Sam. 7 : 1-16. God's covenant with David.
T.—2 Sam. 7 : 17-29. David's thanksgiving.
W.—2 Chron. 6 : 1-11. Fulfillment.
Th.—1 Kings 5 : 1-6. Why David could not build.
F.—Jer. 31 : 19-26. A sure covenant.
S.—Heb. 8. The better covenant.
S.—Heb. 1 : 1-12. The everlasting throne.

CATECHISM

Q. 97. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper?

A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance,

love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

TIME AND PLACE

Soon after the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem about 1042 B.C.; Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, and within the splendid palace of cedar, which David, with the friendly aid of Hiram, king of Tyre (ch. 5 : 11), had built for himself.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Presence of God, 4-7.
With his people, wherever they went.
II. The Providence of God, 8-11.
Shown in the selection and guidance of David.
III. The Promises of God, 12-16.
Concerning David's family and kingdom.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 69; 301; 32 (Ps. Sel.); 17; 90; 68.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—The last lesson gave an account of David's bringing the ark to the temporary sanctuary for it on Mount Zion. David's kingdom had been established beyond any fear of foes from without, ch. 5. A royal palace of cedar had been built, but the ark of God was still in a lowly hut. David in gratitude to God desired to build a suitable temple for its reception. He consulted with Nathan, the prophet, who "from his own feelings, not by divine revelation," approved of the proposal, vs. 1-3. The Lord's view of the proposal, and His gracious purposes for Israel and David's house are given in the present lesson.

I. The Presence of God, 4-7.

V. 4. *That night* (Rev. Ver. "The same night"); following his consultation with Nathan, vs. 1-3. Probably when the pro-

phet had more time for reflection, he laid the whole matter before God. *The word of the Lord came unto Nathan.* This form of expression is used exclusively of divine revelations made to prophets. The message that God charged the prophet to deliver is to be distinguished from the prophet's own uninspired judgment. It would seem that God made the revelation in a vision, v. 17.

Vs. 5, 6. *My servant David.* "The servant of Jehovah" was a special title given only to a few raised up to do special work, as Moses and Joshua, Josh. 1 : 1; 24 : 29. It became a distinctive title of Christ, Isa. 53 : 11; Matt. 12 : 18; Acts 3 : 13, 26 (Rev. Ver.). Its use here would prepare David for an important message. *Shalt thou build?* A negative answer is implied here, and expressed in 1 Chron. 17 : 4. Some other may build it, but not thou. For the reason, see 1 Chron. 28 : 3.

The Lord did not disapprove the building of a temple, but deferred it, vs. 12, 13. *I have not dwelt in any house*; because the nation of Israel having been hitherto in an unsettled condition, the time had not come for building a fixed place of worship. It is implied that not even now was the kingdom established firmly enough for beginning such a work. *In a tent and in a tabernacle*. "Tent" refers to the outer covering of skins (Ex. 26:14) and "tabernacle" to the framework of boards and bars, Ex. 26:19-38.

V. 7. *In all the places wherein I have walked*. The reference is to the different places where the ark had been kept. The presence of God accompanied the ark. *Spake I a word*. The fact that God had given no command to build a temple, along with the fact (v. 6) that He had been content to dwell in a tent, showed that there was no need for haste in the matter. *The tribes of Israel*. The tribe from which the judge or leader for the time being was taken was regarded as ruling the others, as Ephraim in the days of Joshua, Dan in those of Samson, and Benjamin in those of Saul. *To feed my people Israel*; to tend, as a shepherd guides the flock, a common figure in the Old Testament to describe the duties of rulers.

II. The Providence of God, 8-11.

Vs. 8, 9. *The Lord of hosts*; heavenly as well earthly. The title is used because "He manifests himself in the following revelation as the God of the universe," ordering all its events according to His own will. *I took thee from the sheepcote*. (See 1 Sam. 16:11; Ps. 78:70, 71.) "There is in Nathan's message a marked advance upon the words of all previous prophecies. Hitherto, God's promises had been general, and no tribe, much less any special person, had been chosen as the ancestor of the Messiah. . . but now David is clearly chosen." (R. Payne Smith). *To be ruler over my people*; as the representative of Jehovah. David was a type of Christ in His kingly office. *I was with thee*. All his movements were included in the plan of God, all his successes were of God's working. *Have made thee a great name*. Under David, Israel for the first time took its place among the great nations of the

world. His wide-spread dominion was to be a type of the reign of the Messiah.

Vs. 10, 11. *Will appoint a place*. By subduing their enemies, the Lord made a safe place for His people in the promised land, where they might grow and develop. *Will plant them*; like a tree with deep, firm roots. (Compare Ex. 15:17; Ps. 44:2.) *More no more*; tremble no more before their oppressors. *Children of wickedness*; wicked men. *As beforetime*; referring to the slavery and oppression of Egypt. *As since the time*; that is, during the rule of the judges, when the surrounding nations constantly oppressed and subjugated Israel. *He will make thee an house*. The word "house" is very emphatic. "Thou proposest to build the Lord a house: well, a house is what the Lord will make for thee." (Professor W. J. Beecher.) David's proposal is declined, but the Lord's gracious purpose for him and for his descendants is revealed to the king.

III. The Promises of God, 12-16.

Vs. 12-14. *Thy seed*; descendants. It is now seen that the promise of a house referred to a family. *I will establish his kingdom*. David's descendants would continue to occupy his throne. *He shall build . . . I will establish . . . I will be his father*. These promises, fulfilled partially in Solomon, were completely fulfilled only in Christ. In Him alone had God found a permanent dwelling-place among men; His kingdom will endure forever; He is the perfect Son of the Father. *If he commit iniquity*; a warning to those to come, that their elevation would not release them from the penalty, if they should commit sin, Ps. 89:30-33. *With the rod of men, etc.*; "that is, with such punishments as are inflicted upon all men who go astray, and from which even the seed of David is not to be excepted." (Keil.)

Vs. 15, 16. *My mercy shall not depart away*. David's descendants were chastised for their sins and sank very low. But God's mercy did not forsake them, for in due time Jesus Christ was born of David's race (Luke 1:32, 33) to sit upon His throne forever. *Be-fore thee*. This has been explained as meaning either (1) that David, as the tribe-father and founder of the line of kings, is regarded

as seeing all his descendants pass before him in a vision, or (2) that he is looked upon as continuing to exist in his descendants.

Nathan thus related all to David that God

had made known to him in the vision. David then went into the sanctuary and expressed his gratitude in prayer and thanksgiving to God, vs. 17-29.

APPLICATION

The word of the Lord, v. 4. The sailor with the aid of the compass makes his way in safety over a trackless deep; the builder by using plumb-line and spirit-level keeps his walls straight and true; the mathematician reaches right conclusions by following the laws of reasoning. In the word of God we have a guide that leads us into the only right way, a standard by which to test our opinions and practice, a rule for our daily conduct. Whatever agrees with its teachings is right; all that is opposed to it is wrong.

My servant David, v. 5. The highest title in the kingdom of God is that of servant. Not the service we can command, but the service we can render, is the true test of greatness. We hold our positions as stewards. Our talents, wealth and influence are so many opportunities. Every privilege carries with it an obligation. We are not our own. We should hold ourselves and all we have in readiness to do the will of our Lord and Master.

Shall thou build me an house, v. 5. It is not an uncommon thing for one to have a desire to do some certain thing for God's glory, and yet be denied the opportunity. Perhaps some young man would fain be a Christian minister, and the way is not open to him to make the required preparation. If God's will, as manifested in circumstances, shuts up the way, then submission to that will is the highest service. We must not only seek to serve God, but to serve Him in the way He has been pleased to appoint.

I took thee from the sheepcote. *I was with thee*, vs. 8, 9. It is one of the common temptations which try the successful man, to think that his prosperity is due to himself alone. Many besides Nebuchadnezzar in reviewing their possessions and progress have said: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of my kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Dan. 4: 30. Such a thought is always folly, and God will, in one way or

another, teach the one who thus glories his mistake.

I will appoint a place for my people, v. 10. Where a nation honors and acknowledge God, He will protect and bless it. We have much need as Canadians to remember this. Our great stretches of fertile land are filling up with peoples from afar. In the near future, almost assuredly large addition will be made to our national wealth. Surely we should be filled with gratitude that God has been so gracious to us, and never forget that it is His goodness and not our desert. Nor should we forget that national righteousness is the condition of our continuing to enjoy the divine favor.

He shall build an house for my name, v. 13. Three thoughts are suggested by this divine decision. (1) God assigns to men tasks suited to their character and ability. (2) God waits for the right time to carry out His plans. He moves "without rest, without haste" to the accomplishment of His purposes. It is well for us if we learn something of His patience. (3) The plans of God are sure to succeed. Delay with Him never means defeat. Success is sure to those who work with Him.

For ever, v. 13. Who but God can use words like these? Men erect the most splendid and substantial buildings and they soon fall into ruin. Kingdoms of great power and splendor have sprung up only to perish. The solid earth and the over-arching sky will one day be overtaken by dissolution. But all the while God is building up His kingdom. Its foundation is righteousness, its law is love, its Ruler is the eternal Son of God. This kingdom knows no end. Happy are we if our little lives are linked on to its fortunes. Then we shall share the only greatness that endures, the only riches that satisfy, the only joy that does not fade away.

I will be his father, v. 14. Christ has taught us the full meaning of this promise and assures us of our share in it. God offers in the

gospel to take us into His family. This means that He will provide for all our needs and love us with a love as far surpassing that of earthly parents as the sun outshines the stars. Above all, it means that He will make us like Himself, as the son shares the nature and reflects the features of the father; and having once made us His children, He will allow nothing, not even death itself, to separate us from Him.

I will chasten him, v. 14. It is difficult for us to say concerning any particular case that God is punishing for ill-doing on the part of His children, and yet it is often so. But

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Human opinion should have no weight against a divine decision. v. 4.

When God shuts one door of service He opens another. v. 5.

The burdens of God's children are always suited to their strength. v. 6.

We may have heavenly companionship on our earthly way. v. 7.

Prosperity is the gift of Providence. v. 8.

The greatness of men has its roots in the grace of God. v. 9.

National destiny is the outgrowth of national character. v. 10.

Royal bounty should lead to loyal service. v. 11.

The future, though hidden from us, is known to God. v. 12.

No work for the Master will fail of its reward. v. 13.

The privileges of sonship are the measure of its responsibilities. v. 14.

