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SUNDAY SCHOOL BARBER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXII.

DECEMBER, 1898.

No. 12.

My Christmas Gift.

Lord, thou still givest gifts to me;
Thy mercy, like the dew,
From day to day my glad eyes see,
Forever fresh and new.

Thou giv'st me loss, and joy, and pain,
My peace, my griefs, are thine;
The need that is my greater gain
Grief lost in love divine.

Thy face is hid behind the cloud
That darkens all my days;
I know without that falling shroud
I could not bear thy gaze.

Thou giv'st me lessons every hour;
Thou giv'st me faith to trust
The gracious hidings of thy power—
To know thee true and just.

Thou gavest me thy greatest gift,
When on that distant morn,
Thou didst the gates of glory lift,
And Christ my Lord was born.

What shall I on thy altar lay,
From out my want and woe?
What offerings on this happy day
Within thy temple stow?

I, the poor beggar at thy door,
To thee what can I bring?
The want of all things is my store;
Shall I thy praises sing?

Shall I go wandering up and down,
A bedesman of the Lord,
And show his cross, become my crown,
A witness to thy word?

My speech the sons of men disdain,
My words refuse to hear;
Thy message from my lips is vain,
They will not love nor fear.

A contrite soul, a breaking heart,
The life I strive to live,
A fight to grasp the better part,
Are all that I can give.

A poor and blemished sacrifice,
That Israel would not own,
How can I bring before thine eyes,
Or cast beneath thy throne?

Look thou upon thy spotless Lamb,
Who came my sins to bear,
The feeblest of his fold I am,
Yet thou wilt find me there.

The smoking flax, the broken reed,
Thy mercy will not scorn;
A worthless gift, that ye can plead,
"My Lord to-day was born!"
—New York Independent.

The True Christmas.

The meaning of Christmas is unity. The burden of the angelic song was "Peace." The tidings rang out with one voice from innumerable lips. A united heaven sang out the message of unity to a distracted world. Heaven's whole meaning was condensed in one word, and that word was "peace." The time had now come when men might learn to be at peace with one another and with God. The object of Christ's coming was none other than this—to unite man to God through union with himself, and to make man a partaker of the divine nature. Thus all things should at last be subdued to him, and he should reign over a kingdom at unity in itself, and the harmony of heaven should obtain on earth.—Rev. W. S. Sayers.

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Halifax, N.S.

Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1893.

Evergreen Schools.

We hope that our schools will try more than ever to keep open all the winter. We know that in some cases, on account of bad roads and the great distance to be travelled, this is difficult; but wherever the week-day school is kept open for five days in the week, we think it ought not to be impossible to have the Sunday-school open on one day of the week.

A very considerable number of our Sunday-schools, unfortunately, close in the winter; thus the school becomes scattered, and it is often difficult to reorganize in the spring, and takes a long time to get into running order. We think it most disastrous to the best interests of the schools that these interruptions should occur.

In many cases it has been found that the introduction of the Sunday-school papers has been sufficient to keep the

school's open in the winter, where, without them, they would have been closed. But if it be found absolutely impossible to keep the school open regularly, the next best thing—and not a bad thing either—would be to still take the papers, and, as is done in many places, distribute them to the families at the regular weekly or fortnightly service, as the case may be. These papers will all have the lessons; and fathers and mothers, at the home fireside, can have a Sunday-school of their own children, and thus keep up the good and godly habit of the regular study of the Word of God.

This is done with great success in some scattered neighbourhoods where it is not found practicable to have a school at all, and certainly can be accomplished, with best results, in very many places where the schools have to be suspended during the winter. But by all means make an effort to keep it open, notwithstanding rain and snow storms; and if the younger children and those residing at a great distance cannot come, send them their papers. Let them feel that they are not forgotten, and urge them to keep up the memorizing of the golden texts and the memory verses; and also urge the parents to hear them recite these verses, and answer the questions given in the papers. The parents will thus themselves become more interested in the school and the welfare of their children, and may be induced to take a greater interest in the school itself, and become themselves adult scholars—as they ought to be.

The Ontario Sunday-school Convention.

The convention of the Ontario Sabbath-school Association, at Peterboro', was a very successful gathering. The attendance was large, the addresses instructive, the interest, and indeed enthusiasm, in this work was well sustained. Dr. Marion Lawrence, of Ohio, was the chief foreign visitor, and made several admirable addresses emphasizing very strongly the Home Department. A special session was devoted to this department, presided over by Dr. J. J. Maclarea. A paper by the Editor of the Banner was read, and other addresses given. Mr. W. J. Donly, a veteran Sunday-school worker, who has been president for the past year, was succeeded

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by Mr. Thomas McGillicuddy, an energetic Sunday-school man. Much regret was expressed at the absence of the Rev. Dr. Potts, who was prevented by the death of his brother at Richmond, Va., from being present. Dr. Potts will have universal sympathy in his bereavement. At the closing session, the Rev. Dr. Henderson, Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, delivered an admirable address on the question, "Why should we seek to enlist the sympathy of Sabbath-schools in the cause of missions?" It was an eloquent defence of the whole missionary cause, which Dr. Henderson made. He pointed to the great results which had been achieved by missionaries, not only in the cause of the Gospel, but for humanity and civilization. They had been the forerunners of commerce; they had opened up new territory to settlement; they by their explorations in old, historical lands had added materially to the knowledge of the past history of the world, and had been the men who were responsible for the study of philology. The object of the lecture was to stimulate the interest of the people in the question of missions, and Dr. Henderson certainly succeeded in his intention.

Methodist Magazine and Review for 1899.

Good as the Magazine has been in the past, it is proposed to still further improve it in 1899. With the November number is commenced a bright original story entitled, "A Princess in Calico," by Edith Ferguson Black, a popular writer and favourite contributor of The Ladies' Home Journal. The story describes in a graphic manner the heroism of common life, and will be read with great interest by young and old.

Arrangements have been made for a series of Character Studies of men of thought and action. Important contributions will be published from Principal Caven, of Knox College; Professor Clark, of Trinity University; Chancellor Burwash, of Victoria University; Principal Shaw, Wesleyan College, and many other leading Canadian writers. Missionary sketches, stories of travel and adventure, short stories by such popular writers as Emma E. Hornibrook, Mary

S. Daniels, Wood Smith, S. J. Underwood, Mark Guy Pearse, J. Hyslop Bell, etc. Many of the articles will be profusely illustrated. The Popular Science Papers, so interesting in the past, will be continued, as well as monthly reviews of the world's progress, current thought and book notices. See full announcement at end of this number of The Banner. Special inducements to new subscribers. New subscribers for 1899 will receive the November and December numbers of this year free. They will thus receive the beginning of the serial story. To all subscribers—old or new—the following

SPECIAL PREMIUMS

are offered for only twenty-five cents additional:

"Barbara Heck." A tale of Early Methodism.

"Lawrence Temple." A story of Canadian Backwoods Life.

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By DR. WITHROW.

The regular price of these books is seventy-five cents each. Any subscriber to The Methodist Magazine and Review may have one or all of them for twenty-five cents each postpaid. We ask the cordial help of our readers to place this excellent home magazine into many Methodist homes where it is not now taken. Subscription price, \$2.00 per year. When taken in connection with either The Guardian or Wesleyan, \$1.75 per year.

SPECIAL RATE TO SCHOOLS.

The Magazine will be sent in numbers of two or more to any Sunday-school at the net cost of \$1.60 for each subscription. The above three premium books, worth \$2.25, making a valuable addition to the school library, will be given for only seventy-five cents. Here is a fine chance to replenish the library. Each number of this Magazine contains as much as an average Sunday-school book, is well illustrated, and at this reduced rate costs thirteen and one-third cents. The cheapest, freshest and most attractive reading that can be furnished the schools. Address orders—William Briggs, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. Rev. S. F. Huestis, Halifax, N.S. C. W. Coates, 2176 St. Catherine Street, Montreal.

The Lessons for 1899.

The lessons for the first half of 1899, and for the whole of 1900, are on the life of our Lord. This matchless life will be studied throughout Christendom as it never was before. The testimony of experienced teachers is that no help is more valuable than a harmony of the Gospels. The advantages of such a harmony, or monotesaron, will be shown by the following extracts from an article by Prof. Amos R. Wells, in The Sunday-school Times:

"Far above concordance, Bible index, Bible dictionary, I count the monotesaron the very best help to Bible study. The monotesaron, it might be parenthetically remarked for the benefit of the lexicon-lazy folk, is a harmony of the four gospels, so arranged as to make one continuous and complete story, in Scripture words alone. Speaking for one, I may say that through recent first acquaintance with a monotesaron, that Matchless Life has shone upon me with an entire splendour of beauty and majesty before unimagined."

There are several harmonies from \$1.00 to \$1.50, but the general testimony is that none surpass in fulness and accuracy that published by the Editor of The Banner, new edition, with map and geography of Palestine, by Prof. Hamill. Price, fifty cents. For sale at Methodist Book-Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

Teachers willing to accept agency for schools will please communicate directly with Rev. Dr. Withrow, Toronto.

Methodist Magazine and Review for November.

The up-to-date character of this magazine is shown by the timely article on Denmark and the Danes, with portraits of the late Queen and of the royal family, and by an illustrated article on Hong-Kong, one of Britain's keys of empire in China. There are also illustrated papers on "Melrose and Abbotsford," "John Carter and his Wonderful Etchings," "Sir James Simpson," the discoverer of chloroform, and "The World's Progress." "More Sailor's Yarns," "Morals and Manners of the Eighteenth Century," "A Gambler's Conversion," a graphic Rocky Mountain sketch; "Henry Drummond," "The Moon's Story," by Sir

Robert Ball, and other readable articles make an attractive number. A clever new story, "A Princess in Calico," by a new writer, is begun. The November and December numbers are offered free to new subscribers for 1899, the twenty-fifth year of this magazine.

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

Christ's Christmas Feast.

All over Christendom the people are happy in anticipation of Christmas presents. It is a time of joyous giving and receiving. The day is commemorative. It reminds us of God the Father's gift to the poor and fallen world. We find ourselves exultant as we repeat the words, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Then we think of Christ's voluntary act of giving himself for us; "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." The object of the Father's gift was, by the sacrificial offering of his Son, to provide for saving men from perishing and to bring them to everlasting life. The object for which Christ gave himself was to apply the atonement, and of "redeeming us from all iniquity," make it personally saving to the extent and putting upon our brow the diadem of purity.

The apostle grows jubilant when he thinks of this great Christmas present, and shouts, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!" Don't fail to apply for this gift—the gift of Jesus himself. He may be had for the asking. Indeed, he is at the door saying, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come unto him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Christ proposes a Christmas feast.—Divine Life.

Book Notices.

"The Truth About Hell." By Wilbur C. Newell. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 46. Price, 20 cents.

This austere and solemn subject is here treated in the life of our Lord's parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. This is an antidote to much of the loose and careless teaching of the tremendous verity set forth in God's Word.

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"The Teaching of Jesus." Extracted from the Four Gospels and arranged by Jean D. Buy, Ph.D., J.U.D. Boston: James H. West. Toronto: William Briggs. Price 50 cents. Pp. 80.

The teaching of our Lord is here classified under such heading as The True Life, Human Temptations and the Overcoming of Them, the Spirit of the Father, the Kingdom of God, etc. The very words of Jesus are employed.

"Our Blest Redeemer." The story of his life told for little children. By Kate Thompson Sizer. London: Charles H. Kelly. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is just the book for Sunday afternoon, or the quiet evening hour for the little folk. Loving mothers will find it a great help in teaching their children the story of the Matchless Life. It will be easy reading, too, for the little folk themselves, and the many pictures will make it more interesting.

"Outline of the Moral Teachings of the Bible." By Georgiana Baucus. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 20 cents. Pp. 43.

This little manual appeared first in Japanese for the instruction of the

young converts, and it has proved so helpful that it is here submitted for English-speaking persons. Under the figure of a tree planted by the rivers of water the branches of Christian duty and fruits of the Spirit are illustrated.

"Illustrative Notes." A Guide to the Study of the International Sunday-school Lessons, with Original and Selected Comments, Methods of Teaching, Illustrative Stories, Practical Applications, Notes on Eastern Life, Library, References, Maps, Tables, Pictures and Diagrams. 1899. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut and Robert Remington Doherty. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 392.

Of all lesson helps that we see,—and we see a good many,—there are none that surpass the Lesson Notes of Drs. Hurlbut and Doherty. They have the advantage of valuable special studies by Dr. James Hope Moulton, Eugene and Sara G. Stock, Professor Gobin, Professor M. S. Terry, Dr. L. D. Barrows, and others. New maps of the latest surveys have been provided. The book will have additional interest to Canadian readers from the fact that Mr. Thomas G. Rogers, of Toronto, has contributed a series of blackboard drawings. It is very fully illustrated with full-page and smaller pictures, drawings, and diagrams.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FOURTH QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.
 - SUPT. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
 - SCHOOL. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and comest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.
 - SUPT. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
 - ALL. A good understanding have all they that do his commandments.
- III. SINGING.
- IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.
- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.
- VI. SINGING.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMS.
- III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.

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

V. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. (Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.)

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

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.
 - SUPT. Stand thou still awhile, that I may show thee the word of God.
 - SCHOOL. What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
 - SUPT. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.
 - ALL. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF JUDAH.

LESSON X. THE BOOK OF THE LAW FOUND.

[Dec. 4.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. Psa. 119. 2.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 2 Chron. 34.]

2 Kings 22. 8-20. [Commit to memory verse 19.]

8 And Hil-ki'ah the high priest said unto Sha'phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hil-ki'ah gave the book to Sha'phan, and he read it.

9 And Sha'phan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Sha'phan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hil-ki'ah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Sha'phan read it before the king.

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

12 And the king commanded Hil-ki'ah the priest, and A-hi'kam the son of Sha'phan, and Ach'bor the son of Mi'cha'iah, and Sha'phan the scribe, and As-a-hi'ah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Ju'dah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hil-ki'ah the priest, and A-hi'kam, and Ach'bor, and Sha'phan, and As-a-hi'ah, went unto Hul'dah the prophetess, the wife of Shal'lum the son of Tik'vah, the son of Har'has, keeper of the wardrobe; now she dwelt in Je-ru-sa-lem in the college; and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Is-ra-el, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Ju'dah hath read:

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

18 But to the king of Ju'dah which sent you to

REVISED VERSION.

8 And Hil-ki'ah the high priest said unto Sha'phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hil-ki'ah delivered the book to Sha'phan, and he read it.

9 And Sha'phan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. And Sha'phan the scribe told the king, saying, Hil-ki'ah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Sha'phan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hil-ki'ah the priest, and A-hi'kam the son of Sha'phan, and Ach'bor the son of Mi-ca'iah, and Sha'phan the scribe, and As-a-i'ah the king's servant, saying, Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Ju'dah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hil-ki'ah the priest, and A-hi'kam, and Ach'bor, and Sha'phan, and As-a-i'ah, went unto Hul'dah the prophetess, the wife of Shal'lum the son of Tik'vah, the son of Har'has, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Je-ru-sa-lem in the second quarter;) and they communed with her. And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Is-ra-el: Tell ye the man that sent you unto me, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Ju'dah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched. But unto the king of Ju'dah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him,

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inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, As touching the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

20 Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

Thus saith the LORD, the God of Is'ra-el: As touching the words which thou hast heard, 19 because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

Time.—About 622 B. C. **Place.**—Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom of Judah. **Rulers.**—Josiah, sixteenth king of Judah; Asshur-bani-pal, king of Assyria; Psammetichus, king of Egypt.

Home Readings.

- M.* A good king. 2 Kings 22. 1-7.
Tu. The Book of the Law found. 2 Kings 22. 8-20.
W. Effect of the book. 2 Kings 23. 1-8.
Th. Putting away evil. 2 Kings 23. 15-25.
F. The law in the heart. Deut. 6. 1-13.
S. Hear, learn, and fear. Deut. 31. 7-13.
S. The perfect law. Psa. 19. 7-14.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 363, New Canadian Hymnal.

Shine on our souls, eternal God,
 With rays of beauty shine.

No. 296, New Canadian Hymnal.

I love to tell the Story
 Of unseen things above.

No. 289, New Canadian Hymnal.

Sing them over again to me,
 Wonderful words of Life.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. The Book of the Law, v. 8-11.

What was this "book of the law"? See Deut. 31. 24-26.

Who found the book? Where?

How long had it been lost?

To whom did Hilkiah give the book? Why?

Upon what did Shaphan first report to the king?

What further announcement did he make?

What effect had the reading on the king?

Why did he rend his clothes?

What did he fear?

2. Inquiring of God, v. 12-14.

Concerning what was inquiry made of the Lord?

- Who were commanded to seek his counsel?
 What reason was there for seeking the Lord?
 To whom did the servants of the king go?
 What other prophetesses are named in the Old Testament?
 Who of this order are named in the New Testament?

3. God's Answer, v. 15-20.

To whom did God send his answer?

What message of sorrow was sent?

Why was this judgment pronounced?

Why was Josiah a subject of mercy?

What mercy was promised him?

What course of life insures blessedness?

GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Is your Bible lost? It sometimes is, in trunk, or closet, on shelves, beneath books, papers, piles of trash and worldliness. Hunt up the law of the Lord!

2. "Search the Scriptures." Read, pray, meditate; open the soul to spiritual illumination. The message may be of judgment; but better know and seek pardon than die in ignorance and sin.

3. God's mercy is sure. He will be gracious to such as seek him. A broken heart is as sweet incense before him.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Book of the Law, v. 8-11.

What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

What were Hilkiah and Shaphan doing?

How had the temple sunk into decay?

What thing showed a holy zeal in repairing it?

What did Hilkiah say to Shaphan?

What book was this?

What did Shaphan say to the king about the money?

What did he show the king?

What else did he do?

When the king heard the words of the book of the law what did he do?

2. Inquiring of God, v. 12-14.

What did the king command his four servants mentioned in verse 12?

What reason did he give?

To whom did they go?

Whose wife was Huldah?

Are there any other prophetesses mentioned in the Bible?

Where did she live?

3. God's Answer, v. 15-20.

What did God say about his written word?

Why did he say he would bring evil upon Jerusalem?

What had he observed in the behavior of the king of Judah?

What message did he promise him?

How did Josiah die?

Did this break God's promise?

What did the messengers of Josiah do?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. God's word studied curiously?

2. God's word studied penitently?

3. God's word heard with comfort?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What can you tell about Manasseh?

Who was king of Judah after he died?

What kind of a king was he?

How old was Josiah when he became king?

What beautiful thing is said of him?

Of whom was the same thing said before? **Of his great-grandfather, Hezekiah.**

What did Josiah seek while a boy?

What did he soon begin to do? **To repair the house of the Lord.**

What was found while doing this? **The book of the law.**

Who wrote the Law? **Moses.**

Who told him what to write?

What shows that the kings had not cared for it? **The fact that it could be lost.**

What was read to Josiah from the law?

How did the king feel? **Surprised and sorry.**

To whom did he send for advice? **To Huldah, a prophetess.**

What did she say? **That God would help and bless Josiah.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. When Josiah, the king, tried to reform his people what did he do? **He repaired the temple.**

2. While repairing the temple what did Huldah, the high priest, find? **The book of the law.**

3. What did the king do when he heard it read and understood how much God's law had been neglected? **He rent his clothes and turned to the Lord.**

4. To whom at this time did God reveal his truth? **To Huldah, a prophetess.**

5. In answer to Josiah's questions what did God say would come? **Punishment to the guilty, safety for the good.**

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"Blessed are they,"** etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

40. Repeat the Ten Commandments. Exodus xx. 3-17.

41. Into what two tables are these Ten Commandments divided?

The Ten Commandments are usually divided into the first table, setting forth our duty to God in the first four Commandments; and the second table, setting forth our duty to our fellow-man in the last six.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.

Seven Effects of the Word.

I. CURIOSITY.

I have found the book. v. 8.

May we know. Acts 17. 19.

A very lovely song. Ezek. 33. 31, 32.

II. INTEREST.

Read it before the king. v. 10.

Give ear...to my law. Psalm 78. 1.

Hearken unto me. Isa. 51. 4.

III. CONVICTION.

1. *He rent his clothes.* v. 11.

The word...is powerful. Heb. 4. 12

like a fire. Jer. 23. 29.

2. *Great is the wrath.* v. 13.

Who can abide...his anger? Nah. 1. 6.

Much sorer punishment. Heb. 10. 29.

IV. INQUIRY.

1. *Inquire of the Lord.* v. 13.

Open thou mine eyes. Psu. 119. 18.

The spirit of wisdom. Eph. 1. 17-19.

2. *Unto...the prophetess.* v. 14.

Spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. 2. 13, 14.

He will guide you. John 16. 13.

V. WARNING.

1. *I will bring evil.* vs. 15, 16.

God is not mocked. Gal. 6, 7, 8.
 After the flesh . . . die. Rom. 8, 13.
 2. *They have forsaken me.* v. 17.
 Deny him, he also. 2 Tim. 2, 12.
 Woe to the wicked. Isa. 3, 10, 11.

VI. COMFORT.

1. *To the king of Judah.* vs. 18, 19.
 Did that which was right. 2 Kings 22, 2.

Not many noble. 1 Cor. 1, 26.
 2. *Thou shalt be . . . in peace.* v. 20.
 Mark the perfect man. Psa. 37, 37.
 The righteous hath hope. Prov. 14, 32.
 VII. CONSECRATION.
The king . . . made a covenant. Chap. 23, 3.
 Let us reason together. Isa. 1, 18-20.
 I will pay my vows. Psa. 116, 13, 14.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The history of ISRAEL is that of a series of dynasties, each beginning and ending with a revolution, while the people drift, with few and weak countercurrents, farther and farther away from God. But the history of JUDAH records no revolution in government. For four centuries father was succeeded by son, and, with the brief exception of Athallah's usurpation, the house of David continued on the throne. These four centuries exhibit successive periods of religious declension, each of which, except the last, was followed by a brief reformation. Asa was the first great reformer; after Asa's decline came Jehoshaphat; after the "wicked sons of Athallah" and her wicked self came Josiah; after the apostasy of Ahaz came the revival under Hezekiah; and after Manasseh, the worst of all the kings, and Amon came Josiah, one of the very best. Each of these royal reformers found his kingdom lower than his pious predecessor had found it; each was intenser than the reformer before him; nevertheless, the work of each was speedily undone. Our lessons during October and November have given us glimpses of most of these bad and good kings; the lessons for this month open with the reign of the last royal reformer, the youthful Josiah. When he came to the throne the territory of Israel was almost a wilderness; its kingdom had passed away; the great Assyrian Empire was hastening to its destruction; Babylon, Media, and Egypt were renewing efforts to seize the supremacy of the east; and Judah, an insignificant principality, was by turns under the control of eastern and of western influences, now paying tribute to Egypt and now to Babylon. In such an age of revolution and of confusion this pure and devoted man reigned in Jerusalem. At the age of sixteen Josiah chose the God of David, and four years afterward he began actively the work of national reformation. He destroyed the idols, hewed down the "high places," or local shrines of false worship, and brought back to the ancient law the honor and authority which it had lost. But in the midst of his career—sad to say—he was slain in battle while opposing the march of an Egyptian army through his realm. From his time the downward course of his nation became rapid, and no reformer arose to stay the current toward destruction.

