

# Sunday School Banner

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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Vol. 37

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 Our Enlarged Seni  
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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

for  
**TEACHERS**  
AND  
**YOUNG PEOPLE.**

Vol. 37

NOVEMBER, 1903

No. 11

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Take Time to Pray . . . . .	i
A Revival in Every School . . . . .	ii
Sunday School Statistics . . . . .	ii
Our Sunday School Periodicals . . . . .	iii
Our Enlarged Senior Quarterly . . . . .	iv
Methodist Magazine and Review for October	iv
A Stirring Appeal to Sunday School Workers	v
What the Home Department Stands for . . . . .	v
Christian Education—The Northfield Schools	v
Largest Reported Home Department . . . . .	vi
Sunday School Lessons . . . . .	vii
Adding One Hundred to a Class . . . . .	viii
Pastor and Bible Study . . . . .	ix
Heart Holiness . . . . .	ix
Sunday School Suggestions . . . . .	x
Mothers of Churches . . . . .	x
New International Lessons . . . . .	x
A Good Symptom . . . . .	xi
Multiplying Church Buildings . . . . .	xii
World's Fourth Sunday School Convention, Jerusalem, April 18-20, 1904 . . . . .	xii
Parting Words . . . . .	xii
How to Start on Time . . . . .	xiii
International Bible Lessons . . . . .	772
Primary Teachers' Department . . . . .	815

### Take Time to Pray.

Take time to pray, let no vain care  
Intrude between thy soul and God.  
The path of humble earnest prayer,  
His faithful ones have ever trod.  
When earthly cares beset thee sore,  
And claim each moment as it flies;  
'Tis then thou needst to pray the more,  
If over these thy soul would rise.

Take time to pray, thine own soul's need  
Demands thy first, thy chiefest care;  
For heavenly guidance daily plead,  
A loving Father hears thy prayer.  
Unnumbered evils wait around,  
And seek to lead thy soul astray;  
In prayer alone is refuge ground,  
Oh, weary one, take time to pray.

Take time to pray, the church needs those  
Who spend much time with God alone;  
Needs humble, trustful, prayerful souls,  
Whose source of strength is at his throne.

Walking each day in heaven's own light,  
They thus their Saviour's image bear;  
Care cannot crush, nor woes affright,  
The faithful souls that live by prayer.

Take time to pray this world's great  
need,

Is lives whose daily living prove  
To sin-sick souls, to hearts that bleed,  
The wondrous power of Jesus' love.  
If thou'dst be for his service meet,  
Wouldst by thy life his power declare,  
Dear soul, sit o'ten at his feet,  
And learn life's sweetest lesson there.

—M. Carrie Hayward.  
Corinth, Ont.

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**Sunday School Banner**

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

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1903.

**A Revival in Every School.**

THE keynote of endeavour for the winter months in all our Sunday Schools and Leagues is revival. For this great work the religious conferences, which have been held throughout the country, were a necessary preparation. The Scriptural order is thus: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." In all Godly sincerity and earnestness the ministers and lay members have been uttering this prayer, and have been seeking the preparation of the heart, which cometh from God alone. And God, who is faithful to his promise, has not failed in any one of them. The divine benediction has rested upon these services in manifold degree and the church is looking confidently for the further fulfilment of the word of grace.

The hearty co-operation of officers and teachers in our schools is earnestly sought. Let all the exercises and instructions, and all the teaching and singing and prayers converge to this purpose, and the year of effort on which we are entering shall be one of such power and grace as we have never known.

**Sunday School Statistics.**

The completion of Schedule G for our eleven Annual Conferences shows the following results:

No. of preaching appointments .....	4,693	Inc., 108
" Sunday Schools .....	3,431	Inc., 6
" Teachers .....	33,642	Inc., 246
" Scholars—primary classes .....	77,430	Dec., 3,172
" Scholars—intermediate .....	103,227	Inc., 221
" Scholars—adults .....	76,274	Dec., 510
" Scholars—Home Department .....	11,086	Dec., 1,088
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>268,017</b>	<b>Dec., 4,549</b>
No. of Scholars on Cradle Roll .....	3,911	Inc., 3,911
" Scholars in Union Schools ..	5,152	Inc., 415
Grand total Sunday School force	310,722	Inc., 23
Contributions for Missions .....	\$25,058	Inc., \$521
" " Educational Fund .....	682	Inc., 14
" " Superannuation .....	422	Inc., 103
" " S. S. Aid and .....	2,881	Inc., 41
" " Extension .....	150,039	Inc., 3,352
" " School Purposes ..	5,572	Inc., 5,572
" " Other purposes ..		

A grand total of .....	\$184,654 inc., \$0,603
Number of schools that observed Rally Day .....	906
Number of schools that observed Decision Day .....	560
Number of scholars who united with the church during the year .....	10,718 Inc., 1,019
GEO. H. CORNISH, Gen. Con. Statistician.	

The Sunday School statistics furnished by our indefatigable General Conference statistician, Rev. Dr. Cornish, are full of suggestion. Thank God for the great host of over three hundred thousand young people enrolled in our Sunday Schools and for the net increase, small as it is, of twenty-three persons in this army. Mark Guy Pearse remarked the other night that we begin to thank God only after all the losses and lapses from death, removals and other causes are made good, which amount to many thousand every year. We should not be unmindful of the great work that has been accomplished in filling the ranks. Still there is ground for serious thought in the decrease in the primary, adult and home departments.

How far the first of these is due to the enrolment of the scholars in the Cradle Roll we cannot tell, but doubtless some of the little tots included in

the latter primary departure

It is a fact that has been shown in twenty-odd years that the retaining power of the primary and other departments of our schools is

Home Department rapid progress of the thousand and the increase of this most

School work. It is gratifying

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Guardian of the press of the and Epworth

"For the report the Cradle Roll

efforts in the Home Department, and the necessity of this

creasing capacity is conleaf, supply methods of work upon the Board than the efficiency of



the latter list would have come into the primary classes were it not for the new departure of organizing the Cradle Roll.

It is gratifying that in the main body of the school, the intermediates, there has been an increase of two hundred and twenty-one, but the decrease in the adults shows that we have not succeeded in retaining the older scholars. The trolley car and trolley park and the bicycle and other Sunday amusements have doubtless weaned not a few from the schools. We regret especially that the Home Department, which showed such rapid progress and reached over twelve thousand in membership, shows a decrease of one thousand and eighty-eight. We hope that earnest effort to extend this most useful department of Sunday School work will be promptly made.

It is gratifying to know that there has been an increase of one hundred and eight preaching appointments. At each of these surely there should have been a new school, but we observe an increase of only six of these schools. We hope that, especially in the the great North-West, schools will be established everywhere in connection with our work. There is in many of these new appointments a union school, for we observe an increase of four hundred and fifteen scholars in these schools. This may explain in part the discrepancy in the growth of schools and growth of our churches, but not altogether. We trust that the ministers and our faithful and energetic laymen, and especially those devoted men to whom is committed so largely the extension of our work, the Chairmen of the Districts and the Missionary Secretaries in New Ontario and the North-West, will employ every possible effort for the extension and improvement of our Sunday Schools. The Guardian thus comments upon the progress of the year in both Sunday Schools and Epworth Leagues:

"For the first time in our annual report the Home Department and the Cradle Roll presented the results of efforts in these directions. The activity in the Home Department was very gratifying, and manifested at once the usefulness of this service and its great and increasing capability. The General Secretary is contemplating the issue of a leaf, supplying information regarding methods of work. Nothing pressed more upon the Board amid their responsibilities than the evident need of greater efficiency of instruction in the schools,

and better classification and gradation of classes. To these ends careful consideration was given to Normal Class work, for the benefit of our army of faithful teachers. Also to meet an acknowledged want of our youth, a Supplementary Course was adopted, requiring, say, ten minutes of the hour of instruction each Sabbath, taking up valuable matters as to the Bible and Church History not embraced in the International Series. The use of this Supplementary Course was adopted by the General Conference. It has been found both practicable and valuable in the schools of the Maritime Provinces, whose representatives on the General Board in these regards afforded invaluable assistance.

"The Epworth Leagues have very largely increased their contributions to the missionary work of the church, and have been active in many places furthering Bible study, especially in their conventions and their Summer Schools for the study of the Bible and missions, and kindred evangelisms. There is a marvellous arousing of noble purpose and a blessed fruit of achievement. Already there is a strong effort, both through our colleges and perpetuated and systematic institutes, to exalt these studies to a plane of usefulness, universality, and power hitherto unknown. All these matters are of so great interest and importance that we must refer to them again, and soon."

### Our Sunday School Periodicals.

THE Sunday School Banner will maintain its place in the foremost rank of Sunday School lesson helps. It has recently been permanently enlarged, and not only will copious lesson notes be furnished, but helpful articles, original and selected, on improved Sunday School administration, methods of Bible study, teachers' classes, institutes, and the like will be furnished.

### Onward

Increased prominence will be given in both Onward and Pleasant Hours to Methodist and patriotic subjects—the work and missions of Canadian Methodism, the resources and opportunities of

this great country which God has given us—the grandest heritage ever given any people—and our relations to the world-wide British Empire, the symbol of law and order and liberty around the globe. One of the serials for Onward will be a story of great power and intense interest by the celebrated Mrs. Alexander, author of "The Days of Wesley," describing in a fascinating story the days of Luther. The great events of the Reformation, which are grouped around the personal character of that most lovable of men, the great hearted Martin Luther, with his career from boyhood to serene and sunny ripe old age, are vividly depicted. The story will be splendidly illustrated.

Onward will hereafter be pasted and trimmed, so there will be no need of the subscribers cutting the pages. This small improvement will cost several hundred dollars a year, yet it is incurred in the determination to leave nothing undone to improve the character of our papers.

#### Pleasant Hours (enlarged).

Stories of wholesome and healthy adventure of Canadian home and farm life and a good strong temperance serial that will show the ceaseless fight with the drink traffic will be features of this paper for 1904. The Sunday School lesson notes in Pleasant Hours and Onward will be splendidly illustrated and will be a special feature of the year. Pleasant Hours is to be enlarged in size and otherwise improved in character, and although it causes an additional expense of some hundreds of dollars, the price remains as heretofore at the low figure of 25 cents a year for less than twenty copies, or 24 cents for over twenty copies to one address.

#### Senior Quarterly.

The Senior Quarterly is enlarged one-half in size without any addition to its price, which is already very low—20 cents a year. This is now a splendidly illustrated pamphlet of 64 pages and coloured maps, and admirable helps to lesson stud; one of the very best and cheapest in the market. It should be in every school. Send for samples.

Our other periodicals, Sunbeam and Happy Days, Berean Leaf and Berean Quarterly, Dew Drops, etc., will all share the continuous improvement, which is the aim and purpose of both publisher and editor.

### Our Enlarged Senior Quarterly.

The leading Home Department worker of another denomination some time ago pronounced our Senior Quarterly or Bible Study Home Department Quarterly the best of all the quarterlies for the Home Department. At the beginning of this quarter we added sixteen pages of reading matter, making it a quarterly of sixty-four pages, or, counting the full-page map and picture, a sixty-six-page periodical. Considering the size of the page and the matter the pages contain, there is no other Home Department quarterly to be compared with it. Notwithstanding this great enlargement there is no increase in price. This publication at twenty cents a year in quantities, or The Sunday School Banner, sixty cents, should be used in every Home Department, and, with such improved helps, the membership of the Home Department should be greatly and rapidly increased. Our Church leads all others in this department of Sunday School work, but we should double the membership in three months.—Adapted from S. S. Journal.

### Methodist Magazine and Review for October.

An illustrated article of much importance is "Rome Revisited," by the Editor, who also writes on "The Romance of the Fur Trade." "Glimpses of the Moon," "With the Sponge Fishers," well illustrated, are both interesting and instructive. Mrs. Lauder continues her "Distinguished Persons I Have Met." Booker T. Washington writes on "The Future of the American Negro," and Israel Zangwill on "The Return of the Jews." An interesting account of Jerry McAuley's New York mission is given by George Kennan. Dr. Burwash gives the second part of "Wesley's Doctrine of Christian Perfection," and Frank T. Bullen concludes his story, "The Apostles of the South-East." A sketch of the late Lord Salisbury, Current Topics, etc., make up a strong number.

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### A Stirring

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## A Stirring Appeal to Sunday School Workers.

At the meeting of the International Sunday School Committee, Dr. John Potts, of Canada, the chairman, said:

"All Sunday School officers, teachers, and scholars should be total abstainers and workers for the prohibition of the liquor traffic. The Sunday School institution is the greatest temperance organization on the face of the earth. It has in it a prophetic power that shall tell on the civic government and the general legislation of the country in such a way as shall ultimately mean the destruction of what John Wesley designated slavery, and what I designate the liquor traffic, 'the sum of all villainies.' From whatever view-point the liquor traffic is looked at it is the bounden duty of every person connected with the Sunday Schools to educate the children of the church and of the home in favour of total abstinence principles and against the liquor traffic."

This means much to the cause of prohibition. Over here were hundreds of Sunday School workers from all States. It is a victory to have the influential chairman of the International Lesson Committee lay out Sunday School work along total abstinence and prohibition lines, not only for one state of our country, but for all countries included in the scope of the International Sunday School Association.—Pioneer.

## What the Home Department Stands For.

A Sunday School without a Home Department is an incomplete institution. Such a school should awake from slumber and be wide-awake enough to add and effectively work this most important department. In regard to it Alice D. Hamlin has this to say:

"The Home Department has passed its twenty-first birthday. It has reached the age when it may stand before the world for what it is. It has a character of its own. It has a work of its own, also, which no other department can do. It has been defined as the church studying the Word of God. The Home Department has made that possi-

ble, because here the home, the church, and the Sunday School meet at one point. Hence, the whole family are brought together upon one plane. At the time of its organization the church and the Sunday School were gradually growing apart, and the home was drifting away from both.

"The lesson which is studied is the same as that used in the Sunday School, and consequently the entire family, whether in Sunday School or not, have the advantage of the same instruction. Father and mother being interested give the children impetus to learn more about it. The father and mother, thus becoming interested in the Sunday School lesson, will want to become better acquainted with the Sunday School, and thus very often whole families are brought back to the Sunday School and the church."

## Christian Education—The Northfield Schools.

HOW BOYS AND GIRLS PREPARE FOR COLLEGE.

Robert Ingersoll and Dwight L. Moody were contemporaries. Both died within a short time of each other. Both were largely eulogized by the press, though each stood for radically different principles. The memory of the former, however, has nearly passed away, while that of the latter is renewed afresh with each summer migration to his home, and with each session of his schools. Why this is so, is because Mr. Moody, casting aside self, strove to provide for the needs of others. Passing a hut, one time, on the mountain-side, he saw some girls, about the school-girl age, braiding palm-leaf hats. There was no school near them, and they could not afford to go away to one. After a few questioning remarks Mr. Moody determined to found a school for just such girls. That was in 1879. The school was Northfield Seminary. Two years later he established a similar school for boys, and called it Mount Hermon.

In the twenty years since then these schools have developed so that last year the total enrolment was about 1,200, representing not only nearly every State in the Union, but also many foreign countries. That these students are the ones

for whom the school was founded is shown in the report of the principal of Northfield Seminary, who says: "Two-fifths of our girls have no high school within reach, one-third are from towns of 5,000 inhabitants or less, and nearly one-fifth are farmers' daughters. Two-fifths have lost either father or mother, or both. One-third are girls who have done something toward self-support. Twenty-seven are paying their own way, and ten others are meeting their expenses in part, while fifty-seven more are being assisted by the Students' Aid Society and scholarships. Our plan is not to accept girls whose parents could afford to send them to more costly schools, nor to accept those who would be likely to prove poor investments."

The annual report of the principal of Mount Hermon School has a similar import. Of the 725 boys registered there, one-third are working their own way. This is possible from the fact that the average age of the school is higher than it is at the ordinary College Preparatory School, and because the method by which the school is run is to provide board, room, and tuition for the students at just half the actual cost. This opens a way for sturdy, industrious fellows to prepare for college, and smile at their empty pockets. The idea is not a free education, but an education possible through work. That young men and women are anxious to avail themselves of such a place is shown when it is known that at Mount Hermon the ratio of applicants to vacancies is four to one; and this year at Northfield Seminary, for every vacancy there were seven applicants. This means that hundreds of deserving men and women have to be turned away because of lack of accommodation.

As might be expected from a place connected with D. L. Moody, a strong religious sentiment permeates both schools. Daily chapel exercises are held, a well-established church is maintained, and in addition, students are required to pursue courses in Bible the same as in Latin or Greek. Character, rather than brightness, is the standard by which each student is judged, and not infrequently assistance is given to the more vigorous Christian when the merely clever student is turned aside. Hence a preparation for college there means more than the regulation amount of mathematics and languages. The goal, however, for which most students strive is the university or college, and such is the standard set by former students that there are few col-

leges in the east but are glad to welcome into their halls a boy from Mount Hermon, or a girl from Northfield Seminary. Nor is their confidence misplaced; four years of high intellectual training, coupled with the physical effort of self-support, and influenced by the healthy spiritual life of Northfield, combine to give a preparation not only for a college but for the best and noblest kind of life. And that is the purpose and first object of the Moody schools.

### Largest Reported Home Department.

The Church Economist gives the story of the great Home Department of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Sunday School of New York. Dr. Howard A. Johnston, the pastor, began the organization by preaching a sermon on the necessity and value of Bible study. Wise use was made of the names furnished by a visitation of the neighbourhood under the auspices of the Federation of Churches to persuade all to join the Home Department who could not be induced to attend the church or the Sunday School. It was found that many were willing to study the Sunday School lesson regularly at home for thirty minutes a week, as the Home Department plan provides. The work was pushed with energy, and the department now numbers 900 members. Three paid visitors are giving their entire time to it, in addition to fifty volunteer visitors. Some excellent features are in the plan of this department:

1. That the work is done with determination and energy. The department is not made a side issue, but it is justly regarded as an opportunity which God has given to the church for the extension of its influence.

2. Each member of the Home Department is visited at least once a month. The visitors give the members the quarters, and the like, instead of sending them by mail or by messenger boy, and the members are thus given the feeling that the visitor is personally interested in them, and that they are considered by the church as not merely nominal members of its Sunday School.

3. Members of the Home Department are not constantly urged to "come to church." This is no part of the plan, and those in charge of the work feel that

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while it is well to make very clear the fact that members would be welcomed to the church services, the disinclination felt by some to attend might be emphasized rather than removed were there to be a constant hammering about church attendance. The aim is to increase Bible study, and while presence at church service is considered most desirable, argument for it is not permitted to cloud the main purpose of the Home Department.

4. Visitors are instructed to and are inclined to make themselves friends of the families into which they enter. One of the paid visitors is a trained nurse, and she finds many opportunities to use her knowledge to do good and to make friends for her Bible and her church. Another visitor one day found a mother ill and a number of children crying for food. She prepared a meal and helped along till other assistance came. These incidents are just to indicate that the visitors "do what their hands find to do."

5. Where it is possible to do so, groups of members are persuaded to meet together in the home of one of them. The lesson is then taught by one of the visitors.

6. Once each month, on the last Sunday, at four in the afternoon, Dr. Johnston meets the members of the department and reviews the lesson of the month. All members do not attend, but the average constantly increases.

### Sunday School Lessons.

In certain quarters much has been said about the right kind of lessons to be used in the Sunday School. Some have suggested one kind, and others have urged the adoption of something very different.

This association has about forty-four members, representing nearly every church in this and other lands. It is interesting, therefore, to know the conclusions which this body reached.

At the meeting of these editors the question of having different passages of Scripture for different sections of the school, excepting the beginners who cannot read, was presented and debated, as was also the advisability of having an advanced course. The brief but emphatic answer to these questions was the

following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

#### UNIFORM LESSONS.

"Resolved, That, with great appreciation of its value, we cordially indorse the International Uniform Lesson System."

This was an emphatic indorsement of the present International Uniform Lesson System, and was the result of a careful and very exact study of the actual condition of the Sunday School world. It was not the opinion of mere theorists, but of practical workers who for years, and some of them for very many years, have been in close touch with Sunday Schools throughout the United States and Canada. After these years of consideration they believe most heartily in the International Uniform Lesson System, with its one lesson from the Scriptures for the school, but with a graded treatment to suit the capacity and need of each particular grade in the school.

The Uniform Lesson System has stood the test of many years, and even its critics admit that it is the best system for a vast majority of the schools. Critics err when they attribute faults to a system when the fault is not in the system but in the failure of people to work this system properly.

The fact is that few schools have mastered the Sunday School lessons in the six-years' course, and it is plain that if they have not mastered such an easy course, they would not be likely to master one that is more difficult; and if the average teacher does not do thorough work on the Uniform Course it is not likely the teacher would do better work when the task is harder. The further fact is that the Sunday Schools have hardly begun to measure up to the possibilities of the Uniform Lesson System. At the same time it may be said that the system never was better worked than now, and never gave as great satisfaction. Here and there may be found a few persons who want something else, but the schools generally approve the system and are trying to get out of it all that is possible, and as a result are having considerable success.

The Uniform Lesson has great value for spiritual purposes, and at the same time has great value in an educational way, but something more is needed, and that needed something may easily be supplied. To meet this need the Sunday

School Editorial Association adopted the following:

GENERAL PARALLEL LESSONS.

"Resolved, That in addition to the Uniform Lessons we also favor the use of General Lessons (commonly called Supplemental Lessons) which shall not interfere with the present Uniform Lessons, but shall be used in the same sessions with the Uniform Lessons, and shall present facts about the books of the Bible, biblical geography, biblical history, doctrines, and similar matters relating to the Bible, and which may be graded so that with great simplicity for the younger scholars they may pass to a profound treatment for advanced or adult scholars."

Supplemental is not a good title for these lessons, for strictly speaking they do not supplement the lesson. Additional Lessons would be a better title, but General Lessons is the best of all, because the lessons are of a general character, as the resolution reveals. Such General Lessons need not occupy more than ten minutes in a session, but in these ten minutes a number of important facts can be fixed in the memory, and, with a little study at home, in the course of a year the pupil will have gained considerable information, and in the course of six or ten years a vast fund of knowledge.—S. S. Journal.