The Father's mercy is as lasting as His children's need. v. 15.

We are far from blaming those who, having great wealth, spend large sums from year to year on yachts, on equipages, on picture galleries, on jewelry and costly furnishings. Wealth which remunerates honest and wholesome labor is not all selfishly thrown away. But it is somewhat strange that we hear so seldom of rich Christian men devoting their superfluous wealth to maintaining a mission station with a whole staff of

even in the chastisement is to be found evidence of the divine mercy. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," Heb. 12 : 6. Well it is for the ill doer when by the chastening he is led to turn from his ill-doing to righteousness.

Thy Kingdom shall be established forever, v. 16. The kingdom of Christ was at first small and despised. Many efforts have been made to destroy it. But it remains and grows by gathering in men of every race. Its progress will continue until the whole earth is brought under the sway of its Sovereign.

laborers, or to the rearing of colleges or hospitals, or other Christian institutions. It is in this direction that there is most need to press the example of David.—Blaikie.

Grace makes itself equally at home in the palace and in the cottage. One may compare it, in its power to live and blossom in all places, to the beautiful bluebell of Scotland, of which the poet sings :

"No rock too high, no vale too low,
For its fragile and tremulous form to grow."

It crowns the mountain
With azure bells,
And decks the fountain
In forest dells ;

It wreathes the ruin with clusters gray,
Bowing and smiling the livelong day.

—Spurgeon

The posterity of David could only last forever by running out in a person who lives forever, that is by culminating in the Messiah, who lives forever, and of whose kingdom there is no end.—Keil.

If Christ had done nothing more for humanity than give it this word "sleep" in place of "death," He would have been the greatest of benefactors.—T. T. Munger.

"We have many promises," say Christians, but sometimes they merely mean that they have heard many promises. Hearing is far from having. A rosebud is a promise of a rose, but if the heart of an iceberg received it, what blossom-promise would the iceberg have. We have the promises of

God only when we plant them in the soil of trustful hearts. There they will grow and bring forth the flowers and fruit of peace and joy."

God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold,

We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart ;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

Light from the East

House—It is interesting to notice among Eastern tribes which are passing in some places from a wandering to a settled life, that the sanctuary is the last abode to assume the permanent form. In some villages of the Bedouins where the houses are of stone there is still a large, dark tent in the centre, which serves as a place of prayer and a school where the village boys are taught.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

The tabernacle and afterwards the temple testified to the great fact that God has revealed Himself to men. Attention may in the present lesson be concentrated on this fact. Consider :

I. THE METHODS OF THE DIVINE REVELATION.

1. God spoke to Nathan. In a vision of some sort (v. 17) He made known His will to His servant the prophet. To us He has spoken through inspired men, 2 Tim. 3: 16; 1 Pet. 3: 21.

2. He "walked with all the children of Israel," v. 7. Wherever the ark, the symbol of His presence, went, He was there. His gracious promise (Ex. 25: 22) was constantly fulfilled. V. 10, also, speaks of God's presence with His people.

3. He revealed Himself in His providential care of David, vs. 8, 9. He had selected the shepherd lad to be king, and to Him David's safety and success were due. These verses teach the special providence of God. He knows and controls the lives and actions of all men. Such passages as the 139th Psalm in the Old Testament and Matt. 6: 25-34 ;

CEDAR—It was the largest and most useful of all the timber trees known to the Hebrews. The great stature, strength and majestic bearing of the Assyrian led the prophet to compare him to a cedar. Its pre-eminence among ancient woods was owing to a combination of qualities, such as its lightness combined with strength, and its durability, which, under the conditions, wet, dry, and sometimes wet and sometimes dry, excels that of all other woods. The fragrance, closeness, and beauty of the grain of the ancient cedar also made it much prized. In all these respects our various species of cedar are much inferior to the Biblical kind, because they are deficient in the essential oils, which reach their maximum only in wood grown under a semi-tropical sun, such as that of Palestine and other Eastern countries.

Luke 12: 6, 7 in the New, declare most clearly the Lord's intimate acquaintance with men, and His watchful care over them as individuals.

4. In the history of David's kingdom, too, the Lord's hand was to be seen. He would so order events that the throne of David would endure for ever, vs. 12, 13, 15.

5. We find the full revelation of God only in Christ. The three promises of vs. 13 and 14 have their complete fulfilment in Him alone. Take them one by one. "He shall build an house for my name." God found no permanent dwelling-place among men until He came who could say concerning the "temple of His body," that if it were destroyed, He would raise it again, John 2: 19-21. The second promise is, "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." The kingdom of Solomon passed away. All other earthly kingdoms have perished or will perish. The key to the full meaning of this promise is found in Heb. 1: 8. Just as clearly does the third promise, "I will be his father," point to Christ. For He only is the Son of God in such a sense that He can say, "I and my Father are one," John 10: 30.

II. THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE REVELATION. In vs. 6, 7 we have the great truth

shadowed forth, that the worship of God is independent of places and forms. He could be worshipped as acceptably in the humbler tabernacle as in the more splendid temple. It is the spirit of the worshippers, that He regards, rather than outward forms. This is the teaching of Samuel's words to Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice." It is the burden of many a psalm and prophecy. For example, Ps. 15 declares that only the man with "clean hands and a pure heart" can find acceptance in God's presence; and Micah 6: 8 says that true religion is "to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Coming to the New Testament, Jesus affirms that the only real worship is spiritual (John 4: 24), and James describes the worship which God requires when he writes, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world, Jas. 1: 27.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

It is never safe to plan without God. By so doing we are apt to make shipwreck; or, like David in this lesson, we may plan very far short of the possibilities of the case. If we wish to plan for the truest and largest things, count God in. To do as He plans for us is to reach the best attainable.

David and Nathan thought themselves very wise, vs. 1-3. David would build a temple for the Lord, and Nathan, the Lord's prophet, gave his approval and blessing; which just shows that "a king after God's heart," and a prophet, whose business it is to speak God's will, may make huge mistakes, when they fail to first seek God's guidance.

David's intentions were good, but God's plan for him was better; and God does not allow our folly to stand in the way of His doing more for us than we had thought. And so the Lord speaks to Nathan, vs. 4-16, and Nathan tells the message to his king, v. 17. The promptness of it, "that night," v. 4, shows how close God's watch is on our doings.

The message is a long one and contains much. Unless there be careful selection of

the teaching points, the class will weary. Perhaps this series of questions may help.

1. Why did David wish to build a house for the Lord?

2. What sort of house did he propose to build?

3. Why did the Lord not permit him? There are two answers. The first is in 1 Chron. 28: 3. War and worship are unequal yoke-fellows. Blood-shedding and church-building jar. The second answer is in vs. 6, 7—"I am in no haste. The house does not so much matter as My presence with the people. While they have been wandering, I have been content to wander. The house may wait still."

4. Of what does the Lord remind David? vs. 8, 9. The answer is easily got, in its various items, from the verses.

5. What promise made regarding the nation? vs. 10, 11. (a) Permanence and (b) safety: two great national blessings.

6. What promise to David? In v. 11, last clause, a "house," that is a dynasty or family, which shall endure: a promise which would go straight to the heart of any king. In vs. 12-16, a more specific promise of a great ruler, David's son, who was to build the temple, and whose sovereignty should abide. Take the scholars over the truest points in the verses, with Solomon in view. Then fasten upon the word "forever." In whom alone can they be fulfilled? Luke 1: 31-33 gives the answer.

And so God's plan was infinitely larger and grander than David's thought. Isa. 55: 8, 9 may be given as a closing passage.

Some Test Questions

- What plan had David formed?
- What was Nathan's opinion?
- How did the Lord regard it?
- Through whom did he speak to David?
- What reason given for delay?
- Of what was David reminded?
- What promise made regarding the nation?
- Regarding David's descendants?
- How were these promises fulfilled?
- What warning was given?
- What do we learn as to:

- (1) Ways in which God speaks to men?
- (2) The test of right thinking and acting?

- (3) The nature of true worship?
 (4) Old Testament teaching about Christ?

Prove from Scripture

That the mercy of God is enduring.

For Special Study

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The prophet Nathan.
2. God's goodness to David.
3. Christ's kingdom an enduring one.

The Catechism

[For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.]

The Lord's Supper—its worthy partakers.
 The answer to this question points us to 1 Cor. 11 : 20-34, where Paul gives his instructions regarding the Lord's Supper. By many in the Corinthian church the sacred ordinance had come to be looked on as a common meal, and in its observance disgraceful scenes of intemperance were not uncommon. Such conduct is condemned as eating and drinking "unworthily."

The direction as to worthy partaking in the question agrees with that given by the apostle, 1 Cor. 11 : 28. To "examine" oneself is to put oneself to the test, as metals are tested to ascertain their purity. Four points are to be covered in this examination.

1. *Faith.* The first question to ask ourselves in coming to the Lord's Supper is, Do

we discern the Lord's body in the sacrament? That is, do we see beyond the bread and wine the great fact of Christ's death for our sins, and do we trust in Him as our Saviour?

2. The second requirement is *Repentance.* Christ died to save us from sin. By sitting down at His table we profess to be His disciples. This would be a profane mockery, unless we had forsaken sin and turned to God.

3. A third point as to which we must examine ourselves is our *Love.* More than once Christ made love to Himself a test of discipleship, John 14 : 15 ; 21 : 15-17. Unless we have this, we cannot claim to be His followers.

4. *Obedience* is the last point in the self-examination required of us. This is the proof of our love to Christ. Unless we obey Him, our professions of love will be worthless.

Like the Rev. Ver. in 1 Cor. 11 : 29, the Catechism uses the milder word "judgment" instead of "damnation." Unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper is visited with punishment from God, as the penalties of sickness and even death were inflicted on the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 1 : 30. But in our case, as in theirs, punishment is intended, not to destroy, but to bring us to a better state of mind, 1 Cor. 1 : 32.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Introduction—With some blocks build a house (or draw outline). Have you always lived in the house you live in now? Arthur and Susie were born in Canada and went away with their parents to China and then to India, and a letter not long ago said they hoped soon to come back to "dear old Canada." So you see people do not always live in the same place.

You remember King David had just "got settled" in a house of his own (2 Sam. 5 : 11) on Mount Zion, after wandering about in tents. "Father," said a little lad, "don't you think it is wrong to have such a poor old church for God's house, when we



have such nice houses for ourselves?" That is just about what David was saying to Nathan the prophet in our lesson to-day. "I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." (Recall last lesson.) David felt that he had found a place to dwell and wished to provide a permanent house for God in their midst.