Verse 8. Hilkiah the high priest. One of a band of reformers who surrounded the throne of Josiah. His ancestry is given in 1 Chron. 6, 12, 13. He had, a little before this, received from the king a command to ascertain the amount of silver coin already contributed for the repairs of the temple; this money had come from Manasseh and Ephraim and all the remnant of Israel, as well as from Judah. By means of this money "carpenters and builders and masons" were now set to work. These repairs are not fully recorded in this passage; they are incidentally referred to, because it was when Shaphan, the scribe, was sent to Hilkiah, the priest, about the money accounts that Hilkiah informed him of his great discovery. **The scribe,** or secretary of an oriental king, was one of his most prominent and powerful officers. Dr. Plumptre uses modern terms to express ancient facts when he calls the scribe a minister of religion, a secre-

tary of state, and a secretary of the treasury all in one person. The records of the past, the edicts of the present, and largely the policy of the future were in the scribe's hands. **I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.** This verse of itself shows how neglected had been Jehovah's worship; how unexamined had been the cloisters of his temple; and how limping had been the public services because of lack of authorized direction. By some means Hilkiah and Shaphan appear to have identified the book with one that tradition called for in the temple. It will make our story vivid to try to ascertain what this book looked like. It was probably written on parchment (that is, the dressed skin of a domestic animal), and the learned men who wrote it had used a reed for a pen and dissolved lamp-black for ink, and had been careful to write on one side only of each square of parchment.

These squares were fastened together side by side, and rolled upon a stick; sometimes upon two sticks, one at each end. The writing was in columns, with a space of two fingers' breadth between each two columns. Early in the history of literature it became customary to ornament books with bright colors and gold leaf, especially those whose contents were believed to be sacred; so we may imagine this book to have been a huge roll with gorgeous writing, but with much of stain and dirt, the result of decay and neglect. The writing, however, was still legible. **Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.** Probably enough Hilkiah could not read; few men in that age could, and a priest's work was not at all literary. In those days most of the legal forms and data of life were orally transmitted from generation to generation.

10. Shaphan read it before the king. The threats and curses of Deuteronomy were apparently among the passages to be read to the king.

11. When the king had heard the words of the book of the law. How would the Bible impress us if we had never heard a word of it until to-day! Thus was King Josiah impressed. And so dense was the ignorance of his time that it is probable he had never handled a book, and it is even possible that he had never seen one, nor any other literature than the detached sheets of parchment on which Shaphan at intervals put down the records of the palace and the kingdom. We may imagine the courtiers who stood around stretching forward with eager faces to see that rare curio—a book. Then, as was immediately understood when the voice of the scribe was heard, this was God's word, the direct message from God to those people, and the first divine message they had ever heard. **He rent his clothes.** Read in your class a selection from Deut. 28, as being probably one of the passages which so stirred Josiah's feelings. The abandon of the king was thoroughly oriental, but it must have startled the courtiers and filled them with awe. Everyone had seen clothes rent, but who had ever seen a proud king of Judah rise from his throne to thus abase himself?

12. The king commanded five men—appointed them to be a special committee—to "inquire of the Lord" concerning the message of the book. The delegation was a very honorable one. First came **Hilkiah**, whose conduct throughout shows his loyalty to Jehovah. Next was **Ahikam**, son of the noble scribe Shaphan; Ahikam himself appears in Jer. 26: 24; 40: 5 as the head of an influential family, and the

true friend of Jeremiah the prophet. Next is **Achbor**, who, like Ahikam, evidently belonged to a ruling family. (See Jer. 26: 22; 36: 12.) Then the venerable **Shaphan**; and a man named **Asahiah**, of whom we know only that he was a **servant of the king's**—that is, an officer of the court.

13. Inquire of the Lord. At the best there were few prophets. Two, Jeremiah and Zephaniah, proclaimed the word of the Lord while Josiah was king, but Jeremiah (probably) was at this time a very young man in Anathoth, while Zephaniah lived far in the south. Huldah seems to have been the only member of the prophetic order in Jerusalem. The name and office of her husband and the names of her ancestors are given to indicate her good position. **For me, and for the people, and for all Judah.** He felt, as every conscientious soul in such circumstances must feel, great personal anxiety. As a good king he was anxious for his people. But his solicitude reached further still. Josiah understood that among his people was the only clear revelation of the true God. Other shepherds indeed Jehovah had, but they were not gathered into his fold, and the priesthoods and ceremonies of other religions were more harmful than beneficial. With Judah sank or survived the world-wide hope of the Messiah. The curses read in his hearing seemed to swallow up that hope. They were conditioned on Judah turning from God, and Josiah knew that it had turned from God. Can just wrath be stayed by repentance? **Because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book.** Josiah assumed that the fathers had had an opportunity to hear the book and obey its orders; but this present generation had not, and in moral ignorance the younger people had grown. This would imply that the loss of the book was comparatively recent.

14. Huldah the prophetess. Huldah is the only woman in the Old Testament besides Miriam and Deborah who is clearly stated to have been endowed with prophetic gifts. **The keeper of the wardrobe.** Either the courtier in charge of the royal robes or the Levite in charge of the temple vestments. **She dwelt in Jerusalem in the college.** Revised Version, "In the second quarter." By reference to Neh. 3: 9, 12 we find that the "lower city" was divided into two districts.

15. Tell the man that sent you to me. There is a startling abruptness in this language.

16. I will bring evil upon this people. The parallel passage, 2 Chron. 34: 24, is stronger, "Even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of

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Judah." "This prophecy of irremediable doom repeats itself in the two other prophets of the reign. It was irremediable for exactly the same reason as the 'blasphemy against the Spirit' is not to be forgiven—the sinners have gone too long and too far to repent. We can say with absolute certainty that the bar to forgiveness never can be on God's side. But forgiveness not merely cannot be given—it cannot be received—without change of heart and life. Even Josiah's zeal could not do more than wake a flickering loyalty to Jehovah, which postponed the inevitable judgment, God's appointed remedy."—*Moulton*.

17. Because they have forsaken me. This is the immediate or remote cause of every earthly calamity. **Have burnt incense unto other gods.** This was the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual condition of hostility to the true God.

18. But to the king of Judah. From this on the message is more merciful and the tone more courteous and tender. **As touching the words which thou hast heard.** The words read from the new-found roll.

19. Josiah "heard" God's words, therefore God "hears" his.

20. I will gather thee unto thy fathers. A Hebrew phrase for death. **Thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace.** Around his death Providence will throw merciful protection. It is not easy to find this prophecy fulfilled in Josiah's death. But we are not justified in ending the prophecy with this phrase. It is closely connected with what follows. **Thine eyes shall not see all the evil that I shall bring upon this place.** Josiah's best hopes clustered about his nation. The glory of Jehovah and of his people were all he lived for. Death in battle was not more terrible (rather, indeed, more to be desired) than death from disease. Josiah's soul recoiled from neither; the one horrible thing from which he pleaded to be saved was the apparent ruin of God's cause—the overthrow of the nation, the destruction of the temple, the forfeiture of Judah's privileges. This was the evil paramount. If Judah will not so turn to God that this evil might be averted, if the ruin must come, then merciful will be the arrow that "gathered him to his grave."

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Josiah—a mere child—found the kingdom in a wretched state when he came to the throne. His father, Amon, and his grandfather, Manasseh, did wickedly in the sight of Jehovah, and the people were gone in apostasy. True, Manasseh attempted certain reforms, but it was too late for reformation. The downward tendency was too rapid to be stopped. It might be checked temporarily, but inevitable destruction awaited Judah. Had Josiah lived to old age and continued his reign of righteousness without interference, the outlook for his people would have been much better. But his reign was comparatively brief, and while it marked "the last dying glory of the earthly kingdom of David," it also proved that Judah was hopelessly engulfed in the dark waters of moral and spiritual degeneration.

Verse 8. Hilkiah. He was the son of Shalum, the high priest under Manasseh and Amon, and ancestor of Ezra, the scribe. His relation to the recovery of the book of the law, as well as other matters in which he had played a conspicuous part, made his career as high priest illustrious. **The book of the law.** There is great divergence of opinion as to what this "book of the law" really was. It is held by Kennicott that it was "the original autograph copy of the

Pentateuch written by Moses." Some biblical scholars hold that it was the whole Pentateuch, some that it was the three middle books, some that it was the Book of Deuteronomy alone. There is not space to go into that controversy here, interesting as it is. It may be sufficient to say that the suggestion of fraud and forgery made by some hostile critics is too absurd to be entertained, for, as Rawlinson aptly says, "fraud or mistake might as easily have imposed a new Bible on the Christian world in the sixteenth century as a new 'law' on the Jews in the days of Josiah."

10. Delivered me a book. It should be noted that what Hilkiah called "the book of the law" Shaphan referred to as "a book." This confidence of the former and indifference of the latter are explained when it is recalled that one was a high priest, devoted to the spiritual regeneration of the nation, and the other was a scribe, concerned more for the material interests of the people; and that for about three quarters of a century "the book of the law" had been so thoroughly neglected that its very existence had become a tradition. **Read it before the king.** Shaphan had already read certain passages of the remarkable book (see verse 8). What portions were read before the king is not

known, but as he had only a traditional acquaintance with the old religion, he was naturally greatly interested.

11. Rent his clothes. This was done probably through grief for the calamities that were to be visited upon his people, because their "fathers had not kept the word of Jehovah." (See Gen. 37. 29; Job 1. 20; 1 Kings 21. 27.)

13. Go ye. The curiosity and fear of the young king induced him to appeal to the accredited representative of Jehovah in his dilemma. He simply illustrated a too common characteristic, namely, to ignore the claims of God in prosperity and to implore his help in adversity.

14. Went to Huldah. It was probably the urgency of the case that induced them to seek out Huldah, who was in the city, rather than Zephaniah, or Jeremiah, whose home was at a distance—in Anathoth, in Benjamin. As much of the corruption and wickedness of Judah was due to women, notably to Athaliah, it is significant that a woman should be appealed to for information and instruction in this crisis. (See Exod. 15. 20; Judg. 4. 4; Isa. 8. 3.)

16. Behold. These threatenings of the Lord must have smitten the heart of the king with fear. (See 2 Chron. 34. 24, where the language is more sweeping.) Judah was too far gone in idolatry to be rescued by the good intentions of her king. The evil thing was in the blood, and the employment of the most extreme measures was necessary; and for this reason, also, the unquenchable wrath of Jehovah was kindled against Judah.

19. Because. Every determination for righteousness, even if it fail of its fulfillment, will receive due recompense at the hand of God. Evil will inevitably befall Judah, but the king, tender of heart, shall be gathered to his grave in peace. So much at least shall accrue as the result of sorrow for the sins of others, and of an avowed purpose to follow the guidance of Jehovah and honor him. But the impending calamity must have embittered the remaining days of Josiah. So sin pollutes the one who commits it and entails untold suffering upon others who had no part in it. Judah was rapidly approaching the moment when penalty was to be inflicted upon her for her apostasy from Jehovah and for the unspeakable evils that resulted therefrom.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Example of Josiah.

1. Every youth may be, like Josiah, a king. He is king over his character, over his mind, over his opportunities, over his influences, over his destiny.

2. Every youth should follow Josiah's example in an early choice of God and the right. At the age of sixteen he made his decision (2 Chron. 34. 3), and thus consecrated his youth to God's service.

3. Every youth should be like Josiah in the thoroughness and whole-heartedness of his service. He turned not aside; let no interests come between himself and his duty.

4. Every youth should be like Josiah in the exercise of his influence. Read the story, and see how ardently he labored to bring his kingdom into the service of God.

5. Every youth should be like Josiah in his love for God's house. Let us contribute to its support, attend its services, and take a deep interest in its welfare.

6. Every youth should be like Josiah in his interest in God's word. Not only was it read to himself, but to others, and he made it the law of his realm.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D. D.

We have many illustrations of the interest attached to the discovery of an old or specially an original religious document. The Jews were not unacquainted with the general religious teaching of their nation, for in Jehoshaphat's time the people in all the cities of Judah were taught, the Levites and priests taking the book of the law with them. But the discovery of an original or even an ancient copy would have much the effect of such discoveries in our day.

We are delighted, as Hilkiah was, when our scribes, like Shaphan, can read the oldest book. The deciphering lends importance to the discovery. In our day oriental scholars spend a lifetime deciphering and reading these disclosed or discovered books of the law.

When oriental scholars a comparatively short while ago undertook to get at the root of the Brahman religion they were surprised with the almost impossible task of finding any copy of the original Vedas of the Hindus; not even the sacred city, Benares, itself could furnish a copy. Thousands of learned Brahman priests had never seen a copy. Bits of those holy books were repeated; even long and elaborate quotations were pat enough on the lips of the pundits, but none of these men had ever seen a copy of the volume. It was only after patient and persistent, as well as the most prudent, search that a whole copy could be found. European scholars like Max Müller translated and reproduced it, and thus introduced it to the Brahmans themselves after centuries of concealment.

The wardrobe keeper of the Hebrew temple had charge of the various garments kept in

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stock for those officiating in the sacrificial services. Every garment was sacredly prescribed as to color, as well as to form, and there was the most scrupulous care taken that these requirements should be conformed to. One priest might not officiate regularly enough to be charged with the duty of seeing that the garments he was to use should all be of the proper order, and it became necessary to have an officer to take full charge of the vestments and keep them. In like manner there is a wardrobe keeper in great cathedrals in Europe and elsewhere, where the writer has seen garments which cost, it is said, a thousand dollars each and in some cases vastly more. These are often a result of investment by the individual priest, who bequeaths them to the cathedral in which he has served.

The keeper of the wardrobe of the priests of the temple was a distinct office among the Phenician Baal worshipers, and the supply of garments extended to the worshipers. This is not to be understood to mean all the great company of worshipers, but those officiating in the ceremonies. The temple of Baal was very large, and was of the best and most magnificent architecture Tyrian skill could produce under Ahab. This had a great vestry with a large stock of robes in charge of the "keeper of the wardrobe." There is some doubt as to the extent to which the worshipers, as well as those officiating in the offerings, were supplied from this wardrobe, but if the general congregation received distinctive dress, it may have been only some badge or emblem to be worn on the ordinary dress.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JESSIE M. BINGHAM.

The book of the law. It was the law of the Lord that changed nomadic Jewish tribes, roaming the deserts, pitching their tents wherever there was pasturage, into a united and powerful nation, dwelling in habitations, ruled over by prosperous kings. A tumultuous mob of slaves, escaping from bondage, were transformed into a great nation.

An awakened conscience. One evening on my way to prayer meeting I met a young student whom I knew to be an unbeliever. I said, "Come to the meeting with me to-night."

He replied, "I haven't time. I am preparing for examination."

"Have you thought about preparation for that other examination," I said, "Prepare to meet thy God?"

That single bit of Scripture aroused his con-

science and brought him to the prayer meeting and to Christ.—*A. C. Dixon.*

The Bible in national life. The historian Green gives a strong testimony to the effect of the printed Bible in Elizabeth's reign. He says: "No greater change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the meeting of the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible. Its literary and social effects were great, but far greater was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large. A new conception of life—a new moral and religious impulse spread through every class."

America and the Bible. It is historically true that America was born of the Bible; from it came, in the sixteenth century, the strongest impulses which colonized these shores.—*Dr. J. H. Barrow.*

"That book, sir," said Andrew Jackson, pointing to the family Bible upon the table, "that book, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests."

Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of your liberties. Write its precepts in your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influences of this book we are indebted for all progress in civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future.—*U. S. Grant.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

On the fly leaf of a little Bible with which I have long been familiar these words are written: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." The book was given to a boy in his teens, leaving home for school. It looks now as every Bible which has been in one's possession for years should look—not as though it had been hidden away in some forgotten place like the book Hilkiah found in the temple; but its leaves are worn as if they had been frequently turned, and are full of pencil marks, showing that their words have been carefully noted. The school days, college life, and busy working years of the owner of this Bible have proved to all who knew him that he did take heed to his ways according to the word. Your life will never be a failure if the Bible is your daily counselor. "When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou wakest, it shall talk with thee; for the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and the reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

This was a great "find" for Hilkiah, the priest, for the king, and for all the people. Long, long before, as you may read in the thirty-first chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses wrote the law and placed it in the ark of the covenant. Once in seven years it was to be brought out and read to the people to keep them in mind of what God had commanded. But many changes had come to Israel since then. Through wars, defeats, sorrows, sins, and grievous wanderings from God, they had forgotten his law, which, if remembered and obeyed, would have kept them from these evils. Their ignorance of what God had said did not alter the truth. But how different it would have been with them if they had known and believed his word! Even Josiah, who was trying to do right according to his present knowledge, had quite a new view of his duty when Hilkiah read to him this wonderful book. Right and wrong stood out in clear light; his best endeavors and desires had been far from God's standard of righteousness, and with a sincere mind he set himself to study what was written. And what he was so eager to study and understand were the very same commandments and promises which you may read to-day in the first five books of the Old Testament. Where is your Bible? Have you "lost" it? Does it lie on your table unopened? Do you know more about all sorts of books than you know of this one? We might find some excuse for the ignorance of these people, for there was only one copy of the law, and they could not read it themselves. But we each have our own book, always at hand, open before us, fairly coaxing us to read it. But often it is lost quite as really as in the days of Josiah. It is possible that some even in our own Sunday school may know as little about it as he did. What would happen if you should "find" your Bible some day the way Jeremiah found it when he said, "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." You would get light on questions vital to your usefulness and happiness.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Begin with the times in which Josiah began to reign—general neglect of God; idols worshiped; no Bible, etc.... Show the nobility of character which Josiah displayed. Let the Scripture texts be searched out and read by the scholars in turn, and explained by the teachers.... Josiah's example may be presented for imitation of the young, as given in the Thoughts for Young People.... Notice the hindrances in Josiah's way over which he triumphed: 1. His royal birth. Many think

noble birth and luxurious surroundings fortunate, but in reality they are obstacles to a pure and worthy character. 2. His wicked ancestry. Both his father and his grandfather were kings who "did evil in the sight of the Lord." 3. His evil surroundings. He lived in a wicked age, when the mass of the population was abandoned to idolatry and wickedness.... Notice how thorough was Josiah's devotion to God and his cause. He would have no halfway service. Every vestige of idol worship was swept away; the law was rigorously observed.

Before the Class.

BY GEORGE W. PEASE.

Introduction. After the disastrous reign of Manasseh, about whom we studied in Lesson VIII, his son Amon reigned for two years, and the record is, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did." Amon was succeeded by his son, Josiah, one of the best of the kings of Judah. Give the class some idea of the moral degeneration of the people at this time, as shown by the prophets Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Also briefly sketch the early life and probable training of the young king. It was during the temple repairs that the incident happened which is the text of our lesson for to-day.

Development of the text. Place upon the black-board the subject, "The Way of Success," and the following outline: 1. The unexpected discovery; 2. The king's inquiry; 3. The Lord's answer; 4. The promised blessing.

1. *The unexpected discovery.* While the high priest Hilkiah was engaged in some work connected with the temple repairs he found an ancient roll of the law which had been hidden away during a previous reign or had been thrown into the accumulated rubbish. Note that (a) Hilkiah was fulfilling his duty when the discovery was made. Added blessings come to one in the line of duty. (b) He shared his discovery with Shaphan, the scribe, who took it to the king. Be not selfish with discovered truth; give, and give freely. (c) The king was interested in the discovery and was ready to listen to this servant. Be ready to receive truth from any source. (d) The king accepted the word as revealed and humbled himself before God.

2. *The king's inquiry.* The reading of the book of the law had a remarkable effect upon the king, who immediately sent a special commission of five persons to inquire further of the Lord "concerning the words of this book that is found." Note that Josiah shows here (a) A spirit of inquiry. He wished to know more fully the meaning and consequences of the words which he had

heard. (b) A spirit of loving thoughtfulness for his people. The inquiry was to be made on behalf of his people as well as on his own behalf. (c) A spirit of reverence for God's word. The book was accepted without question as being the law of God, and hence to be followed.

3. *The Lord's answer.* The prophetess confirmed to the king the message of condemnation and punishment which he had read in the book. Note here that (a) God's threatened punishments are conditioned. They may be escaped through repentance. (b) These punishments are certain to follow a continuance in the evil course. (c) A point may be reached where they cannot be averted. A time comes when there is "no remedy" (2 Chron. 36. 16); when God's wrath "shall not be quenched" (2 Kings 22. 17).

4. *The promised blessing.* A special mercy was shown the king, and although the threatened punishment was to fall upon the people, it was not to come in Josiah's reign, but he was to be spared the sad sight. Note here that (a) This blessing was given because of humble repentance (verse 9). (b) The punishment of the nation was delayed. Thus the blessing was extended to others.

Specific application. Josiah, the young reformer, teaches us the needful lesson that "The Way of Success" is to have an open, inquiring mind toward the truth, a spirit of reverence for the truth, and ready acceptance of the truth when presented.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

How precious is the book divine.
Now let my soul, eternal King.
Thy word, almighty Lord.
Sing them over again to me.
O happy day.

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.
Give me the Bible.
Holy Bible, book divine.
Holy Bible, well I love thee.
What glory gilds the sacred page.

LESSON XI. TRYING TO DESTROY GOD'S WORD.

[Dec. 11.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The word of our God shall stand forever. Isa. 40. 8.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.*

Jer. 36. 20-32. [Commit to memory verse 32.]

[Read the chapter.]

20 And they went in to the king into the court, and they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elisha-ma the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

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Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



REVISED VERSION.

20 And they went in to the king into the court; but they had laid up the roll in the chamber of Elisha-ma the scribe; and they told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Je-hu'di to fetch the roll: and he took it out

21 So the king sent Je-hu'di to fetch the roll; and he took it out of E-lish'a-ma the scribe's chamber. And Je-hu'di read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month; and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

23 And it came to pass, that when Je-hu'di had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

25 Nevertheless El-na'than and De-la-i'ah and Gem-a-ri'ah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them.

26 But the king commanded Je-rah-me'el the son of Ham'me-lech, and Ser-a-i'ah the son of Az-ri-el, and Shel-e-mi'ah the son of Ab'de-el, to take Ba'ruch the scribe and Jer-e-mi'ah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

27 Then the word of the LORD came to Jer-e-mi'ah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Ba'ruch wrote at the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah, saying,

28 Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Je-hoi'a-kim the king of Ju'dah hath burned.

29 And thou shalt say to Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah, Thus saith the LORD, Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Bab'y-lon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast?