### Adding One Hundred to a Class.

A year and a half ago Judge Going's class of young ladies was formed, with a teacher and one pupil, as one of the activities of the Belden Avenue Baptist Church, of Chicago. During this brief period it has had a remarkable growth. The teacher, Judge Judson F. Going, and the one pupil, decided on several distinctive things as foundation principles on which to build, and the first one was obedience. The young lady agreed to do anything her teacher asked her to do for the upbuilding of the class. Then it was decided that manners or dress of members of the class should not be criticized, that the good in each member should be looked for and cultivated, and that kindness should characterize one member's conduct toward another. With this as the "constitution" of the class,

the work began in December, 1900. Teacher and pupil began looking up new members not connected with their own church. In a few months sixty members were enrolled, and at the end of the first year over a hundred had been gained. As to how the remarkable work progressed, Judge Going writes:

"Our class has a somewhat remarkable history, beginning with one pupil in December, 1900, and increasing in numbers until to-day we have a hundred and sixteen members enrolled. It has been recruited entirely by canvassing outside the church and Sunday School, seeking particularly to enlist the interest of young ladies who were not attending any Bible class regularly. The method employed was to follow any clue which would lead to the discovery of any young woman between eighteen and twenty-five years of age. Having located such a one, she was called upon and invited to join the class. After she became a member, the next step was to induce her to co-operate and do the same kind of work. One of the most noticeable facts in connection with this work has been that very few to whom an invitation has been extended have refused finally to join the class. Of course, the manner in presenting the work has had something to do in accomplishing the result. The efforts of the original pupil and myself have always been characterized by prayerful earnestness, seeking each member, not for the benefit of the class, but for the benefit of the one sought. After the class passed a membership of sixty it was divided into circles of seven, each with a leader, whose duty it was to become perfectly acquainted with the home life of her circle, keep track of their attendance at class, and report to me reasons for absences from the class or its functions. The circles have just been reorganized, on a basis of ten members to each circle. Eight members of the class are now members of our church.

"Every two weeks some social function, either at the home of one of the members or at our class-room, is held. Having outgrown any class-room available in our church, a building adjoining the church, a three-story brick, stone front, was purchased. The lower floor, twenty-two by seventy feet, from which the partitions have been removed, was decorated, carpeted, and furnished, giving us an auditorium to seat a hundred and fifty, and office, kitchen, pantry, and

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bath-room. The expense of fitting up the room has been borne by the class treasury, to which contributions were made by public-spirited Christian men, as well as the members of the class. The House Committee of the class have charge of the rooms evenings, where music, healthful games, books, magazines, furnish a very open, pleasant evening's entertainment to the members of the class, and a place to which prospective members can be brought and made acquainted. The class parlours are open also to all the young ladies of the church."—S. S. Times.

general use a far better theme-suggester and quite as varied and appropriate to modern life as the morning paper with its reports of social and political disturbance. The common interest between pastor and people will draw them together in the field of religious training based upon common Biblical study as well as in any other field of life.—Ex.

### Heart Holiness.

BY LLEWELLYN A. MORRISON.

#### Pastor and Bible Study.

Why should a pastor take an active part in promoting and directing Bible study in his church?

Because he is usually the man who, of all members of the church, is best qualified by previous training for this work.

Because, by reason of every duty as a preacher, he is more able than anyone else to give time and thought to the systematic study of the Bible.

Because, both by reason of previous training and by reason of his work as a preacher, he is more able to keep abreast of the best thought respecting the Bible.

Because the air is full—for good or ill—of questions about the Bible. The young people in his church naturally and rightly look to him to give them thought on these questions.

Because if he is timid or lazy he will lose the confidence of his people, and they will turn to other leaders, often far less safe than he.

Because nothing contributes so much to permanently good results in church work, to steadfastness, stability, and strength as steady, systematic study of the Bible. The apostle Paul was a vigorous evangelizer and counted it his chief work to break new ground. Yet he spent much of his time "confirming" the churches he had already founded. The study of the Bible is a great confirming force.

Because to be studying the Bible with his church will furnish constant themes and material for preaching—preaching that will fit in with the thought of the congregation, command interested attention, and stimulate their own study. The Bible studied with the church is for

Burneth my soul with desiring and eagerness,  
Seeking for Him who doth come from above;  
Mourning my impotence, frailty and meagreness:  
O, for a mighty infilling of love:

REFRAIN:

O, for His pureness of motive and action—  
Sanctified purpose and power over sin!  
Winsome in speech, by inherent attraction;  
Glowing heart holiness reigning within.

Lowly I lie at the feet of the Lowly One—  
Here at the Cross—who was broken for me,  
Waiting, O Father, I wait for the Holy One,  
Promised by Him and forthcoming from Thee.

Come, Blessed Paraclete! Spirit of Purity,  
Come as at Pentecost! Come by the Blood!  
Thou art the source of all mortal maturity;  
Thou, the Essential Revealer of God.

Come and remove all the evil and wrong in me;  
Teach me the glory and grace of Thy ways.  
Come in Thy sweetness! Awake a new song in me,  
Freighted with service and fragrant with praise.

Toronto, Can.

## Sunday School Suggestions.

BY SECRETARY OF B. C. CONFERENCE CONVENTION.

I think that all will agree with me that the Sunday School teachers are among the most faithful workers in our churches of to-day, and still these same workers, from the very fact that they are faithful, feel that they are not as well prepared for their duties as they should be or as they would like to be and for years efforts have been made to devise means whereby busy people could acquire the necessary training for the work as teachers and officers in Sunday Schools. Several of these courses of teaching have come to me lately, among them the following:

The People's Bible Institute, conducted by the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, and of which Rev. Charles Roads is registrar. Address: 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The Legion of Honor Course, by Prof. H. M. Mamil, under the International Sunday School Union, and

The Chautauqua Normal Union, one of the numerous branches of the great Chautauqua movement, and of which Rev. Jesse L. Hurlburt is secretary. Address: Park Place, Morristown, New Jersey.

Any or all of these books, I think, can be obtained from our Book Room at Toronto, and information regarding the courses can be obtained from the addresses given. I trust that every Sunday School in our connexion will arrange for some advanced instruction of their teachers.

## Mothers of Churches.

The function of Sunday Schools as mothers of churches in missionary fields is strikingly apparent in the report of the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society for the past year. Of the one hundred and thirty-one new churches reported in the Congregational Year-Book for 1902, over forty-six per cent. of the whole number had their beginnings in Sunday Schools planted by the superintendents or missionaries of that society. Its schools are organized mostly in places entirely destitute of Christian institutions; comparatively few in large towns and cities where room appears for

more. Special care is taken not to intrude on ground occupied by other religious bodies. This work of patriotic as well as religious concern is carried on in forty States, but the most pressing demand for its increase, limited only by the lack of means, comes from the North-west and South-west. The Society favors the old device of "circuit-riders," giving a county or two in charge to one man, as desirable in many regions. The profits of the publishing and book-selling business of the Society, which for the last year has been the largest in its record, contribute to its missionary work, for which comparatively little is given by the Congregational churches. Forty per cent. of the entire contributions of the year came from the offerings on Children's Day—nearly twenty-three thousand dollars. The religious pioneer work done by this and similar societies of other denominations is of inestimable value, and deserves liberal support.—Outlook.

Such, also, has been largely the case in Canada—especially in our great North-West.

## New International Lessons.

THE Sixth International Committee, which recently met in the city of Washington, has decided upon the following general scheme of the Uniform Sunday School Lessons from January, 1906, to December, 1911:

January, 1906, to June, 1907—An eighteen-months' series on the Life and Character of Jesus, as given by the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

July, 1907, to June, 1908—A full year of Old Testament studies, the first six months taking up Stories of the Patriarchs, the second six months on the Making of Israel, or from Moses to Samuel.

July to December, 1908—The Words and Works of Jesus (or studies in John, logically supplementing the synoptic studies of the year previous).

January to December, 1909—A full year on the Expansion of the Early Church, from the Acts and the Epistles.

January to December, 1910—A full year on the Glory and Decline of Israel (or from Samuel to Isaiah.)

January to June, 1911—Studies in Luke on the Son of Man.

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July to December, 1911—The Captivity and Return of Israel, from Isaiah to Malachi.

There appears to have been an effort to disarm certain criticisms which have been based upon what have been regarded as abrupt breaks in the series of lessons. This criticism has been rather persistent and vigorous in certain directions, and an impression has been made, though we have not felt there was as much point in the criticism as some have supposed.

In the first place, the Bible is not like a text-book on mathematics that must be studied consecutively from the beginning, but is a book on morals and religion in many cases embedded in historic incident, and consequently may be taken up at almost any place. For example, one might begin with the gospels or with the book of Genesis.

Second, it is not practicable in the Sunday School, with its short weekly session, to begin, say, with Genesis, and in order go straight through the entire Bible. There is not time enough for that, especially when it is a fact that the average Sunday School scholar averages only a few years in the Sunday School. With such conditions, it may be wiser to take up a portion of the Old Testament, and then in a comparatively short period pass to the New Testament, or from the New pass to the Old, rather than to spend a long time going through the Old Testament, without any study of the text of the New, or devoting a long period to the New Testament without any textual study of the Old, for, by frequently passing from one to the other within a few years, the average scholar will in a short time gain a general familiarity with both. At the same time, judgment should be used in determining the time for the transitions.

Third, by passing from one section to another at comparatively brief intervals, religious impressions can be made just as certainly as the preacher can make moral and religious impressions by his sermons which are based upon texts selected here and there in quick succession, and without any special order from all parts of the sacred Scriptures.

It is time for critics who would treat the Bible as they do a scientific treatise to recognize the fact that the Bible is differently constructed and has a different purpose, and, consequently, must be treated in a different way. Indeed, some of these very critics are quick to tell us that the Bible is very different from an ordinary schoolbook, or a book on some science, and yet they are so inconsistent

as to demand that we study it as we would a scientific text-book.

In this new scheme, covering six years, there is one consecutive course covering a year and a half, and three other courses each covering a full year of consecutive study, leaving three courses of six months each. Doubtless this will give general satisfaction, and especially to those who have been demanding greater continuity. — S. S. Journal.

### A Good Symptom.

Dr. Oscar F. Safford, D.D., in the Sunday School Helper, thus comments on the increasing interest in the preparation of Sunday school teachers for their great work:

We note that several of our Sunday School Associations have voted to make teacher-preparation the principal business of their sessions this year. To no better work can any Sunday School organization devote itself.

No need in our schools is more urgent than that of adequate teaching.

Our present teaching standard is high; some say too high for the average of our ability. Our failure, therefore is, not in our standard, but in not more rapidly lessening the distance between our standard and our achievement.

We do not believe that our Sunday School teaching was ever of better quality or was ever fulfilled with more self-sacrificing faithfulness than in these days in which we are living. Yet we ought to be unsatisfied with our present measure of success. Our teachers ought to be systematically encouraged and helped. They need to be enabled, by comparison of experience and mutual touch of heart, to kindle and encourage each other.

When any Sunday School association therefore sets itself practically and directly to the business of helping our working and self-sacrificing teachers, who are in the main willing and even anxious to do the best they can, it is an encouraging symptom.

The more your religion costs you, the richer returns it will bring you.—Theodore L. Cuyler.

### Multiplying Church Buildings.

All the Christian world was thrilled a few years ago by the then Chaplain McCabe's telegram to Robert G. Ingersoll, who had declared that Christianity was declining and that churches were dying out: "We are building three churches daily in the Methodist Episcopal Church." Dr. Josiah Strong gives the present-day situation in the following paragraph:

Carefully compiled statistics show that fifteen new church buildings are being erected every day in the year in the United States. As to the part taken by each denomination authorities agree that the following figures are substantially correct: Methodists build three churches a day, Baptists two, Lutherans one and one-half, Catholics one and one-half, Presbyterians one, Episcopalians and Congregationalists three-quarters, and miscellaneous, which would include the Reformed, United Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, United Brethren, and Southern Presbyterians, Baptist, and Methodist bodies, one and one-half. The average cost per church building, including all bodies, is \$7,000. The average daily expenditure for church buildings, therefore, is \$105,000.—S. S. Journal.

### World's Fourth Sunday School Convention, Jerusalem, April 18-20, 1904.

Now, at the opening of the fall-winter season of 1903-4, I want to give you an idea of the progress of the plans for the World's Fourth Sunday School Convention, for which we are to sail in but half a year. To those who are preparing for an absence of a few months such an interval is not long.

First, let me say that there are to be two ships for the convention—not two from America, as has been discussed, but one from our continent (the "Grosser Kurfurst") and the other from England (the "Furst Bismarck"). The former is to leave New York on Tuesday, March 8, 1904, returning due Wednesday, May 18, 1904. A prospectus giving the itinerary, cost, etc., will be sent to any one not supplied, on application. The European steamer starts on April 1, 1904, on

an independent schedule, but covering much the same ground, and joining the American one for the convention.

The United States and Canadian delegation is formed chiefly by appointments proportionate to the Sunday School strength, numerically, of the different States and Provinces. Such appointments are substantially made, but some others may yet obtain credentials as delegates from the World's Committee, even if their State's quota is filled; those desiring such appointment should make their application at once, with deposit of \$25, to Treasurer W. N. Hartshorn, 120 Boylston Street, Boston. Of the remaining berths most are in the \$450 to \$750 classification. Certificates of membership in the "Grosser Kurfurst" party are now being issued.

All who have made deposits up to and including August, 1903, should remember that the second payment of \$25 is due September 1, 1903, and should be sent to the Mercantile Trust Co., of Boston, by whom it is applied on the contract for berths with the steamship agent, and to whom the final payment should be made two months before sailing.

The interest in the project on both sides of the water increases. Men and women, strong intellectually and spiritually, have been appointed, and are engaging accommodations. The cruise bids fair to be the most noteworthy Christian social event of our times.

I shall be very glad to hear from any one on any phase of the subject. On behalf of the committee, I am,

Fraternally yours,

E. K. WARREN.

### Parting Words.

God will take care of you. All through the day

He is beside you to keep you from ill; Working or resting, at work or at play, God still is with you, and watches you still.

He will take care of you. All through the night

He, the Good Shepherd, his flock safely keeps; Darkness to Him is the same as the light; He never slumbers, and he never sleeps.

—Havergal.

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## How to Start on Time.

Start a Sunday School on time even if you have to start almost a minute before time! The cure for lagging teachers and pupils is to have the teaching service already started at the hour promised. Just as surely as a superintendent waits five, or ten, or fifteen minutes, just so surely is his school going to be filled five, or ten, or fifteen minutes late. A railroad train scheduled to leave at 2.30 is

late if it doesn't move at that time, even though the conductor calls "All aboard!" and flourishes his hands, and tells the people to "hurry up." Until the signal to go is given, the sophisticated are not alarmed, and will not hurry. Just so in the Sunday School. The superintendent may ring his bell, call out for order, flourish his hands, and ring his bell, till doomsday, but the sophisticated know that "there is no cause for alarm" until the opening hymn is actually begun.—S. S. T'imes.

## LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FOURTH QUARTER.

Studies in the Old Testament from Samuel to Solomon.

**Lesson 1.** Oct. 4.—DAVID BRINGS UP THE ARK. 2 Sam. 6:1-12. Study vs. 1-19. *Commit vs. 11, 12.* (Read 1 Chron. chs. 13, 15, 16; also 2 Sam. 5: 17-25.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 84: 4. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.

**2. Oct. 11.—GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID.** 2 Sam. 7: 4-15. Study vs. 1-29. *Commit vs. 8, 9.* (Compare 1 Chron. 17 and Ps. 89. Read 2 Sam. chs. 8-10.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* 2 Sam. 7: 16. Thy throne shall be established for ever.

**3. Oct. 18.—DAVID'S CONFESSION.** Ps. 51: 1-17. Study vs. 1-19. *Commit vs. 1-4.* (Read 1 Sam. chs. 11, 12.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 51: 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God.

**4. Oct. 25.—DAVID'S JOY OVER FORGIVENESS.** Ps. 52. *Commit vs. 5-7.* (Read Rom. chs. 4, 5.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 51: 1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

**5. Nov. 1.—DAVID AND ABSALON.** 2 Sam. 15: 1-12. Study vs. 1-23. *Commit vs. 4-6.* (Read 2 Sam. chs. 13, 14.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ex. 20: 12. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

**6. Nov. 8.—DAVID'S GRIEF OVER ABSALON.** 2 Sam. 18: 24-33. *Commit vs. 31-33.* (Read 2 Sam. chs. 15-20.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Prov. 17: 25. A foolhard son is a grief to his father.

**7. Nov. 15.—DAVID'S TRUST IN GOD.** Ps. 22. *Commit vs. 1-6.* *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 23: 1. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**Lesson 8.** Nov. 22.—THE CURE OF STRONG DRINK. (World's Temperance Lesson.) *Prov. 20: 1; 23: 20, 21, 29-35. Commit 23: 29-32. GOLDEN TEXT:* Prov. 20: 1. Wine is a mocker.

**9. Nov. 29.—DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.** 1 Chron. 28: 1-10. *Commit vs. 9, 10.* (Read 1 Chron. chs. 21-29.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Prov. 3: 5. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart.

**10. Dec. 6.—SOLOMON'S WISE CHOICE.** 1 Kings 3: 4-15. Study 3: 1-15; 4: 29-34. *Commit vs. 12, 13.* (Read 1 Kings chs. 1-4. Compare 1 Chron. chs. 5-7.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Prov. 9: 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

**11. Dec. 13.—THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.** 1 Kings 8: 1-11, 62, 63. Study vs. 1-10, 62, 63. *Commit vs. 9-11.* (Read 1 Kings chs. 5-8; 2 Chron. chs. 5-7.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 123: 1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

**12. Dec. 20.—THE QUEEN OF SHEBA VISITS SOLOMON.** 1 Kings 10: 1-10. Study vs. 1-13. *Commit vs. 6-9.* (Read 1 Kings chs. 9-11. Compare 2 Chron. chs. 8, 9.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Prov. 29: 2. When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice.

**Or, THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.** (Christmas Lesson.) *Matt. 2: 1-12. Commit vs. 10, 11.* (Read Is. 7: 14-16; 9: 1-16.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* *Matt. 1: 21.* Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

**13. Dec. 27.—REVIEW.** (Read Ps. 103.) *GOLDEN TEXT:* Ps. 103: 17. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him.

## ORDER OF SERVICES—FOURTH QUARTER.

## OPENING SERVICE.

## I. SILENCE.

## II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [Prov. 15, 26-33.]

*SUPP.* The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord:

*SCHOOL.* But the words of the pure are pleasant words.

*SUPP.* He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house:

*SCHOOL.* But he that hateth gifts shall live.

*SUPP.* The heart of the righteous studieth to answer:

*SCHOOL.* But the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

*SUPP.* The Lord is far from the wicked:

*SCHOOL.* But he heareth the prayer of the righteous. The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.

*SCHOOL.* The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

*SUPP.* He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul:

*SCHOOL.* But he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

*SUPP.* The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom;

*SCHOOL.* And before honour is humility.

## III. SINGING.

## IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.

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

## VI. SINGING.

## LESSON SERVICE.

## I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.

## II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.

III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE AND GOLDEN TEXT by the school in concert.

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

V. ADDITIONAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]

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

## CLOSING SERVICE.

## I. SINGING.

## II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [Psa. 28, 6, 7.]

*SUPP.* Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

*SCHOOL.* The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped:

*ALL.* Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

# International Bible Lessons.

## FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### LESSON V. David and Absalom.

[Nov. 1.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exod. 20. 12.

#### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 13-23. Read 2 Sam. chapters 13, 14.]

2 Sam. 15. 1-12.

[Commit to memory verses 4-6.]

1 And it came to pass after this, that Ab'salom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Ab'sa-lom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Ab'sa-lom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Is'ra-el.

3 And Ab'sa-lom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.

4 Ab'sa-lom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Ab'sa-lom to all Is'ra-el that came to the king for judgment: so Ab'sa-lom stole the hearts of the men of Is'ra-el.

7 And it came to pass after forty years, that Ab'sa-lom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in He'bron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Ge'shur in Syr'i-a, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Je-ru'sa-lem, then I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to He'bron.

10 But Ab'sa-lom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Is'ra-el, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Ab'sa-lom reigneth in He'bron.

11 And with Ab'sa-lom went two hundred men out of Je-ru'sa-lem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not anything.

12 And Ab'sa-lom sent for A-hith'o-phel the Gi'l'o-nite, Da'vid's counselor, from his city, even from Gi'l'oh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Ab'sa-lom.

#### REVISED VERSION.\*

1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. 2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate; and it was so, that, when any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. 3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. 4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! 5 And it was so, that, when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him. 6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 And it came to pass at the end of forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto Jehovah, in Hebron. 8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If Jehovah shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Jehovah. 9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. 10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron. 11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were invited, and went in their simplicity; and they knew not anything. 12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

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

Nov. 1.]

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**Time.**—B. C. 1024 and 1023. **Places.**—Jerusalem and Hebron.

**Home Readings.**

- M. The King's son. 2 Sam. 14. 25-33.
- Tu. David and Absalom. 2 Sam. 15. 1-12.
- W. A sad flight. 2 Sam. 15. 13-23.
- Th. David's trust. 2 Sam. 15. 24-37.
- F. Absalom's wicked intent. 2 Sam. 17. 1-14.
- S. The undutiful son. Prov. 19. 16-26.
- S. Honor to parents. Mark 7. 5-13.

**Lesson Hymns.**

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 34.

I was a wandering sheep,  
I did not love the fold;  
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,  
I would not be controlled.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 32.

Oh, word of words, the sweetest,  
Oh, word, in which there lie  
All promise, all fulfilment,  
And end of mystery!

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 33.

Seeking the lost, yes, kindly entreating  
Wanderers on the mountain a-tray;  
"Come unto me," his message repeating,  
Words of the Master speaking to-day.

**Questions for Senior Scholars.**

**Introduction.** Why had Absalom been exiled to Geshur? How was he recalled? How long before our lesson's date? Was David's treatment of Absalom politic, strong? Was Joab Absalom's friend? Was Joab David's friend? How was Joab related to David?

**1. Corruption** (v. 1-6).—How long was Absalom hatching his plans? For what purpose did he prepare chariots and horses and fifty runners? What was his purpose in standing beside "the way of the gate"? What impression did Absalom make on the men who came to the king for judgment? What may we infer from the fact that "there was no man deputed of the king" to hear complaints? What may we infer from the fact that no one reported Absalom's conduct to the king? Why did Absalom choose Ahithophel instead of Hushai? What may have caused Ahithophel's disloyalty?

**2. Hypocrisy** (v. 7-9).—Why did Absalom go to Hebron? What kind of impression did Absalom's explanation of his desire to go to Hebron make on David? How was it that Absalom could get support from Judah, David's own country?