Lesson—God knew what was in David's heart and He sent David a message by Nathan the prophet. He reminded David, that He had journeyed with the children of Israel for many years, not having a house, but dwelling under a tent (tabernacle). He also reminded David of his shepherd life and the way in which He had raised him to be a great king, etc.

God's Covenant with David—"Now," God says, "I am going to let you stay here (Outline Mount Zion) (Jerusalem) (square) and make a home for yourself in peace without fear of enemies. Your son shall be king after you, and I will be with him and bless him, and he shall build a house for Me. I will be his Father and he shall be My son, and although I may punish him when he does wrong, I will show mercy to him and forgive him, and your kingdom shall be established forever."

What a beautiful promise! (1) a home where they could live in peace and rest and

enjoyment; (2) an everlasting kingdom; (3) mercy and forgiveness.

Golden Text—Repeat—In Jesus (descended from David) this promise is fulfilled; His kingdom is everlasting.

God's Covenant with Us—God promises us a home forever—a home of peace, and rest, and joy. Jesus says, "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . I go to prepare a place for you," John 14 : 2.

Sing, or repeat with gestures—

There's a home for little children
Above the bright, blue sky,
Where Jesus reigns in glory,
A home of peace and joy.

Hymn 590, Book of Praise

How joyful it is to know that "for sure" God will give us a beautiful home in heaven where we shall live forever!

What I Have Learned—God's promises are sure.

Blackboard—Outline (on paper) crown, on which print KING DAVID PROMISED AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM. Outline a house. Print GOD'S PROMISES ARE SURE.

Sing—

Let us with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for He is kind :
For His mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure,

—Hymn 17, Book of Praise

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

A RESIDENCE PROMISED A RULER

Begin with questions about the tabernacle. Get the scholars to tell why this was the best sort of building for the worship of God in times of wandering and unsettlement. Then ask about David's house. Bring out his feeling that the Lord should have a more splendid dwelling than his own. The plan of David, the Lord's decision about it, and the Lord's promise that Solomon should build a temple should be questioned on. The first thing God promised was A RESIDENCE for Himself. But He promised something else. Call for the three things promised to David about his family and throne. God promised A RULER. He was to rule forever. Be sure that the scholars see how this promise must refer to Christ. He is our Ruler. Now question about our duty to Christ. Illustrate by reference to earthly rulers our debt of obedience and loyalty. Bring out Christ's special claims founded upon His giving up His own life for us.

Lesson III.

DAVID'S CONFESSION

October 18, 1903

Ps. 51: 1-17. Study vs. 1-19. Commit to memory vs. 1-4.

Read 2 Sam. chs. 11, 12.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice: else would I give it; thou desirest the truest.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Revised Version—1 that which is; 2 mayest; 3 with a; 4 delightest not in; 5 thou hast no pleasure.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 51. 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God.

DAILY READINGS

M. —Psalm 51: 1-17.

T. —Rom. 7: 12-25.

W. —Jer. 44: 1-19.

Th. —Joel 2: 12-17.

F. —Ezek. 33: 11-19.

S. —Ezek. 36: 22-31.

S. —Hosea 14.

David's confession,

sinful nature.

Sin hateful to God.

Penitence encouraged.

Promise of pardon.

Cleansing.

Repentance and healing.

CATECHISM

Q. 98. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

TIME AND PLACE

In Jerusalem about 1034 B.C. Nathan the prophet, by telling his story of the poor man robbed by his rich neighbor of his one ewe lamb (2 Sam. 12: 1-6), showed the king how wickedly he had acted towards Bathsheba and Uriah. Then David made the confession contained in the fifty-first psalm.

LESSON PLAN

I. David's Prayer for Pardon, 1-9.

Because he had sinned greatly.

II. David's Prayer for Purity, 10-12.

Because nothing is right till the heart be cleansed.

III. David's Vows of Service, 13-17.

Because he had been so graciously forgiven.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 122; 148; 38 (Ps. Sel.); 151; 155; 168.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—This is the first of eighteen Psalms bearing the name of David, eight of them having titles connecting them with historical incidents in his life, this with the startling awakening of David's conscience concerning his sin in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah, 2 Sam. ch. 12. The contents and tone of the Psalm agree closely with the occasion indicated in its title. It is the prayer of a penitent, oppressed with the sense of guilt, and seeking pardon. The parallelism which is characteristic of Hebrew poetry will be observed—the same thoughts with slight variation repeated in each of the two clauses of the verse.

I. David's Prayer for Pardon, 1-9.

V. 1. *Have mercy upon me, O God.* The word "suggests the free bestowal of favor, rather than the exercise of forgiving clemency." Guilt is acknowledged and the appeal made to the mercy and compassion of

God. *According unto; in proportion to. The multitude of thy tender mercies.* The accumulation of expressions shows the urgency of the prayer. His guilt is so great that he feels it will require the infinitude of God's mercy to pardon it. His view of the vastness and tenderness of God's love recalls Ex. 34: 6, 7, whence, likely, he obtained his language. *Transgressions.* The plural is used because there was a combination of evils, adultery, treachery, murder, in his great sin.

V. 2. *Wash me thoroughly; wash me repeatedly.* So complete, he feels is his defilement by sin. *Cleanse me from my sin.* "Sin is described in three different aspects, the Hebrew for "transgression" meaning defection from God or rebellion against Him; for "iniquity", the perversion of right, depravity of conduct; for "sin", error, wandering from the right way, missing the mark in life. The removal of guilt is also triply described—"Blot out", as a debt is can-

celled or erased; "wash", literally to wash clothes as a fuller does (compare Rev. 7:14: 22:14); "cleansed," as from the impurity of leprosy, 2 Kgs. 5:10-14." (Condensed from Cambridge Bible.)

Vs. 3, 4. *For I acknowledge.* The pronoun is emphatic. God had all along known. Now David with awful agony also knows. *Ever before me*; as a constant burden upon his conscience. *Against thee, thee only.* He has done the greatest possible wrong to Bathsheba and to Uriah (2 Sam. ch. 11), but he regards the head and front of his offending to be a sin against God, an open insult to His holiness. *That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest*; vindicated as a just judge in his condemnation of David's sin. "Man's sin brings out into clearer light the justice and holiness of God, who pronounces sentence upon it."

Vs. 5-9. *I was shapen in iniquity*; born with a depraved nature, Job 14:4; Ps. 58:3. He is not pleading his depraved nature as an excuse for his sins, but as an addition to their weight. *Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.* God desires conformity to the right, not only in external conduct, but in thoughts and feelings. To this requirement the psalmist felt himself opposed. *To know wisdom.* This is God's gift, and its presence will result in "truth." *Purge me with hyssop.* The tenses are future and express a well-grounded confidence. The reference here is to the ceremonial purification of the leper, Num. 19:19, a bunch of hyssop, a common herb which grew upon walls being used for the sprinkling. *Whiter than snow*; the image of perfect purity, Isa. 1:18. *Make me to hear joy and gladness*; that the reproaches of conscience and law doom might distress him no longer. *The bones which thou hast broken.* His heart agony was like that of broken bones. *Hide thy face from my sins*; look at them no longer. (See Jer. 16:17.) "The foundation of all other possessions is the assurance of the forgiveness of sins." (Delitzsch.) *Blot out all mine iniquities*; expunge them from thy record. If even one single sin were allowed to remain, it would be offensive to the all-seeing eye of God, and fatal to David's salvation. God represents himself as delight-

ing to blot out sin, Isa. 43:25; 44:22.

II. David's Prayer for Purity, 10-12.

V. 10. *Create in me a clean heart*; a pure heart, in which there would be no taint nor tendency to sin, Matt. 5:8. Such a change could be wrought by God alone. It is truly a creation. *Renew a right spirit within me*; a steadfast spirit as opposed to one pliant and wavering.

Vs. 11, 12. *Cast me not away from thy presence.* "To be shut out from God's presence, is to be excluded from His favor and love." (W. H. Green). *Take not thy holy spirit from me.* The Spirit had been poured out upon David when he was anointed king, 1 Sam. 16:13. To be deprived of the Spirit of God is to be given up to evil. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*; joy springing from the conscious possession of God's love and favor. *Uphold me with thy free spirit*; with a spirit of willing conformity to God's will, so that he might not fall.

III. David's Vows of Service, 13-17.

Vs. 13-15. *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways.* "An endeavor to undo the evil effects of a sin whereby he had given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme" (2 Sam. 12:14), would be one of the most fitting fruits of repentance. *Sinners shall be converted unto thee.* The story of God's forgiving love to David would win their hearts. (See Luke 22:32.) *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness.* 2 Sam. 12:5, 13, gives the key to this strong language. *Thou God of my salvation.* Note the singular appropriateness of the title. *Thy righteousness*; "that attribute according to which God gives to every one his due," and which is shown in pardoning the penitent, as well as in punishing the impenitent. *Open thou my lips.* God's pardon opens the lips that the guilt of sin has closed.

Vs. 16, 17. *For thou delighted not in sacrifice* (Rev. Ver.). "'For' gives the reason for the nature of this thank offering which he proposes to give—not material sacrifice, which God does not desire, but the sacrifice of a contrite heart." (Camb. Bible.) The Mosaic law allowed no sacrifice for the sins of which David was guilty. *The sacrifices of God*; true sacrifices, those in which He has pleas-

ure *A broken and contrite heart.* "The inward part of a man is said to be broken. . . . when he is, in himself, become as nothing and when God is everything to him."

Vs. 18, 19, are a prayer, but for the nation

at large. May Jerusalem prosper by God's grace and favor, and Zion, whereon stood the temple, witness the whole-hearted worship of the people through the appointed sacrifices.

APPLICATION

Have mercy upon me, O God, vs. 1, 2. In the beginning of this cry of the penitent sinner we have the ground of hope. He seeks for mercy, not because of any desert in himself but because God has revealed Himself as a God of mercy. His transgressions have been many and grievous, but God's mercy is more than sufficient to cleanse them away. We may take this thought into our hearts and upon our lips. If there is to be salvation from our sin, it is to be found in the mercy of the divine character, and in no other way. Sometimes men have made other things imperative, and have found in themselves the ground of forgiveness, but to think thus is to deceive oneself.