30 Therefore thus saith the LORD of Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of Da'vid; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

31 And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Je-ru-sa-lem, and upon the men of Ju'dah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

32 Then took Jer-e-mi'ah another roll, and gave it to Ba'ruch the scribe, the son of Ne-ri'ah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Je-remi'ah all the words of the book which Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.

Time.—About December, B. C. 605 or 604.

Place.—The palace of Jehoiakim, which was probably very near to the temple in Jerusalem.

of the chamber of E-lish'a-ma the scribe. And Je-hu'di read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month; and there was a fire in the brasier burning before him. And it came to pass, when Je-hu'di had read three or four leaves, that the king cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brasier. And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Moreover El-na'than and De-la-i'ah and Gem-a-ri'ah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them. And the king commanded Jer-ah-me'el the king's son, and Ser-a-i'ah the son of Az-ri-el, and Shel-e-mi'ah the son of Ab'de-el, to take Ba'ruch the scribe and Jer-e-mi'ah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

27 Then the word of the LORD came to Jer-e-mi'ah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Ba'ruch wrote at the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Je-hoi'a-kim the king of Ju'dah hath burned. And concerning Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD: Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Bab'y-lon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Je-hoi'a-kim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of Da'vid; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Je-ru-sa-lem, and upon the men of Ju'dah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them, but they hearkened not. Then took Jer-e-mi'ah another roll, and gave it to Ba'ruch the scribe, the son of Ne-ri'ah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah all the words of the book which Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.

Home Readings.

M. Writing the prophecy. Jer. 36. 1-10.

Tu. Reading the word. Jer. 36. 11-19.

W. Trying to Destroy God's Word. Jer. 36. 20-32.

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Experience

7. Despising the word. Jer. 11. 1-10.
 F. Rejecting God's word. Isa. 30. 8-17.
 S. Christ's reproof of rejecters. John 5. 30-47.
 8. Rejecting and receiving. Acts 17. 1-11.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 23, New Canadian Hymnal.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
 Gratefully adoring our song shall rise to thee.

No. 27, New Canadian Hymnal.

The Church's one foundation
 Is Jesus Christ, her Lord.

No. 51, New Canadian Hymnal.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
 Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. **Jehoiakim's Crime**, v. 20-26.
 Who was Jehoiakim?
 To whom did the Lord give a message against Judah? Verses 1-3.

Who delivered this message to Judah? When?
 Why? Verses 4-10.
 How did the king learn of the message?
 Verses 16-19.

What did the princes do with the roll?
 What command did the king give about it?

Who read the message to the king?
 Where and when did this occur?

What did the king do with the roll?
 How did the act affect those present?

Who protested against the sacrilege?
 What command did the king give?

Why was it not executed?

2. **Jehoiakim's Sentence**, v. 27-32.

To whom did another message come?

What was the prophet bidden to do?

Why had Jehoiakim burned the roll?

What was Jehoiakim's sentence?

How fully did Jeremiah obey God?

What says the GOLDEN TEXT about God's word?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. The sinner hates rebuke. He also hates the messenger of rebuke. He would destroy both. But God's word lives and God's messengers will rebuke sin so long as sin exists.

2. Man's malice against God is futile. God will be victor in every contest. Better cease the unequal warfare. Surrender and sue for peace.

3. God's word is sure. History confirms it. Experience attests it. No promise ever failed.

His judgments are certain; his rewards are no less true.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **Jehoiakim's Crime**, v. 20-26.

What king is here referred to?

What did the princes do with the prophet's roll?

What did they tell the king?

What did the king do?

Where did this interview occur?

As Jehudi read what did the king do to the roll?

How did the act affect the king and his servants?

Who remonstrated against burning the roll?

What command did the king give?

Why was not the command executed?

What was the king's crime?

2. **Jehoiakim's Sentence**, v. 27-32.

To whom did the Lord send a message?

What was Jeremiah bidden to do?

What had the king said to him? Verse 29.

What was Jeremiah to say to the king about his crime?

What was the king's sentence?

Who also were to be punished with him?

What evil would come upon Judah?

What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. To revere God's law?

2. To obey God's commandments?

3. To fear God's judgments on sin?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was now the king of Judah? **Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah.**

What was this king? **The bad son of a good father.**

What prophet was sent to warn the people?

Who used to write down the words of Jeremiah? **Baruch.**

Were they written in a book?

Who read God's word one day to the people? **Baruch.**

Who told the princes about it? **A young man who feared the Lord.**

How did the princes feel when they heard it? **They were frightened.**

Whom did they tell? **The king.**

What did he do? **He had the roll brought and read to him.**

Where was he sitting? **Before a fire in his house.**

What did he do with the roll? **He had it burned in the fire.**

What did he show by this act? **That he did not care for the holy word of God.**

What did the Lord tell Jeremiah to do? **To write the words in another roll.**

What can the mightiest king never do? **Destroy the word of the Lord.**

What should we be careful to do? **Reverence God's word.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did the princes repeat to King Jehoiakim? **God's warnings which Jeremiah had written.**

2. What did the king do? **Cut the roll and burned it.**

3. Who hid Jeremiah and Baruch from his anger? **The Lord hid them.**

4. What did God tell Jeremiah to do? **Take another roll and write God's warnings again.**

5. What was to befall the king and people? **Death and destruction.**

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"The word of our God," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

42. What are the duties to God enjoined in the first table of the Ten Commandments?

The duties enjoined in the first table are the acknowledgment and service of the only true God; His worship in spirit and truth, without superstitious and idolatrous forms; reverence for His name; and observance of the day set apart for religious rest and worship.

1 Corinthians x. 14. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Foes of the Word.

I. SHUTTING UP THE WORD.

They laid up the roll. v. 20.

Prophecy not any more. Amos 7. 12, 13.

Not to speak at all. Acts 4. 18.

II. READING THE WORD.

Read it...king...princes. v. 21.

Hear...not understand. Acts 28. 25-27.

Men loved darkness. John 3. 19.

III. MUTILATING THE WORD.

Cut it with the penknife. v. 23.

If any man shall take away. Rev. 22. 19.

All the counsel of God. Acts 20. 27.

IV. DESTROYING THE WORD.

Cast it into the fire. v. 23.

Set at nought. Prov. 1. 24, 25.

Thou hatest instruction. Psa. 50. 16, 17.

V. THE DESTROYER OF THE WORD.

I will punish him. vs. 30, 31.

The Lord will not spare. Deut. 29. 19, 20.

Suddenly be destroyed. Prov. 29. 1.

VI. THE LIVING WORD.

Another roll...wrote all. v. 32.

Words...not pass away. Matt. 24. 35.

Word of God...not bound. 2 Tim. 2. 9.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

When the good King Josiah was killed by the archers of Pharaoh-necho at the battle of Megiddo his kingdom was left defenseless. The empires of Assyria on the east and Egypt on the west each claimed Judah as its frontier province, and each maintained its claim by levying heavy tribute. Jewish independence was for the time impossible, and each new sovereign had to make critical choice between imperial masters. Shallum, sometimes called Jehoahaz, was crowned in Josiah's stead. True to his father's policy and to prophetic advice, he favored the Chaldeans against the Egyptians. But he was as unsuccessful as his father. The Egyptian monarch captured him and placed Jehoiakim, his brother, on the throne, after having exacted from him heavy annual tribute. Soon after this Pharaoh was himself defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, who overran all Palestine. Jehoiakim was forced to submit, and was then reinstated, but as a vassal king. Nebuchadnezzar was still in the first year of his reign when our lesson begins. Jeremiah had been prophesying in Jerusalem for nearly a quarter of a century. By inspiration he knew, what the politicians of the time could not see, that the apparent decline of Assyria only transferred the supreme power from Nineveh to Babylon, and that Egypt must fall sooner than its great eastern rival. By God's direction he now undertook to guide Jehoiakim and his counselors in a course which, if followed, would have brought prosperity instead of disaster to Jerusalem. Commanded by God to write down all

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his revelations from the beginning of his ministry, he employed the scribe Baruch as his secretary. Because he was "shut up"—though why, or by whom, or how is not plain—the prophet was himself unable to go to the temple, and Baruch went in his place and read God's words. It was a public feast day, and the courts were crowded. A young nobleman listened with reverence and hastened to report in the palace what he heard. As a result Baruch the scribe was called into the session of the princes, who were discussing the threatening affairs of state. They, too, were frightened by the words of God, and hastened to the king with this new divine message. Our lesson follows.

Verse 20. They went in. The "princes," **The court.** Doubtless an inner rectangle of the palace, like the seraglio of the Turkish sultan. **They laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe.** In the archives of the secretary of state. They did this without the king's knowledge. It was doubtless to their minds a most valuable manuscript. **Told all the words in the ears of the king.** Though they dared not venture with the roll into Jehoiakim's presence, nevertheless, however careless the king and his courtiers might be, they felt that the message must be sounded in his ears.

21. Jehudi. An official messenger. **To fetch the roll.** He wanted to hear the prophecy for himself. **In the ears of all the princes.** This was the second time they heard it. **Stood beside the king.** They respectfully stood while he sat in state on his Persian rug.

22. The king sat in the winter house. "The house of winter" was the innermost, most sheltered part of the palace. **The ninth month.** December. **A fire on the hearth.** "A fire in a pot;" "in a brasier"—(Revised Version). In the East rooms are warmed by fires of charcoal burned in pots of earthenware which are placed in a depression in the middle of the room.

23. When Jehudi had read three or four leaves. Three or four columns of writing. **He cut it with the penknife.** The king did. He took from Jehudi's hand the scribe's knife, which was used for mending pens, and slashed the manuscript. **On the hearth.** In the firepan.

24. Yet they were not afraid. These pitifully bad men did not know in what a crisis hour they stood, and even the princes who looked on Jeremiah with friendly eyes did not share his horror when the roll curled up in the flames of Jehoiakim's brasier.

25. Elnathan, etc. Princes. Made intercession. The word indicates the deepest feeling. They would have helped Jehoiakim to do right if he had allowed them. **He would not hear them.** He had determined to do wrong.

26. The king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech. This should be "the son of the king;" although not Jehoiakim's son, he

was evidently one of the royal family. Of the other two men nothing is known. **To take.** To lay hold of, as prisoners of state. He would not only burn the prophecy, he would kill the prophets. **But the Lord hid them.** Perhaps by supernatural means, but the devout writers of this book believed that all things, even what we would call most natural, were God's doings.

27. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. God knew the prophet's hiding place and gave him work to do. **The roll, and the words.** The roll of the words; the manuscript.

28. Take thee again another roll. Which second roll may have been the original copy of the present book of Jeremiah. It has been supposed that at this time Jeremiah wandered as far away from Jerusalem as to the Euphrates.

29. This message we have not heard of before; it is what Jehoviah had originally sent to Jeremiah. **The king of Babylon** is Nebuchadnezzar. **Shall certainly come and destroy.** Nebuchadnezzar had once been to Jerusalem, and people knew what to expect if he came again. **Cause to cease from thence man and beast.** A most terrible prophecy of desolation. It denotes the utter extermination of living creatures.

30. He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David. After Jehoiakim's death his youthful son attempted to seat himself on that throne, but after two months of turbulence he was taken captive to Babylon and never again saw the city of his fathers. **His dead body shall be cast out.** A repetition of Jer. 22. 19. This prophecy was doubtless fulfilled, but we have no knowledge of the historic facts.

31. Him . . . his seed . . . his servants . . . the inhabitants of Jerusalem . . . the men of Judah. All the different classes of the community are specified because all had united in the crime. The whole of the little nation was demoralized.

32. From the mouth of Jeremiah. This means, as the same phrase means in verse 27, at the dictation of Jeremiah. **Many like words.** Many words that agreed with those on the destroyed roll. So Jehoiakim's sin, like every other endeavor to frustrate the plans of God, failed.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Jeremiah is one of the illustrious figures in Jewish history. Not as eloquent as Isaiah, nor gifted with the ability to work miracles as Elijah was, he stands out as an unflinching reformer in a wicked and perverse generation. Naturally of a timid disposition, he was sublimely courageous, and did not shrink from attacking sin, even if his arrows struck the king himself. He stood for the honor of Jehovah, and though his life was constantly in jeopardy, he went resolutely forward in the prosecution of his great work.

Verse 20. They went in to the king. Jeremiah's career as a prophet had apparently made but little impression upon the people. They did not turn away from their wickedness, nor was it likely that they would as long as the king continued in his sinful courses. But the command came to write out his prophecies and have them read to the people, with the hope that their eyes might be opened and the king's evil career checked. That the plan was perilous did not deter Jeremiah, although Baruch seemed to hesitate at performing his part, for he exclaimed, "Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow." The anxiety of Baruch suggests the terror that seized the servant of Elisha when he exclaimed, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" The answer of Elisha ought to have comforted the heart of Baruch, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." When God calls for service, even though the conditions and consequences of it seem appalling, there should be no quailing, but eager response; for God's servants are merely the instruments of his purpose, and have no responsibility for causes or results, provided they discharge their duty with fidelity.

23. He cut it with the penknife. Whether the king did this himself or Jehudi did it at the king's orders is not clear. The Revised Version substitutes "the king" for "he" in this verse, and this is probably warranted by the best authorities. In any case Jehoiakim was a party to the contemptuous deed. It is unlikely that the entire roll was read; the anger of the king could not be restrained, and only three or four columns were read, for, as Kiel remarks, "the meaning, peculiar to the imperfect, of the continuation or repetition of an act, is fully made out by supposing that the king cut down the roll bit by bit and threw the pieces into the fire one after the other." While only a portion was read, all was consumed. Jehoiakim has many followers who read only a portion of God's word, and, becoming

displeased because of the portrayals therein of their own sinful state, cast away the whole of it. Then there are others who, under the guise of scholarship, take out their penknives and cut up the word, casting out this as fiction, and that as incredible, and the other as doubtful or impossible, until there is little left. But the labor of these penknife critics is in vain, for "the word of the Lord shall stand forever."

26. The Lord hid them. The anger of the king swept him beyond the wickedness of burning the scroll and carried him to the determination to commit murder, for the awful fate that tradition says overtook Isaiah at the hands of Manasseh would probably have been meted out to Jeremiah if he had fallen into Jehoiakim's hands. David's psalm may have comforted the heart of the prophet in his concealment: "When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret place of his tabernacle shall he hide me." If our eyes were not holden, we would see that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

28. Another roll. The destruction of a roll did not interfere with the purpose of God, nor did it alleviate the secret dread that must have been in the mind of the king. Those who attempt to thwart God's plans are liable to suffer injury, while benedictions rest upon the servants of his holy will. This is well illustrated by the conduct of Josiah, father of Jehoiakim, as contrasted with that of the king. The former, when the book of the law of Moses was found, immediately repented and inaugurated a series of reforms, and so averted the calamities that threatened the nation. The latter ignored the warnings of God's prophet, destroyed his word, sought to kill the messengers of God, and, incurring the divine displeasure, suffered the terrible consequences of his evil deeds.

31. But they hearkened not. There evidently was no penitence in the heart of Jehoiakim. Had there been, he would have been forgiven, as were Manasseh, David, and others, who had repented of their sins. His heart was hardened, and he turned not from the way of wickedness, but continued to do "that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God." His career is a frightful illustration of Paul's declaration, "Whosoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

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Thoughts for Young People. God and Satan Use Familiar Tools.

1. *An ordinary pen.* All sorts of documents—mortgages, marriage contracts, messages of hate, and tender letters—had been written in turn by that pen and its fellows. But now God used it for the conveyance of his message of salvation to distressed people on the brink of ruin. How do you use your pen?

2. *Ordinary skill.* Baruch's writing became glorified, because it was the words of God which were dictated to him. Has your ordinary skill been consecrated to God?

3. *An ordinary boy's love of sensation.* Young Michaelah was probably, like every other boy, fond of finding out what caused a crowd. His curiosity led him to listen to Baruch, and his desire to tell a wonderful tale made his heels fly as he ran to the room where his father and the other princes were in session. God uses just such simple means now to spread the news of a revival.

4. *An ordinary penknife.* It had been used for good, bad, and indifferent purposes. But just now the evil spirit in the king's heart impels him to seize it and destroy the last message of mercy that an indulgent God would send him. Every simple fact in life may be turned into an instrument of evil.

5. *An ordinary fire.* That old earthen pot had warmed itself through with a charcoal fire on many a winter's day before, but just now the devil made use of it to complete the mischief begun by the penknife in his servant's hand.

6. *Ordinary repetition.* When your best work has been done and the devil has destroyed it, what then? Do it over again. The bad men who saw Baruch's roll curl up in flames probably thought that this was the end of it. The good men may very likely have expected a sudden outburst of miraculous wrath from an offended God; but God took the ordinary means—another pen, another roll, another dictation.

7. *Ordinary events.* Every threat in that burned roll was fulfilled. Jehoiakim met his painful and ignominious death; his son was swept from the throne; Jerusalem was laid in ashes; the people were taken across the dreary desert as slaves; the captivity was experienced, and they were restored, just as Jeremiah had said.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The scribe of our day and the scribe of the New Testament times should not be taken as the type of the scribe in Jeremiah's time. In the time of the kings the Hebrew scribes were

recognized and supported by the state. They were a learned, organized, and influential body of men. The scribe was in honor quite equal to that of the high priest or chief of the army in David's time. "Seraiah the scribe" is mentioned as among the high officers of David's court, as one might speak of members of the cabinet of the Queen of Great Britain as Secretary of State or Secretary of War. This scribe was not merely a clerk or copyist, or even one with punctilious knowledge of letters. There has always been a free use of the term "scribe," and a varying use in the several periods of Israel's history. The scribes had the care of the law, meaning the sacred rolls of their revealed Scriptures. It was their duty to make transcripts of them, and also to expound them as lawyers or judges, thus serving in a general way as recorders, attorneys, or schoolmasters.

In Egypt scarcely anything was done without writing. Scribes were employed on all occasions, whether public or private, secular or sacred. In every business transaction of the least importance the people resorted to the written document and the scribe was always in demand. Scribes and stewards furnished in written document the number of flocks, of household effects, of farming implements, and occurrences. The mummies of Egypt have been found wrapped in papyrus, or paper, covered with daily accounts of cash received and paid out, pasted or gummed layer over layer.

The winter in Palestine, especially at night, is cold enough to require a fire, though no "hearth" in the sense in which that term is used in northern and western Europe and in the United States. The "hearth" was a movable pot of brass or other metal for holding a bed of coals. There is no chimney, or "fireplace," as we would say, but these vessels for holding fire for heating a room are placed in the center of the apartment, that the family may go to them and warm themselves; and yet sometimes the oven in which baking was done was also utilized to warm the room. The rich burn wood or charcoal in the brass or earthen pots placed in any part of the room, while the poor burn sticks on the earthen floor.

The casting out of a dead body to lie unburied is as great a calamity as could be threatened among Hebrews. One of the remarkable features of Jewish social life is the exceeding tenderness of children toward deceased parents. Though they live at a great distance from the home, they endeavor to return to visit the graves of their parents on the anniversary of the death of either parent; and if this is impracticable, they will hire some pious poor Jew to repeat the formula of prayers in their stead. They never mention

the name of any deceased friend or relative without adding, "Remember the name of the holy one with blessings."

By Way of Illustration.

Trying to destroy God's word. It is related of a heathen princess of hideous countenance that, on looking into a mirror which a missionary had, and seeing her ugliness, she destroyed the glass in rage, and ordered that no more mirrors should be brought into her kingdom. I once saw a man in a railway carriage, to whom a leaf of the New Testament had been given, crumple it up in his hand, fling it on the floor, spit on it, and grind it under his heel. This action was as ridiculous as it was impotent. The word of God was not destroyed.—*Pentecost.*

Two kinds of witnesses. The king's servants became parties to his terrible act by silently acquiescing. They are like Saul, who held the clothes for those who stoned Stephen. Too often timid Christians are overborne by wicked companions, as Peter in the high priest's palace.

"*The Lord hid them.*" The Lord hid his prophet and his scribe. He so hid Elijah from the wrath of Ahab. He delivered Elisha, by concealment, from the wrath of a heathen king. He preserved the lives of Daniel and the Hebrew children even in a lions' den and in a furnace of fire.—*Bible Studies.*

The word of God not destroyed. The Bible is a book which has been refuted, demolished, overthrown, and exploded more times than any other book you ever heard of. Every little while somebody starts up and upsets this book; and it is like upsetting a solid cube of granite. When you have upset it, it is right side up, and when you overturn it again it is right side up still.

Voltaire overthrew the Bible a century ago. Up to that time there had been produced about five million copies of the Scriptures since the world began. From that time to 1880 the statistics of eighty Bible societies show that one hundred and sixty-five million copies of the Bible and portions of it have been distributed through their agency, to say nothing of the millions of Bibles issued by private publishers. Between 1804 and 1880 there were two hundred and six new translations. For a book that has been exploded so many times it still shows signs of considerable life.—*H. L. Hastings.*

Picture in Wyclif's Bible. There is a picture frontispiece in Wyclif's Bible which shows a fire burning and spreading rapidly, representing true Christianity. Around this fire are significant persons trying to put the fire out. One with

horns and tail represents Satan. Another is the pope with his red-coated cardinals, who forbade the circulation of the Bible among the common people. Another represents infidelity. At length one suggests that they all make a united effort to blow on the fire till they blow it out. The resolution is adopted, and there they are, with swollen cheeks and extended lips, blowing upon the fire with all their might, but, instead of blowing it out, they are blowing it up, and they only blow themselves out of breath. The fire is inextinguishable.—*Richard Roberts.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

John Huss, the martyr reformer, said, when by command of the pope all religious books which could be found in Bohemia were burned, "Fire does not consume truth." The indestructibility of the word of God is more wonderful than a dream of romance. Every age of the world has thrust against it poisoned arrows, but the life forces within it overcome all. Its survival through the ignorance of fanatics, the hatred of wicked men, and the assault of unfriendly critics is proof of its divine origin. Never question the truth of your Bible until you have informed yourself of its marvelous history and its influence upon the progress of nations. It is no mark of good sense to speak lightly of this singular book. It is rather a display of ignorance. The story of its translation into two hundred and fifty languages is full of dramatic interest. Men and women have spent years in hard, unremunerating labor, slowly going over syllable by syllable, making a language where none existed, by which the thoughts of God could be brought to the consciousness of the unlettered people; and its teachings, transforming savages into peaceable, civilized beings, have proved the value of this self-sacrificing toil.