**3. Rebellion** (v. 10-12).—What are we to understand by "spies" and by "the sound of the trumpet"? Recall the facts concerning Ahithophel. Why did the people "increase continually with Absalom"? Read carefully the supplementary verses (13-23). What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

**Questions for Intermediate Scholars.**

**1. Absalom Winning the Favor of the People** (v. 1-6).—Who was Absalom? What was his personal appearance? What display did he make? What did he do with those who came with lawsuits to the king? What impression did he make upon them? What did he say about himself? How did he treat those who did homage to him? What was the result of these things?

**2. Absalom Pretending to Be Religious** (v. 7-9).—What request did Absalom make? What reason did he give? What was he doing at Geshur? What did David do for him?

**3. Absalom Perfects Arrangements to Seize the Throne** (v. 10-12).—Who were sent out through all the land? What were they to do? Who went to Hebron from Jerusalem? Why did they go? What eminent man did Absalom get on his side? What was the prospect of Absalom's success?

**Questions for Younger Scholars.**

Who was the treacherous son of David? Absalom. How did Absalom look? What did he want to be? Had he ever done wrong? *He had killed his brother Amnon.* Where did he now live? *In Jerusalem.* What did he begin to do? Why? Did he really feel kind toward the people? What is the worst of sins? *To seem to be good when we are not.* What did Absalom ask of the king at last? What lie did he tell? What wicked plan was in his mind? Did the king know about it? What had Absalom failed to do? *To ask counsel of God.*

**The Condensed Review.**

**1.** Who was Absalom? *David's oldest living son.* **2.** What purpose had he formed concerning his father? *To dethrone him and become king.* **3.** What course did he pursue with the people? *He turned them against the king.* **4.** What step did he take to complete his purpose? *He began a civil war.* **5.** Into what sins did his course lead him? *Hypocrisy, lying, adultery, and murder.* **6.** What one of God's commands did he notoriously break? GOLDEN TEXT: "Honor thy," etc.

## The Church Catechism.

47. What are our duties to our family? Our duties to our family are the duties to each other of husband and wife, parent and child, brother

and sister, master and servant, as set forth in the Scriptures.

Colossians 4. 1. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

## Disrespect of Parents.

## I. A THREAT AGAINST SOCIAL ORDER.

There is a generation that curse their father, and doth not bless their mother. Prov. 30. 11.

Perilous times shall come; for men shall be disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholly. 2 Tim. 3. 1. 2.

## II. A SIGN OF FOLLY.

A fool despiseth his father's instruction. Prov. 15. 5.

A foolish man despiseth his mother. Prov. 15. 20.

## III. A SOURCE OF HUMAN GRIEF.

A foolish son is the calamity of his father. Prov. 19. 13.

A foolish son is bitterness to her that bare him. Prov. 17. 25.

## IV. DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMAND.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exod. 20. 12.

Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. Mark 7. 10.

## V. SEVERELY PUNISHED BY GOD.

Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. Deut. 27. 16.

The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. Prov. 30. 17.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The historic passages last studied by us record the formal establishment of the worship of Jehovah in Jerusalem (Lesson I, 2 Sam. 6. 1-12), and the covenant God made with David when the erection of a temple was first proposed (Lesson II, 2 Sam. 7. 4-16). The chronologic order it is not easy to trace. But David's great sin is placed by most authorities midway between these events and Absalom's rebellion. Psalms 51 and 32 (Lessons III and IV) have been treated as David's confession of sin and his joy over forgiveness. There is not to be found in all history or fiction a more impressive example of the ramifications of divine justice, the working out of God's inexorable law of consequences, than that furnished by David's later life. His indulgence of guilty passion proved to be the first link in a long chain of disasters, blunders, and sins, which involved the wreck of several lives and the saddening of uncounted homes. God had pardoned his sin, and again David experienced the joy of conscious salvation. But the seed sown brought forth a dreadful harvest. One son, Amnon, followed David's example in licentiousness; another son, Absalom, followed it in murder; the king's trusted counselor, Ahithophel (see 2 Sam. 11. 3; 23. 34), followed it in treachery; his general, Joab, sharing David's guilty secret, held him in his power. And all this was only a fraction of Absalom's career. Having killed Amnon, he fled for protection to his grandfather, the king of Geshur. Three years were spent there in exile, and two more within the confines of Judah, in banishment from the court. But the heart of David yearned for his wayward son, and at length by the instrumentality of Joab a reconciliation was effected. Then, with restored opportunities, Absalom began to plot for his father's throne.

**Verse 1.** After this. After the events recorded in 2 Sam. 13. Amnon, David's eldest son, had ruined his half-sister Tamar, who was Absalom's full sister. David was "very wroth" with Amnon, but, according to the Septuagint, did not punish him, "for he loved him, because he was his firstborn." Absalom avenged his sister's wrong by the assassination of Amnon, and then fled to Geshur. After three years

he was recalled without being granted a full pardon and for two years longer was kept waiting before restoration to the favor of the king. David's treatment of him throughout was singularly unwise. After his restoration Absalom prepared him chariots ["a chariot"] and horses, and fifty men to run before him, as a guard of honor. The chariot was a novelty in Jerusalem. [H. P. Smith.] This great show of dig-

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nity would suggest to the populace a claim to the succession, which would be greatly strengthened by the personal beauty and affability of the prince. That Absalom was now David's eldest living son (apparently) would not of itself count much for heirship to the throne, according to oriental usage. But no other choice had as yet publicly been made by David (1 Kings 1. 27), and Absalom was the only son who was of royal blood on both sides.

2. *Absalom rose up early.* Habitually. He showed promptitude and energy in working out his wicked plans. *The way of the gate* was the road to the royal palace, at the gate of which the king might be expected to administer justice. So "The Sublime Porte," a common synonym for the government of Turkey, is the French equivalent of "The High Gate" of the Sultan's palace in Constantinople. Apparently David had grown, in these later years, remiss in his judicial duties. *When any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment* ["When any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgment"]. Such a man would come to the Gate. After wearily waiting, in a great crowd of appellants, for a king who perhaps never appeared, he would be overwhelmed by the gracious interest in his case shown by the heir-apparent. *Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.* In each case the particular tribe and city would be named.

3. *Absalom said unto him.* After hearing his grievance. *See, thy matters are good and right.* He espouses the cause of every man he talks with, and declares that the complainants have no chance of justice, but if only he could have his way all would be well. *But there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.* There was a lack of administrative detail. In place of any attempt at reform, Absalom, intent on stirring up dissatisfaction, insinuates that the king is careless of their wrongs.

4. *O, that I were made judge in the land that every man which ["who"] hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice.* Personal ambition is not suggested by these words (for as prince Absalom outranked any judge), but an earnest desire for the public welfare. His life of idle luxury is not of his own choice; he longs for usefulness; and, without naming his father, all blame for prevalent injustice is passed over to him.

5. *When any man came nigh to him [omit "to him"] to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took ["hold of"] him, and kissed him.* Such condescension could not but be highly appreciated and widely talked about.

6. So that it is no wonder that *Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.* The beauty of this phrase deserves consideration. The loyalty that was due the king was wrongfully transferred to Absalom.

7. *After ["at the end of"] forty years.* There is a chronological difficulty here. The Authorized Version tries to get rid of it by counting the forty years from David's anointing, recorded in 1 Sam. 16. 1, which would be equivalent to four years from Absalom's restoration. The Syriac and some editions of the Septuagint read "four years," which is probably correct—the time spent in developing the conspiracy. When all was ripe for rebellion *Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord ["Jehovah"], in Hebron.* The plausibility of this plea rested on the fact that Hebron was Absalom's birthplace. It was, also, the chief city of Judah, through which tube, though David had sprung from it, disloyalty was widely spread. (See 2 Sam. 19. 11.) "Possibly Judah resented its absorption into the nation at large," and the city in which David's first throne was set and his first court held may not have forgiven the transfer of power to Jerusalem. There are some indications that the legal structure of the tribes which afterward were formed into the northern kingdom was more complete than that of Judah; and we may suppose that the larger part of the complainants with whom Absalom ingratiated himself came from Judah.

8. *Thy servant vowed a vow.* Compare Jacob's vow, Gen. 28. 20-22. *While I abode at Geshur in Syria.* A refugee from justice. *I will serve the Lord ["Jehovah"].* By appearing before him personally with a sacrifice.

9. David's ignorance of the prevailing disloyalty is astonishing. All Judah seems to have been ready to dethrone him; and he does not suspect it. The keen perception which had been so useful to him in early years was now disused. Even stranger than David's lack of suspicion seems to have been that of Joab and Zadok and others in high position.

10. Very elaborate preparation for the revolution had been made. Emissaries were now sent through all the land. *The sound of the trumpet, blown in Hebron at the hour of Absalom's coronation, and sounded on from town to town, was the signal for a formal proclamation of the new king.* And so well were these plans carried out that there is no record of any immediate armed resistance.

11. *With Absalom went two hundred men*

out of Jerusalem. As guests; representatives, probably, of the leading families of Jerusalem. They went in their simplicity, ignorant of the conspiracy. If Absalom succeeded in winning their favor they would be invaluable on their return to Jerusalem. If not, they might have "value as hostages in his hands."

12. *Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite.* "From the later narrative we conclude that this man was the soul of the rebellion." He was David's counselor, and his advice was valued as "an oracle of God" (2 Sam. 16. 23). A man of the same name was grand-

father of Bathsheba, and this may have had something to do with the present treason. Giloh is not yet certainly identified. It was one of the towns of the hill-country of Judah. Not far from Bethlehem are two ruined places with similar names—*Beit Jala* and *Jala*, the latter of which is now supposed to represent Giloh. He offered sacrifice. By fulfilling his program he gave time for the conspirators to reach Hebron. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom. This may have been the result of Ahithophel's activity.

## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

"The second period of David's reign at Jerusalem opens with his great sin, and a large portion of the book of Samuel is devoted to tracing the punishment of that sin in a series of calamities partly involving the whole nation and partly affecting his own family. David's great sin, although freely and fully pardoned, was nevertheless punished, and the punishment came from the same source as the sin."—*Cambridge Bible*.

Absalom's murder of his brother Amnon was ostensibly for revenge, but this was not the only, or probably the dominant, motive. Amnon was the heir apparent to the throne, and his death would gratify his unholy ambition.

Absalom's conspiracy began after his return to court, from which he had been banished on account of Amnon's murder. He was recalled from exile after three years' absence through Joab's stratagem, but not admitted to the royal presence until two years later. "To recall Absalom without granting him a full pardon was ill judged; to readmit him to favor after he had been irritated by two years' seclusion from court, without the slightest sign of repentance, was fatal."—*Cambridge Bible*.

Absalom stole the hearts of the people by resorting to the usual methods recognized the world over as the arts employed by the demagogue.

"How he did seem to dive into their hearts,  
With humble and familiar courtesy!  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
 Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles!"

At the end of four years, when the conspiracy was ripe for rebellion, he assumed the rôle of a hypocrite in order to obtain leave of absence to go to Hebron, pretending to pay a

vow which he had taken during his exile at Geshur. Knowing the depth and sincerity of his father's piety, he could feel well assured that he would be only too glad to discover and encourage any similar state of mind in his wayward but favorite son.

At Hebron Absalom was joined by David's trusted counselor Ahithophel, "whose counsel in those days was as if a man inquired of the oracle of God" (2 Sam. 16. 23). "And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom" (verse 12). David, entirely taken by surprise, resolved to withdraw at once from Jerusalem, and accompanied by his household and bodyguard he crossed the Kidron and took the road by Mount Olivet to the Jordan, amid the weeping of the whole land (2 Sam. 15. 14-30).

"The flight of David and the treachery of Ahithophel suggest the journey to Gethsemane and the crossing of the brook Kidron on the night of the betrayal. Ittai's fervent resolution to follow David whether in life or death recalls the like profession of Peter, almost on the same spot, to the great descendant of David centuries afterward."—*Stanley*.

At Bahurim Shimei, a friend of Saul, threw stones at David, and reviled him with bitter curses; but when Abishai asked permission of the king to rush across the defile and out off the blasphemer's head he said, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him" (2 Sam. 16. 5-13). This incident is interpreted by Charles Wesley in the following lines:

"Pure from the blood of Saul in vain,  
He dares not to the charge reply;  
Uriah's doth the charge maintain,  
Uriah's doth against him cry.

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The third psalm  
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Let Shimei curse; the rod he bears  
 For sins which Mercy had forgiven,  
 And in the wrongs of man reverts  
 'The awful righteousness of Heaven.'

"There is not a single day of the Jewish history of which so elaborate an account remains as that which describes David's memorable flight. The exiles in a state of deep exhaustion reached the Jordan valley after the long, eventful day, and rested at the fords where David had arranged to wait for news from the city (2 Sam. 16, 14, 17, 20). Here, some time after nightfall, they were roused by the two sons of the high priest, who had narrowly escaped with their lives, bringing a warning to cross the river immediately; and before the break of day the whole party were in safety on the other side of the Jordan."—*Stanley*.

The experiences of that first night after the flight from the city are commemorated in the fourth and third psalms. Ahithophel had offered to lead an army of twelve thousand men and surprise David, and destroy him before he could cross the river; but the timely warning which reached him enabled him to escape in safety. The first sleep of that evening when confronted by uncertain peril is referred to in the fourth psalm, verse 8:

"In peace will I both lay me down and sleep;  
 For thou, Jehovah, alone makest me dwell in safety."

The third psalm is a morning song written after the escape from Ahithophel's counsel to destroy him. Verse 5:

"I laid me down and slept;  
 I awaked; for Jehovah sustaineth me."

The adverse influences which surrounded Absalom in his youth and early manhood—the heathen mother, the polygamous household, court intrigues, evil example of sins repented of and forgiven—cannot excuse the ingratitude and treachery of Absalom. In the judgment of mankind his memory deserves universal execration.

This lost Absalom was the idol of his father's heart and the most promising of all his sons. There is no necessary connection between his physical beauty and his wickedness; the coincidence only adds to the pathos of the story. Winning in his ways, beautiful in his person, without blemish from head to foot, the idol of his father, he might easily have been the adored of the nation.

Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

BY BISHOP WARREN.

TWELVE YEARS OF INTENSE HISTORY.

David was old, sick, retired largely from politics. He neglected the administration of justice, engaged in raising vast sums for building a temple, enforced the unpopular census of people and possessions (2 Sam. 24), which the people thought meant more taxes, and was held responsible for the terrible plague that destroyed seventy thousand people in three days, when it was really the sins of Israel that moved the anger of the Lord against them.

On the other hand, there was Absalom, son of a heathen mother, very beautiful, with marvelous hair, jolly, reckless, crafty, with wits sharpened by exile for the murder of his brother Amnon. He thought he saw his way to the throne and schemed accordingly. First, he took on oriental splendor with chariots and a retinue (verse 1); second, he stole the hearts of the people by flattery (verses 2-6); third, he pretended to be very religious to his father and asked to go to Hebron, his birthplace, and pay a vow he made to God while in exile (verses 7 and 8). David, utterly deceived, bade him go in peace to his treason (verse 9).

Absalom had his accession to the throne proclaimed at once all over the land and enlisted Ahithophel, David's counselor, who might well be disaffected with David for the dishonor he had done to his granddaughter Bath-sheba.

David's life had not been faultless; Absalom does not seem to have even had spasms of goodness. David had been weak in family discipline, and Absalom was a natural result.

The outcome will appear in the next lesson.

Thoughts for Young People.

THE EXAMPLE OF ITTAI (2 SAM. 15. 18-22).

Among those who followed David from Jerusalem were six hundred men from Gath—Philistines from Goliath's city. These men, apparently, the king had chosen as his bodyguard. Perhaps he was not altogether sure of the loyalty of his own subjects, and felt safer with foreign mercenaries who could have no secret leanings to the deposed house of Saul. At all events here they are, "faithful among the faithless," as foreign soldiers surrounding a king often are, notably the Swiss Guard in the French Revolution. David's generous nature shrinks from dragging down Ittai with himself. Generosity breeds generosity, and the Philistine captain breaks out into a burst of passionate devotion, garnished, in soldier

fashion, with an unnecessary oath or two, but ringing very sincere, and meaning a great deal. As for him and his men, they have chosen their side. His example teaches us three lessons.

1. *The joy of unselfish love.* Look at the picture of this Philistine captain, as teaching us what grand, passionate self-sacrifice may be evolved out of the roughest natures. Ringing in his words we hear three things which are the seed of all nobility and splendor in human character: 1. A passionate personal attachment. 2. Love issuing in willing sacrifice that reckons not for a moment of personal consequences. 3. A supreme, restful delight in the presence of him whom the heart loves. This capacity, which lies dormant in all of us, will make a man blessed and dignified as nothing else will. The joy of unselfish love is the purest joy that man can taste.

2. *These possibilities of love and sacrifice point plainly to God in Christ as their true object.* We are made with hearts that need to rest upon an absolute love, with understandings that need to grasp a pure, a perfect, and a personal truth.

3. *Observe the terrible misdirection of these capacities in the sin and the misery of the world.* There is nothing more tragic than the misdirection of man's capacity for love and sacrifice. We must lay ourselves on Christ's altar, and that altar will sanctify both the giver and the gift. [Maclaren.]

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

BY REV. A. H. MC KINNEY.

#### PRELIMINARY.

Our study and teaching outline for the month will be:

PRELIMINARY.  
SURROUNDINGS.  
APPROACH.  
LESSON TEXT.  
MEMORY WORK.  
STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask for the review words of the lessons for fast month.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

*Time.* The dates are uncertain. There are wide differences of opinion among scholars.

*Places.* Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom; Hebron, twenty miles south of Jerusalem; Giloh, southwest of Hebron. Show these places on the map.

#### APPROACH.

A few years ago a young man was graduated from one of our largest and best universities. He was a handsome man with a cultivated mind. His friends predicted for him a noble and brilliant career. Before he came to middle age he committed suicide, and all who knew him were shocked at the revelations that followed his death. Ask: What was wrong with him? Draw out the fact that in spite of his brilliant intellect his heart was not right. Then say: Let us turn to our

#### LESSON TEXT

and study about one who was like this young man. Ask: What was his name? When the answer "Absalom" is given have several read what they have written about him. Then paint the following word pictures:

1. Absalom stealing the hearts of the people (verses 1-6).
2. Absalom pretending to be religious (verses 7-9).
3. Absalom rebelling against his father (verses 10-12).

After these pictures are painted question the pupils to ascertain if they understand their import.

Ask: What kind of a body had Absalom? Draw out the fact that he was very handsome. What kind of a mind had Absalom? Show that he was brilliant. What, then, was there wrong about Absalom? Welcome all answers and lead up to the statement: His heart was bad.

#### MEMORY WORK.

Ask all to memorize and to print the following:

# A B S A L O M

HANDSOME IN BODY.

BRILLIANT IN MIND.

BAD AT HEART.

Teach: As a man is in his heart, so is he. The handsome body and the brilliant mind were only instruments for doing evil, because the heart was not right. Because his heart was evil Absalom was a murderer, a liar, a hypocrite, and a rebel. Show how all sin, especially rebellion against God, is the natural result of a bad heart.

Have several repeat the Golden Text. Ask: Of what is this text one? Where is it found

*Absalom's* is generally snake's nest, many heads, Ungoverned undutifulness, and, since the against Jehovah action. A pa bearing its t under McLar

Verses 1-6, thing his con the light and of the man lit His fair face showy zeal for and unfilial re tesy was a coe hendstrong, rec a false subject falsehood that C. R. Brown.

Verses 5. It so magnificent He was the J his picture of lowest circle o

*Absalom's* V please the Scot taining the cr solemn religious hypocrisy, how steal "the liver the devil in" is



in the Bible? Ask all to make and to keep this resolve:

I WILL ALWAYS

# HONOR

MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER.

Impress the fact: 'As God is our heavenly Father he is worthy of double honor.

## STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Have each pupil write a short account of "The Death of Absalom."

Review words, "Rebellion," "Honor."

## By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

*Absalom's great sin* included many sins, as is generally the case. It was like a rattlesnake's nest, full of a twining mass which had many heads, and in every head a poison fang. Ungoverned and selfish ambition, black filial undutifulness, rebellion against an earthly king, and, since that king was God's anointed, revolt against Jehovah himself, were all present in his action. A pathetic and ghastly story it is, and bearing its teaching on its front.—*Dr. Alexander McLaren.*

*Verses 1-6.* We see now what a hollow lying thing his conduct was. The contrast between the light and dark of the outside and the inside of the man lifts his badness into plainer view. His fair face hid a foul and ugly heart. His showy zeal for justice was the mask of a selfish and unfilial rebel. His sleek and greasy courtesies were a coat of paint and oil upon a cruel, headstrong, reckless man. He was a false son, a false subject, and a false friend. He sowed falsehood that he might reap rebellion.—*Dr. C. R. Brown.*

*Verse 5.* It was a great condescension in one so magnificent to express his affection by a kiss. He was the Judas of David's day. Dante in his picture of the *Inferno* puts Judas in the lowest circle of hell.

*Absalom's Vow.* When Charles II wanted to please the Scots and get their help toward obtaining the crown he took the covenant, the solemn religious vow of the Scots. We all hate hypocrisy, however it is dressed up. But to steal "the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in" is the very hypocrisy of hypocrisy.

Shakespeare puts nothing uglier into the mouth of the villainous Gloster than this:

"The secret mischiefs that I set abroad I lay unto the grievous charge of others. But then I sigh, and with a piece of Scripture Tell them that God bids us do good for evil: And thus I clothe my naked villainy With odd old ends stolen forth of Holy Writ: And seem a saint when most I play the devil."

Thus Absalom held a loud religious profession between him and his father to screen his wicked motives in going to Hebron. His mouth said, "My vow." His heart said, "My rebellion."

*Absalom's Influence.* The purpose for which one labors to influence others settles the question of its being right or wrong. It is right for us to win hearts (not steal them) in order that we may make those hearts loyal to their Master and ours. It is a sin to win hearts that we may lead them away from their rightful allegiance to Christ. A weighty responsibility rests on all who have popularity, or who are successful in winning the favor of their fellows. The difference between a right use and a wrong use of one's powers of pleasing is as the difference between light and darkness, between heaven and hell.

## Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

How do you explain the fact that children of good parents sometimes go far astray? I explain it by this other fact, that divine grace is not inherited. The natural birth carries with it the heredity of natural traits, with tendencies to sin. The new birth of the Spirit brings a new heredity of the divine nature, with tendencies to holiness. David was not responsible for the wickedness of his sons. He had sinned enough of his own; his anguish on account of Absalom was no doubt deepened by the thought of similar stains upon his own record. But he could not force his son to take the remedy by which he had himself been saved. There was nothing left for him but to see in Absalom the bitter fruit of evil from which he had himself been delivered only by deep repentance and the infinite grace of God. David suffered many sorrows, but none like this.