For I acknowledge my transgressions, v. 3. As long as we attempt to conceal our sin—and it is the natural impulse to seek to conceal that which is to our discredit—it will afflict us. The way that leads to deliverance is the way of open confession. There may be sins by which we have wronged our fellows and which call for confession not to God only, but also to man. But whatever the sin may have been, there must be a confession of it to God, if we are to be blessed with the sense of forgiveness. Many an offender has sought some other way, but has found, as David did, that his sin is ever before him. Even when some temporary distraction has seemed to banish it, there will be still the feeling underlying all else that something is wrong. In the waking moment there will be the feeling that something is clouding the life and the old fault will present itself. To know and to confess one's fault is the first step in the way that leads to peace.

Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts, v. 6. The righteousness that God requires is no external, superficial thing, but that which is seated in the heart, the very core and centre of a man's being. It is a lesson that constantly needs to be emphasized,

that God's demands for service cannot be met by any external righteousness. It must be from the heart. And His grace is sufficient to implant that righteousness. But nothing else can. The cleansing of the soul from the taint of sin can be wrought by the power of God only. He who created can redeem. This is one of the foundation doctrines. "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." And this man of the long past had grasped that great truth, and cried out to God for cleansing. Happy are we if we have such a faith!

Make me to hear joy and gladness, v. 8. His prayer for cleansing answered, he is ready to look forward and taste of joy. What happiness can approach the happiness of the man who has the consciousness of forgiven sin. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered," and we may put "happy" in place of the word "blessed" for it means the same thing. We have known what it was to have a friendship interrupted by some misunderstanding, and to have it renewed. How great the joy when the cause of misunderstanding was removed. If this is so in our relations with one another, how much greater the joy when there is no longer a barrier between us and God!

Create in me a clean heart, v. 10. The man who is conscious of sin forgiven still feels his dependence on God's Spirit if he is to walk uprightly in the future. Sanctification is as necessary as justification. And the experience passed through in the time of condemnation will set an edge upon the desire for a pure and holy life. Let it be remembered that one is dependent on the help of God for the new life of righteousness, as well as for the forgiveness of sin.

Then will I teach transgressors, v. 13. No one who has obtained forgiveness and rightly understands his blessing, will be content to selfishly clutch and hold it for himself. He

will long to make known to others the benefit he has himself received. His past experience will fit him to teach others, and the undertaking in which he will find the greatest joy will be that of blessing his fellows with the blessing he himself has known.

For thou delightest not in sacrifice, v. 16. These verses are very remarkable in the spirituality of the ideas expressed. Do we not need to ponder upon them? We have not yet learned the great truth contained in

this statement. Not in religious services, but in the heart service, is to be found that which is pleasing to God. The psalmist does not teach that formal services are of no value. But if they are to be acceptable to God, they must be the outcome of the broken spirit and the contrite heart. God must be worshipped in spirit, and with worship thus rendered God is well-pleased. If the heart is right, it matters not so much whether the forms of worship are simple or more elaborate.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

He is on the right track who takes his sin to God. v. 1.

In that word "mercy" David asks for all that even God can give. v. 1.

Thorough surgery is good surgery. v. 2.

To acknowledge a sin is to have gone half way to its pardon. v. 3.

The God who knows us through and through will be satisfied with no surface cleansing. v. 6.

"Whiter than snow" is a strong word; but God's resources and God's mercy, too, are infinite. v. 7.

The renewing of the heart is as truly a creative act as the making of the body. v. 10.

Lacking God's Spirit, there is spiritual paralysis; nay spiritual death. v. 11.

The forgiven man seeks the salvation of his fellow men as naturally as water flows from a spring. v. 13.

A guiltless conscience makes a singing tongue. v. 14.

A humble man is the closest to his God. v. 17.

This Psalm, says a writer of four hundred years ago, is the brightest gem in the whole book, and contains instruction so large, and doctrine so precious, that the tongue of angels could not do justice to the full development.

The Psalm grew out of David's own experience, as Tennyson's, *In Memoriam*, from the death of Arthur Hallam, and many of our best hymns, from the experiences of their authors. It is for this reason that the Psalm belongs to all time.—Peloubet.

Of all acts is not, for a man, *repentance* the most divine? The deadliest sin, I say, were that same supercilious consciousness of no sin; that is death. David's life and history, as written in these Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblems ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul toward what is good and best. Struggle, often baffled, sore baffled, down as into entire wreck; yet a struggle never ended; ever, with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose, begun anew.—Thomas Carlyle.

An outward hell could not burn one whose heart had been cleansed, whose spirit had been renewed. Such a spirit would carry the water of life and the singing angels and the golden city and the eternal blessedness within itself, and there is not a corner in the wide universe where it could be really cast away from the presence of God. Let us not pray chiefly that God would let us into heaven, but first that He would send heaven into us.—Van Dyke.

As long as gunpowder is wet it resists the spark, but when it becomes dry it is ready to explode at the first touch. As long as the Spirit dwells in my heart, He deadens me to sin, so that if lawfully called through temptation I may reckon upon God carrying me through, but when the Spirit leaves me I am like dry gunpowder.—McCheyne.

The audience the Psalmist would choose is memorable—he would instruct transgressors like himself; others might despise them, but "a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous

kind." If unworthy to edify a saint, he would creep in along with the sinners, and humbly tell them of divine love.—Spurgeon.

None can teach others so well as those who have been taught of God themselves; and a desire to save others is a sure sign of repentance.

Light from the East

HYSSOP—Our hyssop does not grow in Palestine; the plant referred to was probably a species of wild thyme which is quite common there. It has a hot, pungent taste and long, slender stems. A bunch of it was bound on a cedar handle with a thread of scarlet wool. It was dipped into the sacrificial blood and what adhered to it was thus sprinkled upon the person or thing to be purified. After being used, it was burn-

ed with the refuse of the animal offered.

WASH—The distinction of persons and things into clean and unclean gave a spiritual significance to the system of purification by which uncleanness was removed. Bathing became a religious act, and water was holy and therefore refreshing and healing. It was natural to speak of the process by which God purged away sin under terms of the ablation which freed from ceremonial guilt. Wash here means a more thorough operation than sprinkling or rinsing. It means to tread the clothes with the feet, or beat them with something. Around almost every well in Palestine the traveller sees crowds of women washing. They gather up the clothes out of the water into a loose roll upon a smooth stone and beat them with a short club, rinsing them frequently.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

It is a familiar story, the sad tale of David's great sin. Let it be touched upon with prudence and delicacy. Then turning to the confession in the fifty-first psalm, make clear its fitness to be used by each one of us. Bring out the following points:

1. *All have sinned.* We must all say, "Against Thee have I sinned." It may not have been in my open, flagrant way, like David. But no man, save Jesus who was more than man, has been sinless. Consider, in proof of this, the examples of such men as Abraham, Moses, Peter, John and Paul. Read also such passages as Isa. 53 : 6 ; Rom. 3 : 23. And the gravest part of our guilt is, that we have sinned not only against men, but against God. David felt this so keenly that, for the time, he lost sight of the injury done to others. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned," v. 4. God is the One most deeply wronged by sin.

2. *Sins have their root in a sinful nature.* This is the thought of vs. 5, 6. The Bible teaches very clearly that we inherit from Adam a nature tainted with sin. (See Rom. 5 : 19.) Even if all our sins were forgiven, there

would still be the sin of our hearts to deal with, 1 John 1 : 8, 9. But mark that David does not think sin any the less his because he has inherited a tendency to sin. It is, after all, through choice that we sin, and so we are responsible. It is always possible for us to resist the temptations addressed to us.

3. *Our only hope of pardon is in the mercy of God.* His holy law condemns. But His mercy in Christ removes the condemnation (Rom. 8 : 1) and throws wide open the door into His favor. We must base our prayer for pardon, as David did, on the divine mercy, v. 1. The mercy of God is a frequent theme in the Psalms. (See 36 : 5 ; 103 : 17.)

4. *It is required of us, that we confess and forsake sin.* This has always been the condition of receiving pardon from God, Prov. 28 : 13 ; 1 John 1 : 9. And the moment this condition is fulfilled by us, the righteousness of God, that is, His faithfulness to His own character and promises, becomes the pledge of our forgiveness and cleansing.

5. *Purity, as well as pardon, is the gift of God.* Besides bringing upon us condemnation, sin has defiled our hearts. In vs. 10-12 the psalmist's longing for purity is most prominent, as is the desire for pardon in vs. 1-9. Note how He feels, that only the One who created the universe can change his

heart. Make it plain, that we cannot have pardon without purity. God will not free us from the penalty of sin, unless we yield ourselves to Him, to be made holy. Jesus saves us *not in* but *from* our sins, Matt. 1: 21.

6. *Gratitude for forgiveness and cleansing is a powerful motive to the service of God.* In vs. 13-17, David declares his purpose, when forgiven and cleansed, to proclaim the name of God and to offer the right kind of sacrifice. It should be pointed out that v. 16 does not express disapproval of sacrifices, but only declares their worthlessness, if the heart be not right. In the New Testament, as here, love and gratitude are set forth as the mightiest motives constraining us to devote ourselves to God's service, Rom. 12: 1; 2 Cor. 5: 14.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

This is a man's rather than a child's psalm. It is not possible, and not desirable that a child should measure all its depths: they are too dark and awful. But children have naturally the upward look, and perhaps their souls will take fire as they try to look through David's eyes to the heights of God's mercy and grace to which the psalm points.

David's sin must be brought out (2 Sam. ch. 11); let it be done with prudence and care. Remember that the soul of the child is quick to contract stain. Let the story be told in such a way as to arouse hatred for David's sin. The story of Nathan's visit to him (2 Sam. ch. 12) will help to this end. Even the heart-hardened David is indignant at his own sin when, in Nathan's picture, he sees it in another.

And *David's cry for mercy.* To whom is it addressed? To whom can such a cry be addressed but to God? And David was in the right way when he went to his God with his sin—have the scholars read Ex. 34: 6, 7. Sin is an awful business: take up the three words for it as explained in the Exposition, v. 2. And how eager David's cry for pardon, and what thorough work he wants God to make of it: take up the three words for the removal of guilt (Exposition, as above). What shame and pain sin bring, (vs. 3, 4); and the anguish of it brings from David fresh calls for cleansing, vs. 7-9. The cleansing

with hyssop (see Exposition and Light from the East) points to another pardoning, 1 John 1: 7. Horatius Bonar's sweet words are the echo of David's prayer—

"Lord, let the cleansing blood,
Blood of the Lamb of God,
Pass o'er my soul."