The young king of Judah was comfortable before the fire on the hearth that winter day in Jerusalem. Accustomed to luxury as his right, sheltered in his elegant palace, with its large chambers, with ceilings of cedar, the color of the richly painted walls contrasting warmly with the winter scene without, the soft firelight throwing a rosy glow upon the luxurious surroundings—what cared the king that all this elegance was builded by unrighteousness? that his neighbor's service had been used without wages, and he had not given him for his work? He was complaisantly easy—why should he be disturbed by too serious thoughts? But Jehudi comes with the book which had just made a stir among the princes as he sat down and read it to them. The king had heard of this, and his curiosity was

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roused to inquire what they were talking about, so at his command Jehudi reads. Why, the book is personal! It speaks straight to the conscience of the man who listens! It calls him by name and mirrors his character so accurately that he can but recognize it. Who dares expose him so? Who dares say to him, "Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it?" Who has the audacity to declare that he, the king, "shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem?" (Jer. 22). Such a book shall not exist! He seizes it from Jehudi's hand, tears it with his penknife, and throws it into the fire. Foolish king! "Fire cannot consume the truth." The end of his career as foretold came by the hand of the king of Babylon, and the contents of the roll he thought to have destroyed were given again to Jeremiah by the Lord, and rewritten by his scribe. It has always been so, and so will ever be. The truth in the word abideth forever, and even its material form is preserved through the ages by the overruling hand of the Author of that truth.

The Teachers' Meeting.

This is a lesson for pictures—vivid pictures. It is freighted with the most solemn lessons, but they are dramatically taught, and it would be a sad blunder to turn from the dramatic fire and pathos of the text to a dust-dry analysis.... To begin with, picture the historical background—the Jews' fear of Egypt and their terror of Nineveh; Josiah's death; his successor's overthrow; Pharaoh's selection of Jehoiakim to be monarch, and, later, Nebuchadnezzar's siege and enforced suzerainty.... In treating the lesson picture the prophet's heartbreaking monotone of woe, repeated for a quarter of a century, and the universal hatred which it aroused; Jeremiah committing his prophecies to writing; Baruch reading God's word in the temple court; the eager boy who ran with the news of this latest sensation to his father and the assembly of princes; the second reading of the roll before the princes; the third reading of the roll before the king and its destruction; the hiding of the prophet and the later rewriting of the scroll.... Or deal with the persons of the lesson: 1. The prophet. 2. The princes. 3. The king, Baruch and the messengers to come in incidentally, and each personality to be a starting point for religious instruction.... Or take the history of the word of God as an outline: Uttered, defied; written, burned; rewritten, fulfilled to the letter.

Before the Class.

Introduction. The prosperous reign of Josiah was brought to an untimely end by his death on the battlefield of Megiddo, during a war into which he rashly entered against Necho, king of Egypt. Josiah's son, Jehoiakim, was placed upon the throne, but in three months' time was sent by King Necho in chains to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, another son of Josiah, was then enthroned, his name being changed to Jehoiakim. The incident in our lesson deals with this king and his treatment of Jeremiah and his warnings. Present briefly to the class something of the life and work of the great prophet Jeremiah.

Development of the text. Place upon the blackboard the subject, "The Way of Foolishness," and the following divisions of the lesson: 1. The fearless prophet; 2. The foolish king; 3. The faithful princes; 4. The fearful doom.

1. *The fearless prophet.* Jeremiah had been commanded to write down the revelations which had been given him and read them to the people. This was done by Baruch, the scribe, who also went to the temple and read them to the people. (See verse 5.) Note (a) Jeremiah obeyed God at great personal risk. Others of the prophets had been put to death by the king. (b) It was a hard duty which was imposed upon him—the threatening with fearful punishment a people he loved.

2. *The foolish king.* Jehoiakim, when he heard the words which Jeremiah had written, cut the roll in pieces, and cast the entire manuscript into the fire burning on a brazier before him. Note that the king by so doing (a) Threw away his last chance for mercy. A way of escape from the impending doom was clearly pointed out by the prophet, but this way was not acceptable to the king. (b) Acted foolishly and childishly, for the truth of what was contained in the roll could have been made certain by abundant evidence if such had been sought. (c) Made the great but still common mistake of thinking that by destroying the message and the messenger he would escape the threatened consequences of his wicked life. There are many to-day who act with reference to the Bible just as foolishly as King Jehoiakim of old. Question the class as to the results of such an attitude toward truth.

3. *The faithful princes.* Certain of the princes protested against the king's action. They thought that his defiant attitude would surely bring judgment upon the people, and, realizing the situation of Judah at this time, they did what they could to turn the king from his wicked purpose, but without avail—"he would not hear them." They were faithful in that they had

warned the king (see Ezek. 33. 7-9), although nothing came of their supplication.

4. *The fearful doom.* Although the message had been destroyed by the king and the messenger had disappeared, being hidden by the Lord from the king's fury, the judgments of the Lord were to come to pass, and that speedily. Note here that (a) God uses men and nations for his purposes (verse 29); (b) One man's sin brings sorrow to many (verse 31); (c) The word of the Lord is sure and standeth forever.

Specific application. As in the last lesson we found that the way of success was to be receptive of the truth, the lesson to-day very plainly shows us "The Way of Foolishness" as being an utter disregard of and opposition to the truth. Use these two lessons to impress upon the class the different results which come to us as determined by our attitude toward truth.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Hasten, sinner, to be wise.
There is a friend.
Come with thy sins.
Who'll be the next?
'Tis the promise of God.

To-day the Saviour calls.
Christ is knocking.
Come, every soul.
There's not a ray of sunshine.
Come, let us use the grace divine.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 22, The "winter house," 604; The "hearth," 533. Ver. 23, Parenthent rolls, 511. Ver. 30, Bodies unburied, 443.

Blackboard.



LESSON XII. THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

[Dec. 18.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jer. 29. 13.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 2 Kings 25 and Jer. 8.]

Jer. 52. 1-11. [Commit to memory verses 9-11.]

1 Zed-e-ki'ah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Je-ru'sa-lem. And his mother's name was Ha-mu'tal the daughter of Jer-e-mi'ah of Lib'nah.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 Zed-e-ki'ah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Je-ru'sa-lem: and his mother's name was Ha-mu'tal the daughter of Jer-e-mi'ah of Lib'nah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all

2 And he did *that which was evil* in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Je-hoi'akim had done.

3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Je-ru'sa-lem and Ju'dah, till he had cast them out of his presence, that Zed-e-ki'ah rebelled against the king of Bab'y-lon.

4 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, that Neb-u-chad-rez'zar king of Bab'y-lon came, he and all his army, against Je-ru'sa-lem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.*

5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zed-e-ki'ah.

6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden; (now the Chal-de'ans *were* by the city round about;) and they went by way of the plain.

8 But the army of the Chal-de'ans pursued after the king, and overtook Zed-e-ki'ah in the plains of Jer'i-cho; and all his army was scattered from him.

9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Bab'y-lon to Rib'lah in the land of Ha'math; where he gave judgment upon him.

10 And the king of Bab'y-lon slew the sons of Zed-e-ki'ah before his eyes; he slew also all the princes of Ju'dah in Rib'lah.

11 Then he put out the eyes of Zed-e-ki'ah; and the king of Bab'y-lon bound him in chains, and carried him to Bab'y-lon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

3 that Je-hoi'a-kim had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come to pass in Je-ru'sa-lem and Ju'dah, until he had cast them out from his presence: and Zed-e-ki'ah re-

4 belled against the king of Bab'y-lon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Neb-u-chad-rez'zar king of Bab'y-lon came, he and all his army, against Je-ru'sa-lem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about.

5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zed-e-ki'ah. In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

7 Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chal-de'ans were against the city round about;) and they went by the way of

8 A-ra'bah. But the army of the Chal-de'ans pursued after the king, and overtook Zed-e-ki'ah in the plains of Jer'i-cho; and all his

9 army was scattered from him. Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Bab'y-lon to Rib'lah in the land of Ha'math; and he gave judgment upon him.

10 And the king of Bab'y-lon slew the sons of Zed-e-ki'ah before his eyes; he slew also all

11 the princes of Ju'dah in Rib'lah. And he put out the eyes of Zed-e-ki'ah; and the king of Bab'y-lon bound him in fetters, and carried him to Bab'y-lon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

Time.—About July 1, B. C. 588 or 586.

Places.—Jerusalem, the capital of the little kingdom of Judah; Riblah, a city in the northern part of Syria. **Rulers.**—Three kings of Judah were at once in captivity: Jehohaz in Egypt, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (after this lesson) in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest of the kings of Babylon, ascended the throne about B. C. 604. **Prophets.**—Four prophets were now delivering messages from God: Jeremiah, who spent nearly all his life in and about Jerusalem; Ezekiel, a captive near the Chebar; Daniel, in Babylon; and Obadiah, in some foreign land. **Parallel Accounts.**—Jer. 39. 1-10; 2 Kings 25. 1-12; 2 Chron. 36. 11-21; Psalms 74 and 49.

Home Readings.

M. The Captivity of Judah. Jer. 52. 1-11.
 Tu. Complete destruction. 2 Kings 25. 8-21.
 W. Sin and its punishment. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21.

Th. Refusing to be warned. Jer. 32 1-5.

F. Prophecy of captivity. Jer. 32. 26-35.

S. Cry of the captive. Lam. 1. 1-11.

S. Christ's warning. Luke 20. 9-18.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 103, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lord, I despair myself to heal;
 I see my sin, but cannot feel.

No. 106, New Canadian Hymnal.

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,
 Hear my humble cry.

No. 107, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lord, I hear of showers of blessing,
 Thou art scattering, full and free.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

I. King Zedekiah's Folly, v. 1-3.

At what age did Zedekiah become king?

What was his lineage?

How long did he reign?

How did he chance upon the throne of Judah?
2 Kings 24, 17.

Whose evil example did he follow?
What act of political folly did he commit?

2. The Fall of Jerusalem, v. 4-7.

Who besieged Jerusalem? When?
How long did the siege continue?
What calamity aided the besiegers?
Who had foretold this siege and famine?
Chap. 25, 3-7.

How had the prophet been treated for thus saying? Chap. 32 1-5.

What befell the city?

How did the army escape?

3. King Zedekiah's Fate, v. 8-11.

Who pursued the fugitives?
Where was the king captured?
Where was the captive taken?
For what was he judged?
What punishment was inflicted?
How might this fate have been averted?
GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Be sure your sin will find you out.
2. Sin brings sure destruction to the impenitent.
3. God has no lack of agents to carry out his will.
4. The sin of one brings sorrow to many.
5. Broken pledges are poor defenses in trouble.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. King Zedekiah's Folly, v. 1-3.

Who was the last king of Judah?
What had been his name, and how did he become king? 2 Kings 24, 17.

How long did he reign?

What was the character of his rule?

Whose example did he follow?

How was his folly especially shown?

How did the Lord regard Zedekiah and his people?

How did God regard the wicked? Psa. 7, 11.

What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

2. The Fall of Jerusalem, v. 4-7.

Who besieged Jerusalem?

How long did the siege last?

What were the sufferings of the people?

How are these stated in Lam. 4, 4?

What was the result of the siege?

What was done to the city? 2 Kings 25, 9.

What became of the people? Psa. 137, 1.

3. King Zedekiah's Fate, v. 8-11.

What did King Zedekiah undertake to do?
Jer. 39, 4.

Was he successful?

Where was he taken prisoner?

What was done to Zedekiah's children?

What was done to Zedekiah?

What was done to his princes?

Would all this have happened if he had obeyed the Lord?

Against what, then, are we warned by his history?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That sin unrepented brings sure destruction?

2. That God has instruments to accomplish his purpose?

3. That people suffer for their rulers' sins?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was the last king of Judah? **Zedekiah.**

How old was he when he became king?

How long did he reign in Jerusalem?

What did he encourage the people to do?

How did he know that this was wrong? **God sent prophets to tell him.**

Why would he not listen? **He wanted to have his own way.**

What is the great danger in self-will? **It grows stronger all the time.**

What king came to take Jerusalem? **Nebuchadnezzar.**

How long did he besiege the city? **Two years.**

What did the people of Judah have to do at last? **To give up to the heathen king.**

How was Zedekiah treated? **He was bound with chains and his eyes were put out.**

Where did he end his life? **In a prison in Babylon.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. Who was the last king of Judah, **Zedekiah, a weak man.**

2. Who came to capture the city? **Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.**

3. Why did God allow the city to be destroyed? **Because his people had forsaken him.**

4. At the last what did Zedekiah do? **He sought safety by flight.**

5. How could Zedekiah have avoided his awful fate? **By turning to God.**

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"Ye shall seek me," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

43. What are the duties to our fellow-men enjoined in the second table of the Ten Commandments?

The duties enjoined in the second table are filial affection and obedience; and respect for our neighbors' rights in life, family, property, and reputation, extended to the thoughts and desires of the heart.

Ephesians vi. 1-3. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Downward Steps of Judah.

I. WICKEDNESS.

- Isa that which was evil.* v. 2.
Lust...sin...death. James 1. 15.
His servants ye are. Rom. 6. 16.

II. WRATH.

- The anger of the Lord.* v. 3.
Angry with the wicked. Psa. 7. 11.
Wrath...is revealed. Rom. 1. 18.

III. WAR.

- Came...all his army.* v. 4.
Will bring a nation. Jer. 5. 15-17.
Shall hear of wars. Matt. 24. 6.

IV. WANT.

- The famine was sore.* v. 6.
Young children ask bread. Lam. 4. 4.
Shall be burnt with hunger. Deut. 32. 24.

V. DESOLATION.

- The city was broken up.* v. 4.
The city sit solitary. Lam. 1. 1.
Zion is a wilderness. Isa. 64. 10, 11.

VI. DISTRESS.

1. *Took the king.* v. 9.
Thou shalt not escape. Jer. 34. 3.
2. *Slew the sons.* v. 10.
Seed...shall be cut off. Psa. 37. 28.
3. *Put out the eyes.* v. 11.
Shall he not see it. Ezek. 12. 13.

VII. CAPTIVITY.

- Carried...to Babylon.* v. 11.
For their good. Jer. 24. 5-7.
I will visit you. Jer. 29. 10.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

When Jehoiakim's miserable reign was over his young nephew, Jehoiachin, took his place, but he was soon deposed, and Zedekiah became king. Jerusalem again passed through the horrors of a siege, which, however, was suddenly and unexpectedly abandoned because the Babylonian generals found it necessary to march rapidly to meet an Egyptian army. Through all the changes of the war and the varying fortunes of the armies of Judah Jeremiah reiterated his prophecy of the destruction of the city, and stood manfully for the true worship of God. Zedekiah revolted against Nebuchadnezzar. That king—more properly that emperor, for many subject-kings owned him as their master—worn out with the disloyalty of Zedekiah, whom he had placed on the throne of Judah, determined finally to lay waste the land and to carry away its inhabitants, so that they could no longer conspire with enemies to his rule. He besieged the city of Jerusalem, blockaded it for a year, and finally took it by storm. The king and his family were taken prisoners and brought to Nebuchadnezzar for sentence. The children of Zedekiah were slain in his presence, and then the captive monarch was blinded and taken to Babylon, where he lingered for some years of darkness. There was one ray of hope in all this misery. While large numbers of the people in Jerusalem and Judah had been slain a remnant was carried away to Babylon. This remnant included most of those who were worshipers of Jehovah. Their exile only made their devotion the more intense. A wave of revival swept over the scattered Jews, encouraged by the messages of prophets such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. When, after years of exile, the Jews returned to Palestine they were a new people in character and loyal to their God. Thus the captivity, instead of a calamity, proved to be a blessing.

Verse 1. One and twenty years old when he began to reign. His kingdom was small, but his task was great for so young a man; Egypt claimed his kingdom as its frontier province against Babylon, and Babylon claimed it as its frontier province against Egypt. **He reigned eleven years.** Years of interminable anxiety and almost matchless weakness of character. Of **Hamutal**, his mother, nothing is known. **Jeremiah**, his father, was not, so far as we

know, related to Jeremiah the prophet. **Libnah** was a strong city in the southwest corner of the little kingdom of Judah.

2. He did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord. And yet he was not purposely a bad man. He was certainly no worse, hardly so bad, as the kings who had immediately preceded him, not nearly so wicked as Athaliah or Manasseh. He does not seem to have worshipped false gods. His sin was in not resisting

the downward current of his time, in weakly submitting to the pernicious influence of the nobles, in breaking his sworn promise of fealty to Nebuchadnezzar. Moral weakness brings destruction as surely as wickedness. The "kings" of Judah were merely viceregents of Jehovah, personally responsible to him. When, therefore, independent existence had become impossible for Judah, and the word of the Lord clearly directed submission to Babylon rather than to Egypt, it was "evil in the eyes of the Lord," positive sin, to disobey that direction. **According to all that Jehoiakim had done.** With less of moral perversity, however, and much less force of character.

3. He had cast them out from his presence. Courtiers in disgrace were cast out from the presence of the king. So these officers of the kingdom are cast out from the presence of Jehovah.

4. Nebuchadnezzar . . . came, . . . he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it. That is, he drew lines of ditches around it, with a rampart on one side, on which were erected his military engines. In those days, as we all know, gunpowder was not used, but very remarkable machines had been contrived to throw huge rocks to great distances. These and the battering rams were the chief instruments of war used against invested cities.

5. The city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. Of this siege we have many interesting details, especially in Ezekiel and in the Book of Lamentations. That the besieged were able to hold out until the eleventh year is astonishing, especially when we take notice of the poor rabble inclosed within its walls (verse 6).

6. The fourth month. Made up of our June and July. **The ninth day of the month.** Possibly July 1. This day was memorable for the breach made in the city walls. **The famine prevailed, and there was no bread for the people.** The starved soldiers were no longer capable of making strong resistance. The phrase of the land may point to the fact that the city was crowded with refugees who had sought its walls for safety from the Chaldeans.

7. The city was broken up. In more modern phraseology the northern wall was broken through and the city lay defenseless before its conquerors. **All the men of war fled.** The Chaldeans came from the north side of the city, the king and his men of war fled toward the south. **By night.** Josephus says that the city was entered at midnight. **By the way of the gate be-**

tween the two walls, which was by the king's garden. Gathering his wives and children and summoning a few bodyguards about him, he made his way along a street which ran between the wall on the east and the wall on the west side of the Tyropeon valley and which ended at a gate above the royal garden and the Pool of Siloam. There are several instances in Eastern cities at the present time of a street thus running between two walls. The king's garden was at the Pool of Siloam, at the mouth of the Tyropeon. **Now the Chaldeans were by the city round about.** This means that the investment of the city was complete. **They went by way of the plain.** The king's party was forced to run along a road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho. They did not select the one over the mountains, but that over the valley or plain. They were making a mad race for the desert.

8. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king. The troops, as we have seen, had surrounded the city, and probably detachments of the army held all the road from Jerusalem to Jericho; so Zedekiah had little chance. **All his army was scattered from him in utter disorganization.** Those that were captured were at once made slaves.

9. Riblah in the land of Hamath. There were two Riblahs. This was the place to which Pharaoh-necho had summoned Jehoabaz (2 Kings 23, 33). It was on the east bank of the Orontes River, about thirty-five miles northwest of Baalbek. A modern village of the same name occupies its site. **He gave judgment upon him.** Commentators call attention to the fact that this was the trial of a common criminal. Zedekiah had forfeited his kingship by breaking his oath. The phrase is literally "spoke with him judgments." A striking phrase, says Dr. Terry, implying that the judgments rendered were not in word only, but in deed.

10. The king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. It was the refinement of cruelty to bring the death agonies of the poor king's sons into the last scene his eyes beheld. **Slew also all the princes of Judah.** They had been the king's chief advisers in his rebellion. An abundant opportunity had been given by Nebuchadnezzar's officers for their submission.

11. Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah. Eastern people regard a blind man as incapable of ruling. Already Zedekiah's daughters had been taken captive. **Bound him in chains.** Probably bound him hand and foot. **Put him in prison till the day of his death.** Tradition says that when in Babylon Zedekiah was forced to work in a mill.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Zedekiah possessed the distinction of being the twentieth and last, as well as one of the weakest, of the kings of Judah. His father was Josiah, the good king, and his brother, Jehoahaz, succeeded his father on the throne, reigning for about three months. It was unfortunate for Judah that her kings reached the succession at a very early age. Josiah was eight, Jehoahaz twenty-three, Jehoiakim twenty-five, Jehoiachin eighteen, and Zedekiah twenty-one. Jerusalem was under the control of Nebuchadnezzar at this time, but if the new king had conducted his affairs with discretion, "Jerusalem might have remained the head of the Babylonian province of Judah, and the temple of Jehovah continued standing." He was not a fit ruler for difficult times, and it is not unlikely that he was chosen by Nebuchadnezzar to be king because of his weakness and irresolution. A man of iron will on the throne might have given Nebuchadnezzar trouble, in spite of the oath of allegiance he had extracted from his vassal. But Zedekiah abused the power placed in his hands, and invited the destruction that speedily came to the land, his people, and himself.

Verse 1. Zedekiah. He was the third son of Josiah, his mother being Hamutal. His immediate predecessor on the throne was his nephew, Jehoiachin, whose reign was brief and who was carried in captivity to Babylon. (See 2 Chron. 36. 6; 2 Kings 24. 6.) When he became king he changed his name from Mattaniah (the gift of Jehovah) to Zedekiah (the righteousness of Jehovah). There is a suggestion in this act of a desire to rule in righteousness and for the glory of Jehovah, as did his father, Josiah. But if any high expectations were created by this outward sign, they soon vanished away.

2. Jehoiakim. He was the successor of Jehoahaz, who was deposed by Pharaoh-necho and carried in chains to Riblah and to Egypt, where he died in captivity. When Nebuchadnezzar entered Palestine he found Jehoiakim in a defenseless state, laid siege to Jerusalem, took the king prisoner, and bound him with the purpose of carrying him to Babylon. Jehoiakim became submissive, however, and was reinstated as king, and became the vassal of Nebuchadnezzar. After three years he broke faith with his master, in spite of the repeated remonstrances and warnings of Jeremiah, and Nebuchadnezzar sent his allies against him. The land was plunged into misery, which increased until Jehoiakim's untimely death (Jer. 22. 18, 19; 34. 30).

3. Rebelled. The drastic results of such a course in the case of Jehoiakim should have served as a warning to Zedekiah. He had allied himself with Nebuchadnezzar, but he held his honor lightly. He disregarded the counsel, entreaties, and threatenings of Jehovah as uttered by his prophet, Jeremiah. But all high considerations were ignored in the face of insatiate ambition.

4. It came to pass. This calamity occurred in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign. The month corresponds with portions of our December and January, according to the lunar conditions. This date, so significant to the Jews, is kept by them even to this day as a fast. The character of the siege and the methods employed are interesting when compared to modern methods of warfare. The effect of the siege, which continued for a year and a half, was speedily disastrous. (See Jer. 37. 21; 38. 9; Ezek. 5. 10; Lam. 4. 5-10.)

7. The city was broken up. Further resistance was useless, and flight was the only, though precarious, means of safety. Probably one of the first to flee was the king who had brought such woe upon his people. But escape was impossible; the Chaldeans soon captured the royal company.