In some respects the son resembled the father. He was handsome, winsome, resourceful, magnetic. His friendly kiss and pleasing way of putting himself at the service of the people when they came to the city gate remind us of

David's genial ways and magnetic personality. But in the use of these graceful gifts of nature how widely different they were! David's habit was to say, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant," and to hold himself at God's disposal for the interests of his kingdom. Absalom's habit was to call himself his own master, and to consider only what would minister to his own pleasure. David's sins were dark eddies in the stream of his life, while its current flowed Godward. The trend of Absalom's life was always away from God, with never a ripple even on the surface toward a better way. He was selfish through and through. First, last, always, he thought only of himself. He was vain of his person; he loved flattery; he loved display; he cared nothing for his father except for what he could get from him, and, worst of all, he made a pretense of honoring his father's religion to further his wicked and unfilial ambitions. What a splendid man he might have been if he had loved and served his father's God! How mean and miserable he looks in his withering selfishness! The pillar he built to keep his name in remembrance crumbled long ago. "Absalom" is the synonym for vanity, cruelty, and heartless self-love.

His crowning shame was his treatment of his father. When selfishness goes as far as this, it is indeed a "vice of frightful mien." One can more easily forgive any other sin. We instinctively feel contempt for the son or daughter who is negligent or unkind, especially when parents have come into the shadows of life's late afternoon. A nature capable of such conduct is essentially mean and hard. Kindness or generosity to all the rest of the world can never make up for lack of tender consideration for one's own father or mother. In homes of true refinement the younger members of the family are taught to show respect and attention to parents and grandparents. Rudeness or indifference to them is extremely ill-bred, and no self-respecting person will be guilty of it, even without regard to the moral law, "Honor thy father and thy mother." And since habit grows by daily acts and thoughts, let us cultivate this beautiful grace of manner and of heart by constant courtesies and kindness. Do not take the easy-chair and leave the less comfortable ones for older people. Never sit while they are obliged to stand, at home or in public places. Consider their comfort always before your own. Be respectful in speech and manner. Such manners at home give graciousness to manners outside of home.

To grieve by coldness or neglect the heart that has loved us best since the day of our

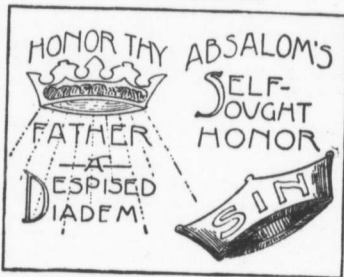
birth is a wrong too great to be forgiven, except it is repented of and all possible restitution made. Selfishness is subtle; it will betray us unawares. Watch against it; pray to be delivered from it. It is the spirit of demons. Unselfish love is the spirit of angels in heaven.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

We have here an unsavory but edifying topic. We study, 1. Corruption, verses 1-6, a study that has illustrations in every morning newspaper; 2. Hypocrisy, verses 7-9; 3. Rebellion, verses 10-12. The steps of Absalom's treason are, 1. The princely splendor of his life, which would charm orientals; 2. His affected interest in the affairs of the people; 3. His insinuations against his father's rule; 4. His suggestions concerning his own elevation to the throne; 5. His hypocrisy in feigning a religious service when he was really rebelling; 6. His treasonable influence exerted over Abithophel and others of David's servants.

### Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



An object may be good or evil according to the motive which influences one in striving for its attainment. To be popular with the people was no wrong, nor was it otherwise than just that Absalom should have their respect; but when he presumed to go beyond his legitimate rights and by cajolery and deceit win from his father the affections of his subjects, he was entering upon a course of sin and shame. For the sake of an uncertain honor, to which he was not entitled, he chose to dishonor his aged father and forego the brightest diadem of all, the honor that cometh from God alone. The crown he coveted and unjustly sought was a weight of iron, void of beauty, honor, or glory.

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**Coloring.**—Crown and rays, yellow; wording, white and purple; crown, gray; "sin," red; words, white and blue.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES.

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The preachers have overlooked this passage. No published sermons have been found after a most diligent search.

**LESSON VI. David's Grief over Absalom.**

[Nov. 8.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** A foolish son is a grief to his father. Prov. 17. 25.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION.**

[Read 2 Sam. chapters 15-20.]

2 Sam. 15. 24-33. [Commit to memory verses 31-33.]

24 And Da'vid sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of A-him'a-az the son of Za'dok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And A-him'a-az called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, Is the young man Ab'sa-lom safe? And A-him'a-az answered, When Jo'ab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.

30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cu'shi came; and Cu'shi said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cu'shi, Is the

**REVISED VERSION.\***

24 Now David was sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, a man running alone. 25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. 26 And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. 27 And the watchman said, I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth, and said, Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. 29 And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, even me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. 30 And the king said, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, Tidings for my lord the king: for Jehovah hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. 32 And the king said unto the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Ab-

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

young man Ab'sa-lom safe? And Cu'shi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Ab'sa-lom, my son, my son Ab'sa-lom! would God I had died for thee, O Ab'sa-lom, my son, my son!

**Time.**—Perhaps about B. C. 1023 (Usher).

**Place.**—Mahanaim, a town of Gad on the banks of the Jabbok.

### Home Readings.

M. A sad day. 2 Sam. 18. 1-8.

Tu. A sad end. 2 Sam. 18. 9-25.

W. David's Grief over Absalom. 2 Sam. 18. 24-33.

Th. Victory and tears. 2 Sam. 19. 1-8.

F. A foolish son. Prov. 17. 15-25.

S. Rebellious children. Isa. 1. 1-9.

S. Comfort in sorrow. Lam. 3. 17-33.

### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 37.

Are you weary, are you heavy hearted?  
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 38.

I've found a friend in Jesus, he's everything  
to me,  
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 41.

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling  
gloom,  
Lead thou me on.

### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *Suspense* (v. 24-26).—Where did Absalom rally his forces? Who was his chief adviser? What had been his first move after the conspiracy was launched? Where had David gone? Who had gone with him? Whom had he sent back? Why? Whom had he sent to circumvent the plans of Absalom? In what city did David wait for news of the battle? Who commanded David's forces? Where did the two armies meet? How did Absalom meet his death? Why were David's orders disobeyed? What did the watchman see? How did the king reason about the bringing of the news? What did the king infer from the ap-

proach of the solitary runner? What two things did the watchman see?

2. *Tidings* (v. 27-32).—What did the king infer from the approach of Ahimaaz? How did it happen that Ahimaaz was the earliest messenger to arrive? Why was his message so vague? What one question crowded all others out of the king's heart? Why was a man who knew so little of the facts sent first? Who brought the news of Absalom's death to David? Why was such sad news to David such good news to the messenger? What, if Absalom had not died?

3. *A Broken Heart* (v. 33).—Could David draw any consolation in this hour from the past? from the present? from the future? What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Waiting for the Messengers* (v. 24-27).—What battle had been fought? What was the result? Where was David? What did the watchman see? What did the king think of him? What was seen next? Whom did the watchman recognize?

2. *The Messages Delivered* (v. 28-32).—Which messenger came first? What report did he make? What was David anxious about? What did Ahimaaz say about Absalom? Who next reported? What question was repeated to the Cushite? What did the answer mean?

3. *David's Lamentation for Absalom* (v. 33).—How was David affected by Absalom's death? Where did he go? What words show his deep grief?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

How had Absalom talked to the people? What did they think? What did they do when he sent for them? Was this right? No. What did David do when he heard about it? Where did he go? *To Mahanaim*. How did he go? What were David's men and the men with Absalom doing? Which gained the victory? Where were Absalom and his men driven? What happened to Absalom? Who killed Absalom? *Joab*. Where was David

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### The Condensed Review.

1. Where did David wait for news of the battle? *Between the two gates.* 2. Who were sent to convey the news? *Ahimaaz and Cush.* 3. What did David ask of the messengers? *"Is the young man Absalom safe?"* 4. How did the announcement of Absalom's death affect David? *He was much moved.* 5. What did David say of Absalom? *"Would God I had died for thee."* 6. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? *"A foolish,"* etc.

### The Church Catechism.

48. What are our duties to our country? Our duties to our country are to render due honour to rulers; to observe the laws of the land in the fear of God and to support their authority; to contribute our just share to the expense of government; to promote the public well-being; and to exercise our franchise for the public good.

Romans 13. 1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 7. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Matthew 22. 21.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

### Bible Words about Young Men.

#### I. THE GAYETY OF YOUTH.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth. Eccles. 11. 9.

Young men, praise the name of the Lord. Ps. 148. 12, 13.

#### II. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUTH.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. Ps. 119. 9.

Young men exhort to be sober-minded. Titus 2. 6.

#### III. THE OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUTH.

When thou wast young thou walkedst whither thou wouldst. John 21. 18.

I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 1 John 2. 14.

Your young men shall see visions. Joel 2. 28.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The interval between the last lesson and this was crowded with events. The first tidings that David had of disloyalty was that already "the hearts of the men of Israel" had gone after Absalom. Unrecorded political and military movements made the defense of Jerusalem impracticable. The latter part of 2 Sam. 15 gives a melancholy account of the retreat of David and his company. Ittai from Gath, was with him. Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, with Levites bearing the ark of the covenant, followed, but were, with lofty faith, sent back to the city. Hushai, "the king's companion," was also sent back in the hope that he might offset the counsel of Ahithophel. The march over the Mount of Olives was crowded with mournful incidents, but the little army pushed on across the Jordan. Meanwhile Absalom had reached Jerusalem, and was recognized as king. Ahithophel, his wisest counselor, advised him to send twelve thousand men while David was "weary and weak-handed," to capture and kill him, then by gentle measures to win over his followers to Absalom's support. This shrewd plan was offset by Hushai, who, for the purpose of gaining time for David, advised the gathering together of all Israel against the old king. Hushai's insincere counsel was adopted, and Ahithophel, foreseeing the consequent ruin of Absalom's cause, "set his house in order and hanged himself." During these discussions at Jerusalem David had reached Mahanaim. His army in three divisions was placed under the leadership of Joab, Abishai, Joab's brother, and Ittai the Gittite. To these three commanders he gave earnest charge: "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." A desperate battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. Twenty thousand men were slaughtered. Absalom, riding on his mule, was overtaken by some of David's troops. The mule dashed under the boughs of a "great oak" and Absalom's head was caught by its branches while the mule "went on." Fearful of meddling in so delicate a condition of affairs, those who saw it reported to Joab, and Joab without delay killed Absalom. Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, asked Joab for permission to carry the tidings of the victory to David. Joab sent "the Cushite," but Ahimaaz by permission also ran, and outran the Cushite.

Verses 24, 25. David sat ["was sitting"] between the two gates of Mahanaim, awaiting news from the field of battle. His soldiers had

dissuaded him from accompanying them, saying, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us." The watchman went up to the roof over ["of"]

the gate unto the wall. The gates, at the inside and outside of the thick wall of the city, held between them a sort of public room in which may have been a magistrate's seat, which the king now occupied. The "watchman" (the officer in charge of the gate) looked, and, seeing a man running alone, cried . . . and told the king, who said, *If he be alone there is tidings in his mouth.* That is, he is a messenger. A defeat or panic would have brought fugitives in groups. *He came apace, and drew near.* The trained runners in the employ of the ancient governments of the East often attained great speed, sometimes it is said in a day's course outrunning a horse.

**26.** *The watchman saw another man running.* The first man was Ahimaaz, who by a more circuitous, but probably less difficult, route had outrun the Cushite, and whose motive seems to have been love for David, to whom he would have the awful news gradually broken. Our word *porter*, though often used for one who lifts heavy burdens, means door-keeper. This second man *running alone* is also recognized as a messenger. The suspense is broken by the words of the watchman, which again are replied to by the king.

**27.** *He thinketh.* I think. *The running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok.* He is recognized by his gait as Jehu was by the fury of his driving. *He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.* The bearer of good tidings was sure to be rewarded by the king. Ahimaaz had recently conducted most difficult affairs in David's behalf as a sort of "secret service" agent, and was held in honor; and David reasoned that Joab would not send such a man if the tidings were adverse.

**28.** *Ahimaaz called, All is well.* "Peace." The usual salutation. *He fell down to the earth upon his face before the king* ["He bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth"]. The usual ceremony. *Blessed be the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.* Roundabout phrase-

ology this, but promptly understood by David as the report of a great victory.

**29.** *Is the young man Absalom safe?* "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" Again the Hebrew word for Peace is used. *When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant* ["even me thy servant"], *I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.* This may have been literally true. But the entire statement is a prevarication, indulged in for the sake of breaking the sad news to David. Ahimaaz probably knew that Absalom was dead. He at least must have inferred that it was not "well with the young man."

**30.** *Turn aside, and stand here.* And in obedience to the king's command Ahimaaz takes his place among the royal attendants while waiting for the second messenger.

**31.** *And, behold, Cushite* ["the Cushite"] *came. Tidings, ["for"] my lord the king. The Lord* ["Jehovah"] *hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.* God has done justly, which of course implies, as Ahimaaz's message implied, a complete victory.

**32.** *Is the young man Absalom safe?* "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The same question had been asked the earlier messenger. How could Cushite answer? It was a point of honor not to bring bad news to the king. The messenger does the best he can with his painful message. *The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.* The implication is unmistakable. There was at least no glamour over the Cushite's eyes.

**33.** *The king was much moved.* "Shocked, having hoped against hope to the last." *Went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept.* He went alone to a little square room, we may suppose, over the square space in which he had been sitting, and under the roof from which the watchman had seen the runners. On the profoundly pathetic wail of this bereft father one hardly dare make comment. Absalom left one daughter, who was married into the royal family; his sons may be supposed to have died early.

## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

With the close of the eventful day of the flight from Jerusalem a cloud rests over the subsequent history of the rebellion, which continued three months longer. Absalom was publicly crowned, and occupied the throne during this short period; but there are no records of his reign.

Absalom's heart was so bitter and relentless

against his deeply wronged father that he was ready to follow the counsel of Ahithophel, however atrocious. He took public possession of the concubines which David had left in charge of the palace so that all Israel might hear that he was "abhorred of his father," and reconciliation with him was rendered forever impossible. He was ready to follow the counsel

of Ahithophel subject his father's life.

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David

of Ahithophel still further, and deliberately subject himself to the necessity of taking his father's life.

But it was thought well to consult Hushai, also, who with consummate skill counseled delay, in increasing the chances of success; his counsel was adopted, the counsel of Ahithophel was turned into foolishness, the rebellion was suddenly doomed to inevitable defeat; and the wise and proud Ahithophel, foreseeing the result, went and hanged himself. "For Jehovah had appointed to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Jehovah might bring evil upon Absalom" (2 Sam. 17. 1-14).

Absalom raised a large army, and crossed the Jordan to meet the disciplined veterans of David at Mahanaim. The battle was fought in the forests of Ephraim. Absalom was defeated and slain, and twenty thousand of his men were left dead on the field.

"In the interlacing thicket, . . . which the Ammonite wars had made familiar to David's veterans, the host of Absalom lost its way; and Absalom, riding at full speed on his royal mule, suddenly met a detachment of David's army, and darting aside through the wood he was caught by his long hair in the thick boughs of an overhanging terebinth, swept off the animal, and there remained suspended.

"None of the ordinary soldiers ventured to attack the helpless prince, but Joab and his attendants killed him and threw his body into a well-known ditch, and covered it with a huge mound of stones as a mark of execration, as in the case of Achan (Josh. 7. 26)."—Stanley.

The story of David's lament is a story of to-day, and repeats itself in every age and every rank in life.

The strongest parental affection, even in the heart of a king, is powerless in the case of Absalom.

The name of Ahithophel has passed into a byword for the truth that "God taketh the wise in his own craftiness" (Job 5. 13), and his unscrupulous treason forbids all sympathy with his fate. We may apply to him what was said of a great party leader: "His great crimes were enhanced by his immense talents, of which God gave him the use and the devil the application."—Smith.

"Absalom and David each did his utmost to show what he could do. Absalom showed how bad it is possible for a son to be to the best of fathers, and David showed how good it is possible for a father to be to the worst of sons; as if it were designed to be a resemblance of

man's wickedness toward God, and God's mercy toward man, of which it is hard to say which is more amazing."—Henry.

If Absalom had been slain by the soldier, even Joab would have turned against him to punish him. Joab was not punished, because of his rank and influence and because he represented the royal power, and could speak and act at the time with the authority of the king.

The bitterest suffering of the father is reached when his beloved Absalom is overthrown in his wickedness and slain. It is the hopeless sorrow over a lost son. There is no sorrow like unto it. Parental affection, which makes this sorrow possible, is the tenderest, the strongest, and most beautiful of all the natural virtues. Such sorrow should impress our minds with the baseness and wickedness of Absalom's ingratitude and rebellion.

The lost son is more assuredly and hopelessly lost if he has lost his love and reverence for his father.

Absalom comes to his tragic end early in life. He secures the crown for a brief reign of three months, and is put to death at thirty.

It was not possible in David's heart to harmonize the affection of the father with the justice of the sovereign. What was impossible in David's heart was only possible in the heart of God (Rom. 3. 26).

"Two things are to be noted as contributing to Absalom's fate: First, the ostentation of going into battle on the mule, which marked his rank as a prince; and, second, the vanity of wearing his hair in a style only becoming to a Nazarite."—Smith.

### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

#### KINGS AND KING.

Absalom made many wise provisions for his reign, but forgot one thing, namely, that God reigns. Absalom came to Jerusalem. David fled from Jerusalem, dropping the precious third psalm on the way. Absalom reigned three months and then set out with his army to conquer and slay his father. The necessary result is known. To have allowed Absalom to be king would have been the nonerection of the temple, the destruction of all religion, and the failure of prophecy. But as it is, to this day every man, woman, and child in passing by flings a stone of detestation at Absalom's monument in the valley of Kedron. I myself have done it.

The point of the lesson is the grief of the parental heart over a recreant son. There is

love that hatred cannot abate. Tidings come, as three months before, by the runner Ahimaaz. David caught at a hope of good tidings, because the runner was a good man. But the real truth came out, and David went up to his chamber to tread the winepress alone, uttering the heartrending wail that has rung down the ages. Literature of the imagination has no equally touching note of grief. There are moments when the human heart is enough like God to say, "Would God I had died for thee."

There are two lessons: one to parents. Is the child being brought up rightly from the beginning? If not, there may be, if not a David flight, a David headache in the future. One lesson to the child and youth. Is the young man safe, not in the end merely, but in the beginning? There are a dozen gateways and paths to ruin. They open pleasantly, the paths are flowery and exciting. There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death.

"How far the gulf stream of our youth may flow

Into the arctic region of our lives!

The sins of youth live in the bones of old."

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### LESSONS FROM ABSALOM'S FATE.

**1. Stolen Hearts.** The subject of this lesson is the death of Absalom. But the previous history should be kept clearly in mind or we cannot understand the sad closing scene. What must have been Absalom's feelings as he hung there in the great oak as yet unburnt, being (probably) caught fast by his long hair which had been his beauty, and at the mercy of a relentless soldier like Joab. None came to help him, and yet do we not read (2 Sam. 15. 6) that he had stolen the hearts of the men of Israel? Yes. But stolen hearts are of no more real advantage than other stolen things. The friends that are born for the day of trouble can only be won and maintained by true character.

**2. The Pursuit of Evil.** A notable text is Prov. 11. 19: "He that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." Many people are pursued by evil; sin will not let them alone, and though conscious of their failings, and longing to be rid of them, daily they fall victims to the evil tyrant. But others pursue evil. They sin willfully, knowingly, determinately, perseveringly—so did Absalom. Let his end be a warning to us.

**3. Sin Brings Suffering.** The issue of this

history shows this in many ways. David's sin of love and hate; Absalom's sin of ambition and ingratitude; Ahithophel's sin of perfidy; and the sins of many others, brought acute suffering to these sinners. Though David's enemies were scattered and his throne restored to him, yet that deeply touching passage appointed for our lesson, where with keenest anxiety he waits for news of the battle, and with overwhelming grief he laments his lost son, shows him still suffering the yet unfinished consequences of his great moral fall. We sin, and our sin may be pardoned, but by sinning we have perhaps set in motion a chain of cause and effect which may work mischief years after. "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us each day without sin." [Stock.]

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

#### PRELIMINARY.

Have several pupils read aloud what they have written concerning the death of Absalom; correct what is imperfect, and commend every effort made. No opportunity should be neglected for encouraging the pupils to do some home work during each week.

The teacher should read very carefully the Scripture text between last week's lesson and the one we are now to study, and if necessary should write an abstract of those parts which relate more particularly to Absalom, so as to be able to state concisely the events of which our lesson is a culmination.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

**Time.** Just after that of last Sunday's lesson.

**Place.** Mahanaim, David's temporary capital. The defeat of Absalom took place in the wood of Ephraim.

#### APPROACH.

Two boys are dreaming daydreams. Of course they intend to be great men and to leave world-known names behind them. In their daydreams they see indicated very clearly the way to greatness. One leaves home, rarely thinks of his aged father and mother, dies in middle age, leaving behind him a name that is famous throughout the land. He had won success as a railroad engineer, and the monuments that he left behind are the bridges that he had constructed. The other son gave up his dreams, and remained at home to look after the farm and to take care of his parents in their old age. Which was the greater man? To-

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day we are to study about one who tried to make himself great. Let us note how he succeeded.

## LESSON TEXT.

Another opportunity for picture painting is presented in our text. Intermediates delight in looking at persons in action. We will present our lesson in a series of pictures portraying the persons mentioned in the text, as follows:

1. *The King.* Describe the space between the inner and the outer gates of the city, which was used as a place of public resort. Picture David with his heart torn by anxiety sitting there awaiting news concerning his rebellious son.

2. *The Watchman.* Describe the tower over the gateway, from the roof of which the watchman could see a long distance off. There he stands looking into the distance. See! what is that? How he strains his eyes! What excitement there is in his voice as he calls to the king seated below, and declares that he can discern a man running! The king infers that being alone the runner is not a fugitive, and that, therefore, he brings good tidings.

3. *The Runners.* Picture the man running toward the gate. Soon he is followed by another messenger. Ask: What is the name of this first runner? What did he call out to the king? What did the king do? What did he say? What did he ask Ahimaaz? What did he answer?

But wait! Picture Ahimaaz turning aside. There comes the other runner. See how he runs! What is his name? What did he say? What did the king ask? What was the answer? Explain what this means.