The cry for purity follows naturally, vs. 10-12. He wants forgiveness; and when forgiven wants to be made and kept clean. The children understand this frame of mind perhaps better than the older persons. It is just the way they feel towards earthly parents. Make clear and emphatic that it is only God's Spirit that can make and keep the heart clean. Hymn 101, vs. 5, 6, and 111, vs. 4-7, Book of Praise, will help in impressing the thought.

David at work—will perhaps give a fresh turn to the current. God forgives; God's Holy Spirit makes glad and strong (v. 12). To what end? That we may bring other sinners back to God. Such is David's resolve, v. 13: and that we may "tell to all the world around, what a dear Saviour we have found," vs. 14, 15.

One must get a piece away from a high building or a high hill to see how lofty it really is. In closing, have the scholars stand back and take a look at this wondrous sight: David crushed by a sense of guilt and crying for mercy—David sounding forth God's praise because he is forgiven—the forgiven sinner seeking to bring his fellow-sinners back to God.

Some Test Questions

- To what author is this Psalm ascribed?
- At what period in his career?
- How had he come to a sense of guilt?
- For what is his first and great cry?
- What three words used for sin?
- What three for cleansing?
- In what sense is every sin a sin against God only?
- What taught here as to "original sin"?
- What prayer follows that for pardon? v. 10.
- Explain "right spirit", v. 10; "free spirit", v. 12.
- What is the best incentive to soul-saving?
- To the singing of God's praise?
- In what sacrifices does God delight?

What do we learn as to:

- (1) Our need of pardon?
- (2) The mercy of God?
- (3) Renewing by the Holy Spirit?
- (4) The qualifications of a soul-saver?

Prove from Scripture

That we should pray for forgiveness.

For Special Study

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The terms on which God forgives sin.
2. To what David's penitence led.
3. "Whiter than snow."

The Catechism

[For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.]

Ques. 98. *Prayer—its definition.* Prayer is defined in this question by stating:

1. *Its Object.* Prayer is to be offered only to God. This follows from the First Commandment. For prayer is an act of worship, which we are forbidden to offer to any other than God. Prayer to angels is excluded by this definition. They minister to us (Heb. 1:14), but we nowhere are told that we can speak to them. Prayer to saints is also excluded. We shall go to them (Luke 16:9) but they never come to us, Luke 16:27-31. Prayer may, however, be offered to each of the three persons in the Godhead, to the

Father (Matt. 6:9), to the Son, (Acts 7:59,) and to the Holy Ghost, Rom. 8:26.

2. *Its Authority.* Prayer is to be offered "in the name of Christ." We have the right to use His name, as an agent uses the name of his principal, or as an officer of the law acts in the name of the state. To pray in the name of Christ is, further, to base our plea on the ground of His merits and sufferings. Yet again it means that we are joint-heirs with Him (Rom. 8:17), of the blessings promised by the Father.

3. *Its Spirit.* We must pray in the spirit of submission to God. The only things for which we have the right to ask without any qualification are things which God has expressly promised, or which we know it is His will we should have. In praying for other blessings, we must put in the condition, "if it be His will." This spirit of submission will show itself in confession and thanksgiving.

The phrase "offering up," used of Old Testament sacrifices, points to the element of worship in true prayer.

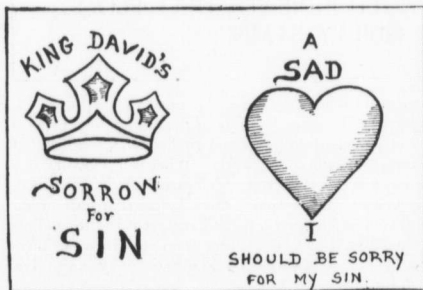
"When all the conditions are fulfilled, God will with absolute certainty be moved to answer our prayer. He will, if He sees best, give us precisely what we ask for, at the precise time, in the precise manner. Or He may give it in a different time or manner, or give something better."

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Introduction—I wonder if any of you little people ever cry. "Oh, yes?" you say. Why do you cry? "Get hurt," "want something," "somebody took something from me," "somebody hurt me,"

"sick." Yes, these are all reasons for crying. There is another reason yet.

"A little fellow sat crying under a tree in a corner of the garden. 'What's the matter, my boy?' I asked. 'I's been bad, and I's sorry,' he sobbed. 'Well,' I said, 'get up and go to mother and tell her you are sorry, and ask her to forgive you.' He wiped his eyes and off he went. The next time I passed I saw him with his arms around his mother's



neck and a happy smile on his face, and I was sure she had forgiven him."

Do you remember God's beautiful promise to King David and his family (Recall lesson)? Amongst other promises God said that He would be kind to them always, and forgive them when they did wrong, if they asked Him.

Lesson Subject—God showing His love for His people by leading them to repentance.

Lesson—In our lesson to-day King David is crying. Something has gone wrong. David has sinned and displeased God. His heart (outline) is not so pure as it was. We'll put some sin-marks within this heart.

What do we do when anything gets soiled—covered with stains? "Wash it," you say. "Oh, I can't wash my heart."

The Snow Prayer—David knows who can wash his heart, v. 2. Listen! "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Do you remember what snow is like?)

Confession—David is sorry for his sin, and to-day we hear him confessing (Repeat the big word), that is, telling God all about it, and asking God to forgive him and make his heart clean again; just as the little fellow went to his mother "and confessed" and asked forgiveness. A little girl once said to her father, "Papa, I want you to tell God

something for me. I have such a little voice I don't think He could hear it away up in heaven; but you have a big man's voice, and God will be sure to hear you." Can God hear the "little voices" when they "pray" and "confess" to Him?

Show a picture of a girl or boy. The picture only shows the "outward appearance," the face, dress, etc. God sees right into hearts. He knows even our thoughts and feelings. In every heart He sees some sin-marks; and only He can wash them away, and make our heart whiter than snow—pure, clean, new.

Golden Text—Listen to David's prayer! Let us all clasp our hands and pray it too, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." God "rubs out" all the sin-marks, if we ask Him to do so.

A Clean Heart—Here is what David's heart looks like after he has told God he is sorry, and God has forgiven him. (Rub out the sin-marks, and print CLEAN within the heart).

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED—That I should be sorry for my sins.

Blackboard—On the paper crown (or outline) print KING DAVID'S SORROW FOR HIS SIN. Outline a heart, in which print SORROW. Underneath print CONFESS YOUR SINS.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THERE IS A FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD
DRAWN FROM IMMANUEL'S VEINS;
AND SINNERS, PLUNGED BENEATH THAT FLOOD,
LOSE ALL THEIR GUILTY STAINS

Let the scholars repeat the verse printed on the blackboard until they all know it. Then it may be sung. Make very clear what it means. Here, for illustration, is a piece of cloth all stained and soiled. But it is plunged into water and rubbed with soap, and it comes out quite clean. Now, something has stained our hearts. What is it? Every one will answer "Sin." Who alone can cleanse this stain from our hearts? It is God. Ask the scholars to repeat, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Now, before that stain of sin could be taken away, Christ the Son of God had to pour out His blood, that is, die, on Calvary. This is what we mean by saying that His blood cleanses from sin. Have we anything to do, to have our stains made clean? Yes, just what David did, confess our sin. Let the whole school join in repeating, 1 John 1: 9.

LESSON IV.

DAVID'S JOY OVER FORGIVENESS

October 25, 1903

Ps. 32. Commit to memory vs. 5-7. Read Rom. chs. 4, 5.

1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely shall

Revised Version—I was changed as with; 2 let; 3 counsel; 4 upon thee; 5 trappings must be bit and bridle

the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

12 When the great waters overflow; 13 reach; 14 will; 15 to hold them in, else they will not come.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 32: 1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

DAILY READINGS

M. —Psalm 32. David's joy over forgiveness.
T. —Psalm 130. A prayer of hope.
W. —Psalm 103: 1-18. A merciful God.
Th. —1 John, ch. 1. Confession and cleansing.
F. —Heb. 9: 6-15. Eternal redemption.
S. —Rom. 4: 1-8. Blessing of forgiveness.
S. —Psalm 85. Peace.

CATECHISM

Q. 99. What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?

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

Connecting Links—Our Psalm is closely connected with that of last Sabbath's Lesson. Psalm 51 is a loud cry of sorrow on account of sin and an earnest prayer for pardon and cleansing. Psalm 32 is a song of gladness following the reception of pardon, a rapturous outburst of joy on the lips of one who has been restored, like the prodigal, to his father's house. The author makes use of his own experience for the warning and instruction of others. (See Ps. 51: 13.) In Rom. 4: 6, David is referred to as the writer.

I. The Way of Forgiveness, 1-5.

V. 1. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.* The Hebrew is an exclamation, "Oh, the blessedness of him!" called forth by the contemplation of the happy estate of the forgiven one. "Transgression" is passing the limits fixed by the law of God. "Forgiven" means, literally, taken away. *Whose sin is covered* "Sin" is the missing of the mark, the failure to come up to what God intended us to be and to do. "Covered," here, means hidden out of sight.

TIME AND PLACE

About 1034 B.C., soon after the writing of the fifty-first psalm, and nearly a year after David's great sin; the king's palace in Jerusalem, where David had received the message brought from the Lord by Nathan the prophet.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Way of Forgiveness, 1-5. Through the humble confession of sin.
II. The Offer of Forgiveness, 6. Made freely to every sinner.
III. The Results of Forgiveness, 7-9. The protection and guidance of God.
IV. The Joy of Forgiveness, 10, 11. In which all are invited to join.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 752; 161: 24 (Ps. Sel.); 217; 457; 533.

EXPOSITION

Vs. 2-4. *The man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.* This does not mean a sinless man, but one to whose account God will not reckon the sin he has committed. "Iniquity" is crookedness or depravity of nature. "Imputeth not," means, "the cancelling of a debt which is no longer reckoned against the offender." Note, as in last lesson, the three words for sin and for pardon. *No guile*; absolute sincerity. There must be no attempt to deceive self or God, 1 John 1: 8. *When I kept silence*; did not confess, for a whole year. *My bones waxed old*; as it were rotting away. *Through my roaring all the day long.* An awakened conscience causes pain to the soul like a burning fire or gnawing worm. "He who will not speak his sin to God, has to groan." (MacLaren.) *For day and night*; unceasingly. *Thy hand was heavy upon me.* God's chastening hand was laid heavily upon him, to bring him to repentance. *My moisture is turned into the drought of summer.* His bodily freshness and vigor were driven out as by an intense and prolonged drought. *Selah*; a

musical stop, or rest. Observe how appropriately it comes in here and at the close of verses 5 and 7, marking a change of sentiment.