9. Gave judgment. Riblah was about two hundred miles northeast of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar, who was conducting a campaign against Tyre also at this time, was encamped there. Zedekiah was granted no consideration because of his position as king, but was speedily punished for his breach of faith to the man who had given him a throne. (See 2 Kings 24. 20; 2 Chron. 36. 13; Ezek. 17. 15-19.)

10. Slew the sons. The punishment of Zedekiah's crime was extremely cruel, especially as it involved so many who must have been entirely innocent. These sons were slain in order to destroy all hope of succession to the throne. Sin always entails suffering upon the innocent as well as the guilty. We cannot see its ramifications, or we should discover that its taint is constantly destroying life and interfering with the happiness of those who had no part in the particular offense.

11. Put out the eyes. The punishment of Zedekiah was without the slightest trace of mercy. Perhaps it was deserved, but it seems to be the refinement of cruelty. His case discloses a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy. (See Ezek. 12. 10-13; Jer. 32. 3-5; 2 Kings 25. 6, 7.)

Thoughts for Young People.

Zedekiah's Message to Us.

Zedekiah preaches loudly to us, and here are some of the lessons we may draw from his career:

1. *When God means to punish a sinner no wall or weapon avails to protect him.* Zedekiah might have slipped away from Nebuchadnezzar, but he could not from God.

2. *Weakness of will produces quite as much of sin and calamity as is produced by strong bad wills.* Fervent sinners at the outset deliberately intend to be sinners. They slip by moral weakness into a course of sin, and he who would glorify God must do it by a strong will.

3. *Nobody can be bad without plunging others into suffering.* Zedekiah himself suffered partly because of the weakness and badness of his ancestors and of his brother, and doubtless thousands of families were broken up, and the most awful suffering entailed upon them, because of Zedekiah's weak perversity while on the throne of Jerusalem. It is questionable whether you can even entertain an evil thought without injuring somebody, else. "None of us liveth to himself."

4. *Sin leads to temporal ruin.* All the pulpits preach that it leads to eternal ruin, and that is the all-important lesson for all to learn. But it is well to have it clearly fixed in our minds, also, that it leads to temporal ruin as well. In the long run virtue makes for worldly prosperity and vice for poverty and degradation.

5. *It is not safe to confide in any strength but that of God.* "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The orientals in some cases deprive the criminal of the light of day by sealing up his eyes. When Sir Thomas Roe visited the court at Delhi a son of the great Mogul was actually suffering this punishment. He had been thrown into prison and deprived of the use of his eyes by some adhesive plaster put upon them for the term of three years, after which the seal was taken away, but he was still detained in prison. Dr. Richard Watson, who relates this fact, says that in Isa. 44. 18, "They have not known nor understood; for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand," the Hebrew word translated "shut" signifies to overlay, or cover over the surface, but generally to overspread or daub over with mortar or plaster, which entirely corresponds with the manner in which the eyes of criminals are sealed up in some parts of the

East, just as the phrase "they have not understood" has reference to another custom of compelling a conspirator against the throne to swallow opium or other stupefying drugs to render him unfit for business. The celebrated Persian monarch Shah Abbas ordered this treatment of his grandson, who was to be his successor, to prevent his disturbing his government.

But deprivation of eyesight was a common punishment in the East, which was accomplished at first by searing with a hot iron; but as this was found not certainly to destroy the sight, it was substituted by taking the eyes out altogether with a sharp-pointed instrument. This cruelty was chiefly applied to persons who were aspirants of the throne, or likely to become such by their blood relationship or other circumstances. It was also practiced in the case of chieftains whom it was desirable to deprive of power.

By Way of Illustration.

Jerusalem destroyed. The great lesson to be learned from the destruction of Jerusalem is God's persistent and constant effort to prevent it. As the angel stood in the path of Baalam while going on in his stubborn determination to disobey, so God puts warnings and entreaties and mercies, and the love of Christ and trials and punishments, in the path of the sinner, as his good angels, to stop him and cry out, "Go back, go back!"—*Bishop Warren.*

Too late! That young man who pulled such a strong oar that he dared to row across Niagara River tried to row across nearer the cataract. He found that he had trifled too much with that resistless tide. It carried him down and over that awful precipice. The fall of Judah was just such a catastrophe in the face of repeated warning. There will come a time to sinners when it will be too late! An old man said to his pastor: "At seventeen I began to feel deeply, but put it off till settled in life. After marriage I bought a farm and thought that it would not answer to become religious till I had paid for that. I resolved to wait ten years. At the end of that time I thought no more about it. Now I am indifferent and it seems to be too late."

Israel sifted. First the captives were sifted by Nebuchadnezzar. And then the captives were sifted on their return by the call for volunteers, who would naturally be the most religious, most zealous ones. Some one has said that in looking for seed to plant New England two and a half centuries ago the Lord sifted two kingdoms, England and Holland, for the best they had. With equal truth it may be said that the Lord of providence, on the same wise principle, sifted

the Jewish people twice over to get out the best seed for the land of promise.—*Coates.*

Comfort in God's promise. Two rabbis were looking upon the ruins of Jerusalem. One of them wept bitterly over the desolations of Zion and the sad fortunes which had befallen the city of his fathers. The other laughed when he viewed the same things.

"Why do you laugh?"

"Because by this very desolation, which assures us that God is true to his threatenings, we know that the same God will be true also to his promises, and will restore Zion to her beauty and glory."

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The lessons of Judah's captivity can be fully learned only by reading the prophecies and Lamentations of Jeremiah and the prophecies of Ezekiel. It is a story of fascinating pathos. I would recommend my class to read Cunningham Geikie's *Hours with the Bible* in connection with the Bible history. It will bring these events before you almost as if you were yourself a dweller in Jerusalem in the midst of those anxious, agitated days, watching the dying throes of your own nation and hearing the wail of your fellow-exiles driven forth to weep by the rivers of Babylon.

The Bible history is a sad story faithfully told, setting clearly forth the never-changing principles of God's moral government. Righteousness and truth are the foundations of his throne. Disobedience and sin cannot go unpunished.

As we have seen in the lessons of this quarter, there were occasional efforts to resist the moral and social corruption of the nation; but while the reformers were themselves sincere, the reformation among the people was only external—it did not touch their hearts—and such conversions have only transient effect upon life and conduct. Sin is destroyed at its root only when we search for God with our whole heart, and until the root itself is dead the bitter fruit will reappear.

The heart of Judah was not right with God; and out of the heart are the issues of life. The outward sins which showed an evil heart were the worship of false gods; profaning holy things; making no difference between the clean and unclean; dishonoring the Sabbath; neglecting and discrediting God's word; selfish indulgence in ease and luxury; lying; deceiving; cheating in business; and oppressing the poor. Heart answers to heart in all ages and all lands. Judah's sins have a familiar look; their bitter outcome bids us take heed.

Faithful prophets warned, but the people would not listen. False prophets who spoke

"according to their own hearts" misled them, promising life and prosperity where God had said there should be disaster and death. If they listened at all to the truth, it was only to say, "The evil will never come in our time; it was so with Israel, but it will not be so with us." But the word of the Lord faileth never.

Ready to excuse themselves, the people said: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. We are suffering for the sins of the generations before us." But God says not so. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and he that "hath walked in my statutes and hath kept my judgments to deal truly, he is just, he shall surely live." Each one is responsible only for his own sins and his own destiny. No soul is condemned for Adam's sin. Read the second chapter of Romans and the eighteenth of Ezekiel.

Let us take to our hearts the message of the lesson. Sin is the same, its effects the same, its outcome the same in every human soul and in every nation. Very tenderly God pleads with us, "O do not this abominable thing which I hate." Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?"

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. *Two events* in Hebrew history are indicated by the phrase "the captivity": 1. The deportation of the ten tribes in B. C. 721 by the Assyrians under Sargon, probably to lands near the Caspian Sea, a banishment from which the "lost tribes" never returned; 2. The destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar about B. C. 587, and the "carrying away" to the Euphrates valley of nearly all the citizens of Judah. Here they remained until B. C. 536, when they were restored to Palestine....II. *Causes of the captivity*: 1. Natural causes. Two great hostile empires find a rich little principality lying between them; each in turn repeatedly conquers it and exacts tribute, until at length the stronger monarch, in accordance with oriental usages, slaughters those who will not submit and settles the rest near his own capital. 2. Supernatural causes. God's task through the centuries is to maintain a selected people. God selects a nation to be the custodians of supernatural truth. It is the brainiest nation in the world, but it is, nevertheless, depraved and lacking in spiritual sense. The few serve God with more or less clearness of vision; the many worship idols. By a series of providential events God brings about the destruction of the worst element, while the better are transferred to a region where all that is good in them is trained and developed, and after a while are

restored to become the progenitors of the Messiah. . . . III. *Word pictures*: 1. The terrors of this siege. 2. The fate of Zedekiah. 3. The destruction of Jerusalem. 4. The weary journey across the desert. . . . IV. *Lessons from the captivity*: 1. It became a great blessing to the Hebrews. It destroyed idolatry, intensified religious life, took away secular hopes, and raised spiritual aspirations. 2. It fulfilled God's prophecy, and thus became a buttress of divine revelation. 3. Even from the standpoint of secular history it is full of lessons.

Before the Class.

Introduction. Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, reigned for three months, when he was carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and Zedekiah, a third son of Josiah, came to the throne. Jeremiah was still prophesying in Jerusalem, Ezekiel on the banks of the Chebar, and Daniel in Babylon. Give a brief account of the power and extent of the Babylonian empire at this time. Picture the internal condition of the kingdom of Judah, showing the triangular conflict between the prophet and the princes, the prophet and the king, and the king and the princes of the realm.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Death," and the three following divisions: 1. The king's disobedience; 2. The people's distress; 3. The nation's destruction.

1. *The king's disobedience.* The previous lessons have shown us the great influence the kings had over the people, and that when the king's principles and policy were righteous the nation was blessed and protected, but when a king came to the throne and "did evil in the sight of the Lord" the reign was always disastrous. We see in the opening verses of the present lesson (a) The king disobedient to the Lord, doing evil in his sight, and thus inviting the infliction of the threatened judgments. (b) The king was disobedient to his word and rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar. This was in direct opposition to the counsel of the prophet Jeremiah, the wisdom of whose advice was soon made apparent.

2. *The people's distress.* The king's folly brought the army of Nebuchadnezzar against his capital city of Jerusalem in January, B. C. 587. The city stood the siege for a year and six months, when it was finally taken. During the siege the people suffered terribly from famine (verse 6. See also Lam. 4. 5-10). Note in passing (a) The people's brave defense. They were willing to fight, and did bravely fight against physical force, but were

not willing to obey the voice of God, which would have obviated the necessity of such fighting. Moral courage to do right is the great need of the present day. (b) Jeremiah's great faith in the word of the Lord shown by his buying a piece of land outside the city walls. (See Jer. 32. 6-15.) (c) The utter insincerity of the Jews shown by their momentary repentance during the siege (Jer. 34. 8-10) and their return to their evil practices as soon as they thought the danger was passed (Jer. 37. 5).

3. *The nation's destruction.* The city was taken in July, B. C. 586, and Jewish national life came to an end as had been prophesied time and time again. Note (a) The flight, pursuit, and capture of the king; (b) The judgment upon the king, his sons, and the princes of the people. In this connection see, also, the remarkable prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jer. 32. 3-5; 34. 2-5; Ezek. 12. 13). (c) The destruction of the city (Jer. 52. 12-14); (d) The deportation of the people (Jer. 52. 15, 16).

Specific application. The oft-repeated warning as to the result of persistent disobedience was now seen to be true. The way of disobedience is "The Way of Death." Impress this thought upon the class.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Deep are the wounds.
Come, ye sinners.
There is a fountain.
Weary of earth.
Jesus, my Lord, to thee I cry.

I bring my sins to thee.
All glory to Jesus be given.
Come, every soul by sin oppressed.
Jesus Christ is passing by.
Of him who did salvation bring.

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Blackboard.



LESSON XIII. A CHRISTMAS LESSON.

[Dec. 25.]

GOLDEN TEXT. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2. 11.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Luke 2. 1-20.]

Heb. 1. 1-9. [Commit to memory verses 1, 2.]

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who, being the brightness of *his* glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

6 And again, when he bringeth in the first-born into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

8 But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in *his* Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also
- 3 he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the
- 4 Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a
- 5 more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time,

Thou art my Son,

This day have I begotten thee?

and again,

I will be to him a Father,

And he shall be to me a Son?

- 6 And when he again bringeth in the first-born into the world he saith, And let all the angels
- 7 of God worship him. And of the angels *he* saith,

Who maketh his angels winds,

And his ministers a flame of fire:

- 8 but of the Son *he saith*,

Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;
And the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

- 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity;

Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee

With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Time.—The time when this epistle was written is uncertain, but probably about A. D. 68.

Home Readings.

- M.* A Christmas Lesson. Heb. 1. 1-9.
Tu. A Saviour given. Isa. 9. 1-7.
W. Sent of God. 1 John 4. 9-15.
Th. Head over all. Col. 1. 9-19.
F. The guiding star. Matt 2. 1-11.
S. The angel's message. Luke 2. 1-14.
S. Seeing and rejoicing. Luke 2. 15-20.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 301, New Canadian Hymnal.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the new-born King.

No. 290, New Canadian Hymnal.

Angels, from the realms of glory,
 Wing your flight o'er all the earth.

No. 300, New Canadian Hymnal.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
 Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

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

- What is our GOLDEN TEXT?
 How had God spoken unto the fathers?
 Through whom did he afterward speak?
 What was the Son appointed to be?
 What had God made through him?
 What is said of Jesus in verse 3?
 To whom is Jesus declared to be superior?

2. His Great Glory, v. 5-9.

- How does the apostle prove this?
 Repeat the texts quoted in verse 5.
 What text concerning the second coming of our Lord is given in verse 6?
 What does God say of the angels?
 What does he say of his Son?
 What does Christ love, and what does he hate?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. God used to speak to many people in many places, giving to each a little of divine truth, just so much as that person could understand and repeat. But in the fullness of time he sent a complete revelation; all he had to say to human beings he said at once. And that revelation came not by dream or vision or words whispered out of infinite silences, but by a human life, the life of a Jewish carpenter who became a rabbi, Jesus of Nazareth, the "Son of man."

2. This Jesus of Nazareth became our Saviour.

He is the express image of God, the Maker of all worlds, the Upholder of all things.

3. Our salvation is secured no longer by the offering of sacrificial lambs, the waving of censers, the chanting of psalms, or any other ritual service; it is not secured by going to church, or by any good deeds. Jesus "by himself purged our sins;" he gave himself as the one sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

4. Because of his sacrifice for us the whole universe through countless ages rises to do him honor. He is higher than all angels, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of his kingdom, and forever he sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

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

- What is our GOLDEN TEXT?
 How had God spoken unto the fathers?
 Through whom did he afterward speak?
 What was the Son appointed to be?
 What had God made through him?
 What is said of Jesus in verse 3?
 To whom is Jesus declared to be superior?

2. His Great Glory, v. 5-9.

- How does the apostle prove this?
 Repeat the texts quoted in verse 5.
 What text concerning the second coming of our Lord is given in verse 6?
 What does God say of the angels?
 What does he say of his Son?
 What does Christ love and what does he hate?

Practical Teachings.

How does this lesson teach—

1. The greatness of the revelation made in Christ?
2. The greatness of the atonement made by Christ?
3. The greatness of the honor given to Christ?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- By whom did God speak in times past?
 By whom has he spoken in these last days?
 How does he speak to us by his Son? **Jesus came and lived among us.**
 How can we learn how he lived and died? **By the story of his life.**
 Where is it told?
 What do we learn in the Bible? **How to live so as to please Jesus.**
 Where was Jesus born?
 How did he come into the world?
 Who were waiting to welcome him?
 What did the angels' song declare?

How may we have the peace he came to bring?
By letting him come into our hearts.

How do we know that he came to help and bless children? **Because he called them to him.**

Was that call for the children of that time only? **No, it was for all the children that should ever live.**

Who are the happy children? **Those who have heard and obeyed the call.**

Have *you* heard and obeyed the call?

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

44. How doth our Lord set forth our duty to God and our fellow-men?

Our Lord sets forth our duty to God and our fellow-men in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

Luke x. 27.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

God's Christmas Gift.

I. HIS SON.

Unto us by his Son. v. 2.

Thou art my Son. Acts 13, 33.

The Son of God. Mark 1, 1.

II. HIS HEIR.

Heir of all things. v. 2.

All things into his hand. John 3, 35.

Joint heirs with Christ. Rom. 8, 17.

III. HIS IMAGE.

The . . . image of his person. v. 3.

The image of . . . God. 2 Cor. 4, 4.

Seen me . . . seen the Father. John 14, 9.

IV. OUR REDEEMER.

Purged our sins. v. 3.

By his own blood. Heb. 9, 12.

Bare our sins. 1 Pet. 2, 24.

V. OUR KING.

Scepter of thy Kingdom. v. 8.

Above every name. Phil. 2, 9, 10.

Government . . . no end. Isa. 9, 7.

VI. OUR GOD.

Thy throne, O God. v. 8.

The Word was God. John 1, 1.

Manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. 3, 16.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Our Christmas lesson is taken from one of the strongest and loftiest letters ever written—the Epistle to the Hebrews. It appeared early in the history of the Church, but who wrote it and exactly to whom it was written no one knows. True, in our Bibles it bears the name of Paul, but that name stands in none of the ancient manuscripts, and the scholarship of Christendom is gradually settling down to the conviction that the letter could not have been written by Paul. It has been called the last appeal of Christianity to Judaism—an appeal made while there still seemed to be some possibility of harmony between the leaders of the two forms of religion. Soon after it was written came the great uprising of the Jews against the Romans. Jerusalem was destroyed, and the slender ties existing between Christians and Jews were forever disrupted. The epistle follows a method of interpretation and of teaching which is very foreign to our modern methods. Nevertheless, there are passages in it (one of which is chosen for our lesson) which are not surpassed in all literature, not only for their divine sweep of thought and doctrine, but for their practical bearing on everyday life in every century of time. Our passage to-day is about a Messenger who, we are told, is the heir of all things, absolutely righteous, and yet full of loving-kindness. He carries a message which could not be intrusted to prophets or angels, the message of salvation to a lost world. The lesson presents a highly poetic and rhetorical view of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is, therefore, particularly adapted to the Christmas season.

Verse 1. The beginning of this epistle is singularly lofty. There is a certain rhythmic melody in the words even when turned into English. The argument begins where both the natural and the supernatural begin, with **God**. But our attention is not first directed to God's attributes—how, as other apostles tell us, in him dwell all power and wisdom and love—but to his energetic endeavors for the salvation of man. The first part

of the involved sentence which we now study, rid of its parenthesis, is simply: **GOD HATH SPOKEN. Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past.** The Revised Version is, "Having of old time spoken by divers portions and in divers manners." Perhaps "manifoldly and variously" carries the thought; imperfectly, of course, for there could not be a perfect revelation with such imperfect

agencies as the "prophets" to write and the "fathers" to read. It was a horde of children in intellect and spirituality, but with fully developed physical powers and desires, that Moses led from Egypt to Canaan. The whole world was in its infancy, and God through Moses treated its infantile souls much as we treat the children in our primary classes. By a series of object lessons and fragmentary revelations he sought gradually to develop their minds and spirits. The whole Mosaic ritual was a series of symbols made up for the purpose of forcing the baby world to ask questions about God and heaven. Every act of Jewish life became an acted parable. The killing of lambs, the tinkling of bells, the burning of incense, the embroidery of garments, the muzzling of oxen, the fencing of roofs, and the thousand other daily incidents were made typical—that is, they were used to teach deeper truths than those which appeared on the surface. And those truths all had to do with the coming One. Thus Israel became in a true sense a priest nation for mankind. But the truths which the priests and prophets had thus instituted were "sundry and divers," unconnected and incomplete. **Unto the fathers by the prophets.** The "fathers" are the Hebrew ancestry. "By" should be "in," for the statement is made of the written word. The "prophets" here seems to stand for all the inspired writings within reach of the Jews. So that this first verse by its parenthesis asserts that the Old Testament is fragmentary and imperfect compared with the full revelation of God through Christ.

2. In these last days. At the end of these days. At the conclusion of the Jewish Church and State. **By his Son.** Notice that the word *his* is italic in the Revised as well as in the Authorized Version, which means that it is inserted by the translators to make the sentence intelligible, and that there is nothing corresponding to it in the Greek. Neither is there any article, as the Revised Version (margin) suggests, "a Son." It is better to read it exactly as it is written. He is "Son of God" in an emphatic and exclusive sense, and while there are other true sonships, he holds his sonship in common with none. **Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.** "If children, then heirs." **By whom also he made the worlds.** The Greek word is "all ages." (Compare John 1. 3; Col. 1. 16.)

3. Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. Or, "Who, being the ray of brightness from his glory (so in the Nicene creed, Light of light) and the stamp or impression of his essence." The Revised Version has, "Who being the effulgence of

his glory, and the impress of his substance" (margin). No man hath seen God any time, but the only begotten Son is his representation among men. There is a beautiful old Hebrew saying concerning wisdom which resembles this, "For wisdom is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness." **When he had by himself purged our sins.** That is, he did not make purification of sins by sacrifices and types, but by the surrender of himself for the sins of the world. **Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.** An oriental premier sits on the right side of the throne.

4. Being made so much better than the angels. "Having become so much better." In modern English the verse seems to mean: Our Lord's effective efforts to atone between God and man exalted him and distinguished him above angels and all other creatures quite as far as did any essential superiority of his nature.

5. Unto which of the angels said he. The writer is now appealing to the silence of revelation. It runs counter to some of our methods of explanation and interpretation to note that his quotations had in the first case reference to David and his seed. But it was assumed by Hebraic thinkers that such passages had a fuller application and a larger accomplishment in the Christ. **Thou art my Son.** (Psa. 2. 7.) **I will be to him a Father.** (See 2 Sam. 7. 14, where it is said of the seed of David.)

6. And again. Literally, "But again." **When he bringeth in the firstbegotten.** "When he shall have brought the firstbegotten." Apparently the sense is with reference to the time when he shall have brought the firstbegotten. **Into the world.** In the sense of the inhabited earth, not of the universe. **He saith.** The citation is either directly from Deut. 32. 43, where the Septuagint has the words, "Rejoice with him, ye heavens, and let all the angels of God worship him," or, by a slight adaptation, from the Septuagint rendering of Psa. 97. 7, "Worship him, all ye angels of his," where the Authorized Version, after the Hebrew text, reads, "All ye gods."

7. And of the angels he saith. Better, "While he saith to the angels." The citation is from Psa. 104. 4, Septuagint version.