4. *The Father.* Where is the king? He has disappeared. Picture David in the chamber over the gate, now no longer a king, but a father weeping for his son. It is easy to repeat what David said, but it is almost impossible to portray his feelings.

## MEMORY WORK.

Have all repeat the Golden Text, and show how the foolishness of Absalom brought destruction to himself and grief to his father.

Have the following written on a slip of paper to be given to each pupil:

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,

Yet they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience he stands waiting,

With exactness grinds he all."

Ask all to memorize it and to print it on their cards. Show how the seeming triumph

of Absalom finally resulted in his overthrow. Ask all to resolve and to print:

I WILL NOT LET MY  
FOOLISHNESS

LEAD ME INTO SIN.

## STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Request all to restudy the twenty-third psalm, so as to be able to repeat it perfectly on next Sunday.

Review words, "Grief," "Foolishness."

## By Way of Illustration.

"Is the young man Absalom safe?" Sin does not destroy love. Love has more concern to ask, "Is the young man safe?" than to seek to know the issue of the battle that decides the fate of his kingdom. "Would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!" has broken out of thousands of parents' hearts. But yesterday a gray-haired father said to me, "I will give my life and my property to recover my son." Love is everlasting. It puts its all of possibility to help and save. But it fails if there be no cooperation of the sinner.—*Bishop H. W. Warren.*

*David's Bitter Sorrow.* As soon as David knew that he was to be king don't you think he believed that when he came to the throne all trouble would cease for him. But his severest troubles and his deepest sorrows came to him after, and not before, his exaltation. We do this very thing. The boy at school longs for the day when he shall be his own master. The girl wishes the day to come quickly when she can manage her own household. The small business man thinks if he could enlarge his business, then he would be happy. There are many who say, "If such a thing could happen I would be supremely happy." Godliness with contentment is what we need to make us happy.

*Verses 33.* Have you never asked yourself why so much space is devoted in the sacred Scriptures to the narration of Absalom's life? It certainly cannot claim prominence because of its worth. Is it because it illustrates God's Fatherhood. If a weak earthly father like David manifested such deep sorrow over the untimely end of a rebellious child, what think you must be God's sorrow over the sins of mankind? That unquenchable desire of David's to die in order to save his son is only the

mild reflection of God's heart. He has died. Sin does not drive us so far away from God that he will not save us. Human fatherhood will receive a wandering child. Human fatherhood will run out to meet the returning penitent when he is a long way off. How much more will our Father in heaven do this?—*Dr. E. S. Tead.*

*Absalom's Tomb.* To-day there is a monument in the valley of Jehoshaphat called "Absalom's Tomb." Christian and Mohammedan travelers, as well as Jewish residents, have been in the habit, from time immemorial, of casting a stone at it as they pass, to show their condemnation of this unfilial son. "Honor thy father and thy mother," are the words of God at Sinai. To lack reverence for one's parents is to be both ungodly and inhuman.—*Dr. C. R. Brown.*

*Absalom, a Lost Soul.* You are determined to gain your point. You have now come to a critical spot which you must get by. The devil keeps the stile, and you say, "What is it you demand of passers-by?" and the answer is, "We take souls here. Every man passing this counter lays down his soul." "His soul?" say you, startled at the thought; "may I not go through for less?" "Not a whit less." Some one behind touches you on the shoulder and says, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—*Joseph Parker.*

#### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

It is a pathetic scene. "Love covereth all sins." Rebellion, ingratitude, selfishness, all forgotten in the eager question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" It is not David the king, but David the father, who speaks, and a thrill of sympathy runs through every heart, for we know that many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. This is love's nature and love's mission—to outlive sin and to pity its victims with an undying compassion. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

David's grief is not singular. The heart of humanity is as one in such suffering ever since the earliest hour of time when

"Sorrow set her bleeding heart  
On this fair world of ours."

His mourning for Absalom is always associated in my thought with the grief of another whose son was taken away in the bright prom-

ise of young manhood. It was my first introduction to sorrow, in my childhood, and the impression has remained intensely distinct through the years. I can never forget the strong tones of anguish in which the words of David were repeated, "My son, my son! would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!" And if our hearts thrill with sympathy for the universal suffering of the bereaved, can we think the Divine Heart is less tender? No. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." "I know their sorrows."

"Never a trial that he is not there,  
Never a burden that he doth not bear,  
Never a sorrow that he doth not share,  
Moment by moment I'm under his care.  
Never a heartache, never a groan,  
Never a teardrop, never a moan,  
Never a danger, but there on the throne  
Moment by moment he thinks of his own."

David had passed through the valley of the shadow of death before. When his little child was ill he fasted and wept and prayed, hoping God might be gracious and suffer him to live. But when David saw that the spirit had gone he accepted God's will with sweet resignation. He said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." There was comfort in his sorrow. He seemed to have heard the music of the Saviour's words spoken ages after, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But Absalom's death was different. There was no sweet assurance for the broken-hearted father. It was a dark valley indeed through which he walked. But even there, when "fear was on every side," he could say, "I trusted in thee, O Lord. I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." He was human, and for a time his grief overcame him. But not for very long. He remembered that he had duties as king, and he put aside his personal feelings for the sake of others. There is a point beyond which grief even in the deepest trouble becomes displeasing to God and wearisome to friends. It must be resolutely overcome; life's duties must be taken up, and we must give ourselves not to be ministered unto, but to minister. To grieve overmuch is to distrust God. It is inconsistent with Christian belief. Do we say God is almighty, and all-loving, and yet cover ourselves in gloom as though he could not solve the darkest problem nor care for his children?

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The storm cloud in passing is dark, but presently, with the sun shining on it, it is gloriously beautiful. "Sorrows, in the light of heaven, will be God's rainbows," and our song shall be, "Just and true are all thy ways, thou king of saints."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

1. Suspense, verses 24-26; 2. Tidings, verses 27-32; 3. A Broken Heart, verse 33. . . . Draw a map, showing Hebron, Jerusalem, the Jordan valley, Mahanaim. The lesson is full of material for word-pictures. . . . Practical lessons for us from Absalom's conduct; from David's conduct. Absalom's fate is paralleled by many a wild son, and David's sorrow illustrates parental love. . . . "Would God I had died for thee!" David said, but he could not die for Absalom. But Christ commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, he died for us.

### Library References.

The references to Absalom on the last lesson are of value here also.

DAVID'S GRIEF.—Taylor, *David*, pages 330-337. Krummacher, *David*, pages 441-446. Blaikie, *David*, pages 285-290.

JOAB.—Tuck, *Revelation by Character*, page 193. Geikie, *Old Testament Characters*, page 244. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. ii, Index. Stanley, *Scripture Portraits*, page 69. Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. iii, Index. Kittel, *History of the Hebrews*, Index. Ewald, *History of Israel*, Index. Lives of David and Bible dictionaries.

### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 29.—*The Pulpit*, London, vol. lxx, page 245. Verse 31.—*The Pulpit*, London, vol.

xxviii, page 17. Verse 33.—Payson, E., *Sermons*, vol. iii, page 352. *The Homilist*, vol. vi, page 122. Doddridge, P., *Sermons*, page 147.

### Blackboard.



To-day's lesson furnishes the final scene in the brief drama of a life replete with tragic incident. Absalom was already branded as a criminal, and his conduct toward his father was inhuman in the last degree. The violent death which he has just suffered at the hands of Jeab is the just sequel to his godless career, and evidences that inevitable and unescapable moral law which operates against the evildoer. Yet not alone is his own wickedness required, but also the sin and folly of his father. David at an earlier year had proved unfaithful, and in the death of his abandoned son and the nation's shame he was experiencing the awful recoil of his own delinquencies.

Coloring.—Tree, light brown; foliage, light and dark green; first line, white and red; other lines, cream.

## LESSON VII. David's Trust in God.

[Nov. 15.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Psa. 23. 1.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

Psa. 23.

[Commit to memory verses 1-6.]

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of

REVISED VERSION.\*

- 1 Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside still waters.
- 3 He restoreth my soul: He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

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

the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

**Time.**—Probably B. C. 1023.

### Home Readings.

- M. David's Trust in God. Psa. 23.  
 Tu. The great Shepherd. Isa. 40. 1-11.  
 W. The good Shepherd. John 10. 1-18.  
 Th. The Shepherd's care. Ezek. 34. 9-16.  
 F. Not afraid. Psa. 3.  
 S. "I am with thee." Isa. 43. 1-7.  
 S. Secure. Psa. 92.

### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 120.

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,  
 And it told thy love to me.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 129.

Abiding, oh, so wondrous sweet!  
 I'm resting at the Saviour's feet.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 123.

I am coming to the cross;  
 I am poor, and weak, and blind.

### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *God Our Guide* (v. 1-3).—What makes this psalm evidently the utterance of a long and rich experience? Compare it with the fifty-first and the thirty-second psalms. Which of its materials were gathered from the shepherd's life? Which of its materials from the warrior's life? What is its message? What is its structure? For what proper name does "the LORD" stand? What is the logical conclusion from the statement that Jehovah is our shepherd? Whither does he lead us? What does he restore or revive? What are "paths of righteousness"?

2. *God Our Defender* (v. 4).—Why does the psalmist change the figure from that of sheep

- I will fear no evil; for thou art with me;  
 Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.  
 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:  
 Thou hast anointed my head with oil;  
 My cup runneth over.  
 6 Surely goodness and loving-kindness shall follow me all the days of my life;  
 And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah forever.

guarded by a shepherd to that of a wanderer in a wilderness? What are meant by the rod and the staff?

3. *God Our Provider* (v. 5).—Note the entire change of the figure in verse 5. Who is our host? What sort of people well know that God is our host and our provider? What sort of a provider is he?

4. *Confidence in God* (v. 6).—What greater reasons have we to confide in God than the psalmist could have had? What is the spiritual significance of green pastures? table? cup? rod? anointing? house of Jehovah?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *The Good Shepherd* (v. 1-4).—What statement is the subject of this psalm? What care of the Good Shepherd is mentioned in verse 2? What blessings are signified? Why is soul-restoration needed? What guidance is given? What trying experience awaits each one of us? What takes away fear regarding it?

2. *A Royal Host and His Guest* (v. 5, 6).—What picture is presented in verse 5? Who are looking on? What special mark of favor is given? What attendants are provided for safety and aid? What prospect is seen?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

What is the twenty-third psalm sometimes called? Which name do you like best? What did King David play upon? When did he begin to do it? What did he sing? Where did he keep his father's flocks? *Near Bethlehem*. What did he afterward make? How many hymns are in his book? *One hundred and fifty*. When did he write the twenty-third psalm? What did he remember? What did it make him think of? Can you repeat the first three verses? What other place did he think of? Can you repeat the fourth verse? What state of his life did he think of last? Can you repeat the fifth and sixth verses?

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## The Condensed Review.

1. Who is the shepherd of the good? "*The Lord is my shepherd.*" 2. Where does he lead his sheep? *Beside the still waters.* 3. What can the Christian say in the valley of the shadow of death? *I will fear no evil.* 4. Why? *For thou art with me.* 5. What confidence have we concerning God's goodness and mercy? *They shall follow me all the days of my life.*

## The Church Catechism.

49. What are our duties to the Church of Christ? Our duties to the Church of Christ are to take our part in the public ordinances of worship; to assist according to our ability in all Christian work; to contribute according to our means to the support of the Church and its institutions, and particularly to the extension of the Gospel in the world.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

## What the Lord Is to Us.

## I. THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

*The Lord is my shepherd.* v. 1.

Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep. Heb. 13. 20.

When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory. 1 Pet. 5. 4.

## II. THE GIVER OF LIFE.

*He restoreth my soul.* v. 3.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10. 10.

Come to me, that ye may have life. John 5. 40.

## III. THE ANNIHILATOR OF DEATH.

*Through the valley of the shadow of death*

*I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.* v. 4.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death. 2 Tim. 1. 10.

That he might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Heb. 2. 14, 15.

## IV. THE CONSTANT PROVIDER.

*Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.* v. 6.

I lead in the ways of righteousness that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance. Prov. 8. 20, 21.

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. 4. 19.

## V. THE SPIRITUAL COMRADE.

*I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.* v. 6.

Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends. John 15. 15.

Sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2. 6.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

We study to-day the twenty-third psalm, one of the favorite poems of the world, one of the treasures of the devout soul. St. Augustine saw in a dream the one hundred and nineteenth psalm rise before him as a tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, and Dr. Stoughton has compared the twenty-third psalm to the fairest of the flowers that grow in that paradise. Not always can the Christian voice his feelings in such joyous language as this psalm throbs with, but he may find some encouragement from the recollection that this is perhaps the only psalm in the entire psalter which from beginning to end is expressive of personal confidence, joy, and triumph. There is no telling where or when it was written. That it is the composition of David is generally agreed.

**Verse 1.** *The Lord* ["Jehovah"] *is my shepherd.* David knew all about sheep and shepherds. What a shepherd is to his flock—provider, defender, director—God is to us. But if God be our Shepherd it follows that we are God's sheep—weak, defenseless, needy creatures, but eagerly following him. It is not straining Bible interpretation to remember that our Lord in typical utterances did not include all men among his sheep; some he called goats, and some, wolves. Which are we? The Lord has bought his sheep with a great price,

and we should each be able to say as confidently as did David, "The Lord is my shepherd." Mr. Spurgeon says, "There is no 'if,' nor 'but,' nor 'hope so' about this; he *is* my shepherd; but the sweetest word of the five is the monosyllable '*my*.'" In another place we read that Jehovah led forth the multitude as a flock. There is much comfort in this doctrine of a general providence; but there is still greater comfort in the present tense, first person, singular number of our text. *I shall not want.* Every moment of a human life registers wants, needs,

of body, mind, and soul; but in none of these shall the trusting soul be left. All our needs shall be supplied according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Experience strengthens faith. (Compare Deut. 2. 7 with Deut. 8. 9.)

2. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.* Pastures of tender grass. (Compare Jer. 33. 12.) *He leadeth me.* Here is provision for lying down and for walking; for rest and for activity. What the green pastures are to the sheep home-comforts are to us; and where should the Christian make his heart's home? Certainly he should not pasture in the midst of temptation. "We find rest and refreshment in God's promises, provender and peace, serenity and satisfaction."—*Spurgeon.* By an easy typology *the still waters* may be interpreted to stand for the graces of the Holy Spirit. Remember the homely adage, "Still waters run deep." In a beautiful note *Tristram* reminds us that the Eastern shepherd never *drives*, but always *leads* his sheep; and that the Oriental sheep requires water daily, owing to the heat and dryness of the climate. Both of which facts, when taken in connection with this verse, have the force of religious parables to us.

3. *He restoreth my soul.* "Renews my life." He not only provides the means of restoration by pastures and waters, but the restoration itself—which is more than any shepherd can do for sheep. Human beings need food and slumber, but food and slumber, however useful, do not insure constant health. Health itself is a gift from God. So in our spiritual natures we need a divine restoration, a restoration that does not come from means of grace, invaluable as they are, but by the direct act of God. *He leadeth* ["guideth"] *me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.* An unusually suggestive sentence. In the first place the *leadership* of God implies the *following* of servants. In the second place observe the continued use of the personal pronoun. God leads not the church merely, but the individual Christian—"me." In the third place, he leads not in the *path*, but in the *paths* of righteousness. Different courses in life are divinely ordained for different people. In natural characteristics John and Peter and Paul, Martha and Mary, were singularly unlike. God has paths of righteousness adapted to each nature and each circumstance, but all the paths of God are righteous, just, good, pure. Lastly, all these blessings are "for his name's sake;" and that, according to oriental verbal usage, is for his character's sake. Characteristically God does

these things; of his own nature he blesses us. Very beautifully has it been said that God is not a piano placed in the center of the universe whose melodies may be evoked only by skillful fingers. God is the Sun of righteousness, the Father of lights, the Luminary of souls, who shines perpetually in all directions. It is of his nature to shine, to lead, to provide, to nurture, in every way to bless.

4. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.* "The believer does not quicken his pace when he comes to die, but still calmly walks with God." "The valley of the shadow of death" is a natural figure of speech for a mountaineer like David. But "no shadow can stop a man's pathway. The shadow of a dog cannot bite; the shadow of a sword cannot kill; the shadow of death cannot destroy." *Thou art with me.* "More than all in Thee I find." God's presence is our comfort. *Thy rod and thy staff* are "synonyms" for the shepherd's crook, a walking-stick with a curve at the upper end, which is used both to rule the flock and to defend it against enemies.

5. The figure is changed from that of a shepherd to that of a host. *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.* It is not a crime to have enemies. It is a blessing not to have them, but those who have no human enemies have other adversaries—diseases, bereavements, calamities of many sorts—and one might die of chagrin in the midst of the disappointments of mature life were it not for the presence of the Friend, who in our hours of weariness and need has a table of bounty prepared for us. *Thou anointest my head with oil.* The allusion is to the perfumes used at banquets rather than to any induction into priestly or kingly office. *My cup runneth over.* "Jehovah is no niggard host, like the Pharisee (Luke 7. 46); he provides for the joys as well as the necessities of life (John 2. 1-11); his guests shall be of a cheerful countenance, and a gladsome heart (Psa. 104. 15)."—*Kirkpatrick.*

6. *Surely* ["Only"—Revised Margin] *goodness and mercy* ["loving-kindness"] *shall follow me all the days of my life.* God himself goes before us, and his two servants, "Goodness and Loving-kindness" follow us. Calamity cannot come near us. *I will* ["shall"] *dwell in the house of the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *forever.* In this world and in the world to come; here, in church fellowship; there, amid the saints who throng about the throne—for heaven is "the upper story of the house of the Lord."

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## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The psalmist here gratefully sings the praises of Jehovah, under whose loving care as the watchful shepherd (verses 1-4) and the bountiful host (verses 5, 6) he knows neither want nor fear.

"The psalmist's words admit of the most universal application to all needs, temporal and spiritual, in every age. Their meaning grows in depth as the love of God is more fully revealed through the teaching of the Spirit in the experience of life."—*Cambridge Bible*.

As the good shepherd he feeds his flock, he guides them in right paths, provides for their every want, and protects them from every danger. The sheep know his voice, and they follow him gladly, even when he leads them away from green pastures, by rocky and thorny paths to new pastures, which they cannot see. In dangerous places they follow him, and fear no evil.

As the bountiful host Jehovah makes the psalmist his guest, he welcomes him to his banquet hall, he honors him with the anointing oil—the oil of gladness—and provides for him the enjoyments of life, while he supplies its necessities.

And he will provide for him an everlasting home. "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (verse 6). "Without a belief in personal immortality, religion is surely like an arch resting on one pillar—like a bridge ending in an abyss."—*Max Müller*.

The great truth that God is not the God of the dead but of the living is brought into practical existence in the Psalms (Matt. 22, 31, 32). Abraham looked for a city of foundations whose builder and maker is God. The patriarchs show plainly that they desire a heavenly country: "Wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11, 16).

The psalmist has Jehovah near him. The hope of immortality is involved in this spiritual fellowship and communion. "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth. But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psa. 73, 23, 24; comp. 49, 15).

If I have thee, there is none else in heaven and earth whom I desire. Thou art my only good and happiness in the whole universe.

Where thou art is heaven; even as, to the loving child, where mother is, there is home.

The sheep follow in perfect trust even though the shepherd should be leading them away from a green pasture, by a rocky and thorny path to another pasture which they cannot see.

If God be as a Shepherd to us, we must be as sheep before him; inoffensive, meek, and quiet; silent before the shearers; we must know the Shepherd's voice and follow him.

The sheep dwell in a country where at any moment they are liable to be swept away by mountain torrents, or carried off by bill robbers, or torn by wolves; and at any moment their protector may have to save them by personal hazard.

## Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

## A SONG OF TRUST.

IN human speech one of the sweetest songs of trust is one of the oldest. If religion was evolved it must have developed faster than any other phase of human life. Its beginnings are our highest hopes of attainment in these last days. Volumes have been written on this jewel of the soul, this "nightingale of psalms." I have one commentary that has over twenty thousand words of comment on this single psalm. Hundreds of thousands have commented on it by lives rather than words.

This necklace of grace has six jewels:

1. The Shepherd satisfies every want (verse 1). Neither dainty food, faithful friends, nor abundant gold can do this. It takes the infiniteness of God.
2. He gives a life of peace by the waters of rest (verse 2).
3. He restores the soul with sweet refection when it is merely weary, or with pardon and the birth of a new nature when it is sinful (verse 3).
4. He, the Sun of Righteousness, is our guide through the deep darkness (verse 4).  
"I had rather walk in the dark with thee,  
Than walk alone in the light."
5. He is our peace, however thickly the enemies encamp about us (verse 5). He gives food, adornment, and a cup of life full to overflowing. He says, "I am come that ye might have life in overflowing abundance, more than you can hold."
6. Glancing back at those encamped enemies, he says, "Only goodness and mercy shall pursue me." They are as eager on my trail to overtake me as enemies would be.

There can be but one conclusion. One so lovingly cared for in so many respects in this life by such infinite care will surely dwell in the home of the Lord forever (verse 6).

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### SIX MARKS OF CHRIST'S SHEEP.

We find them in John 10:

1. *Christ's sheep know their Shepherd.* We should thank God that we have known the Shepherd of souls since our infancy. We should spare no pains until the last sheep of the wilderness is brought to know and follow our good Shepherd.

2. *They know his voice.* Often badness has put on the garb of goodness, so that sometimes "the very elect" have nearly been deceived. But no other voice need ever be mistaken for the voice of God by the trusting soul.

3. *They hear him calling them each by name.* Dr. Porter describes the silent hillside of Bashan filled in a moment with life and sound, while the shepherds lead their flocks forth from the city—thousands of sheep and goats in dense, confused masses. Until all came out the shepherds stood together; then they separated, each shepherd taking a different path, and uttering as he advanced a shrill, peculiar call. The sheep heard them. At first the masses swayed and moved, then they turned into long living streams, flowing after their leaders, and the shepherds spoke to the sheep one by one, and called each by his name. So our Saviour knows us individually, and talks to us.

4. *They love him.* His love satisfies, and in this love want and fear are unknown.

5. *They trust him.* Their trust is founded not only on his promise, but on his performance. He maketh, he lendeth, he restoreth. The past and the present sustain our confident hope for the future.

6. *They follow him.* Leadership without following is useless. We can tell whether or not we are the sheep of the Good Shepherd by the direction of our footsteps.