V. 5. *I acknowledged my sin.* Note again the three expressions for the act of confession. The reiteration is a token of strong emotion. He was dead in earnest. Confession, be it remembered, does not undo any wrong; but it is evidence of the repentance which leads to pardon. *And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* The "thou" is emphatic to show that the release from sin was the act of God.

II. The Offer of Forgiveness, 6.

V. 6. *For this*; in consequence of the penitent psalmist's experience of God's justifying grace. *Shall every one that is godly*; "that is, the object of the gracious love of God, himself filled with pious affections in return." *In a time when thou mayest be found*; during the day of grace, which may pass away, Isa. 55: 6; Jer. 29: 12, 13. *Surely in the floods of great waters*; when the judgments of God are let loose.

III. The Results of Forgiveness, 7-9.

V. 7. *Thou art my hiding-place.* (Compare Ps. 27: 5; 31: 20; 91: 1.) God himself will cover him from danger. David had experience of the value of coverts when fleeing from Saul. *Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance*; "give me abundant cause, turn where I may, to praise thee." (Perowne.)

Vs. 8, 9. *I will instruct thee.* "Vs. 8 and 9 seem to me to be best taken as the divine

voice answering the confidence of v. 7." (Maclaren.) *Counsel thee with mine eye upon thee* (Rev. Ver.). Counsel, to be helpful, must take account of all conditions; hence the watchful eye. The Lord's eye is upon us, not to watch for faults, but for guidance.

Be ye not as the horse or as the mule. Man should give God willing obedience, not constrained, like an irrational animal. *Bit and bridle.* Dumb animals cannot be moved by reason, only by compulsion. *Else they will not come near unto thee* (Rev. Ver.); to become subject to thy control and do the work thou dost require. Here men are exhorted to render to God spontaneous obedience, and not wait for the stroke of judgment to be applied.

IV. The Joy of Forgiveness, 10, 11.

Vs. 10, 11. *Many sorrows shall be to the wicked.* The warning of the previous verse is continued. It is a law of the kingdom of God that sin must be punished. *But he that trusteth in the Lord.* The contrast to "the wicked" is a trusting, not a sinless man. *Mercy shall compass him about.* "God's loving-kindness is around him on all sides, as the circumference of a sphere is about the centre." *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice*; the practical use to be made of this happy condition. God, and not oneself nor one's possessions, is to be the true source of rejoicing. *Righteous*; not the perfect, but those trusting in God for pardon and protection. "The righteous have abundant cause for rejoicing, not in themselves, but in Jehovah, that is, in their knowledge and possession and enjoyment of Him."

APPLICATION

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, v. 1. There are many kinds of happinesses in the world. Sometimes happiness is merely the result of a healthy body; sometimes it is the outcome of success. But of all the happinesses that the spirit of man may know, that is the first, which is the possession of the man who, knowing his sin forgiven, is able to look up to God as His great and loving Father and Friend. If God no longer condemns him, then there is no one who can harm or distress him.

When I kept silence, v. 3. Many a man has

tried to hide his sin by silence, and for a time, by force of will, has carried out that purpose. But sooner or later the burden will become insupportable. Not only will the mind be distressed, but one's physical condition will change under the pressure of unconfessed and unforgiven sin. The fever of his soul has become a fever of body; and seek as he may, he can find no rest. This truth is illustrated in the happenings of every day, and history and great works of fiction are full of incidents that show how vivid and graphic the picture is, that is here

given of the suffering of the impenitent.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, v. 5. It is folly to think that we can get rid of the distress, except in the way that God himself has appointed. God covers sin, but man may not attempt to do so. There was no delay. Having resolved on confession, he speedily did as he had resolved. And swift as the confession poured out, came the answer of divine grace. God is not slow to meet the penitent. When the prodigal son was "yet a great way off," the loving father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. The delay is all on man's side, never on God's.

Thou art my hiding place, v. 7. Says a writer quoted by Spurgeon on this verse: "Suppose a traveller upon a bleak and exposed heath to be alarmed by the approach of a storm. He looks out for shelter. But if his eye discern a place to hide him from the storm, does he stand still and say, 'I see there is a shelter, and therefore I may remain where I am'? Does he not betake himself to it? Does he not run in order to escape the stormy wind and tempest? It was a "hiding-place" before; but it was *his* hiding-place only when he ran

into it and was safe from all his foes."

I will instruct thee and teach thee, v. 8. Sometimes young people think that God should have made them good; but they must remember that God does not coerce a man's will. He appeals, beseeches, warns, instructs, but if man still is heedless, then He leaves him to himself. Let us see to it, that we are always open to the divine appeal and instruction.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, v. 10. In verses 10 and 11 we have the contrast made between the fate of the good and of the wicked. It doesn't always seem to us that the wicked are sorrow-laden and the righteous rejoicing. But if there seem many contradictions to this in life, it is because we are not skilled to read the facts. Where one is forgiven and walking in trust and righteousness, there may come to him sorrows, but no abiding sorrow, and there will always be provided help and deliverance, so that the tone of his life will be that of joy and confidence. With the wicked man it must be otherwise. He may seem to be happy, but his happiness has no real foundation, and his gladness, like the morning dew before the sun, will soon pass away.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

He whom God forgives is rich in soul, though he may be poor in purse. v. 1.

Let it not be forgotten of God that "Though His hand be strong to smite," 'Tis also strong to save. vs. 4, 5.

Quicker than the flash of the electric currents across the deep, comes God's forgiveness in response to our confession. v. 5.

He that is in the rock fortress need not fear the flood. v. 6.

God is the Great Pedagogue. v. 8.

He who is right with God has no fear of God's eye. v. 8.

The world's notion is that to be a saint is to be sour. God's purpose is that his saints should be the gladdest people on earth. v. 11.

This thirty-second Psalm was a favorite with the great Augustine, who often read it "with weeping heart and eyes, and before

his death had it written upon the wall which was over against his sick-bed, that he might be exercised and comforted in his sickness." His words, "The beginning of knowledge is to know thyself to be a sinner," might be prefixed to it as a motto.—Cambridge Bible.

Professor Moulton arranges the Psalm in seven stanzas as follows: First stanza, vs. 1, 2; second, vs. 3, 4; third, v. 5; fourth, v. 6; fifth, v. 7; sixth, vs. 8, 9; seventh, vs. 10, 11. Each stanza marks a distinct movement in the progress of the thought. It will be worth while to have the class read it in stanzas as above.

The great epic dramas are less than a score in number, and all are based upon some experience akin to David's. . . . The great epics are three—The Iliad, The Inferno, and Paradise Lost. They are all stories of conflict with sin and passion.—Hillis.

A little poem, *The Two Tides*, compares the covering of our sins to the incoming tide, which overflows the mud and wrecks and refuse "that lie in ghastly heaps along the strand," and only the rippling water is seen reflecting the light of the moon.

"And Thou, O Christ, our Light, look down
In all the lustre of Thy grace,
Till every wave as mirror hold
The image of Thy shining face."

"Holy gladness is a secure protection of the soul. If any one is merry, let him sing psalms (Jas. 5:13); and the little devils who are always waiting to spoil every pure enjoyment, and to make every pleasure an occasion to sin, will fly away, like bats from a cavern when a torch is kindled."

Light from the East

MOISTURE, DROUGHT—In Palestine there is a great contrast between the copious rainfall of winter and the absolute dryness of summer. In winter and early spring every plain is soaked. I have seen horses sinking

to the saddle girths in the brown loam of Esdraelon, and sometimes they stick fast, and even disappear altogether, when crossing a water run. In summer there is little, if any, rain, and the fierce sun soon dries up every particle of moisture. Many of the plants do not fade gradually, as with us, but are dried up almost at once, and stand a desiccated and dismal caricature of their former life. This is the figure which the old shepherd used to express his experience in this psalm.

FLOODS—In the fall, when all the gullies are dry, they form a tempting camping place to those who do not know the country well. When a sudden storm bursts on the hills above, accompanied sometimes by a water spout, a resistless torrent of foaming water comes down the gorge with little warning, sweeping all loose things away and often endangering life. Flocks and men must swiftly betake themselves to higher ground, and they are fortunate who can find some cave or other shelter above the torrent's reach.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

The thirty-second Psalm is a companion Psalm to the fifty-first. In the latter we have the cry of a penitent for pardon. In the former the forgiven soul looks back on the way it has travelled from the darkness into light, and breaks forth into a song of rejoicing, in which those around are called to join. The Lesson Plan may be followed in teaching.

I. **THE WAY OF FORGIVENESS**, 1-5. Mark the starting point of this way. The sinfulness of the psalmist's former condition is indicated by the three words, "transgression," "sin," "iniquity." Its misery is compared to the crushing of the bones by the heavy weight of God's hand, and the wasting heat of a burning fever. It is no wonder that one, who was delivered from so wretched a plight, shouted, "O the blessednesses!" as the first word of the Psalm may be translated. In his happy escape the

psalmist had *his* part, while another part belonged to God. The sinner is required to confess his sin. The three expressions in v. 5 for the psalmist's confession show how real and thorough it was. God's part, too, is described by the use of three words, which should be carefully studied. At last the goal was reached when the psalmist could say, "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." It was like the home-coming of the prodigal, Luke 15:20.

II. **THE OFFER OF FORGIVENESS**, 6. Does it seem strange that this offer is made to the "godly?" Do they need forgiveness? Yes, even the accepted children of God need daily forgiveness, as the feet of the Eastern traveler must be frequently washed, because of the dust that clings to them, John 13:10. But not only to the godly is forgiveness offered. It is held out to those who are yet strangers to God. It was "for the ungodly" that Christ died, Rom. 5:6-8. Yea, the gospel offer is to all, John 3:16; Rom. 10:13; Rev. 22:17. The time to seek forgiveness is now, 2 Cor. 6:2.

III. THE RESULTS OF FORGIVENESS, 7-9. Two of these results are specified, namely protection and guidance. Pardon is like a gate opening into a city, behind whose high and strong walls there is safety for the citizens. Or, again, it is the entrance into a path where we may enjoy the companionship and direction of a Guide who knows the way to its very end. The folly of rejecting the protection and guidance of God is set forth in v. 9.