8. Unto the Son he saith. Quoted from Psa. 45. 6, 7.

9. The oil of gladness was the symbol of rejoicing, and especially of induction into the holy offices of priesthood and royalty.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

The authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is in doubt, but the message gives no uncertain sound. The presumption is that, as it was written at Rome, probably shortly before Paul's martyrdom, Paul had some connection with its preparation. He may have written it, or he may have furnished the materials for some other person to work out, possibly Barnabas or Apollos. There are many theories concerning the authorship of the epistle, but while it would be a satisfaction to know definitely who the author was and the circumstances of its publication, yet these facts are not particularly essential to its interpretation. The author was appealing to the Jews and striving to win their allegiance to the Messiah, but the letter is adapted to all who have not accepted him as their Saviour and Mediator.

Verse 1. At sundry times. The Hebrews would concede the truth of this statement without the necessity of argument. They were familiar with the law and the prophets, and their whole history as a people was a record of sundry times and divers manners of God's revelations to them.

2. In these last days. The writer recognized the coming of the Messiah as marking a new dispensation and a new epoch in the spiritual history of the Hebrew history. **His Son.** From this point it was necessary to argue the case with the Hebrews, and especially with those who looked upon Jesus as simply "the carpenter's son," and who regarded his assumption as the Son of God as absurd. To the writer of the epistle the Son, being the herald of a new dispensation, was the bearer of a new message, which supplanted the old message, as the Son himself transcended the prophets who foretold his coming. **Heir of all things.** By comparing Col. 1. 13-18 we get a glimpse of the dominion over which the Son holds sway, and see, further, a valid suggestion as to the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

3. The brightness of his glory. The rendering of the Revised Version, "effulgence," is better. The word translated "glory" denotes "the resplendent glory of God's majesty as the means by which he makes a revelation of himself and claims the adoration of his creatures. In Christ this glory is received and concentrated in an individual, personal image, rayed or beamed forth, as it were, from the Deity, and itself, therefore, beaming forth its brightness in turn. This beaming image is then no mere mirrored reflection, no fleeting phenomenon produced merely for a specific and definite purpose.

It has expressed in it the essential being of God, just as the figure or image is contained in the die."—*Moll*.

4. Better than the angels. In his relation as Mediator he exercised a function in which angels have no part, and in many ways—origin, power, mission, dominion, name—he was infinitely their superior, although by his incarnation he who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" became "a little lower than the angels." **Unto which of the angels.** The superiority of Jesus to the angels is made clearer by the Scriptures which the writer of the epistle calls to his aid. (See Psa. 2. 7; 2 Sam. 7. 14; Rom. 8. 29; Deut. 33. 43, 70; Psa. 104. 4; 45. 6, 7; Isa. 61. 1.) The scriptural quotations continue for nearly the entire remainder of the chapter. With the accomplishment of his work as a redeemer the Messiah resumed his position of infinite superiority over the angels.

6. When he bringeth. The reference is evidently to the second coming of Christ, although some biblical scholars seem inclined to connect it with "a public and formal presentation of Christ after the ascension;" some "to some otherwise unrecorded and like presentation previous to the incarnation," and still others to a presentation "accompanying the incarnation." **All the angels.** (See Deut. 32. 43, 70.) Angels exist, and are not to be worshiped, but they render worship to the One who was "made so much better than the angels." *Moll* says, "The invocation of angels as ministers to our needs and mediators of salvation is no less irrational and absurd than the denial of their existence and of their employment in the service of God for the benefit of the heirs of salvation is unscriptural."

8. Unto the Son. The reference is to Psa. 45. 6, 7, the interpretation of which is difficult, but the sense is clear, and as the Jews accepted this psalm as applying to the Messiah, the appropriateness of quoting it in this place is apparent. The sway of the promised Messiah was to be universal. The Jews repudiated the claims of the Messiah in whom the writer of the epistle believed, and for whose triumph he labored, and they are still awaiting his coming.

Thoughts for Young People.

Motive for Heeding the Gospel.

1. We should give earnest heed to the Gospel when we hear it because it comes from God, who is the head of all authority. (Verses 1, 2.)
2. We should heed the Gospel because it

comes to us through Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, and the brightness of his Father's glory. (Verses 3-8.)

3. We should give heed to the Gospel because it gives to us the pardon and purification of sins, through the blood of Christ. (Verse 3.)

4. We should give heed to the Gospel because of the penalties attending neglect of it. (Verses 2, 3.)

5. We should give heed to the Gospel because of the wondrous works which attend it, works as great now as in the early days. (Verse 4.)

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The late Rev. Dr. J. A. Davis, missionary to China, in a paper read before the American Society of Comparative Religion, discussed the "Messiahs of the Heathen." Among the instances collated was that of the Hindu Parusha. The Rig Veda says, "From him (Parusha) was born Viraj, and from Viraj was Parusha produced whom gods made their oblation. With Parusha as a victim they performed a sacrifice." The great Hindu lawgiver, Manu, says that Parusha was the first male and was born Lord, by whom the world was made. In one of the Brahmanas this sacrifice is spoken of as voluntary and availing. The late Professor Banerjea, a high-caste Hindu by blood, but a Christian, says, in commenting on this remarkable sacrifice, "It is not easy to account for the genesis of these ideas in the Veda, of one born in the beginning, Lord of all creatures, offering himself a sacrifice of deified mortals, except on the assumption that it is based on the tradition of the 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'"

The Egyptians had the story, before the time of Moses, of the death of Osiris for the sins of man. In the tombs of those supposed to have lived before the Hebrews entered Egypt, to copy from Dr. Davis, "is recorded the strange history of human transgression when war rose between God and man, and only by blood was peace made." . . . "This son of God (Osiris) is born of a virgin influenced by rays of light from heaven. He goes forth to teach men a better life, and turns the nations back to faith and righteousness. But he meets with foes so vindictive, so mighty, so crafty, that he is slain for human sin. And then he passes into the unseen and nether world, where he becomes the judge of the quick and the dead. Yet some day he is to rise again. And the dying hope of the devout Egyptian was to dwell with the loving Osiris at last and forever." Osiris is reputed to have died when about thirty years of age.

These instances are given without any attempt

to account for them or to confirm their accuracy, or to give the original form of the tradition. How far later notions may have been read into them, how far the greater light of our own day may illumine them beyond their original concept, scarcely matters, as they are chiefly of interest in suggesting that they probably had their origin in the same ideal revelation, and they are dear to those who have nothing better. They are all illuminated by the revelation of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

Verse 3 speaks of Jesus sitting down on the "right hand of the Majesty on high." When Sir John Lawrence became viceroy of India and summoned the princes and kings of all India, to come for the first time into his presence as such, there was much difficulty in determining the order of the rank of some of these kings and nobles. One of these ruled eleven millions of people, another nine millions, and they were jealous of the traditions of their blood and of their great deeds and wealth. Each of these demanded to be seated next to the viceroy, and the contention was settled by a compromise of one sitting on his right hand alone, and the other on his left hand at the head of the long line of eighty or more princes and nobles.

By Way of Illustration.

Revelation through prophets. The prophets were the men who stood on the mountain tops, and were thus able to get a glorious outlook for their race and the world. But as the stars are above even the tallest mountain peak by many thousand miles, so Jesus is above the wisest, greatest prophet.

"*The express image of his person.*" In an old palace in Rome there is a chamber on the ceiling of which is painted that wondrous fresco of Guido—the "Aurora." If one stood underneath and gazed up in the darkness, one might get a faint sense of outline and color; but the strain upon one's neck was so great that before you could get a view of the painting you must drop your head. A few years later I went again to see the "Aurora," when the custodian led me to a table and bade me sit there and look down at the table. I discovered that its top was a plate-glass mirror, in which every beauteous line and all the marvelous coloring of the aurora were perfectly reflected. That was a fine device for revealing the fresco. For all the long ages past men have been trying to get glimpses of God, the fact of whose being is revealed in nature above and below. But the light has been dim, for "who by searching can find out God?" But now, at last, God has sent forth his Son,

"the express image of his person, and the very brightness of his glory," in whom the Father is perfectly revealed.—*Pentecost.*

The voice. I went to hear the most wonderful organ in the world, and it was played by a master. How those wonderful sounds throbbed around us and helped us in imagination to see all that was told through that marvelous instrument! We had tempests and storms and battles and tumults. And then suddenly in the midst of the tempest there sounded a beautiful voice, a human voice, I thought it to be, and it rose on the wings of sound over all the hurricanes, and before it the tumult melted into sweetest harmony. It was the human-voice stop. Amidst the crash of kingdoms and thrones, amidst panics and fears, one Voice, and it was a divine-human voice, has been able to quiet the storms and bring harmony to the world. God hath spoken to us by his Son.—*E. P. Hood.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

It is good to "rest beside the weary road" of sin and defeat over which we have come in the histories of Israel and Judah, and hear the angels sing, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Jeremiah heard the far-away notes of this song above the discords of Jerusalem and the wails of the captivity. He prophesied: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHT-ROUSNESS." And, "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." Was ever a sweeter Christmas carol sung? I wish every Jew could hear it, and rejoice in its promise. Would you not like to tell it so that all might know? The Christmas bells ring out the blessed tidings; the Restorer has come; his word is sure and will be fulfilled as truly as was the word foretelling the captivity.

Will you not pray that his scattered people may hear and believe? This day should have a new

meaning for us since our studies in Jewish history. Our interests are closely allied with theirs. We sometimes regard the Jews with prejudice and dislike, but they are a living testimony to the truth of the Bible. It is chiefly a record of their history and of prophecy concerning them. Through them we have received these sacred oracles. The man who wrote the words of our lesson was a Jew. This epistle was written to Hebrews. Jesus came from the tribe of Judah. He was their promised Messiah, and the Gospel was sent to them before it was preached to the Gentiles. "God has not cast away his people which he foreknew." "All Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

In studying this lesson with only my Bible for a commentary I have seen visions from mountain tops of prophecy; I have heard songs and laughter and shouts of joy above earth's saddest sounds; I have seen Jerusalem's restored walls of salvation, and her jeweled gates of praise. I have seen the glory of the Lord shining above the gross darkness of the people; Gentiles coming to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising, "as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations," because unto us is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. If he truly is your Saviour, you may sing your Christmas carols with a glad and thankful heart!

The Teachers' Meeting.

Two themes appear in this lesson, not detached, but blended together in the verses. Let us separate them and develop the thoughts in connection with each. 1. *A great Saviour.*

(1) He is great in his origin (verses 2, 3). He is the Son of God, the effulgence of his Father's glory, the manifestation of his person, higher than the angels. Yet he became our Saviour! (2) He is great in his power (verse 3). He made the world, and he sustains the world. Yet he was willing to renounce all to save us! (3) He is great in his self-surrender (verse 3). He "made purification for sins," not by offering a sacrifice, but by offering himself, giving his own blood to save us. (4) He is great in his present exaltation (verse 3). Having given himself to die, and risen again, he has ascended once more to his throne, and sits at God's right hand, bearing the name that is above every name. (5) He is great in his glorious return (verse 6). "When he again bringeth in the firstborn." The Revised

Version contains a reference to the Saviour's second coming in glorious majesty, attended by the angels. (6) He is great in his eternal rule (verse 8). His throne and scepter are forever, and his kingdom shall never pass away. 2. *A great salvation.* (1) The Gospel salvation is great because it comes from God (verse 1). Its origin is in the throne of the universe. (2) It is great in the preparation made for it (verse 1). For thousands of years the prophets were preparing the way and lifting up the people to a readiness for the Gospel. (3) It is great because proclaimed by God's Son (verse 2). The loftiest Being in the universe stoops from his throne and brings salvation to guilty men. (4) It is great because of its purifying work (verse 3). Its purpose is to take away sin, to make men pure; and this work it accomplishes for multitudes. Thousands can say, "He has taken away my sins!" (5) It is great in its responsibilities (chapter 2, verse 1). It requires us to give earnest heed lest we drift away from its opportunities and lose them. (6) It is great because of its penalties (verses 2, 3). There is just recompense of reward to those who neglect its call, a punishment all the greater because the neglect shows contempt of God. (7) It is great because of the miracles attending it (verse 4). Its truth is attested by mighty works of salvation from sin and transformation of character now.

Before the Class.

Introduction. Our Christmas lesson for this year is taken from the Epistle to the Hebrews, "a mighty work . . . the last appeal of Christianity to Judaism." The author of this epistle is not known, but there is no question as to the message which the book contains and that it is rightly placed in the canon.

Development of the text. Place upon the blackboard the subject, "God's Christmas Gift," and consider the verses of the lesson under the three heads: 1. The loving Father; 2. The sacrificing Son; 3. The glorious kingdom.

1. *The loving Father.* From the moment sin entered into the world God in his love for his children has exerted himself to win them back to an allegiance to himself and to his standards of righteousness. The first two verses of our lesson summarize what has been done for us in the way of revealing God's will to us. There have been many prophets and many forms of revelation, "law and prophecy, doctrine and exhortation, warning and consolation, threatening and promise in the prophetic discourse." The last and greatest revelation was through his Son Jesus Christ. Draw out from the class thoughts as to

ways in which God has shown himself as a loving father, such as (a) In his laws; (b) In his warnings; (c) In his punishments; (d) In his long-suffering; (e) In his promises and their fulfillment; (f) In his providings, etc., leading the class up to an appreciation of the greatest manifestation of his love in the giving of Jesus the Christ, his only Son, with the gift of life in his hands.

2. *The sacrificing Son.* In Jesus, the divine Son of God and also Son of man, we have a revelation of what it is possible for man to attain unto, for the time will come when we shall be presented to the Father perfect in Christ Jesus. The Christian then is (a) Self-sacrificing in his nature. Jesus gave himself and all that he had to his great mission of saving fallen humanity. Is the servant greater than the Master? (b) A revelation of godliness in his life. Jesus was the express image of God to man. So should his disciples be a revelation of the Christ spirit to all men. (c) Redemptive in his work. The Son of man "himself purged our sin," thus opening the doors of eternal life to the imprisoned soul. Our lives should be such as will help everyone with whom we come in contact to a higher and purer plane of daily living.

3. *The glorious kingdom.* The kingdom of God, whose citizens are these Christ-men, is the kingdom whose doors have been opened to us through the work of Christ. Note here that (a) The King is the Son, who is "appointed heir of all things." (b) The scepter is the scepter of righteousness. This is the ruling force in this glorious kingdom. (c) The duration of this kingdom is for all time. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and forever." Citizenship in this kingdom is what Christ offers.

Specific application. Briefly review the outline presented in the text development and emphasize the threefold nature of *God's Christmas Gift*: first, his love; second, his Son, bringing the gift of eternal life; and third, the glorious kingdom of righteousness, prepared for all who love his appearing. This gift is free to all upon the fulfillment of certain very simple conditions. It is offered to all to-day. What shall we do with it?

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Joy to the world.
Hark! the herald angels sing.
O little town of Bethlehem.
All hail the power of Jesus' name.
Tell it out.

Hark! what mean those holy voices?
Hail, to the Lord's Anointed.
Prince of peace.
The joyful morn.
Glory to God.

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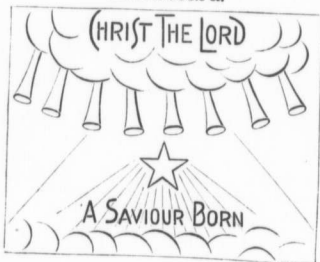
THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.—Critical works by Alford, Delitzsch, Vaughan, Westcott, Stuart Rendell. Expository, by Edwards's *Expositor's Bible*. Meyer, T. B., *The Way into the Holiest*. Murray, *The Holiest of All*. Rendell, *Theology of the Hebrew Christians*.

AUTHORSHIP, DATE, ETC.—Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*. Introductions to the New Testament by Harman, Salman, Dodds, and especially Glog, *Introduction to the Pauline Epistles*.

THE INCARNATION.—Gore, *The Incarnation*. Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ, Lux Mundi*. Otley, *The Doctrine of the Incarnation* is an historical treatment of the doctrine as held in ages past.

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 3, The post of honor, 686. Ver. 9, Anointing, 429.

Blackboard.



FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Dec. 25.

Golden Text.

Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. Mal. 3. 7.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Golden Text. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord Luke 2. 11.

NO.	TITLES.	GOLDEN TEXTS.	WHAT ABOUT.	FOR ME.
I.	R. U. A.	Help us, O Lord—	A Great Revival.	Seek the Lord.
II.	J.'s G. R.	In all thy ways—	A Wise King.	God's law is good.
III.	The T. R.	And the men did—	Working for God.	Love and give.
IV.	I. C. to S.	I heard the voice of—	Doing God's Work.	There is work for me.
V.	M.'s K. F.	The earth shall be—	The Kingdom of Peace.	I may help bring peace.
VI.	H.'s G. P.	Yield yourselves—	Coming Back to God.	"Return unto Me."
VII.	The A. I.	God is our refuge—	God our Helper.	Look to Jesus.
VIII.	M.'s S. and R.	If we confess—	Sinning and Repent- ing.	"Jesus will help if you try."
IX.	T. L.	My son, if sinners—	The Safe Way.	Be wise now.
X.	The B. of the L. F.	Blessed are they that—	The Holy Word.	Love the word of God.
XI.	T. to D. G.'s W.	The word of our God—	The Solid Rock.	Keep his words.
XII.	The C. of J.	Ye shall seek me—	The Fruit of Sin.	Sin is sure to kill.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The TITLES and GOLDEN TEXTS of the quarter's lessons are the framework of this temple in which we have tarried. Master them so that they can be readily recalled.

2. Note the time covered by the lessons of the quarter—more than three and a half centuries; from B. C. 951 to B. C. 587.

3. Make a list of the kings of Judah, and note which "did evil in the sight of the Lord," and which "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

4. Note the wicked sons of good fathers and the good sons of wicked fathers.

5. Observe how many reformations occurred and under what kings.

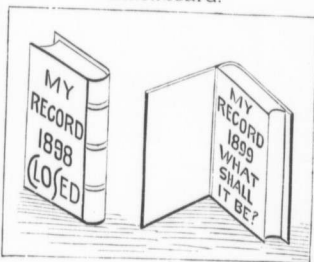
6. Observe what part prophets played in this national history.

7. In how many and which lessons is the word of God made prominent, and how?

8. In what lessons have women a prominent part?

9. What is the chief lesson that *you* have learned from the quarter's study.

Blackboard.



RESPONSIVE SERVICE FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER.

Supt. Topic and Golden Text of Lesson I.

Boys. Reformation under Asa.

Girls. "Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee."

Supt. Lesson II.

Boys. Jehoshaphat's Good Reign.

Girls. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Supt. Lesson III.

Boys. The Temple Repaired.

Girls. "And the men did the work faithfully."

Supt. Lesson IV.

Boys. Isaiah Called to Service.

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

Supt. Lesson V.

Boys. Messiah's Kingdom Foretold.

Girls. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Supt. Lesson VI.

Boys. Hezekiah's Great Passover.

Girls. "Yourself unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary."

Supt. Lesson VII.

Boys. The Assyrian Invasion.

Girls. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Supt. Lesson VIII.

Boys. Manasseh's Sin and Repentance.

Girls. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Supt. Lesson IX.

Boys. Temperance Lesson.

Girls. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent them not."

Supt. Lesson X.

Boys. The Book of the Law Found.

Girls. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."

Supt. Lesson XI.

Boys. Trying to Destroy God's Word.

Girls. "The word of our God shall stand forever."

Supt. Lesson XII.

Boys. The Captivity of Judah.

Girls. "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

LESSON I.

First Single Voice. We learn from Asa that the first duty of every man and nation is reform. The best preparation for the hard battles of life is in performing the daily duties of every day. When we have gone over to the Lord's side, as Asa did, we have a right to expect the Lord's help.

LESSON II.

Second Single Voice. Jehoshaphat's reign was a good reign—

1. Because he made his defenses strong against the enemy.
 2. He had his people well instructed.
 3. He sought the Lord God of his father.
- The Christian soldier should—
1. Never forget that he has an enemy.
 2. He should study his Bible.
 3. And depend upon the Lord.

LESSON III.

Third Single Voice. When the house of God is neglected and out of repair it is a sure sign of a decline in religion. We ought to go to church to give as well as to get. Giving for the Lord's work should be universal and enthusiastic.

LESSON IV.

Fourth Single Voice. In this chapter of Isaiah we have the whole Gospel. We learn about God, a Saviour, conviction of sin, forgiveness, consecration, a call to volunteer service, a hard service, and final redemption. The work of God's servants is often hard and discouraging, but there is always certain success in the end.

LESSON V.

Fifth Single Voice. The Golden Age of the Bible is yet to come. Only with Jesus as King will these good days ever dawn.

The Holy Spirit is the fountain of intelligence and truth. As the white light of the sun is made up of many colors and hues, so the Holy Spirit comprises all gifts and graces.

LESSON VI.

Sixth Single Voice. Christ's first work in converting a soul or in renewing a church is to cleanse away sin. It is our duty to carry the Gospel invitation to everybody.

We must expect that some will reject it. There will always be those who will accept it.

LESSON VII.

Seventh Single Voice. Lesson VII teaches us that one man and God at his back is stronger than Sennacherib and his soldiers. Both the king and the prophet worked as well as prayed. God sometimes waits before he sends deliverance, that his people may increase their faith.

LESSON VIII.

Eighth Single Voice. We learn from Manasseh's evil influence that sin is a disease which is catching.

Punishment is a school for training men. God's mercy is like the wideness of the sea. If that colossal sinner, Manasseh, could be forgiven, all sinners may be. He is an example of a great sinner, sincerely penitent and thoroughly reformed.

LESSON IX.

Ninth Single Voice. Lesson IX teaches us that we should not try to guide our souls over the unknown sea of life without learning from the experienced. No one is safe who enters the place of temptation.

This lesson gives us a strong contrast between the path of the just and the way of the wicked—the one ending in noontide glory, and the other in darkness.

LESSON X.

Tenth Single Voice. The reading of the Bible gives us: An awakened conscience.

More light on the path of duty.
God's threatenings.
God's tender mercies.
Men and nations cannot do without God any more than this earth can do without a sun.

LESSON XI.

Eleventh Single Voice. Bad men hate the Bible and seek to destroy it because it condemns them. All efforts to destroy God's word are useless. It is like trying to put out a fire by blowing it.

The injury comes to those who try to destroy it.

LESSON XII.

Twelfth Single Voice. The great lesson to be learned from this destruction of Jerusalem is God's persistent and constant effort to prevent it. The punishment was a necessary part of God's discipline.

There comes a time when no moral influences can touch the hardened soul.

There is always a remnant left. God's kingdom does not perish.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

The Waiting King.

WHAT if you had been at Bethlehem the night of the coming of the Saviour and some child out in the road had asked you the way to the manger in the stable? You would have counted it as an honor, taken it as a rare privilege, to have been the guide of that little pilgrim into the infant Saviour's presence. An opportunity centuries ago, is it not your privilege to-day? At this time of the year the thought of the nearness of Christ pervades all our life. The road to the stable of the inn runs along the very street on which we live.