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

#### PRELIMINARY.

As the psalm that we are considering is one that every Christian is supposed to have memorized, it will be profitable for the teacher to spend some time in having the pupils recite it.

For those who wish to get at the real meaning of the imagery of the psalm, and who wish

to make its meaning clear to the pupils, nothing will be more helpful than a small book entitled *The Shepherd Psalm*, by Josephine Baldwin.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

No importance need be attached to the time and the place of the composition of this beautiful pastoral poem. It is a natural outcome of David's early life as a shepherd, and is true to the experiences of devout believers in all ages and in all climes.

#### APPROACH.

The method of approach employed in teaching will depend upon what is our paramount aim in the presentation of the psalm. (See Lesson Text below.) It is suggested that the teacher make himself familiar with the practices of an oriental shepherd, and as his approach tell a story of the shepherd's relation to his sheep. For boys, an expansion of 1 Sam. 17. 34-36 would make an impressive approach.

#### LESSON TEXT.

Two methods of treatment are suggested:

1. Let the teacher become very familiar with the imagery of the text, and get the real meaning of the various phrases and words, such as "the shadow of death," "rod," "staff," "oil," "cup," etc. Have the pupils repeat the psalm verse by verse, question to ascertain whether they know the meaning of the words and understand the pictures employed, explain wherever necessary, and show the spiritual application. (It would be a revelation to learn how many persons in the school have no real conception of the meaning of the word "rod" in verse 4.)

2. Another plan would be to show what the shepherd does for his sheep. For example:

- (1) Supplies every need (verse 1).
- (2) Feeds (verse 2).
- (3) Rests (verse 2).
- (4) Restores (verse 3).
- (5) Leads (verse 3).
- (6) Protects (verse 4).
- (7) Entertains (verse 5).
- (8) Blesses (verse 5).

When the pupils open their Bibles at John 10. 1-18, and tell how many of the above expressions or ideas have their equivalents in Jesus's description of himself as the Good Shepherd.

Finally, ask: In order that God shall be my shepherd what am I to do? Use all answers to lead up to the thought: *If God is my shepherd I must hear, obey, and follow him.*

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## MEMORY WORK.

Have all print the following in order that it may be memorized, and also preserved for future reference and use:

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

FEEDS  
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LEADS  
PROTECTS  
ENTERTAINS  
BLESSSES

# HIS SHEEP.

Ask all to print at home the above on their cards, and also the following:

## I WILL YIELD LOVING

## OBEDIENCE

## TO THE LORD, MY SHEPHERD.

Request all who will truly make this promise to remain after school for special prayer. (Very young children may be led to Christ the Good Shepherd.)

## STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask all who have signed the pledge to bring their pledge cards with them on next Sunday, and all who have not already signed to get their parents' permission to do so. Ask each pupil to bring in on next Sunday an account of some harm that has resulted from the use of strong drink. (These accounts may be clipped from newspapers, copied from books, or written out as the result of observation or of recitals by the pupils' friends.)

Review words, "Shepherd," "Obedience."

## By Way of Illustration.

*David the Shepherd Boy.* We are told in Persian story of a ruler who dedicated one apartment in his palace to the memory of earlier days, ere royal caprice had lifted him from lowliness to honor. There in a tiny room with bare floors was the simple equipment of shepherd life—the crook, the wallet, the coarse dress, the water cruse; and there he spent a part of each day, remembering what he had been, as an antidote to those temptations which beset men in the dazzling light of royal favor. So David the king did not forget David the shepherd boy.—*F. B. Meyer.*

"My shepherd." It is a personal relationship. John tells us that "He calleth his own sheep by name," and He says to us through

Isaiah, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Joseph Cook, in writing of his experiences in India, says: "I was cheered through all my journey from the sea to the Himalaya Mountains with the twitter of a little native bird." This great man, deep in the mysteries of India's peculiar races and weird philosophies, found solace and pleasure in a tiny bird. So does the Lord Jesus listen for your song, be it ever so simple, and wait for your service, be it ever so imperfect.

A traveler in Syria once put on the shepherd's dress and, imitating his call, went out to the flock and pretended he was the shepherd. The sheep paid no attention to him. "Will your sheep never follow anyone but you?" he asked. "Sometimes when a sheep gets sick it will follow a stranger; never any other time," answered the shepherd.—*Bishop W. X. Ninde.*

*Verses 2, 3.* The midday or nightly rest is intended to fit for effort, and so "paths of righteousness" come next after the "green pastures" and "still waters." The purpose of repose and refreshment is to prepare for tasks and marches. A man may lie in a bath till strength is diminished, or may take his plunge and come from it braced for work. In the religious life it is possible to commit a like error, and to so prize "still waters" as to put aside imperative duty for the sake of them. We are like Peter and say, "Let us make here three tabernacles," while there were devil-ridden sufferers waiting to be healed down on the plain.—*Dr. Alexander McLaren.*

*The Banquet. Verses 5, 6.* The psalmist says, "I am more than Jehovah's sheep; I am Jehovah's guest." It is a mark of great intimacy to sit with a man at his table; in the East it is essentially so; it signifies intimacy and love. The chief complaint made against Jesus was that he not only received sinners, but ate with them. It was not possible for our Lord to give a more touching proof of his love for his wayward follower than to dip a sop and pass it to his hands. Many times in the Bible the Christian life is spoken of as a feast, which is the highest type of earthly merrymaking. In Luke 12:37 we find the reward of the faithful servants: "Verily I say unto you, that he [the Lord] shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." He will be the Host and will himself serve his guests.

"Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." In England when I saw a man walking I said, "He is probably a poor man." If he drove a carriage I concluded he

was fairly well-to-do. If he had coachman and footman I knew he had wealth. But if he had two footmen I was tolerably sure that he belonged to royalty. So every Christian, child of a King, has two footmen, goodness and mercy.—*Moody.*

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

David wrote this beautiful psalm in the midst of turbulent scenes. The quiet waters beside which his Shepherd led him were not in the outward life. It was the River of Peace, flowing not from earthly springs, but from the exhaustless springs of God's love; that of which Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We must find these waters of quietness. While there is trouble, and fret, and rush outside, there must be peace within. We must let the Good Shepherd lead us into cool, quiet, resting places or we shall fall in a dead faint by the way. It is easy to talk of the beauty and grace of a quiet mind and an undisturbed temper when life's currents flow peacefully, but not so easy when the depths are stoned and there are rocks and rapids to be gone over. Then we need to be led by One who knows where to find the still waters. It is very comforting to be assured that God does not want his children to wander about weary, troubled, anxious. He says, "Come unto me and rest." We are not hunting for him, but he is hunting for us, to care for and to protect us. "For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a Shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. . . . I will feed them in a good pasture . . . by the rivers. . . . I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." With such a Shepherd we confidently say, "I shall not want."

He leadeth me. Who leadeth? The Lord Jesus. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." He leads beside the still waters of a conscience cleansed from sin: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The quiet waters of trust: "My

God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The quiet waters of patience: "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Ah, patient continuance! You say you would like a little change; these waters are too still. It grows monotonous, wearisome. But if the Good Shepherd leads you there, they will prove to be sweet waters, beautiful, reflecting the heaven above you. Put the emphasis upon the two words "He" and "me." Jesus is a real person; he knows me and cares for me as fully as if there were no one else in the world for him to think of. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

We will never find the quiet waters unless we follow our Shepherd. If you are looking for anything really satisfying in this world apart from him let me tell you, faithfully and tenderly, you will be disappointed. I do not say it because I am a misanthrope or a pessimist. This is a good world in which to get ready for a better one; I rejoice in its beauty and its many pleasures. But it can never satisfy a soul born for heaven. It gives, but not as Jesus gives. I want you to have his peace, then you can make the most of all the world can offer and yet be so independent of it that you could lose all and yet joyfully say, "I shall not want."

"Lie down and sleep,  
Leave it with God to keep  
This sorrow which is past  
Now of thy heart.  
When thou dost wake,  
If still 'tis thine to take,  
Utter no wild complaint;  
Work waits thy hands;  
If thou shouldst faint  
God understands."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Two outlines: 1. God our Guide, verses 1-3; 2. God our Defender, verse 4; 3. God our Provider, verse 5; 4. Confidence in God, verse 6. . . . 1. The Good Shepherd; 2. His Provision for the Sheep; 3. His Superiority to all Foes; 4. Victory over Enemies.

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**Blackboard.**

The most tender and striking figure is employed by David to describe the personal rela-

tion between himself and God. The kindness and solicitude of a shepherd for his flock represents to him the loving-kindness of Jehovah. However many or devious the paths of life might be, there was one path upon which the cares and perplexities of life did not intrude to take away his comfort and peace of heart. It was the way wherein the Good Shepherd led, and there the pastures were always green and the waters still. David looks in retrospect over his lifelong journey, and can discover nothing



but the goodness and mercy of the Lord; and in the calm consideration of the past he can scan the future confidently, hopefully, fearlessly. Do we too know the Lord as our Shepherd?

Coloring.—Path and words, cream; wording, white and light green with red.

**LESSON VIII. The Curse of Strong Drink.**

[Nov. 22.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Wine is a mocker. Prov. 20. 1.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION.**

Prov. 20. 1; 23. 20, 21, 29-35. [Commit to memory verses 29-32.]

1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

**REVISED VERSION.\***

1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise.

20 Be not among winebibbers; among gluttonous eaters of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty;

And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?

Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?

Who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine;

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30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it liveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

They that go to seek out mixed wine.  
31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, When it sparkleth in the cup, When it goeth down smoothly:

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, And stingeth like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange things, And thy heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea,

Or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.  
35 They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not hurt;

They have beaten me, and I felt it not: When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

**Time.**—About 1000 B. C. (Usher).

### Home Readings.

M. The Curse of Strong Drink. Prov. 20. 1; 23. 20, 21, 29-35.

Tu. Source of woe. Isa. 5. 11-23.

W. A danger signal. Isa. 28. 1-7.

Th. Luxury and captivity. Amos 6. 1-7.

F. Drunkenness and defeat. 1 Kings 20. 13-21.

S. An evil portion. Matt. 24. 42-51.

S. Watch! 1 Thess. 5. 4-11.

### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 222.

Gently, Lord, oh, gently lead us  
Through this lonely vale of tears.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 351.

When times of temptation bring sadness and gloom,  
I will tell it to Jesus, my Lord.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 321.

A better day is coming,  
A morning promised long.

### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Deceitfulness of Intoxicants* (v. 1, 20, 21).—What conditions of drunkenness do the Old Testament books of history and prophecy reveal? Were distilled liquors known in Old Testament times? In what sense is wine a mocker? Is it wise to take wine or liquors in "moderate" quantities? Is it wise to associate with drinking men, even though we do

not ourselves partake of liquor? Why is gluttonous eating of flesh forbidden? Is there any one cause of poverty as prevalent at the present time as drunkenness? How does drunkenness lead to inertia and uselessness?

2. *The Ruin Wrought by Intemperance* (v. 29-35).—What process in the wine is described by getting "red"? by "sparkling"? by "going down smoothly"? Are the horrors of the strong drink habit exaggerated in our lesson? Has our lesson anything to say about the family horrors of indulgence in strong drink? About the social and political horrors? About the mechanical and business disasters?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Warnings against Excess* (v. 1, 20, 21).—What two words indicate intoxicating liquors? What difference between such liquors now and those known in Bible times? What are the effects of the use of intoxicants? In what sense is wine a mocker? What two forms of excess are mentioned together? What evil results are spoken of?

2. *The Woes and Vices of the Drunkard* (v. 29-35).—What results are mentioned as a result of drinking? What attractive features of wine are mentioned? What warning is given? What evil results of intoxicating liquors are in verses 32-35? What is the only safe thing to do in regard to these drinks?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

What great evil is in all lands? Who first separated the spirit of wine from wine? What did they call it? What kind of power has it? How long ago did King Solomon talk about it? What other kind of intemperance is there? What does strong drink make? *Drunkards*. What does too much eating make? *Gluttons*.

How can you begin to do it? do? What taught to Ought to we take?

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I. SELF-INTOXICATION  
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v. 1.

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11. 9

II. EVIL CONSEQUENCES

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v. 20

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III. POVERTY

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How can you avoid being either? When must you begin? Who will tempt you, and how will he do it? What will a wise child resolve to do? What are our bodies? What are we taught to do? To "be filled with the Spirit." Ought we to live by a rule? Whose rule shall we take?

### The Condensed Review.

1. Against what sin is this lesson directed? *Against the sin of intemperance.* 2. What is intemperance? *Excess of any kind.* 3. What particular excess is here denounced? *Excessive use of intoxicating drinks.* 4. What warning does the Scripture pronounce against the seller of intoxicating drinks? "*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink*" (Hab. 2. 15). 5. What warning to the user of these drinks?

"Wine is," etc. GOLDEN TEXT. 6. What direct command does it give to all? "*Look not thou upon the wine when it is red.*"

### The Church Catechism.

50. What are our duties to society at large? Our duties to society at large are truth, honour, justice, and kindness to all men; equity, fidelity, honesty, and industry in business; help to the needy; and respect for age and authority.

Philippians 4. 8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

### Five Evils to be Avoided by Youth.

#### I. SELF-INDULGENCE.

*Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*  
v. 1.

Mortify the deeds of the body. Rom. 8. 13.  
Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Eccles. 11. 9.

#### II. EVIL COMPANIONSHIP.

*Be not among winebibbers, riotous eaters.*  
v. 20.

Evil communications corrupt good manners. 1 Cor. 15. 33.

Follow not that which is evil. 3 John 11.

#### III. POVERTY.

*Shall come to poverty; shall clothe a man with rags.* v. 21.

The belly of the wicked shall want. Prov. 13. 25.

So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man. Prov. 24. 34.

#### IV. SLAVERY TO EVIL HABIT.

*They that tarry long; I will seek it yet again.* v. 30, 35.

Woe to them that draw sin as with a cart rope. Isa. 5. 18.

#### V. A BITTER CONSCIENCE.

*It biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.* v. 32.

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee. Jer. 2. 19.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

All strong drink is bad. Mere moderation in the use of it is a mockery. To take it at all is a sin against both body and soul. Total abstinence is the only remedy. In this lesson Solomon enumerates unpleasant experiences from which we all would shrink, and asks, Who is it that hath these? The answer is (substantially), All who indulge in intoxicants; and especially, the connoisseurs, whose jaded palates are ever craving fresh stimulant. [Stock.] Now if any young person among our Sunday scholars is disposed to agree with all this, but to excuse himself by adding, "I at least am neither a habitual drinker nor a connoisseur," Solomon replies in effect, "*Beware of the beginnings of this worst of all habits.*" In the closing verse the certain results of intemperance are vividly described—fleshly lust, foolish thoughts, imminent though unnoticed danger, and the drowsy semi-idiotic state in which the drunkard awakes out of the sleep of intoxication. Worst of all is the fascination of the habit, which leads the sufferer back to the cause of his suffering.

**Verse 1. Wine.** . . . *strong drink.* The two intoxicants of the ancient East. The Hebrew word here used for wine (*yadyin*) occurs one hundred and forty times in the text of the Old Testament, and is uniformly rendered "wine" by both the English and the Revised

Versions. It seems indeed to be the original of the English word *wine*, passing through the Greek form *oinos* and the Latin form *vinum*. Other Hebrew words are elsewhere used for wines; one of them especially, *tirōs*, serves in some passages to describe the freshly expressed

and still unfermented grape juice. But *yáyin* always means grape wine, fermented and matured. The word for "strong drink" is *sékár*, from a root which supplies the Hebrew words for drunk, drunkard, drunkenness. "Its etymology warrants the inference that it is to be regarded as a comprehensive designation for every sort of intoxicating beverage from whatever source derived."—*R. S. Kennedy*, in *Encyclopædia Biblica*. In some passages the meanings of the two words overlap; in this text a parallelism is made for the purpose of including all intoxicants. Date wine was probably very early used as a strong drink by the Hebrews. In later times cider was added to the mischief-making drinks, and wines made from quinces and from pomegranates. Foreign liquors also were imported to Palestine: a Babylonian drink made from sour milk (like *kumiss*); the liquors from Media and Edom made from malted fruit juice; and Egyptian barley beer which became famous throughout the ancient world. Strong drink was also made by mingling spices with wine. (See note on verse 30.) It is probable that the division in the mind of the writer was not so much between the sources and processes of manufacture of intoxicants as it was between the two great effects that intoxicants have on the mind and conduct. Everything that intoxicates is either a mocker or a brawler (Revised Version instead of *raging*) or both. Intoxication tends to deceive the intoxicated person and to make trouble between him and others. *Is deceived* is literally *reels*.

**20. Be not among.** Associate not with *Winebibbers*. "Drunkards in wine." *Riotous* ["gluttonous"] *eat*ers of flesh. A phrase of uncertain meaning; literally, "squanderers of flesh." Probably animal food was as much of a luxury to the common people of ancient Palestine as it is now to the majority of people in Asia, and the eating of it at a banquet was typical of excess.

**21.** For the drunkard and the *glutton shall come to poverty*. The word for "glutton" is the same as the word for "riotous eaters of flesh." *Drowsiness* [literally, "sleepyheadedness"] shall ["will"] *clothe a man with rags*. *Dr. Plumptre's* comment is forcible: "The three forms of evil that destroy character and reputation are here brought together: liquor, lust, and laziness."

**29. Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?** The Hebrew is startling; literally, "Who hath Oh! who hath Alas!" Instead of nouns interjections are used. *Who hath contentions? who*

*hath babbling* ["complaining"]? *who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness* [Margin, "darkness"] *of eyes?* Here are the sadly familiar phenomena of intoxication: regret for lost innocence and lost self-control; needless and inexcusable injuries, "the result of groundless differences;" and confusion of the vision and of other senses. The questions hardly need an answer, but the inspired poet proceeds to give it.

**30. They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek ["out"] *mixed wine*. In later times it was the Jewish custom to use diluted wine: "Three parts of water to one part of wine, excepting when the wine was very weak, when two parts of water were used." For one to drink wine without dilution, or for one to drink much wine, was regarded as indulgence to excess, and mixed wine, wine heightened in flavor and increased in strength by aromatic herbs and spices, was regarded as peculiarly injurious. Sometimes honey and pepper were added. In Assyria it was the custom of luxurious revelers to have the drugs and aromatics pounded into a paste in their presence. This perfumed paste was dissolved during the feast in earthen bowls of wine, and served.**

**31. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red.** Or, in other words, upon red wine, or, the redness of wine. Palestinian wines seem generally to have been red. *When it giveth his color in the cup* ["When it sparkleth in the cup"], *when it moveth itself aright* ["When it goeth down smoothly"]. The warning is against the baneful fascinations of color and the seduction of taste. The connection with the next verse is close: "At first it glides smoothly down, over the lips and the palate, but"—

**32. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.** This means painfully and fatally. It may also mean comprehensively. There is no wound more immediately prevalent in its effects over all physical functions than the bite of a poisonous snake, which affects the blood, the digestive organs, and the mind. So is it with intoxicating liquor. Our delicate and composite physical nature, our intellect and our soul, are all destroyed by it. The species of snake referred to as an adder is not known.

**33. Thine eyes shall behold strange women** ["strange things"], *and thine* ["thy"] *heart shall utter perverse things*. "Strange women" is a common phrase for "stranger women," foreign women; most of the enticers to the social evil in Palestine being foreigners. But the

sense of the heart, the varieties, the allusion made in any case and common emotional

**34. Yea,** *in the midst upon the tumult and perturbation of motion of the word meaning. describes "the*

*The Deceit* *mockers* and *tim*s whom *scorns* those "drunken *wo* (Eph. 5. 18) is due to the great criminal beverages that *hol*, whether distillation. The drunk says, "I will of the excess awakes his habits. One drunkenness

*Warning of Winebibbers.* room were of Jerusalem, at same evil rep

To be am "gluttonous" not enter into and when a served with viting variety indulge to ex ancient feasti The drunkard sess themselves to poverty;" in rags" (ver drowsiness, lic disreputable a vites its patro

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sense of the phrase here seems to be that while the heart conceives and the mouth utters perversities, the eyes behold perversities, and the allusion may be [Müller] to delirium tremens. In any case the meaning is plain. "Conscience and common sense have been dethroned and the emotional nature is vitiated."

34. *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* "The disturbed rest and perturbation of thought occasioned by the motion of a ship at sea" are used as a figure. The word translated "mast" is of uncertain meaning. But the entire sentence closely describes "the broken, unsound sleep of the rev-

eler—his head whirling, his mind confused."—*Toy.*

35. *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick ["hurt"]; they have beaten me, and I felt it not.* The drunken man is counting his "wounds without cause," and he sees that he has been more severely injured than his feelings indicate. The worst injuries of the drink habit are at the time unconscious to him who indulges. *When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* Here is the climactic conclusion of this awfully realistic description. "The drunkard's experience teaches him nothing—his only desire is to get back to his debauch."

### HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

*The Deceitfulness of Intoxicants.* Wine is a mocker and a scorner; who mocks at his victims whom he has brought into trouble and scorns those whom he has deceived. Men are "drunken with wine wherein is excess" or riot (Eph. 5. 18). The tendency to produce excess is due to the alcohol contained therein. The great criminal concealed in the intoxicating beverages that have cursed mankind is alcohol, whether produced by fermentation or by distillation.

The drunkard in his soliloquy (Prov. 23. 35) says, "I will seek it yet again." Unconscious of the excesses of the night, as soon as he awakes his first thought is to return to his old habits. One of the greatest punishments of drunkenness is this insatiable appetite.

*Warning against the Low Associations of Winebibbers.* The associations of the wine-room were considered disreputable in ancient Jerusalem, and the saloon should be held in the same evil repute to-day.

To be among winebibbers is to be among "gluttonous eaters of flesh." "Animal food did not enter into the ordinary diet of the people, and when at an occasional banquet it was served with lavish hospitality and with inviting variety there was great temptation to indulge to excess. The 'gluttonous' feature of ancient feasting astonishes students of history." The drunkard and the glutton shall "dispossess themselves" of their substance and "come to poverty;" for "drowsiness will clothe a man in rags" (verse 21). Drunkenness, gluttony, drowsiness, liquor, lust, and pauperism, are the disreputable associations to which the saloon invites its patrons.

*The Destruction of the Drink Evil.* The nineteenth century will ever be known in history as the age of the destruction of slavery. The

twentieth century must earn the distinction of the destruction of the drink evil.