IV. THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS, 11, 12. This joy has been spoken of already in v. 7. There the thought is that the pardoned sinner, whatever his circumstances may be, has countless sources of joy all around him. Observe the source of this joy. It springs from "trust" in the mercy of God. Then notice that "righteousness" goes along with it. The psalmist recognizes that sin was the cause of all his sorrow, and that he can be happy only if he is holy. The last thing in the psalm is the expression of this joy. It bursts forth into grateful praise. In this glad song all are asked to join.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The time of David's great sin was like a dark, murky morning—oh, so black and gloomy and sullen. Then followed the thunder peals of conscience, which awoke the great sinner to a mighty cry to God for pardon (See Ps. 51, the Lesson of last Sabbath.) The storm clears and there is the glad rainbow of God's mercy and faithfulness in the sky. The afternoon is calm and peaceful. The world is full of light and joy. This is the atmosphere of to-day's psalm. Make joy the key-note of the lesson. Its title is David's Joy over Forgiveness, and its Golden Text, "Oh, the blessednesses of him whose transgression is forgiven."

It is with this *song-burst of joy* that the Psalm begins, vs. 1, 2. Stop to analyze the waters of this fountain. The forgiven man is glad, oh, so glad, (1) Because he is right with God, "the Lord imputeth not iniquity." (2) Because he is straight with himself—"in whose spirit there is no guile." It is surely a good religion which can make one sing so merrily.

The joyless shadows in which this forgiven

man had walked are described in vs. 3 and 4. Learn the reason for his agonies—simply that he would not acknowledge his sin. If we *will* bury our faces in the earth, we need not expect to see the sun.

The hard road to the bright hill-top, v. 5. It is hard to acknowledge one's sin, even to God. Every grain of pride in us says, "No," and the devil backs up our pride. It is a rough road; but there is no other, if we would reach the hill-tops of God's loving favor.

The joy of lending a hand. Verse 6 shows how one man's confession and forgiveness may be another man's safety.

Joy castle, v. 7. God is the Castle, and the Prince that dwells in it.

A child's joy; and no joy can be purer. Verses 8 and 9 indicate it. God's children, teachable, docile, rejoice in His instruction and in the guidance of His eye.

The trust that shouts. It is so simple—trust God; it opens flood gates of mercy; and for gladness, the believer shouts aloud. Again, a good sort of religion!

But be sure not to close the lesson without making so very clear that the scholars cannot fail to see and remember, that the only one who has a right to "be glad in the Lord" is the "righteous" man, the "up-right in heart", v. 11. He who will not abandon his sins, has no right to feel glad. His should be the "godly sorrow" that Paul speaks of in 2 Cor. 7:10, which "worketh repentance to salvation." When we turn away from sin, and with good and honest hearts seek to do God's will, joy comes as naturally as light from the sun.

Some Test Questions

- To which Psalm is this the sequel?
- In what circumstances written?
- What is its key-note?
- By what words is forgiveness described?
- What was the result of "silence"?
- Through what did forgiveness come?
- What effect upon others?
- In what respects is God a "hiding-place"?
- What promise of instruction?
- Of guidance?
- What contrast between the lot of the righteous and of the wicked?

What do we learn as to:—

- (1) The policy of refusing to confess?
- (2) God's readiness to forgive?
- (3) God's way of guiding his children?
- (4) The true spirit of religion?

Prove from Scripture

That the Lord guides His people.

For Special Study

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The necessity of confession.
2. The fruits of forgiveness.
3. Joy as a force in Christian service.

The Catechism

[For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.]

Ques. 99. *Prayer—its rule.* The rule for our direction in prayer, as stated in this question, is two-fold. There is (1) A general rule and (2) A special rule.

The general rule is "the whole word of God." The word of God directs us in prayer, by teaching us what God is, by revealing to us our own sinfulness and need, and by showing us how to approach God.

Further, we have examples in the scriptures of all the elements which enter into prayer. There are: (1) Adoration, which is due to God as the Great Ruler of the universe (Ps. 145: 1-3); (2) Confession, which

befits us as sinners in the sight of heaven (Ps. 51); (3) Petition, which is the suitable expression of our need (Eph. 3: 14, 19); (4) Thanksgiving, which is our proper return to God for His manifold mercies (Eph. 1: 3); (5) Consecration, which is the yielding of ourselves to God (1 Chron. 29: 16); (6) Communion (Ps. 139).

Then there are in all parts of God's word invitations to pray, and encouragement, by examples and otherwise, to believe that our prayers will be answered.

The special rule is the prayer "commonly called The Lord's Prayer." Concerning this prayer the following points may be noted:

1. It received its name from the fact that our Lord taught it to His disciples, Matt. 6: 9.

2. We are not bound to use this or any other form of prayer, or to present our petitions always in the order followed in it. Our Lord and His disciples were most spontaneous and free in their prayers. (See John 11: 41, 42; ch. 17; Acts 1: 24, 25; 4: 24-30.) It is a directory to guide us in our prayers, rather than a form to be followed. At the same time its use is helpful in private and public worship.

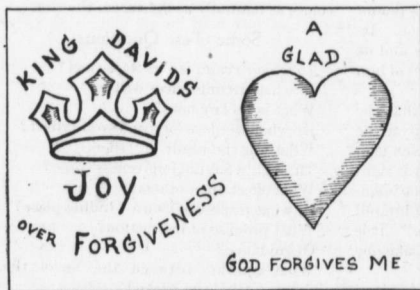
3. It falls into three parts, (a) A preface containing an invocation and setting forth our relations to God and to one another; (b) Petitions; (c) Conclusion.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Introduction—Let us all clap our hands. Do we clap our hands when we are sad? No! we clap our hands when we are very glad (full of joy).

To-day we are to hear about King David being very glad. I think he clapped his hands perhaps, and shouted for joy.

Let us draw again our crown symbol. Was David a good king or a bad king? Why do you think he was a good king? (Name some of his good acts.) Who chose David to be king? Would God choose a bad man to be king? Did David love God? Was he always good? Was he sorry when he displeased God? Could David play and sing? What do we call his songs?



Our lesson last Sabbath was one of David's sad songs? Why was he sad? Recall David's confession and sorrow for his sin. We saw that David's heart was not clean, and we heard his prayer. (Repeat, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, etc.") His heart was sad, for a bad heart is never glad.

Lesson Subject—God showing His love for His people by granting them forgiveness.

A Glad Song—To-day we are to hear one of David's glad songs. We shall hear why he was now rejoicing. (Use a large paper heart.) On one side print SAD (with blackness around it); on the other side print GLAD. What changed David's heart? Print FORGIVENESS. Yes, God answered David's prayer and gave him a clean heart and forgave him his sin. David felt so happy that he wrote a beautiful, joyous song (psalm).

Golden Text—Listen to what David says about forgiveness. Repeat and explain "transgression" and "covered." God puts out of sight, out of mind, the sin that is confessed.

Joy over Forgiveness—Let us draw a chime of bells and print (v. 11), BE GLAD IN THE LORD, SHOUT FOR JOY. We shall make the motions of pulling a bell rope, while we repeat these words over and over.

Happy Children—Are you little ones always

full of joy? That is the way God means you to be. He made the little birds to sing, the flowers to bloom, and little children to laugh and sing. If you ask an unhappy child, "What is the matter?" you will generally find he has been doing something wrong, or feeling wrong—proud, or selfish, or discontented. (Tell a little story of a child who was unhappy through wrong-doing and of the joy that came when father and mother forgave the naughtiness of their child.)

Jesus Covers My Sin.—How do we cover our body? Yes! with dresses, coats, cloaks. We are told of a wonderful robe that will cover our sin. It is "the robe of Christ's righteousness." Jesus died, His blood was shed, that our sin might be covered, forgiven by God for Jesus' sake. We must keep close to Jesus, under His robe as it were, and pray to God for forgiveness when we are naughty. He will

FORGIVE for Christ's sake.
FORGET

Sing—Hymn 553, Book of Praise.

What I have Learned—That God forgives me.

Blackboard—On the crown symbol print KING DAVID'S JOY OVER FORGIVENESS. Outline a heart full of joy.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

"I SAID"—

"THOU FORGAVEST"—

Many in the school have seen a telegraph instrument. Ask them what happens when the operator strikes his key. You will be told how away at the other end of the line, perhaps, another instrument begins to click, and the operator there knows the meaning of the clicks. Now look at the blackboard. Who is the "I"? It is David. He was on the earth. The "Thou" is who? God, who is in heaven. Now, complete the sentence "I SAID"—. Then complete the other sentence "THOU FORGAVEST"—. You see what happened in heaven when David made up his mind to confess his sin. Remember, God forgave him before he confessed, as soon as he said he would confess. Picture the prodigal saying, "I will arise" and his father's willingness to receive him. Then impress on each scholar that God is willing to forgive the moment we are ready to confess.

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Teacher Training Course

Presbyterian Church in Canada

Under the Direction of the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee

DEPARTMENT OF SCRIPTURE—I. The Books of the Old Testament; II. Old Testament Geography and Institutions.

N.B.—It is recommended that the Revised Version be consulted in these studies.

LESSON I.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A WHOLE

NAME—The name Old Testament is derived from 2 Cor. 3 : 14. It means the collection of sacred and inspired books connected with the Old Covenant or Jewish dispensation.

NUMBER OF BOOKS—As accepted by Jews and Protestants, the collection consists of 39 books—a number easily remembered from the letters of the two words—O-l-d T-e-s-t-a-m-e-n-t, 3 and 9=39. The Greek version of the Old Testament, made a century or more before the Christian era in Egypt, and commonly known as the Septuagint, contained a number of others, usually called the Apocrypha. These were also inserted in the Latin Vulgate version of Jerome, used by the Roman Catholic Church. But the Apocrypha were never recognized as authoritative either by the Jews or by Christians, until the Council of Trent, held in the 16th century after the Reformation, made them so for Roman Catholics.

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE—These 39 books were all originally written in Hebrew, except a few chapters of Ezra and Daniel, which have come down to us in the kindred language, Chaldee or Aramaic, spoken by the Babylonians and by the Jews after the captivity. Both of these languages belong to the Semitic group, of which Arabic is the chief modern representative.

ORDER OF THE BOOKS—In the Hebrew Bible this is considerably different from the order with which we are familiar, derived from the Septuagint. The Jews divided the books into three groups :

I. The Law, including the five books of Moses.

II. The Prophets, including (a) the His-

torical books, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings. These are called Prophetical probably because supposed to have been written by prophets; (b) the Prophetical books proper, again subdivided into Major and Minor Prophets.