That lovely feature of the incarnation, the childhood of Jesus, comes down to the humblest, the youngest. Bethlehem's street goes by every child's door. It only needs the invitation of a voice, a guiding hand, to make a connection between the children and that nearing, waiting Saviour. It is a beautiful ministry one has chosen when, catching the spirit of Jesus, it stoops to the little ones with loving arms, and then lifts them to the gentle bosom of the King. This is the time for earnest prayer, the hour for effort. It is one of the divine Spirit's chosen seasons for seed sowing. The hour of your opportunity is striking.

PRIMARY TEACHERS as a rule are eager to learn best ways and methods. A fine opportunity is provided for superior training in the Bible Normal College, at Springfield, Mass. Extension courses are offered for the year 1898-99, which are especially valuable for primary teachers.

There are three of these courses, each a unit in itself, but all so related that a student wishing to remain longer than the ten weeks in which the course is covered can do so to advantage.

The courses include Bible study, child study, general pedagogy, sociology and missions, and Bible school pedagogy. The expenses are very low, and it is to be hoped that many will avail themselves of this opportunity.

The second course for the year will open January 4, 1899. For further information address the president Bible Normal College, Springfield, Mass.

Food in Famine.

BY MARY A. LATHEBURY.

THE story of the natural creation is the story of the spiritual creation written in another language, and told over and over in a thousand differing

ways. The grain of wheat that must die, that it may live again, and the tree that springs from the root of the decayed parent tree—"as a tell tree, and as an oak whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof"—these tell a story of life springing out of death that we may read at every step.

The story of the divine provision for human needs as told us by the geologists is another nature story with a spiritual history within it. Great beds of anthracite lie where they were stored by the ages, and bearing the imprint of the forests which they once were, but which no human eye ever looked upon. They are the stores provided by a Father for a great world family yet unborn. He knew that they would waste their forests, while they increased and covered the earth, and so he stored his own for their coming needs.

The story of the earth is that of a human life written large. The Lord, who knows us from eternity, sees that before we begin to take his wisdom and righteousness to live by we shall be wise and right in our own eyes, and try to direct our own lives. He sees also that we shall miserably fail—that we shall waste our substance and begin to be in want, so while we are yet infants he brings all holy and innocent affections and stores them in our inmost spirit. He gives his angels charge concerning us, and

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

He allows mothers to be the chief channels through which he brings his love and truth, and later teachers may aid in a work that angels might covet. To bring the seed of the word, grain by grain, here a little and there a little, and put it away in the heaven-guarded treasury of a child's mind is a privilege that few can measure.

A little child wandering down an English lane saw a cottage door open, and ventured to stand on the little doorstep and look in. He saw a bed, on which lay a woman who seemed to be very ill. She was alone, and he heard her repeat over and over some words that had a strange sound as they came to him out of the shadows of the low room. She said:

"I in Thee, and Thou in me!"

These words carried no meaning with them, but they inclosed a seed that was hidden away by the Lord in the inmost soul of the child, and years after, when he had grown to manhood, and in a new land and among new friends was beginning

the new life of faith, the words that he heard as a child at a cottage door in an English village came back to him full of a deep and blessed meaning.

He afterward told this story of his childhood with its sequel to a visiting friend. His little daughter stood near him listening. She wondered what those words could mean that her father thought so beautiful, and then thought of them no more. Years after, when she also had entered upon the new life, the words came back to her, and they bore with them the same strength and sweetness that had blessed the dying woman in the English cottage.

Thus was a seed wafted over more than half a century, stopping twice to take root in the heart of a little child all unconscious of its nature, but to whom, years after, it became bread in time of need. Who guided and preserved the seed? Not the child. "I the Lord do keep it," says the word. "I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it I will keep it night and day."

Mother, teacher, have faith in God. He does not make you responsible for the growth of the seed; he only places it in your hand and asks you to sow it faithfully and lovingly in his name. "Cast thy bread (seed) upon the waters." "In the morning sow thy seed," and be sure that some time it will be brought forth by the Lord into the consciousness of him who received it for his regeneration and spiritual growth. Sooner or later it will be food in time of famine.

Everyday Teaching.

BY MRS. S. M. CLARK.

THE object of the Sunday school teacher is to lead her scholars to Christ and then build them up in Christ, or help them to live lives of truth.

Some think the lessons taught in the Sabbath school are like the clothing worn on the Sabbath day, to be laid away when the day is over till another week. Some time ago I had occasion to speak to a class of children on Monday. It was necessary for me to refer to some of the places made sacred by our blessed Master. The children's faces were perfect blanks. One would have supposed they had never heard of the Bible. I asked the question, "Don't you go to Sunday school, and have you never seen this?" (drawing the outline of the map of Palestine.) A little light began to dawn on some of the faces. Finally one child broke out with, "O, that is for Sunday. We learned that in Sunday school. I didn't know as you wanted that to-day?" The Sunday and Monday were two entirely different days, and the geography was as different as Greek and English. They had no idea the

countries remain the same every day of the week.

This is but one point in our teaching. There is a sort of Sunday respect, Sunday gentleness, Sunday refinement, which ought to be carried through the entire week. How can we teach our scholars that our Father in heaven may be approached at any time? In the church kindergarten we might very easily do it, but what can be done when we have but one hour in the seven days of the week? "If we would teach truth, we must live truth," not only on the Sabbath day, but every day, and then when we come in contact with the little one, a word in the right direction may be the means of changing many a life.

If we lived in the country or by the seashore, we might plan to take a walk together to see the sun rise. What an opportunity for calling attention to the wonderful goodness of God in permitting the great round sun to rise every morning to give light to the world!

Or, if in the city, a trolley-car ride might also lead us to talk of the wonderful control man has over electricity, and how God has given him the power to discover, invent, and control, always leading the child's mind to the great God above who is constantly watching over us. Opportunities are ours. If we neglect them, we suffer, and also those intrusted to our care. Let us, then, be ever on the watch to magnify our Lord and Master.

Difference in Primary Classes.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

WE who have taught primary Sunday school classes for a number of years are not this year teaching the story of the life of Christ for the first time. We have taught more than once of David and Solomon, of Paul and Barnabas, of Abraham and Isaac, and of many other characters in Old and New Testament history.

Very well, then, it would seem that after promoting our present class, with the practice in teaching we have acquired, with knowledge of new methods and, with subjects familiar and tried, we might proceed with our new class, as far as discipline is concerned, exactly as before.

Not at all! It seems that we must be born again for every new class which we take to teach. Look at the marvelous difference between these new children and our graduates.

We will suppose that it has taken us one year to quell a set of rioters, and to turn their animation, vivacity, and inventive resource for mischief into right directions. We have found them at the close of the year warm-hearted, impulsive,

eager, enthusiastic, and rapid of response, with quite a gift for memorizing and ease in expressing their ideas. This class was full of energy and force from the start; but it was a misdirected energy and force. Under guidance it has become a power for good.

We congratulate ourselves on promotion day that we have been such successful teachers. We have instituted a reform! We have gained a victory. We have promoted a noble class!

Wait a moment! Out of nothing, nothing comes. Let us not flatter ourselves until we realize that our rioters possessed noble qualities, and that the Lord let us find it out in time to turn these traits in right directions.

We feel like conquering heroes until face to face with a new class. "We will proceed in like manner," say we.

Note how we have braced ourselves to quell a mob, when here before us are gentle, inoffensive, patient, listless, inert, nerveless children. Instead of having our nerves shaken and unstrung by disorder, we long to shake the class, to shake a little life into it.

"Where is the ringleader?" we ask. Is there anybody here who has life in him? All sparkle and joy have gone out of our work until we get used to this class atmosphere of dead calm.

After all there appears to be a ringleader in the shape of a grandfatherly boy, who talks and moves as though the cares of nations rested on his shoulders.

We succeed in interesting him at last in lessons, and in turn he wakes up the class by the plodding patience with which he takes hold of his memory verses and undertakes to sing.

Toward the close of the year one or two of these apparently dull and lifeless members prove to have bright minds, but they have been hiding their light under a bushel of shyness, so that we thought them stupid and indifferent.

A few are going to make singers. One or two have an unhappy life at home; and all are thoughtful and careworn beyond their years, from one cause or another. They had been used to receiving snubs and ill-treatment, and our enthusiastic manner at the beginning of the year rather confused them, for, of course, they could not understand that we were undertaking to fortify ourselves against a mob, and we could not understand that what little spirit or life the Lord had given these children had already been crushed out of them by cruelty and mismanagement.

Our second class we begin at last to understand, when, behold, it is time for their promotion.

"We will have more sense this year," say we, and allow for differences in temperament and

home training. We begin gently this time and feel our way.

Alas! If we could only have an apparently lifeless and indifferent class, we would begin early to make their acquaintance, for we know now exactly how to do it.

We have an entirely different element in our third year's class, and do not know how to manage it at all. The children are bright enough, but they are not in the least interested in lesson or teacher, while on the other hand they are intensely interested in each other, and in each other's dress. A new bonnet or pair of shoes kills the lesson. They are a set of gigglers. They amuse themselves and entertain each other wonderfully well, but have no interest whatever in a Bible lesson. They are not noisy, they are not dull; but they are scatter-brained. We would as soon attempt to teach a class of butterflies on the wing. We look in vain to find in our third year's class any qualities of mind and heart to which we can appeal. Weighed in the balances they are found to be lighter than vanity.

But wait! A swarm of butterflies will flutter around a lighted candle! O that we had a figurative or spiritual candle. Here is our candle! Alas that it comes to us late in the year! Our candle comes to us in the shape of an apple-cheeked small boy—an odd left-over little man, who did not seem to fit into another class, but is handed over to us, as a sheep without a shepherd.

He is in his element here, for all the children flutter around him (insect fashion) and then bow down before him, and "tend" him with devoted love. All that he does and says they admire and imitate. He is an enthusiastic little body, and the vigor with which he recites his memory verses inspires the class with zeal to do likewise.

It is not long before all are interested and enthusiastic, not because of their teacher's knowledge and wisdom, but because a ministering angel has come among us in the shape of a chubby boy, whose eyes are shining with enthusiasm, and whose heart is overflowing with affection.

We bow our heads with humility, saying, "Of myself I can do nothing;" yet feeling that the Lord "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" in sending us this cherub who brings to our class the one element lacking, earnest purpose in our study—a purpose which his tiny ministrations we were, with all our teaching experience, unable to accomplish.

With the children of our fourth year's class we can be sure of one thing only, and that is they will teach us infinitely more than we can teach them, proving to us the while that our mightiest battles win for us our greatest victories.

Northampton.

Sprays of Holly.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

For this exercise select four of the older primary scholars to give the principal recitations, and drill any number desired in the general concert recitations and the closing song. The more children the better, if platform accommodations are ample.

Every child should carry a spray of holly. Let the little company come from an adjoining room at the sound of piano or organ playing a familiar marching tune, humming the tune softly, as they march to the music to their places upon the platform. The four who are to recite separately should stand in front. In the opening recitation by these in concert they may wave their holly sprays, and as each recites in turn the sprays should be lifted up at the close of the recitation.

Four scholars in concert.

Sprays of holly, sprays of holly,

Holidays are here.

Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas,

Crown of all the year.

No. 1.

At Christmas time our hearts are light,
The Christmas star shines clear and bright ;
The world is full of joy to-day,
And fair as this fresh holly spray.
These leaves of green and berries red
A lovely brightness seem to shed.
To show that all is joy to-day
I bring my little holly spray.

No. 2.

At Christmas time the bells ring peace,
The angels' song will never cease.
Good will to men, and peace on earth,
Sweet voices sang at Jesus' birth.
No harm can come, no fear of ill,
When Jesus whispers, "Peace, be still."
This makes me glad on Christmas Day,
And so I bring my holly spray.

No. 3.

The Christmas time is giving-time ;
"Give, give," rings out the silver chime.
Give love with every gift you bring,
And first of all love Christ the King.
Perhaps but little you can give,
Yet give that little while you live.
A few bright leaves and berries red
Some Christmas cheer may help to spread.
If you can do no more to-day,
Give some one else a holly spray.
By this I mean do something kind ;
Some pleasant way you'll surely find.

Like pleasant thoughts are these green leaves,
To cheer a lonely heart that grieves,
Love's gifts belong to Christmas Day,
And so I bring my holly spray.

No. 4.

Please do not say 'tis simply folly
To bring these little sprays of holly.
'Tis true they are not good to eat,
They will not clothe, nor give you heat,
But they are bright and fair to see ;
God loves bright things, and so do we.
They please our eyes, and teach us, too,
Sweet lessons that are ever new.
God wants us to be bright and fair,
And cheerful smiles we ought to wear,
And so, on this bright day of days,
We decorate with holly sprays.

All on platform may join in the following recitation, waving the holly sprays in rhythmic motion, which may easily be secured by previous drill.

In concert.

Sprays of holly ! sprays of holly !

Bring them on this happy day.

Shining leaves and scarlet berries

In mid-winter seem to say,

"Keep up heart, be glad and grateful,

Love will brighten all the way."

Song.

Air "Christmas," or any suitable common-meter tune. All join.

With hearts and voices glad

We hail this happy day ;

To show our joy and gratitude

We wave the holly spray.

Our God has made it beautiful,

And mid the frost and snow

He sets the shining leaves of green,

Because he loves us so.

On this fair earth the Saviour lived,

And all things good he gives ;

And ours are all things to enjoy,

Because the Saviour lives.

May he who came a little child

To brighten all the earth,

Teach us to keep with joy and praise

The day of Jesus' birth.

A little march around and off the platform may be arranged, the marching music of the instrument being in same key as the tune just sung, and the children may hum an accompaniment a-bore, waving the holly sprays as they march away. The interest of the exercise will depend upon the intelligent, spirited manner of those giving it. It should mean something to them, and not be a mere performance.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.
FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSON X. (December 4.)

THE BOOK OF THE LAW FOUND.
2 Kings 22. 8-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." Psa. 119. 2.

Primary Notes.

BY MARTHA VAN MAICER.



I once knew a lady who never read the Bible, and who did not want to read it! She did not even have one in her house. Do you wonder why? She had not been taught to love it when a child. She was not taken

to Sunday school or to church, and no one told her how good and blessed a book it was. Poor lady! Do you feel sorry for her?

Perhaps some one here knows a child who never goes to Sunday school. That child may grow to be like this lady—without any Bible, any God, any hope! Maybe you can invite this little boy or girl to come here with you. You certainly can talk about the Bible you have learned to love, and tell over the stories you have heard from it. If you do this, some one may learn to love it too. Will you try?

A boy king. Some of you have heard about the boy king of Spain, and have felt sorry for him, perhaps. A king has a great many burdens to bear. One of the good Bible stories is about the little king of Judah. His name was Josiah. Willie may come and print it to help us to remember. Josiah had a bad father and a bad grandfather. Some one may tell us if his great-grandfather was a good man. [Tell that his name was Hezekiah.]

As soon as this boy king heard about the true God he began to seek him. This means that he began to try to find out what God wanted him to do, and to do it. This is the way to seek God. He was sixteen years old then. One thing he felt sure God wanted him to do, and that was to tear down the altars for the worship of false gods. Do you think that was right?

Then the people had let the Lord's house get dirty and broken in places, and Josiah thought it ought to be made clean and beautiful. Do you think that was right? Do you not think this was a pretty good kind of a boy king?

The hidden treasure. While they were cleansing

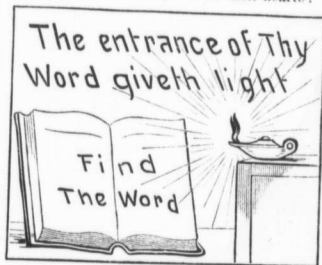
the temple something very precious was found! It was not gold or silver or precious stones, but something worth more than any of these! It was the word of God. It did not look like this [show Bible], but like this [show a scroll]. It was the part of this Bible which God gave to Moses. Who can tell where it is in the Bible? I will tell you the names of the books of the law. King Josiah lived six hundred years before Jesus came, so, of course, the treasure which was found was not so great as this which we have with the beautiful story of the life of Jesus. I wonder how many can say:

"Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine!"

[Show the blackboard.] What is a lamp for? Every little child knows that—to give light. Do you know that the Bible is like a lamp? It gives light to all who want it. It cannot help giving light, for you know "God is light," and he is in his own word.

Light in the heart. If God's word is a light that shows the right way to go, why is not every one who has a Bible good? [Print "The entrance of thy word giveth light."] Here is a room, and it is dark. There is plenty of light outside, but all the windows and doors are shut tight so that the light cannot get in. This is the way some people do. They shut their hearts tight, so that the light of God's word cannot get in, and so their hearts are dark!

What did King Josiah do when the word of God was brought to him? He listened when it was read to him. When he heard from it that he and his people were not pleasing God he was sorry and began right away to try to please him. He let the light enter his heart, and that is what God wants us to do. The boys and girls who remember what they learn here and try to do it show that they have let the light enter their hearts!



Jamie was a poor little boy who had not been taught to do right. He had learned to steal, and he did not know that it was wrong. But when he went

to the mission school and learned the commandment "Thou shalt not steal" he stopped right away, and when his wicked people sent him out to beg or steal, and beat him if he came home without something, he told them he could not disobey God! Jamie let the light of God's word enter his heart. What do you do with it?

Kindergarten Hints.

BY MRS. MARY J. CHISHOLM POSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Best Book of All. 2 Kings 22. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." Psa. 119. 2.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 2 Sam. 6; Josh. 1; *Literary Attractions of the Bible* (Halsey); *What is the Bible?* (Ladd); *The Cry of the Christian Heart* (Pressensé).

ATTENTION STORY.

The wise King Solomon had learned from his father something which helped him to understand much about the world and about people. His father, King David, had great love for God's word, this best book, and he liked to read it and find out its stories. He knew that it was given first to some people who lived in a wilderness long, long ago, and its first messages were written upon stone. When the people came out of the wilderness they had to cross a river, but they thought God's word so precious that they must take it with them. There were not any steamboats or ferryboats then; but the people must cross a river, so they made a box of fine cedar wood and covered it with gold. Then they made forms of two angels kneeling with their wings touching each other and placed these upon the top of the box. Inside was their one precious Bible. The minister told some other ministers to walk before the people and carry the box, then all the people followed. Do you think any harm came to them or to the precious box? No; as soon as their feet touched the water it waited for them to pass over safely. Here is the story. [Read Josh. 3. 6, 11-17.] After that, when David was king, and lived in the country where the box and the book were kept, he must go up to the great city of Jerusalem to live and to rule. He could not go without the Bible because he had learned to love it; so he planned to have a new cart and oxen take it where he went. He wished all the people to give welcome to the book because it was to be in Jerusalem. The people sang and the king made a new song for them, while all their hearts were very glad. [Read 2 Sam. 6. 1-5.] After that many people forgot the book, and forgetting God's messages, they prayed to idols; but all the time the book was kept safely in the temple, though it was forgotten. One day a long time afterward, when another king reigned, a minister found the book. He was very glad, and he did not keep the good news all to himself, but he told another man, who told the king and read it to him. [Read 2 Kings 22. 8-10.]

Explain unusual words, such as "oversight," "scribe," "delivered," etc.

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Make clear the beautiful story of the revelation of the word. By reading the chapters indicated in the "Aids" above the teacher may get the story within her heart and then her lips will give it ready utterance. The need of the world to-day is great; people must have the book now, for without it we live in darkness. Each day in the circle of kindergarten freshen the narrative by speaking of the "lamp" to his feet and the "light" to his path which the king David found it to be. Impress the fact that now we may do as did Hilkiah and Shaphan—give it to others with readiness and with joy.

NATURE TALK. The season affords topics. The children may talk of water in its different forms—of dew in summer, then hoar or white frost, heavy frost, and ice when the cold winter days come. It will be interesting to learn of the people who live in very cold countries, and to know how the girls and boys there have pleasures. The customs of these people show that their needs and their pleasures are provided for by the loving Father, who loves all his children. The little children living in the cold countries of the north wear fur clothing, and use dogs and reindeer as we use horses. They are very happy and enjoy their life, but they as well as we need the book which tells us of our Father and teaches us how we may please him. The children of the north land like winter, and they live in little queer houses, with ice where we have gardens, just outside their doors.

HAND WORK. The children in kindergarten may get different leaves or sprigs of trees which they can find, and they may outline these on their slates or on paper. How many pine leaves are in a single cluster on a stem? This may be indicated with the sticks in stick-laying.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Talk of the pleasure and the duty of telling others about the book, as Hilkiah and Shaphan told the people and read it to them. It is unselfish and right to do what we may be able to send the good news of the sacred book to everyone all over God's beautiful world.

LESSON XI. (December 11.)

TRYING TO DESTROY GOD'S WORD. Jer. 36. 20-32.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The word of our God shall stand forever." Isa. 40. 8.

Primary Notes.

A little heathen girl in India once found a piece of paper on the ground upon which was

printed "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." She did not know what it meant, but she asked everyone she saw until some one told her to go to the missionary, and she did, and learned the beautiful story of salvation. It



was such a little bit of the word of God, but it was enough to teach her the way to heaven! When the word of God is so precious how careful we ought to be to love it and show it great honor! This lesson tells a sad story of the way some people tried to destroy God's holy word.

Lesson plan. To show that the word of God is worth more than anything in the world. That it is very foolish and wicked to try to destroy it. That the one who tries to do this will himself be destroyed.

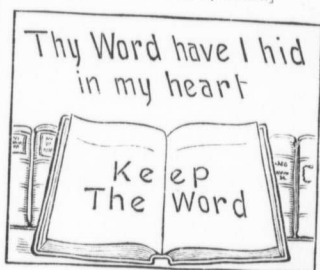
1. There are a great many beautiful and precious things in the world. [Ask children to think and tell what is the most precious thing they ever saw. The teacher may tell of some of the costly and beautiful things in the world, and then say that she has here something worth more than all other things. Show the Bible, and tell some reasons why it is so valuable—it is a light to show the way, a support to hold us up, worth more to us than thousands of gold and silver, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, etc.]

2. The lesson tells how a foolish man once tried to destroy God's word. He was a king, and ought to have known better than to do such a foolish thing. [Tell the story of Jehoiakim, the bad son of good King Joash.] Do you wonder why he wanted to destroy God's word? It was because he did not want to live by it and keep it in his heart. One day, when Freddy had been naughty, and his mamma talked to him about it, he pulled away, and said, "Talk about something else!" He did not want to hear about his naughtiness, and just so Jehoiakim did not want to hear about his wickedness. He thought if he took the roll and cut it with his penknife and burned it in the fire, that would be the end of it! [Show what the roll was like, and how easy it was to seem to destroy it.] Very likely the king felt pleased when he saw the bright blaze eating up the parchment. It must be that he did not know our beautiful Golden Text. Do you know it? If you learn it now while you are young and hide it away in your heart, you will never make such a mistake as this king did.