This is the supreme criminal of all time. There is not a single crime that this hideous beast does not carry in his pouch. Murder is one of the mildest aberrations from good citizenship that characterize this monster. The tortures of the dark ages were mere amusements compared with the terrors and horrors that this evil inflicts upon its victims. Who can understand the thumbscrews of the mind? Think of the wheels that pull apart the joints of the soul! What abysses of agony are found in the racks of the spirit! The old external tortures soon find their limit in the benumbed nerve and fainting heart. But the hells that burn in the breast of him who is dying of delirium tremens defy description. Uncap hell. Look upon the great army, a hundred thousand strong, marching into these tortments every year in our great Empire.

"Prevent the coming generation from acquiring the craving, and liberate the slaves now in bondage, and you have done much toward making this world like Eden."—*Bishop C. H. Fowler.*

*Abstinence and Moderation.* "Thus far experiments upon large bodies of men, in exploring expeditions, and in the armies, where labor and exposure have to be endured, indicate that when the regular moderation quantity of alcohol is taken the harmful effects offset the beneficial ones, and the moderate drinker is made less fit, rather than more fit, to work."—*Dr. Hewes, Harvard Medical School.*

*Liquor destroys Reliability.* In times of stress, whether in mercantile pursuits or national defense, liquor is now being debarred. General Kitchener rigidly enforced prohibition in his Sudan campaign, and even army officers under him were

compelled to leave behind private supplies of wine that they had intended for personal use. There were no favors shown. Lord Roberts, an abstainer himself, also prohibited the use of liquor by our soldiers in South Africa, except such as was necessary for hospital or medical use.

### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

#### INSANITY FOR SALE.

I have seen grogshops with these signs painted on them: "The Charms of the Seductress;" "The Vesuvius;" "The Shipwreck;" "The Delirium Tremens;" "The Little Hell;" etc.

Do these signs appall and repel? No. When one has sold his soul to buy insanity they attract. There is in man a bravery that courts danger with an assurance of victory. When this trait is perverted it becomes a dare-devilism that rushes madly into certain defeat. Admiral de Gama, of Brazil, traitorously took his ship over to the rebels. Defeated, he blew up his ship with all on board.

Wine is a mocker in that it debases and destroys the best in man—strength, clear-headedness, power to get wealth, knowledge, power of will, family affection, love of God—and rouses the worst in man—woe, sorrow, wounds without cause, murders. "It first maddens, then unchains the tiger" in man.

After all this has been experienced, after disgrace, loss of business positions, destruction of family, ruin of personal powers, the sheer insanity that has been purchased is apparent in the poor victim's saying, "When I awake I will seek it again" (verse 35). One disgraceful debauch is not enough. No importunity of friends avails. No entreaties of aged father, once loved mother, nor of wife he has sworn to love and protect, have weight. No fear of death and damnation holds him back. He has sold soul and bought insanity.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### FOUR STEPS IN THE RIGHT WAY.

1. *Temperance.* Wines and liquors at public dinners, festivals, weddings, and social parties are highly improper. They offer temptation. They entrap the unwary. They open a door to vice. They set a bad example. They offend Christian consciences, and outrage the general sentiment of the best people. They lower the tone of morals, public, social, and private. They invite to partake, and ruin many souls. Prov. 1. 10, 15; 23. 20; 28. 10; Rom. 14. 13; 2 Cor. 11. 29; 1 Tim. 5. 22.

2. *Total abstinence* from intoxicating drinks becomes a duty, and doubly so for young persons who are framing their principles and forming their habits. Personal safety, and responsibility for influence, as well, require it of all. Deut. 21. 20, 21; Rom. 13. 13, 14; 1 Cor. 7. 31; 8. 9, 12, 13; 9. 25; Titus 2. 12; 2 Pet. 1. 6.

3. *Prohibition.* The business of making drunkards is wicked, and ought to be prohibited by civil law. God's curse is upon it; and men should not tolerate it. Psa. 94. 20; Eccles. 3. 16; Isa. 28. 1; 59. 14.

4. *Spiritual Life.* There is only one sufficient cure for the evil of intoxicants, that is, Christian holiness. "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." The Spirit brings purity to the affections, sweetness to the temper, knowledge to the mind, peace in the conscience, love in the home, precious friends in social life, and God's blessing in living and dying. Gal. 5. 19-23; 1 Cor. 6. 10; Eph. 4. 19-23; 5. 9; 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15. [D. A. Whedon.]

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

#### PRELIMINARY.

As this Sunday is to be observed as the World's Temperance Sunday the teacher should put in his or her very best endeavors to make the day tell for temperance, and therefore for righteousness. The fact that the pupils to be instructed and influenced are not drunkards should not lead to any lessening of effort, but rather to an increase thereof, for the twofold reason that it is vastly easier to prevent than to cure drunkenness, and no teacher has any guarantee that the pupils may not become drunkards.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

There is no need of spending valuable time on the lesson surroundings.

#### APPROACH.

For the purposes of recalling the fact that the evils of intemperance are just as marked to-day as they ever were, and of instilling in the pupils' minds a hatred of the accursed thing, read to them the following or some similar testimony:

Judge McAuley, of Kansas City, in committing a "plain drunk," gave utterance to the following: "If I had my way I would not only close every saloon in the country, Sunday and week days, but I would stop the sale of intoxicating liquor in any shape or for any pur-

pose whatsoever. I would have every manufacturer reaching, I would have every sign and Ninety-five the direct cent included a few petty adjustment of whisky, broken families in this country on a buffer

Because of study a selection of the following then questioned the edge of the the selection

1. *A Mock* along mocking noble. He is that is worth best endeavor braces his mocking him man's name! of the one w illustrate how then mocks

2. *A Brave* looking for rough. He What is his What does he finally become nent illustration

3. *A Rag* asleep in the Look at the For what is It is an old to the side d beer kegs. Drunkard.)

4. *A Red-e* erred with wo feet picture name? (Mrs did she come

The above text as time Other pictures

1. Mr. Caro



pose whatever. I would make it a crime to manufacture the stuff. This may be far-reaching, but the sentiment is justified by the sights and experiences in this court-room. Ninety-five per cent of the cases tried here are the direct results of whisky; the other five per cent includes morphine and cocaine fiends and a few petty grievances that come before me for adjustment. The woes that arise from the use of whisky, the ruined men and women, the broken families, the griefs and tears all aired in this court, are enough to turn gray the hair on a buffalo robe."—*Evangelical Messenger*.

## LESSON TEXT.

Because of the short time allotted to lesson study a selection must be made. One or more of the following pictures may be painted, and then questioned upon. The teacher's knowledge of the pupils' environments will help in the selection:

1. *A Mocker*. There is a man that goes along mocking at everything that is high and noble. He scoffs and makes light of everything that is worthy of the highest thought and the best endeavor. One listens to his mocking, embraces his ways only to find that the man is mocking him for his foolishness. What is the man's name? (Mr. Wine.) What is the name of the one who follows him? (Mr. Fool.) Illustrate how wine leads astray by mocking, and then mocks the deluded one.

2. *A Brauler*. There is a man going along looking for a fight. He is boisterous and rough. He insults women and threatens men. What is his name? (Mr. Strong Drink.) What does he do? What is done to him? What finally becomes of him? (Be ready with pertinent illustrations.)

3. *A Rag Man*. Look at that man lying asleep in that alleyway. See! he is awakening. Look at the rags that take the place of clothes! For what is he looking? Ah, he has found it. It is an old tin can. Watch him shamle up to the side door of that saloon and drain the beer kegs. What is his name? (Mr. Drunkard.)

4. *A Red-eyed Woman*. There she goes, covered with wounds, babbling, quarrelling, a perfect picture of woe and sorrow. What is her name? (Mrs. Drunkard.) By what means did she come to her present condition?

The above will probably be as much of the text as time will permit to be dwelt upon. Other pictures are suggested:

1. Mr. Carousal Seeker (verses 30, 31).

2. Mr. Devil-Possessed (verse 32).  
"O, thou invisible spirit of wine,  
If thou hast no name to be known by,  
Let us call thee devil."—*Shakespeare*.
3. Mr. Delirium Tremens (verses 33, 34).
4. Mr. Slave (verse 35).

## MEMORY WORK.

Have the pupils copy the following in order to memorize it:

## STRONG DRINK

EMPTIES	FILLS
POCKETBOOKS,	POOR HOUSES,
HOMES,	HOSPITALS,
MINDS,	INSANE ASYLUMS,
CHURCHES,	PRISONS,
PULPITS,	POTTER'S FIELDS,
HEAVEN.	HELL.

Then have all print this resolve:

I WILL SHUN THAT

MOCKER

THAT DECEIVES SO MANY.

Have pledge cards shown, urge the importance of keeping the pledge, and ask all who have determined to take the pledge to remain after school.

## STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to write during the week a summary of what they know or can learn about Solomon. Review words, "Drink," "Mocker."

## By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 1.* A man seeing a wasp creeping into a bottle filled with honey that was hanging on a fruit tree said, "Why, you sottish insect, you are mad to go into that vial, when you can see many of your kind there dying in it before you." "The reproach is just," answered the wasp, "but not from you men who are so far from taking example from other people's follies that you will not take warning from your own. If after falling several times into this vial, and escaping by chance, I should fall in again, I should then but resemble you."—*Dean Swift*.

*Verses 21.* Of every hundred paupers seventy-five are made so through drink. Out of every hundred lunatics fifty are made so through drink. Seventy per cent of the divorces and ninety per cent of the crimes are traced to the same source. Shattered constitutions, ruined

reputations, and untimely deaths come in with whisky. Alcohol has well been called "the devil in solution."

*Verses 29-32.* An English chemist suggested that in addition to the word "poison" a list of antidotes be printed on the labels of bottles containing poisons; the *Boston Traveller* suggests the following inscription to be printed on the labels of bottles containing alcoholic poison:

"It biteth like a serpent,  
It stingeth like an adder,  
Death is in it!  
Touch not! Taste not!"

*Verses 35. Enslaved.* A few years ago a noted tamer of wild beasts gave a performance in a large London theater. At the close he brought out an enormous bou-constrictor, thirty-five feet long. He had bought it when two days old, and had seen it grow from a tiny reptile, which he often carried in his bosom, into a fearful monster. He considered it perfectly harmless, and under his control. The curtain rose on an Indian woodland scene. A huge serpent was seen winding its way through the trees. A man emerges from the heavy foliage, and their eyes meet. The serpent quails before the man, and under his guidance performs a series of frightful feats. At a signal from the man it begins to coil its heavy folds around him. Higher and higher do they rise, until man and serpent seem blended into one. The man screams while the audience applauds. But the applause freezes on their lips as they see that the trainer's scream was a wail of death-agony. Those cold, slimy folds had embraced him for the last time. The life was even then crushed out of him. His slave had enslaved him. This is the story of intemperance. The man who takes the first glass has taken a box of intemperance into his bosom, and it will straightway crush him.

#### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

There can be no stronger words spoken regarding the use of intoxicating liquor than we find in the Bible, and no more convincing illustrations of its shameful effects. From the beginning the Golden Text is true. Wine is a mocker. It deceives, betrays, and holds its victims in pitiless contempt. A study of what the Bible says must help us to have clearer convictions, and so avoid the snare. Our lesson gives a solemn warning. Every word should be remembered. Its questions are answered in faces we daily meet; its announce-

ment of the bitter end is the story of many a life with which we are sadly familiar. Isaiah's description of the blighting curse seems as if it were written for the young men of our own time: "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards . . . whose glorious beauty is a fading flower. . . . The drunkards shall be trodden under feet. . . . They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment." "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, so that day come upon you unawares." "Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God." I am thankful that St. Paul adds these words of hope: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." This is the only hope for one deceived by the mocker. Resolutions fail; the will breaks down; appetite overcomes. But the power of God can loose the chains, build up the broken fiber of the mind, and deliver from the appetite. Hundreds have been so saved; but hundreds more have gone to hopeless wreck. The only safe way is not to trifle with the deceiver. Colonel Hadley, whose experience illustrates the awful effects of drinking and the blessed power of God to deliver from it, says it is not the many glasses of liquor which make a man a drunkard, *it is the first glass.*

It is so evident that drinking impairs the brain and hinders the capability for work that it is quite impossible now for a young man to get a position in any business if he is known to be intemperate. A leading daily paper said recently in an editorial, "It is generally admitted by sensible and intelligent persons that total abstinence from alcoholic stimulants from the cradle to the grave is best for the great majority of mankind." Let us count ourselves in that great majority; then we shall be safe. The warnings, sad to say, are not needed for our boys alone; our girls are in danger. Afternoon teas have their perils. It is a shame even to speak of it, but we must face the truth. It is shocking to see a dehumanized man; but a woman! Surely angels hide their faces from the sight! Yet I have seen it; not a poor out-cast woman of the street, but a bright, well-born, respectable girl in good society. And I have heard of it more often than I have seen it. I pour out my soul in earnest pleading

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with you, dear members of my class, to set yourselves with all your powers against this mocking, damning foe. Will you throw all your influence against it in society, in your home, and in the community? "At the last it bieth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

**The Teachers' Meeting.**

Our lesson, which is selected from two chapters of the book of Proverbs, lends itself to several analyses. The one followed in the *Illustrative Notes* is forcible: 1. The Deceitfulness of Intoxicants, verses 1, 20, 21; 2. The Ruin Wrought by Intoxicants, verses 29-35. . . . Temperance, in the Scripture use of the word, is self-restraint. There can be no temperance in the use of a bad thing. Three unchangeable reasons for intemperance are given: Our proneness to turn innocent things into sin; The presence of the Lord (Phil. 4. 5); The danger that those who follow us may pass us; for we may be able with safety to go further than those whom we influence, and so may lead them to ruin. . . . A textual study of this lesson, verse by verse, and phrase by phrase, will be of great benefit.

**Library References.**

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.—Commentaries, Toy, Perowne, Delitzsch. Introductions, Driver, Wright, Adeney, and Harman.

TEMPERANCE.—It may be well to repeat the titles of some books named here during the past three or four years. *Temperance in All Nations*, 2 vols. Williams, *Where Satan Sows His Seed*. Coleman, *Beauties of Temperance*. Gustafson, *Foundations of Death*. Dorchester, *Temperance Problem in All Ages*. Wadlin, *Relation of the Liquor Traffic to Pauperism, Crime, and Insanity*: a portion of the 26th

Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 1.—*Preacher's Magazine*, 1895, page 170. Verse 29.—*The Preacher*, vol. i, page 417. Bean, J., *Sermons*, page 323. *The Homiletic Review*, vol. xiv, page 273; vol. xxxi, page 252; vol. xxxiii, page 83. *The Pulpit*, London, vol. xii, page 327.

Blackboard.



Exhilarating and intoxicating liquors have in all ages menaced the moral welfare of communities. Under one form or another they are dispensed and sold to those who are too weak or too foolish to withstand the temptation. The "bar" of to-day is the open doorway to intemperance, and the first step in the downward course of many a ruined life. If the evils that lie beneath its alluring guise were known and understood, its custom would soon decrease. It is indeed a bar to all that is best in the present life as well as that longer life to come, and the safest side of such a "bar" is the outside.

Coloring.—Doorway, cream and black; sign, blue; word, white; "bar," red; lettering, white.

**LESSON IX. David's Charge to Solomon.**

[Nov. 29.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Trust in the Lord with all thine heart. Prov. 3. 5.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION.**

[Read 1 Chron. chapters 21-29.]

1 Chron. 28. 1-10. [*Commit to memory verses 9, 10.*]

1 And Da'vid assembled all the princes of Is'ra-el, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers,

**REVISED VERSION.\***

1 And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that served the king by course, and the captains of thousands, and the captains of hundreds, and the rulers over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his

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

and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Je-ru'-sa-lem.

2 Then Da'vid the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: *As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:*

3 But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.

4 Howbeit the LORD God of Is'-ra-el chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Is'-ra-el forever: for he hath chosen Ju'dah to be the ruler; and of the house of Ju'dah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Is'-ra-el:

5 And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Sol'o-mon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Is'-ra-el.

6 And he said unto me, Sol'o-mon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.

7 Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.

8 Now therefore in the sight of all Is'-ra-el the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you forever.

9 And thou, Sol'o-mon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.

10 Take heed now: for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

sons, with the officers, and the mighty men, even all the mighty men of valor, unto Jerusalem.

2 Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: as for me, it was in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and for the footstool of our God; and I had made ready for the building. 3 But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood. 4 Howbeit Jehovah, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever: for he hath chosen Judah to be prince; and in the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel; 5 and of all my sons, (for Jehovah hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah over Israel. 6 And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. 7 And I will establish his kingdom forever, if he be constant to do my commandments and mine ordinances, as at this day. 8 Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of Jehovah, and in the audience of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of Jehovah your God; that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.

9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for Jehovah searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. 10 Take heed now; for Jehovah hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

#### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 158.

Jesus, and shall it ever be,  
A mortal man ashamed of thee.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 161.

When Jesus comes to reward his servants,  
Whether it be noon or night.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 328.

Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if thou be near.

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#### Home Readings.

M. David's Charge to Solomon. 1 Chron. 28. 1-10.

Tu. Willing gifts. 1 Chron. 28. 20-21; 29. 1-9.

W. David's prayer. 1 Chron. 29. 10-19.

Th. Solomon king. 1 Chron. 29. 20-30.

F. A father's advice. 1 Chron. 22. 5-16.

S. Prayer for Solomon. Psalm 72.

S. Wisdom's counsel. Prov. 1. 7-23.

### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Assembly of All Israel* (v. 1).—What assembly is described in the lesson? Was it an unusual one? Who called it? Who composed it? What was David's condition at the time? What part did he take in it? What public emergency made this assembly necessary? What became of Adonijah?

2. *David's Frustrated Ambition* (v. 2, 3).—What had David had it in his heart to do? For what did the "ark of the covenant" stand in the thought of Israel? Why did God forbid David? What does this teach us? With what spirit did David submit to God's will?

3. *"The Lord's Anointed"* (v. 4, 5).—For what had the Lord chosen David? In what sense could he be king "forever"? Whom had God chosen to be David's successor? Who, in the truest sense, was the Lord's anointed?

4. *Solomon's Destiny* (v. 6).—What duty lay before Solomon? If this duty were rightly performed how would it affect national life? How would it affect the unfolding of the kingdom of the Lord on earth?

5. *The Conditions, Personal and National* (v. 7, 8).—On what was the permanence of Solomon's kingdom conditioned? For what did David urge "all Israel" to seek? What national possession would be theirs through all generations if they were faithful?

6. *David's Charge to Solomon* (v. 9, 10).—How can we know God? What is it to serve him with a perfect heart? What is it to serve him with a willing mind? What does the Lord understand? What are the conditions of our relationship to God? What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *David's Supreme Wish Not Granted* (v. 1-3).—What was the occasion of David's speech? Who were present? How did he address them? What great desire had for years been in David's heart? Why was he not permitted to carry it out?

2. *David's Grateful Review of God's Goodness to Him* (v. 4-7).—What choice by God is first mentioned? Who next had been chosen? What special work was Solomon to do? What promises were given to him? Upon what conditions?

3. *David's Charge to the Assembly and to Solomon* (v. 8-10).—In whose presence was the charge given? What was the exhortation given to the assembly? What consequences were promised if they obeyed? What charge was given to Solomon? What is said of the divine knowledge? What solemn truths at the close of verse 9? What special work was Solomon to do? What was he to be careful about?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

What did David do in his last days? Whom did he gather around him? What did he say was the desire of his heart? For what did he want a place of rest? What had the Lord told him? Why? Who was to build it after him? What does the name "Solomon" mean? *Peacable*. How long was the kingdom to last? What did David entreat of his son Solomon? What did he say of the Lord's knowledge? What would come if Solomon served him faithfully? What if he forsook him? What were his last words? What did David have to give to Solomon?

### The Condensed Review.

1. What men did David call together to Jerusalem? *The chief men of all Israel*. 2. What did David say had been in his heart? *To build a house for the Lord*. 3. Why had God forbidden him to build the temple? *Because he had been a man of war and had shed blood*. 4. Whom had God chosen to succeed David on the throne? *Solomon*. 5. What did God wish Solomon to do? *To build him a house—the temple*. 6. What did God urge all Israel to do? *To keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord*. 7. What did he urge Solomon to do? *"Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind."*

### The Church Catechism.

51. How doth our Lord sum up our duties to our fellow-men? Our Lord sums up our duties to our fellow-men in the Golden Rule, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

Matthew 7. 12. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

### Four Characteristics of the Good Man.

I. HE SEEKS FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.  
*I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark.* v. 2.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psa. 122. 1.

Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Matt. 22. 37.

## II. HE IDENTIFIES HIS SUCCESS WITH GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

*The Lord God chose me to be king.* v. 4.

The Lord is the strength of my life. Psa. 27. 1.

Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father. James 1. 17.

It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. Psa. 18. 32.

## III. HE IDENTIFIES HIS WILL WITH GOD'S WILL.

*Serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.* v. 9.

Serve him in sincerity and in truth. Josh. 24. 14.

I delight to do thy will, O God. Psa. 40. 8.

## IV. HE ENERGETICALLY FORWARDS GOD'S PLANS.

*Take heed now; be strong and do it.* v. 10.

Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Eccles. 9. 10.

Put on the whole armor of God. Eph. 6. 11.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Years have passed since Absalom's rebellion. David is now old and feeble, and the details of government seem to have been passed into the hands of others. The gossip of the court, apparently, has it that Solomon is to succeed him. But Solomon is one of his youngest children, and not unnaturally Adonijah, his eldest living son, asserts his right to the scepter, and tries to wield it while David still lives. News of this rebellion is brought to the king, and with admirable decision and promptitude he proclaims Solomon king, and proceeds to confirm him on the throne. He systematizes the work already done in preparation for a great temple to Jehovah; "gathers funds and materials, and gives Solomon full instructions about the building; organizes the priests and Levites, the temple orchestra and the choir, the doorkeepers, treasurers, officers, and judges; reorganizes the army, the tribes, and the royal exchequer, all on the model of the corresponding arrangements for the temple."—*W. H. Bennett.* Then he gathers the great men of the nation to the capital to bid them a solemn farewell as king, and to commend his son and successor to their loyalty. This lesson gives a picture almost unique, that of a great king renouncing his sovereignty, and prescribing, with much of detail, the proper course for the nation and for his heir to take.