III. The Writings or the "Psalms," including all the poetical books, the book of Daniel, and the remaining histories—Ruth, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

Within these two latter classes the order in which they were placed sometimes varied, but the double book of Chronicles was always put last. Hence the saying of Christ (Matt. 23 : 35) concerning all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to that of Zechariah slain between the temple and the altar, as mentioned in 2 Chron. 24 : 21, included the whole Old Testament.

CANON*—The 39 books are a collection from the religious literature of the Jews during a period of about 1200 years of their history,—a period about double that covered by English literature since the time of Chaucer. The forming of the collection as an authoritative Canon of Holy Scripture has commonly been attributed to Ezra and his successors as heads of the Great Synagogue or official council. But little is definitely known regarding that. It is now generally believed by scholars that the three divisions of the Jews represent three successive stages in the growth of the collection.

"A book entitled to a place in the Bible is called a canonical book, one not so entitled an uncanonical book, and the title itself canonicity."

* The Canon means, "The books of the Bible recognized by the church as the inspired rule of faith and practice."

LESSON II.

CLASSIFICATION OF BOOKS.

We have already seen what the Jewish classification of the books was, as based probably on the stages in the growth of the sacred canon, but for our purpose a more useful classification, and one following our own familiar order, will be a Division According to Subject.

I. THE PENTATEUCH (five-fold book), or Law, including Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These five are usually attributed to Moses. They bear especially on the period of the deliverance from Egypt and the organization of Israel as a nation. The book of Joshua is sometimes associated with them as relating closely to the same period. The six-fold book is then called the Hexateuch.

II. THE HISTORICAL BOOKS, from Joshua to the end of Esther. These give us our chief information regarding the history of the Jews, from the time of the occupation of the land of Canaan to the time of Ezra, after the restoration from the Babylonian captivity—a period of about 1000 years. Some portions are given with a good deal of detail, such as the early life of David and the time of Elijah. Other portions are fragmentary or sketched only in broad lines, such as the period of the Judges and most of the kings.

III. THE POETICAL OR DEVOTIONAL BOOKS, from Job to the Song of Solomon. Like everything else in the Old Testament, the poems are all religious in their subject and thought, but they represent four different kinds of poetry:

(a) The Book of Job is really a drama, with an approach to the epic in form. The ancient Jews had no theatrical performances.

(b) The Song of Solomon is a lyrical drama.

(c) The Psalms are lyrical and intended for singing.

(d) Proverbs and Ecclesiastes belong to a class known as Wisdom Literature, made up mainly of sententious sayings and short essays on the wise or right conduct of life. Though usually called poetry, it is often hard to distinguish it from prose.

Hebrew poetry in its form differs widely

from all that we are familiar with in modern languages. It has no rhyme or regular rhythm, so far as can be made out. It depends simply upon the arrangement of the sentences or clauses, so as to be balanced in closely related couplets or triplets. The relation of the clauses is usually one of three kinds: (1) synonymous or nearly so, for example, Ps. 1:1; (2) contrasted, for example, Prov. 10:1; (3) inferential, for example, Ps. 9:20. In elevation of sentiment, terseness of language, and felicity of figures, Hebrew poetry ranks with the highest in any literature.

In addition to the poetical books there are many poetical passages in the histories and in the Prophets.

IV. THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS, from Isaiah to Malachi. These are usually divided into (a) the Major Prophets,—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel (though the Jews did not count Daniel among the prophets at all), and (b) the 12 Minor Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, etc. These last were counted by the Jews as one book, but they do not belong to one age, and they are not arranged in chronological order.

LESSON III.

THE PENTATEUCH AND ITS CONTENTS

The Pentateuch, including the five books—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, gives a history of the world from the Creation, and especially of the Jewish people, down to the death of Moses. Inserted in this history and forming its chief feature, is the law, civil and religious, which regulated the whole life of the nation. Hence the collection was most commonly known as The Law. This law is still acknowledged as binding by all Jews, and in all their later history was regarded as fixed and unchangeable. It could be interpreted but not amended, and the most important work of Jewish literature outside the Bible, namely the Talmud, consists mainly of the interpretations given by noted lawyers in their schools for the guidance of the judges. Genesis—or the Book of Origins, is of the nature of an introduction to the national history. It gives, (a) the origin of the world, (b) the origin of man, (c) the origin of sin,

(d) the origin of separate nations, (e) the origin of the people of Israel, (f) the origin of the twelve tribes. All this is told in such a way as to throw light on the religious history of mankind as a whole, and on the special mission of Israel as God's peculiar people, chosen to receive a new revelation of His will and to witness for Him among the nations of the earth. The chronology of this long period is still very uncertain.

EXODUS—gives an account of the departure of Israel from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, of the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, and of the setting up of the first tabernacle for public worship.

LEVITICUS—gives the details of the ceremonial for the worship in the tabernacle and the observance of the great festivals.

NUMBERS—continues the history of the experiences of Israel, adverse and otherwise, in the wilderness on the way to the land of Canaan, and embodies fragments of legislation on a variety of matters, both civil and religious.

DEUTERONOMY—contains a series of four addresses or sermons and two poems, all attributed to Moses, in which he rehearses the main features of the law (hence the name—"the second law"), and urges the hearty observance of it. A postscript gives an account of Moses' death.

LESSON IV

GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND

For the period of Saul and David and Solomon, as for other parts of Scripture history, it is necessary to recall the general physical features of the land of Palestine. These are chiefly four, running north and south between the ocean on the west and the desert on the east. First, there is the Maritime Plain beside the coast of the Mediterranean; then the great Western range of mountains from Lebanon in the north to the extreme south. Parallel to this is the Jordan valley, which at the Dead Sea lies 1290 feet below the level of the ocean. Finally, on the east of the Jordan is the Eastern range, similar to, but more continuous than, that on the other side of the valley. If these ruling features were quite uniform, the country would have had a history other than it ac-

tually had, but the modifications have made its history, as truly as the main features, notably Esdraelon, the Shephelah, and the country to the south of Judæa. With these modifications and with Judæa, the lower section of the Western Range, we have chiefly to do.

JUDÆA—Its place-names of greatest importance were Bethel, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron and Beer-sheba. Judæa itself is a lofty plateau of stony moorland, where herbage appears only at intervals, and water is scarce, and the landscape generally is featureless. Adapted, not for agriculture, but for grazing, it is a land of shepherds, a fact that has impressed itself upon its history and its religion. It lay near the desert, and the Jew never forgot the lessons that this contact brought him. It was a land, too, of fortresses rather than towns, and when Saul became king, three of these, Bethel, Michmash and Geba, were in the possession of the Philistines. Jerusalem was both a fortress and a sanctuary.

THE BORDERS OF JUDÆA—The range of hills that forms Judæa does not fall directly upon the Maritime Plain. Another smaller range lies between, called the Shephelah, separated from Judæa by a valley. The prevailing appearance of the Shephelah is of short, steep hill-sides, narrow glens, deep caves, just the place for guerilla warfare. Here, accordingly, in the days of Saul and David, was the chief theatre of the struggle between the Israelites and the Philistines.

To the East, the land sinks swiftly into the Jordan Valley, and across the gulf are the hills of Moab. From the Dead Sea to the Western Range lies the wilderness of Judæa, where David wandered.

To the south of Judæa there is a gradual descent before the level of the desert is reached and a mountainous barrier that has saved Judæa from invasion by that way.

ESDRAELON—Esdraelon has a history all its own, for it gives a clear passage through the Western Range from the sea to the Jordan. In shape, a triangle, it was the great battle-field of Scripture, one of its most famous campaigns being that of the Philistines against Saul, when Saul was defeated, and on Mount Gilboa took his own life.

*AN ORDER OF SERVICE: Fourth Quarter

OPENING EXERCISES

I. SILENCE.

II. *Superintendent.* O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.

School. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

III. SINGING.

Pleasant are Thy courts above,
In the land of light and love,
Pleasant are Thy courts below,
In this land of sin and woe.
O, my spirit longs and fains
For the converse of Thy saints,
For the brightness of Thy face,
For Thy fulness, God of grace!

Hymn 389, Book of Praise

IV. PRAYER, closing with the Lord's Prayer.

V. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

VI. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Ps. 24 : 3-5 and 7-10.

Superintendent. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place.

School. He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Superintendent. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

School. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Superintendent. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

School. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in?

Superintendent. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

VII. SINGING.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
To crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Hymn 90, Book of Praise

VIII. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

IX. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

CLASS WORK

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

I. ROLL CALL.

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

III. MEMORY VERSES AND CATECHISM.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

CLOSING EXERCISES

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

II. SINGING. Hymn selected.

III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which may include recitation in concert of Catechism, Lesson Title, Golden Text, Memory Verses and Heads of Lesson Plan.

IV. SINGING.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing.

Hymn 26, Book of Praise

V. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Luke 2 : 30-32.

Superintendent. Mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

School. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

Superintendent. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

VI. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

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THE BOOK PAGE

Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church. By John Edgar McFadyen, M.A. (Glas.), B.A. (Oxon.), Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis in Knox College, Toronto. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 376 pages; \$1.50 net.

The objections urged against higher criticism fall into two classes. It is urged that the methods of the higher critics are unreliable and their results therefore uncertain, as evidenced by the wide divergencies of view amongst the critics themselves. It is also maintained, that the conclusions of criticism contradict convictions which are fundamental to the Christian faith. Professor McFadyen has sought to meet both these classes of objections. He has stated the case of his opponents with conspicuous fairness, and his reply is couched in language of great courtesy and moderation. He has thus avoided the faults deprecated in one of the opening chapters on the "Discourtesies of Criticism" and if he fails to convince, he will not offend. Written with all its author's beauty of diction and style, and showing on every page the hand of a master, this volume will be welcomed by those who wish to be informed concerning what has been well styled "the gravest issue" the British churches have "had to face within living memory." If it is possible for the friends and foes of higher criticism to find a common ground, such a book as this will materially aid in their doing so. At any rate, it is well that the case from both sides

should be clearly set forth, so that the great mass of Bible students, who cannot presume to be experts on this subject, may have the materials for a sound judgment. The reader will appreciate the full table of contents at the beginning and the excellent index at the end of the book.

Measuring Sunshine; and other Addresses to Children. By Frank Smith, M.A., B.Sc. H. R. Allenson, London. 158 pages; 50c.

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