3. There are some people now who try to destroy God's word by saying that they do not believe

it. So they never look at it, and when they see others reading it and obeying it they laugh at them! There was such a man once whose little daughter went to Sunday school and had a card given to her with these words printed upon it, "God is everywhere." When she showed it to her father he told her that was not right, and that he would make her one that was right. So he printed in big letters "God is nowhere." She took it and spelled it out, and ran to him, saying: "Papa, this is better than the other one. See, it says, 'God is now here!'" Yes, God is right here, and his word will last forever and forever! But the people who try to destroy it will themselves be destroyed, not because God wants them to be, but because they choose to be!

There were two little sisters who both said they loved their mamma dearly. One of them found it easy to forget what mamma said, and so she often disobeyed her. She would say, "O, I forgot!" and the next time she would forget again. But the sister loved mamma so well that she tried to remember all the things mamma told her. She "hid" mamma's words in her heart because she had a real and true love for her, and tried to remember what she said. That is what we shall do if we love Jesus—we shall try to remember all his precious words and not destroy them by our carelessness or forgetfulness. [Show the blackboard, and teach the text "Thy word have I hid in my heart," adding the reason, "That I might not sin against thee." This is a good time to learn how many of the children have Bibles of their own, and to urge the bringing of them to Sunday school.]



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. More about the Book which will Last Always. Isa. 40, 8-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The word of our God shall stand forever." Isa. 40, 8.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Matt. 5: Jer. 36.

ATTENTION STORY.

Once King David said that the words of the book he had hidden away; he knew that they were words good and true, so he would like to have them all the time, even when he could not see the parchment and read them. He said that he hid them in his heart. That means he had taken them into his thought, and put them in his memory; then they became so dear to him that the warm, loving part of David, his heart, kept them hidden away. No one could see them or take them away from him, and the very thought of the words of the book was sweeter than the smell of a beautiful flower or a drink of cold water. Did your mamma or some friend ever say something or do something which you liked to think about? One reason why David hid God's word in his heart was because it would last always. What God has said lives forever and forever. A great and good prophet thought the word precious, and he said this. [Repeat the Golden Text.] Now let us say it together. Can you think of anything else that will last always? [Here the teacher may enforce that truth, "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."] The greatest and the best things are out of sight. Some of these (physical) are air and light. Our thoughts (mental), and love (spiritual), the greatest and best of all, will live forever. The prophet was so sure of this that he called upon the Church and all the people to tell the good news. He called the Church by the name Zion, and this is what he said. [Read Isa. 40, 9-11.]

Explain unusual words: "Withereth," "bring-eth," etc.

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Impress a lesson of the faithfulness of God to his word of promise. An illustration well suited to the children which is familiar to them always is that of the rainbow, which is a sign to people that God remembers his promises (Gen. 9, 13-15). Another illustration is found in Gen. 8, 22, which has never failed. During the mornings of the week the talk may be of different topics indicated by the lesson in Isaiah and the references given above. The one thought of the lesson is the stability of God's word, and every illustration and story should bear directly upon this. We may thus have the children rooted and grounded in the faith.

NATURE WORK. The talk in the circle may be of some seasonable topic like the cold weather, and what has been provided by a loving Father for our comfort. A suggestion of this is in the lesson in verse 11, first clause. The "flock" has sheep which furnish wool grown for their clothing and which they can spare for our clothing, warm and comfortable. The care of wool before it becomes a coat or a dress is a valuable sequence lesson. The rainbow, seedtime and harvest, day, night, and other topics of the references given furnish the kindergarten more material than she can use for the work of the week.

HAND WORK. The children have abundant

topics to illustrate with the cubes, oblongs, sticks, rings, and sewing. The reference to mountains in verse 9 of the lesson is sufficiently suggestive for the work of many days in drawing, using the sand table, etc.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Talk of the Bible as the most precious book in the home. Mother's Bible and grandma's Bible are like dear friends to them. There are little children in other lands whose mothers and grandmothers have never heard of this Bible. We would like to have them hear of God's word and know its sweet, comforting promises. Can we do something to help them? Will we? Homes are brighter and people are happier where this book is read and loved, and where the people of the family like to do as the book tells us is right.

LESSON XII. (December 18.)

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH. Jer. 52. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. 29, 13.

Primary Notes.



One day Frank had been disobedient and had taken something that his mother told him not to touch. "But, mamma," he said, "my little hands forgot!" "Then the little hands must be taught to remember," said mamma, gravely, and she tied them fast behind his back. Frank did not like this very well, and when Arthur, his little friend from across the street, came to get him to go out and play Frank felt very unhappy. It is not pleasant to be in captivity, is it? But Frank would not have been a captive if he had only obeyed. He had to be punished to teach him how bad a thing sin is. Our lesson to-day is about the kingdom of Judah, which disobeyed God, and had to go into captivity to learn that God must be obeyed.

REVIEW. [Recall the names of some of the kings of Judah. The children will remember how some of the kings of Judah were good men and tried to help the people to love and serve God. Then others came who did not care for God and his law, and the people would follow them instead of following God only. Tell that God had many times sent word to them by the prophets that he would have to punish them, but they did not think he would. Do you not think they were very foolish?]

[Print at the top of the board the word "Obey" in very large letters. Below it print "The Word."]

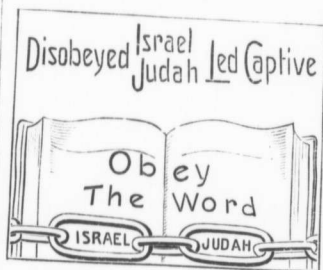
God said this many times to his people of the kingdom of Israel. He said it to the people of Judah too, and he told them if they disobeyed, they would be led away captive. [Make two chains on the board, and let children tell if the people of Israel obeyed God. Print in the links of one chain "Israel," and in the links of the other "Judah."]

Why was little Frank in captivity? Yes; because he disobeyed. Why were Israel and Judah both in captivity? Because they disobeyed. What happens to people now who disobey? They become captives. [Tell the lesson story in a few words, showing that God allowed a heathen nation to carry his people away into captivity to teach them how evil a thing it was to disobey him.] When people go away from God now and are made captive by Satan God still gives them a chance to come back to him and begin again. When Frank's mamma punished him it was because she loved him and wanted him to learn to do right. That is the reason God punishes us when we do wrong.

Here is another chain—a long one. [Make links rapidly as you talk.] What is a chain for? Yes; it is used to bind, and the chain we are making now is one that binds to our great enemy, Satan! I will put a letter in each one of these links. You may call the name of the letter as I print it, and you will see how many can pronounce the long word these letters spell. Yes; it is "Disobedience," and it binds fast to Satan now just as it did in the days when Zedekiah lived! Frank's mamma did not want him to learn to disobey her, lest he should learn to disobey God some day. The boy who obeys his mother and father is much more likely to obey God than one who disobeys. Will you not think when you are tempted to disobey, "If I do this, I am making a link in the chain that will bind me to Satan?" Who is willing to be Satan's slave? Not one, I hope!

But there is a chain (and we can make it if we will) that binds to a good and loving Master. We will make the chain of obedience now, and as you look at the two chains and think about them will you not choose which one you will have for your own? Little folks are making links every day in their chain, and God looks down and sees what the letters in the links spell. What have our lessons been about lately? Yes; about the word. To-day we learn that God wants us to obey the word. Last Sunday we learned to keep the Word, and the Sunday before that to find the Word. Who is the Word? Jesus

is his name, and the Golden Text tells how to find him. [Teach the Golden Text, making the old story very plain and simple, as though it were to be your last opportunity, as indeed it may be with some little one!]



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Great Promise, Jer. 29. 11-13; Isa. 35. 4.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. 29. 13.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Isa. 35. 40.

ATTENTION STORY.

The wonderful book which we have been talking about has messages for everyone, and talks of all the good things which make people happy. It speaks, also, of fruits, vegetables, and many good things to eat, but it speaks oftener of what will do good to our heads and will warm our hearts with love for all people everywhere. If we have pleasant and loving thoughts for them, we please our Lord, who said that he knew his thoughts and that they were of peace. He said, too, that we may speak to him and he will listen; and if we search for him, we will find him. Our Golden Text is about this; let us say it together. Listen to the other verses. [Read verses 11 and 12.] All through the book there are promises that some one should come who would teach people how to "call," and "pray," and "seek." He would be gentle and peaceful. One place in this book calls him the Prince of Peace; and once a great prophet told people not to be afraid, but be strong, for God would come. These are the words of the message: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come (Isa. 35. 4). All the people expected that some time this would come true, because, as we have found, the word of God never fails. They were looking for him as we look forward to our Christmas joy.

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Talk of the wonderful promises found in verses 12 and 13, also in the promise of

the coming Saviour. Lead to an expectant longing for him who was to come, and by getting the children in sympathy with the "hope" of the prophets and the people of long ago the lesson of next Sunday will have a fresh interest. Each day in the kindergarten speak of the eager out-looking of those who longed for peace and who needed joy, holding the breath and straining the eyes while longing and expecting a Saviour. The need of peace was great, and the teacher will realize this if she will refresh her mind with the facts of the history of Rome at this period. One of the many histories is Myers's, which gives much information in condensed form. Dwell on the need of peace then and now and always, showing that Jesus loved peace, and he would have each one of his children love it. He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Talk of the Golden Text as showing that God is willing to be with those who call and pray and search in real earnest, putting the "heart" into it, which means all, for the heart holds the "issues of life."

NATURE TALK. This season has many wonderful subjects for study, and one may be water in its different forms. The lesson suggested for two weeks ago, and the study of sheep may be connected by a little verse in Psalm 47, "He giveth snow like wool." This means that David thought the beautiful snow (one form of water) to be like the clothing, soft and white, which is upon the sheep. Even green trees may be continued a study. Their fine, pretty leaves, covered with frozen water, sparkle like jewels when the sun shines upon them.

ART WORK. Show some pictures of a winter scene and talk of the beauty of a winter landscape.

HAND WORK. The children may sew forms of snow crystals. White silk or thread may be used on dark paper. [Some specimens of forms may be found in the *People's Cyclopaedia*.]

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. It will be instructive and profitable, leading to gratitude for God's loving care, to talk of the warm clothing provided for beasts and for man. Dr. Hooker's *Nature Book*, used in the public schools, has much to say about the coverings for animals which God has given. Feathers for birds, fur and hair for animals, and all are cared for. God clothes the beasts of the field, and he cares for the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. He loves and cares for little children and for all those who are in the home. They all can love him and can serve him with glad hearts.

LESSON XIII. (December 25.)

A CHRISTMAS LESSON. Heb. 1. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2. 11.

Primary Notes.



Milly's mamma gave her a beautiful little Testament to have for her very own. It was a Christmas present, and Milly was very much pleased with it. Shall I tell you what she called it? Her "Jesus Book." She took it to church and Sunday school with her every Sunday, and she always wrapped it up neatly in her little white pocket handkerchief. This shows what care she took of it. Milly loved the little book because it told her beautiful, true stories about Jesus, and she loved him dearly. Do you not think that if we truly love Jesus, we shall love his word? This lesson shows how Jesus came to bring us word from our heavenly Father. [Sing or recite in concert:]

"I believe in God the Father,
Who made us every one;
Who made the earth and heaven,
The moon and stars and sun.
All that we have each day,
To us by him is given;
We call him when we pray,
Our Father in the heaven."

Illustration. There was once a very rich man who had lived to have white hairs without knowing that God was his Father! Of course he did not go to Sunday school when he was a little boy. We ought to say "Thank you" to God for letting us hear about him. At last this rich man was so ill that all his friends thought he would surely die, but he did not. God sent a good man to see him one day, and just as he was about to go away he said to the sick man, "Have you thought to thank your heavenly Father for sparing your life?" "My heavenly Father!" thought the sick man; "why, I did not know I had a heavenly Father!" He called his servant right away and sent him out to buy a Bible, and there he read that Jesus came into the world on purpose to show how his heavenly Father loved him and wanted to save him! O, how glad he was to find out this blessed truth! Every one of you will find it out, too, if you love God's word.

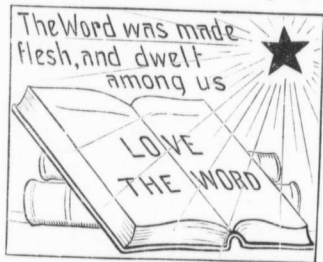
How Jesus came. [The telling of the Christmas story should never be omitted for any "program" whatever. Tell it to your children as though they had never heard it, and might never hear

it again! A little time and thought and ingenuity will enable you to produce a good Christmas blackboard even though you cannot draw. A star cut from gilt paper, a picture of the inn and manger, of the shepherds, and of other accessories if desired can be cut from Lesson Helps and fastened to the board. Then with some colored crayon for lettering, a picture of the infant Jesus, some greens, and a Christmas song you will be ready to make a vivid story of the coming of the Christ-child. Of course the story must be told out of a heart of love to reach little hearts.]

Do you like to think that Jesus was once a little child like you? Maybe you wonder that the great King of heaven came to earth as a little baby! But I am sure you are glad, for now you may be sure that he knows just how to feel sorry for you in your little sorrows, and glad for you in your little joys. If he knows just how you feel, then how easy it is for him to help you! [Sing "Jesus once was a little child, a little child like me."]

Why Jesus came. The sick gentleman said he did not know that he had a heavenly Father. There are so many people just like him! God looked down on all these poor orphan children of his, and he felt so sorry for them that he said, "I will send my Son Jesus to show them what I am like." And so Jesus came to show us the loving heart of our heavenly Father. God had been sending word for a long time by holy men and prophets that he loved everybody and wanted to help and save them, but a great many folks would not listen, and he thought they would surely hear Jesus! Can you tell me the name of some good man or prophet that we have been studying lessons about lately? [Help children to recall names of some of the good men to whom God spoke.]

Where Jesus came. How glad we ought to be



that Jesus came right down to the world in which we live! He lived in a little house in

Bethlehem. His father—what was his name?—was a carpenter and worked every day in his shop. His mother—what was her name?—lived in a small house like houses that may now be seen in that country, with only the earth for a floor. If Jesus had come as a great king, perhaps we would feel afraid to come to him with our little troubles, but because he was once a little child like us, and lived as we live, we may feel that he is our Friend and loving Brother. This is the beautiful Christmas lesson—that Jesus is one of us!

Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. A Message of Peace Brought by the Angels. Luke 2. 8-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2. 11.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTEN. Holy Bible, Matt. 2. *Overture of Messiah* (Handel). Read this if you do not play the music, and get in the spirit of the chorus, "And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

ATTENTION STORY.

Our last lesson taught us that God said he had thoughts of peace, and to-day we talk of the message which told that the Prince of Peace whose coming had been promised so long had come. The story about the message is the beautiful Christmas story of the shepherds watching their flocks of sheep one night when an angel came and the brightness of the glory was so shining that the shepherds were afraid; but the angel said those gentle words which are written in God's word, "Fear not." Then the good tidings of great joy were told by the angel and he told the shepherds where they would find the little Prince of Peace. Suddenly many other angels came and they were singing together about glory to God and about peace. After that the shepherds said to each other, "Let us go and see about this that the Lord sent his angels to tell us!" [Read with reverent spirit in natural manner and without comment Luke 2. 8-18.]

Explain unusual words: "Tidings," "host," "multitude," "toward," "pondered."

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Make vivid to the imagination the field, the flocks, the shepherds, the angels, the tidings, and the song. This anniversary of the birthday of the Prince of Peace is the greatest and best day of all the year except the Easter Day. Many suggestions are given for talks on the wonderful story. While the shepherds were doing their regular work the sweet surprise of this first Christmas morning came to them in the song of angels. The shepherds began to be missionaries

at once, for they repeated the message of peace, and this book says "that they made known abroad." That was just what Hilkiah and Shaphan did, and it was the same story. The priests, said "Jesus is coming," and the shepherds said, "Jesus has come." How quickly we tell good news, and how glad we are to tell it! Can you help tell the message to the children over the seas and on the islands? This book says that "all they that heard it wondered" (verse 18). Everyone wonders about it yet, for it is the most beautiful wonder story ever told, and the best of all is it is true. This story will last always, for you remember we have learned that the words of the book cannot pass away.

NATURE WORK. Talk of the sky and the stars. King David liked to look at them when he was a shepherd boy, and they seemed like his friends. No fairyland was ever so beautiful as the brightness of the night when the angels were singing to the shepherds.

HAND WORK. The little children may draw pictures of stars, and may make the form in stick-laying. In the sand table they may build a little city and form mountains around it. This will remind them of Bethlehem, where the Prince of Peace was born, on the first Christmas morning.

ART WORK. Show a picture of the Nativity.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. Talk of peace in the home and in the nation. After war peace is sweet. After hard work rest for the body is as peace to the mind. Dwell on the blessing and privilege of giving good news, especially this best news, to others.

"Angels sang a loud sweet song,
For a holy Babe was born;
Down on earth to live with men,
Jesus, our dear Saviour, came
On a Christmas morning.

"Joy and peace the angels sang;
Far the pleasant echoes rang;
Peace on earth, to men good will,
Hark, the angels sing it still,
On a Christmas morning."

Whisper Songs for December.

TENTH LESSON.

Hast thou found the word of God?
Hide it, child, within thy heart.
More than all the kings of earth
Rich and fortunate thou art.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

Dost thou love the word of God?
None shall take its truths away;
God shall write them on thy heart
As thou readest day by day.

TWELFTH LESSON.

When the night of sorrow falls,
Listen to God's holy word;
"He shall give his angels charge"—
"He shall keep thee," saith the Lord.

THIRTEENTH LESSON.

Wouldst thou know the Living Word?
Love his words, and follow them,
So within thy heart shall live
Jesus, born in Bethlehem.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Fourth Quarter.

SINGING.

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

Teacher. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

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

C. My lips shall utter thy praise.

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

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

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

GIVING EXERCISE.

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

C. Gladly and lovingly.

T. What has God given us?

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

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

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

BIRTHDAY SERVICE.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHING.

PREPARATION FOR LESSON.

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

C. A lesson from God's holy word.

T. If God speaks, how should we hear?

C. With earnest, loving, faithful hearts.

LESSON TAUGHT.

CLOSING SONG.

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

ECHO PRAYER, followed by "Mizpah."

Christmas.

The earth has grown old with its burden
of care,

But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and
fair,

And its soul full of music breaks forth
on the air,

When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, Old Earth, it is coming to-
night!

On the snowflakes which cover the sod,
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle
and white,

And the voice of the Christ-child tells
out with delight,

That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched
and poor,

That voice of the Christ-child shall fall,
And to every blind wanderer opens the
door

Of a hope that he dared not to dream of
before,

With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest may walk in
the field,

Where the feet of the holiest have
trod.

This, this is the marvel to mortals re-
vealed,

When the silvery trumpets of Christmas
have pealed,

That mankind are the children of God.

—Phillips Brooks.

The thoughtful and religious people of
Belgium are becoming alarmed over the
terrible increase of drunkards among
them. In 1851 the excise revenue was
\$800,000; it has now reached the enor-
mous sum of \$6,600,000. During the
same period the number of public houses
has increased from fifty-three thousand
to one hundred and seventy-five thou-
sand. In a recent discussion in the
Belgian Chambers, ex-Minister of Justice
Lejeune declared that "the nation was
returning to a new form of barbarism,
which could only be described by the
term 'alcoholic barbarism.'"

"In His Keeping."

W. J. HUNTER EMOY, M.D.

1. "In His Keep - ing": once a - gain Thrills my soul the
2. While I know my Sav - iour near, Life's steep path, ob -
3. Close en - fold - ed by his wing, Though I suf - fer

sweet re - frain, Sooth - ing sor - row, care and pain.
scure and drear, I may tread with - out a fear.
I can sing Of the joy his love doth bring.

4 He will be my guide and stay,
Till, at last, the shadowed way
Brightens into perfect day.

5 Then, from all time's trials free,
Kept by him I still shall be,
Through a glad eternity.

—Amy Parkinson.

Our Sunday-school Periodicals for 1899.

We are sure that the readers of The Banner must have noticed how much enlarged and improved it has been during the last year or two. Nearly a hundred additional pages have been added to the annual contents in that time. The piece of music on the last page has added materially to the cost of The Banner, but it has given very great satisfaction. No effort shall be spared to make it increasingly useful to teachers. Additional illustrations will be employed where they will be found of value. The Banner is by far the oldest Sunday-school magazine in the Dominion, now entering upon its thirty-third year.

Onward will also be still further developed. A bright serial illustrated story will be printed, and other improvements introduced.

Pleasant Hours will continue to be true to its name, and will endeavour to combine entertainment and instruction for our boys and girls.

In Sunbeam and Happy Days a superior class of illustrations will be employed, and they will be brought thoroughly up-to-date as papers for the young folk.

Dew Drops has been exceedingly popular. It has reached a circulation of over 17,000, but notwithstanding this large

circulation its price is so low that it has netted an actual loss hitherto. Instead, however, of raising the price to make it pay its way, the publisher generously trusts to the increased circulation in the schools.

Our Senior Quarterly has at once leaped to a success, and has increased in circulation rapidly every quarter since it was launched a year ago. It is especially the organ of the Home Department, which is growing rapidly in favour and influence. It, too, will be improved and especially adapted to the needs of our Canadian schools.

No change will be made in The Intermediate Berean Leaf or Quarterly Review Service. These are already as cheap as can be made for our school constituency.

The progress and improvement of the past is a guarantee that these periodicals will be kept thoroughly up-to-date and made as progressive as possible. If the winter circulation were as great as that of the summer the periodicals could be considerably improved. Many of our schools are closed in the winter, not only disorganizing the school, but greatly prejudicing our publishing interests, as the costs of publication are nearly as great in the winter as in the summer. Read the article on "Evergreen Schools" in this number, and let us have fewer cases of suspended animation in the winter than heretofore.

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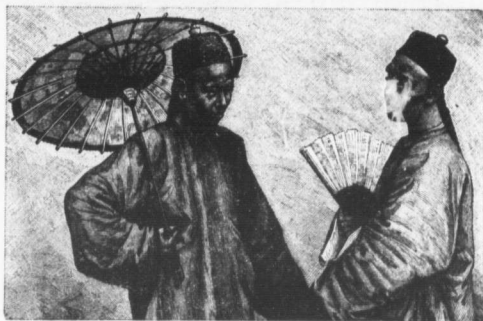
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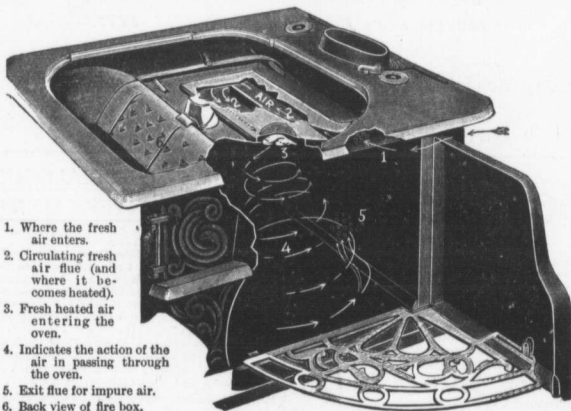
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