**Verse 1.** *All the princes of Israel.* A comprehensive phrase including the eight classes about to be enumerated. *The princes of the tribes.* From each tribe one representative had been selected to be present with Moses at the numbering of the people, and the office seems to have become permanent. 1 Chron. 27. 16-22 gives a list of "princes of the tribes" who made their home at David's court. *The captains of the companies that ministered ["served"] to the king by course.* The names of these men are given in 1 Chron. 27. 1-15. They "came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year." The ministering to the king is explained elsewhere as "serving the king in any matter." *The captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds.* Military officers of lower rank. The names of the stewards ["rulers"] over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, are given in 1 Chron. 27. 25-31. Two of these were responsible for all the king's "treasures" in cities, villages, and castles; two supervised the vineyards and wine cellars; two were over sycamore and olive orchards and oil cellars; one over "tillage;" two over the herds;

one over the camels; one over the asses, and one over the flocks. *Officers.* "Eunuchs." *The mighty men, and with all the valiant men* ["the mighty men, even all the mighty men of valor"]. The thirty-seven heroic men whose deeds are recounted in 1 Chron. 11. It adds much to our interest in this gathering of the notabilities of Israel that we know the name of nearly every person and are familiar with the character and deeds of many of them.

**2.** *David the king stood up upon his feet.* In acknowledgment of the greatness of the occasion. There may be an intimation here, also, of the feebleness of David. *Hear me, my brethren, and my people.* Israel's king must be selected from among his "brethren" and "fellows." (Comp. Deut. 17. 15-20, and Psa. 45. 7.) *As for me, I had ["it was"] in mine ["my"] heart.* See 2 Sam. 7. 2 and Lesson I; also 1 Chron. 17. 1. *To build an ["a"] house of rest.* Compare 1 Chron. 17. 5; 2 Sam. 7. 6. When David proposed to build the temple Jehovah, by the voice of Nathan, declared, "I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day: but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle

to another "house of the Lord contained Kings 8. Heavens so the especially guarded; (Isa. 60. feet glorious material habitation building the land stones w abundance cedar tree David hu and tender for the God gave ing until been [art (Lesson to Hiram the house which we hovah ha feet."

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to another." This gives point to the phrase "house of rest." *The ark of the covenant of the Lord* ["Jehovah"]. So called because it contained the two tables of the covenant (1 Kings 8. 9). *The footstool of our God*. As Heaven was represented as Jehovah's throne, so the earth in general was his footstool; but particularly was his earthly sanctuary so regarded; and by Isaiah he gave the promise (Isa. 60. 13): "I will make the place of my feet glorious." Great quantities of costly material had been *made ready by David for the building of the temple*. The "strangers" of the land were pressed into the service; costly stones were quarried, iron was prepared in abundance, and brass "without weight," and cedar trees were imported from Lebanon. For David had said, "Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent." God gave as his reason for delaying the building until the reign of Solomon, "Thou hast been [art] a man of war and hast shed blood" (Lesson I). In later years Solomon explained to Hiram of Tyre that David "could not build the house for Jehovah because of the wars which were about him on every side until Jehovah had put them under the soles of his feet."

**4. 5.** David publicly declares Solomon to be his successor, and emphasizes his own position as a man of war, and that of Solomon, whose name means "Peaceful," as a man of peace. He credits his elevation to the throne entirely to Jehovah, who had by a succession of choices set apart *Judah*, and then the house of *Jesse*, and then David himself, as the ruling forces of the united kingdom, and from all David's *sons* Jehovah had now *chosen Solomon*. (Parenthetically he acknowledges that God has given him *many sons*, and the names of fifteen are given in 1 Chron. 3. 1-9.)

**6.** Solomon, then, was divinely ordained to build the *house and courts*. This phrase brings to view the peculiar construction of an ancient oriental temple, a sanctuary to be entered by none but priests, and courts for the use of the multitudes and worshippers.

**7.** Moreover ["and"] *I will establish his kingdom forever*. (Comp. 2 Sam. 7. 13.) This prophecy is fulfilled in the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah. But there is a condition: *if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments* ["mine ordinances"], *as at this day*. The Hebrew is literally, "If he be strong."

**8.** The exhortation of this verse is addressed

to the gathered princes. *In the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord* ["the assembly of Jehovah"]. Publicly in the presence of this representative gathering. *And in the audience of our God*. Every word being heard by him. *Keep and seek for* ["observe and seek out"] *all the commandments of the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *your God*. And this is for a great purpose, that, as a consequence, *ye may possess* [that is, inherit] *this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for* ["to"] *your children after you forever*. "The Hebrew word connotes three different ideas, which may have all been present to the mind of the speaker: First, the continued holding of the land by father and son (comp. Exod. 20. 12); second, the completion of the work of conquest left unfinished by Joshua (comp. Gen. 24. 60); third, the enjoyment of the fruits of the land."—W. E. Barnes.

**9.** *Know thou the God of thy father*. For this use of the word "know" compare Exod. 5. 2; Isa. 1. 3; Jer. 31. 34. The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength." But to love God we must first know him. Jehovah was the God of the fathers of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; his providence and goodness had been tested in past generations. But emphatically had he been the God of the man who uttered these words. They were backed by personal experience. Every parent should be able to give a similar exhortation to his child; every teacher should be able to say to his scholar, "Know thou the God of thy teacher." *Serve him with a perfect heart*. That is, with an undivided heart. So the heart of king Asa who refused to divide his worship between Jehovah and idols is described as perfect. Perfect faithfulness is what is implied. *A willing mind*. Ready for direction. *The Lord* ["Jehovah"] *searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts*. A beautiful illustration of this truth, which is capable of good use in the Sunday school class, is given in Ezekiel's vision of Jehovah's detection of secret idolatry (Ezek. 8). The last two clauses of this verse should be memorized. They state facts and conditions that are true of all men and women to the end of time.

**10.** *Take heed now; for the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *hath chosen thee*. See verse 5. *To build an* ["a"] *house for the sanctuary*. This was the one great task divinely assigned to Solomon. The last words of this verse, *Be strong, and do it*, are worthy to be adopted as a motto

by every young Christian. In similar spirit the Rev. Ernest O. Allen, of Toledo, has phrased his maxim for daily life: "Do what

you can, with what you have, where you are, to-day, for Him; but do it." Daily practice of this maxim would solve all life's problems.

### HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The joy of David's return to the throne from which he had been driven by Absalom was disturbed by the angry jealousy of the rest of the tribes against Judah for beginning the movement without them (2 Sam. 19. 41-43). Sheba's rebellion, occasioned thereby, was more dangerous than Absalom's, and its suppression closes the second period of David's reign at Jerusalem.

"The three periods of David's reign at Jerusalem were each stamped with a great calamity, the lessons of which were made plainer by the numerical parallel. During the first period there were *three years* of famine, to avenge the cruelties of Saul upon the Gibeonites in violation of a sacred covenant (2 Sam. 21. 1); during the second period there were *three months* of flight before the rebellious Absalom; and during the third period there were *three days* of pestilence for David's sin in numbering the people (2 Sam. 24. 1; 1 Chron. 21. 1)."—*Smith*.

In a moment of pride and ambition David desired to know over how vast and populous a kingdom he ruled; forgetting that the strength of Israel consisted not in the number of its people, but in the protecting care of God (Jer. 17. 5).

When the prophet Gad was sent to David to offer him the choice of three modes of decimating the people, he chose the third, saying with pious resignation, "Let us fall now into the hand of Jehovah; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man" (2 Sam. 24. 14).

The pestilence was sent for the appointed time, and there died "from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men" (verse 15).

David was called to build up the nation and became a man of war and blood. This disqualified him for the work of building the temple, for which he had planned and made preparation, and upon which he had set his heart (2 Sam. 7. 2-7). To be deprived of this high honor must have been a great disappointment, but it seemed to emphasize the wide difference in moral tone between the God of Israel and the gods of the surrounding nations.

David's many hardships as a warrior, his severe labors as a king, his sins and sorrows, made him prematurely old. David at seventy

was older than Moses at one hundred and twenty, and older than many persons are in our day at eighty.

The failing strength of the king was the signal for a new conspiracy by Adonijah, who was the oldest son of David, distinguished for his manly beauty, and for showing no evidence of special fitness to rule. Solomon was now publicly anointed king, and the conspiracy came to a sudden end.

In the closing lesson devoted to the study of David's life our thoughts turn to his character. "David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15. 5).

If he was a great sinner, he was also a great penitent, and "his repentance was as deep and thorough as his sins were flagrant and aggravated."—*Carlisle*. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. "The secrets of his inner life, with its hopes and fears, its struggles and triumphs, are revealed to us in the outpourings of his heart preserved in the book of Psalms."—*Cambridge Bible*. Some of the sweetest and most comforting of his psalms were written during the painful and chastening experiences occasioned by his fall. (Comp. Psa. 51 and 32.)

"The rock is smitten, and to future years  
Spring ever fresh the tide of holy tears,  
And holy music whispering peace  
Till time and tears together cease."

—*Kebble*.

David was a man after God's own heart, a man whom God approved in contrast with Saul, who was rejected (1 Sam. 13. 14; Acts 13. 22). We read that Solomon's heart "was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David, his father" (1 Kings 11. 4). Except in a single instance, David never used his royal power for personal ends. "In the execution of the sons of Saul for his crime against the Gibeonites, he acted in accordance with his obligations as a magistrate for the best interests of the nation; and in spite of Shimei's reproaches we may believe that David's contemporaries regarded the matter in the same light as himself."—*Hastings*. "The sup-

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position that David executed the sons of Saul in order to rid himself of seven possible claimants to the throne is a base calumny sufficiently refuted by his care for Mephibosheth, and by the obscurity of the victims."—*Cambridge Bible*. Acts of suffering inflicted in war, and in the punishment of crime, at best seem crude, but especially so when all the facts are not fully recorded.

#### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

Last words are authoritative words. They embody experience, they ask return for a life of devoted love. Hence Christ put the most important word of all into the last moment. Hence also the inspiration that comes from Paul's closing message.

The lesson gives us a similar occasion. All God's promises are based upon the human side of the conditions being fulfilled (verse 7). This was distinctly impressed upon the people, both by David's word and by all Jewish history. The same is true to-day.

After appealing to the princes, captains, and mighty men he turns to Solomon, the selected heir to the throne, with three exhortations:

1. Know thou the God of thy father—the one who had made a shepherd lad a warrior, statesman, king, and poet for all coming ages. David had no agnosticism in himself, and desired none in his son. "Know thou God," by study of his law, listening to his prophets, obeying his commandments, and having the inner witness that all his ways pleased the Lord.

2. Serve him with perfect heart and willing mind. There is no knowing of God but by service. It is in the realm of experiment that the highest knowledge is acquired. It was by actual trial of the keys and wires that Morse knew that he could transmit "What hath God wrought," and everything else, over the wires. Motives: (1) If you seek he will be found. (2) If thou forsake him he will cast thee off forever.

3. The Lord hath chosen thee to build a sanctuary. Now therefore *do it*.

Then the beautiful June day of David's life, that had growths, flowers, and promise of fruit for the whole world, with a thunderstorm or two with lightning and thunder, closed with a peaceful evening and unearthly splendor.

#### Thoughts for Young People.

1. *Service of God*. This charge was given to a young man of (possibly) eighteen years of age (perhaps older). He was full of vigor, with bright prospects, and God wanted his

services. He has some service for every young person—some place in which God may honor him if he will only seek God.

2. *A Perfect Heart and a Willing Mind*. The true course is stated in verse 9 of our lesson. A wonderful verse: "Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind." That precept should be written upon every young heart. Great stress is laid in Scripture on knowing God.

#### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

##### PRELIMINARY.

After several have read aloud what they have written about Solomon, and their work has been commented upon and commended, distribute slips of paper and have the pupils print the following, which the teacher may dictate:

## SOLOMON'S

PARENTS	— DAVID. BATH-SHEBA.
BIRTH	— AT JERUSALEM. IN 1034.
TRAITS	— FAIR IN BODY. BRILLIANT IN MIND. HUMBLE IN SPIRIT.
HOME	— LUXURIOUS.
TEACHER	— NATHAN.

Have the pupils copy the above on their cards at home.

##### SURROUNDINGS.

*Time*. 1015 B. C. is the traditional chronology.

*Place*. Jerusalem.

*History*. The teacher should be prepared to give a brief summary of the events between our lesson and that for November 8.

##### APPROACH.

A young woman was approaching the end of her stay on earth. She had been ill for several months, and the disease had made such headway that she knew that she must lay aside her pain-racked body and go to that home where no sickness ever enters. In turn, she called each member of her family into her room and gave to each one a parting message. One who was then a young boy is now a middle-aged man, but he has never forgotten the dying charge of the one whom he loved. To-day we are going to study about a charge which was remembered and kept. Let us turn to our

## LESSON TEXT.

which we will consider under the following summary:

# DAVID

CALLS AN ASSEMBLY.  
ADDRESSES THE PEOPLE.  
APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE.  
CHARGES SOLOMON.

## STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Give to half the members of the class the reference 1 Chron. 29. 26-30, and ask them to write an account of "The Death of David." Give the other pupils the reference Acts 13. 22, and ask them to write on "The Character of David." Review words, "Charge," "Trust."

## By Way of Illustration.

*David's Charge to Solomon.* The words of a dying man carry tremendous weight. In a court of law the testimony of one who is dying is estimated of great importance. It is acknowledged that a man under those conditions does not trifle, nor care for those things which make for mere worldly honor and applause. He is believed to view things in the light of the eternal world upon whose threshold he stands. Many times a father's last words or a mother's last request has engraved itself indelibly upon human hearts and changed the whole tenor of life. A young man said: "These words still ring in my ears—they were my father's dying message: 'Live for eternity! Nothing else is worth while. Live for eternity!'"

*Verses 7-9. Conditional Promises.* That which was prophecy to them is history to us. The kingdom of Solomon lasted as long as he was faithful to the God of his father. A woman said to her pastor: "I read that verse in my Bible, 'Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you,' and I thought I would test it. I asked for many things. Not one has been granted to me. I cannot believe that promise is true." "Did you fulfill the conditions?" "What conditions?" "The verse says: 'If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.'" "I did not notice that; I am afraid I did not fulfill the conditions." God always does the best thing possible for each nation and for each individual. If they are disobedient he cannot wisely do for them what he would if they were obedient.—*Bishop W. F. Mallalicu.*

*Verses 7-9. Holy Manhood.* The world needs not so much fine logic as holy manhood. The truth of Christianity cannot be revealed apart from a human life. Those poor Africans knew nothing of the light of the world, and in their blindness they bowed down to wood and stone. But there came among them a man in whom Jesus Christ lived, and in David Livingstone Africa saw the Christ. Burmah knew

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1. *David Calls an Assembly.* Very vividly paint the picture of the gathering of the princes, the captains, the stewards, the officers, the mighty men, and the valiant men. (From a study of the Notes be prepared to tell just who these various classes of officers were in case questions should be asked; but do not go into details, because Intermediates are more interested in the men getting there than they are in fine distinctions.) Ask: Who called these people? Why? (Draw out the facts that David was old and wished to announce his successor.) Where did they assemble? Why in this city?

2. *David Addresses the People.* Picture David standing to speak to his people. Summarize what he said somewhat thus:

(1) I wanted to build a house for God.

(2) God said "No," because I was a man of war.

(3) God chose me to be king.

(4) He has chosen Solomon to be my successor.

(5) He wishes Solomon to build his house.

(6) He will establish his kingdom if he obeys him.

3. *David Appeals to the People.* Have some one read aloud verse 8. Ask: What did David ask the people to do? What would be the result of doing this?

4. *David Charges Solomon.* Note the three things that David tells Solomon to do:

(1) Know the Lord.

(2) Serve him.

(3) Build the sanctuary.

Ask: What does the Lord search? What does he understand? Of whom will he be found? Whom will he cast off?

## MEMORY WORK.

Have the pupils copy for future use the outline under lesson text after it has been taught.

Have several repeat the Golden Text, and after its meaning has been explained and it is understood ask all to print:

I WILL MAKE THE LORD MY

# TRUST

ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE.

nothing of the incarnated God and was lost in heathen superstition, but there came a man to them whom they called "Jesus Christ's man" and in Adoniram Judson they found the truth. There are streets in your cities and cities across the oceans that will know what Jesus Christ is like because some of you go there, and in your Christ-life show them. In the Christian warfare everything depends upon the human personality linked to the divine.

#### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

How gladly would David have given to Solomon the treasures of his own experience, to fit him for his lifework! How gladly would every father and mother and teacher do the same! But experience cannot be bequeathed. Everyone must "try out" life for himself. David could not save Solomon from pitfalls he himself knew too well. All he could do was to give the best advice that ever father gave a son. Well would it have been for that brilliant young man if he had followed it all his days. But that is not the usual way with sons or daughters. Experience is the only teacher, and the lessons are not easy. However, let us consider David's advice. It will certainly help us over some of the hard experiences, if we may not avoid them altogether.

The starting point of all true success and happiness is to know God. There are few who really do know him. They know he is somewhere in the universe superintending affairs in a general way; they know him somewhat as they know our own Governor-General or His Majesty King Edward. There is nothing personal in their feeling toward him. They do not know him as a child knows his father with whom he lives and talks every day. David's God was a friend, a care-taker, a companion, one who loved him even when he sinned. He said of him, "The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in time of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."

Life is very different when we know God as our Father. Many a boy has gone out friendless, to make his own way in the world, and has been kept from evil, in the straight path to success, because of this sweet faith in his heart. An old woman who lived in a lone room in a tenement had a strawberry plant growing in a broken teapot. A visitor said to her, "Your plant flourishes nicely; you will soon have strawberries on it." "O," she replied, "it is not for the sake of the fruit that I keep it. I am

too poor to keep a living creature, but it is a great comfort to me to have this living plant, for I know it can only live by the power of God, and as I see it live and grow from day to day it tells me God is near. And if he cares for the plant he will surely care for me." Life is a lonely way without this sweet intimacy. It is a perplexing way without this quiet trust. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? If ye then be not able to do the thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? . . . Be not ye of doubtful mind. . . . Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

Let us be sure that we do know God as our Father, Friend, Redeemer, Saviour. Knowing him so, the serving follows easily and naturally. When the heart is right with God, serving him and serving oneself are interchangeable terms. For our affairs are his affairs. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." He desires our success in the world so far as it is good for us. Abraham was his friend, and he made him rich in cattle and gold and silver.

A man serves God with a perfect heart and a willing mind when he uses his business success to make the world better and happier. It is not what we are doing, but the spirit in which we do it that determines whether or not we are serving God. How utterly foolish it is to make a pretense of serving him when we know in our secret soul that we choose our own comfort or pleasure first! He searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. We may deceive others, but we cannot deceive him. It is well to face this fact. We may seem to ourselves, and to others, very self-sacrificing; we may speak with the tongues of angels; do all sorts of missionary work with apparent unselfishness, while in the imagination of the thoughts—that secret place where only God sees—it may all be as the chaff which the wind driveth away—useless waste of time and energy because it is not sincere. David's advice was good; it is not worth while to do anything under false pretenses. The final reckoning is with One who understands the inmost soul of things. He hates a sham.

"Take heed now," said David. No part of his charge to Solomon was more important than this. The chief reason why so few really know God and serve him in the only way which is worth while is because they do not take heed; they do not think. They do not like to think; it interferes with pleasure; it breaks

up plans; it makes one uncomfortable. And so they try every way to keep from thinking. They read all sorts of books; go to see all sorts of plays; sometimes they drink so that they may forget. The impressions of Sunday are driven away by new impressions on Monday. "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip," or "run through the mind like a sieve." It is a sign of promise for the future if a young man or woman, a boy or a girl, gives thoughtful attention to religious worship, to business, to study, or any task they have in hand.

May you know God in such a way that your service for him will be loving and sincere; and may you be earnest in spirit as one should be who is called to do a great work for him. For as truly as Solomon was chosen to build the house for the sanctuary you are chosen to build the temple of your own soul for his dwelling place forever. Be strong, and do it."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

This lesson calls our attention to the service of God—what men shall do to serve him, and how they shall do it. Verses 1-6 show the outward and visible signs of service. Conditions have changed since David's time, but the public service of God is still divisible into two great classes, the men of war and the temple-builders. It is neither an accident nor a mistake that some men are by nature aggressive and pugnacious. Those qualities are sinful only when they are devoted to sinful ends. To-day the cause of the Lord needs warriors quite as much as it did in David's day, and however much we may love peace, the day of complete peace has not dawned so long as the liquor traffic, the social evil, political corruption, and lack of business integrity, characterize so much of life. God calls his servants to be men of war, and they must not rest until God's enemies are conquered. But there is a constructive work before the Christian as well as a destructive work, and in many senses the house of the Lord is yet to be built, and we are the people to build it. So that we have both David's and Solomon's work to do. . . . How men shall serve God is shown in verses 7-10: (1) With a perfect heart; (2) With a willing mind.

### Blackboard.

The strength of Solomon's character, the beauty of his life, and the success of his admin-

istration depended upon the perfection of his inner life. David had himself been a man after the heart of God, and he desires that his son



and successor should have the same high distinction, and take his part in the fulfillment of the divine plan. He urges upon him the responsibility of his position, pointing out that consistency, soundness and purity of heart, and unwavering fidelity are essential to the success of his commission. The foundations of a material and spiritual kingdom have been wisely laid, and Solomon is about to enter into the labors of his father. We have a like responsibility, for the heritage of life as well as its obligations, and to meet it bravely and wisely we must seek God and serve him with a perfect heart.

*Coloring.*—Arch, light brown, outlined in black; words, cream and red; lower phrase, purple and white.

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### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

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## Primary Teachers' Department.

### Notes.

"ANYWHERE, providing it be forward!" said the brave explorer Livingstone. This is a noble motto for any Christian worker, and it is especially commended to the Sunday school worker. "Forward" in new and better plans and methods of work; "Forward" in increasing power to win the little ones for the Lord we love; "Forward" in the knowledge and love of the Lord, which underlies all desire for growth of the kingdom.

It should be the aim of every teacher of the littlest ones to do all that in her lies to elevate the standard of teaching in the Primary Sunday school. It is true that there are many earnest teachers who are unable to attend Sunday school conventions, and who are even debarred the pleasure and profit that comes from membership in a Primary Union. What can such do to promote a forward movement in primary class work?

ONE can always begin to move forward from the point upon which she stands. In this day of cheap and excellent helps for Sunday school workers none need be left unaided. This may well be called the children's century, so widespread and profound is the interest in child study, and so earnest and sincere the effort to discover the very best methods of dealing with little minds and hearts. The teacher who really wants to take advance steps in this work will find an abundance of the best helps awaiting her attention.

It would be worth much to the great company of primary teachers who turn to these pages for inspiration and help if many teachers would share their experience with others. A most earnest invitation is hereby extended to practical workers who have something to say on this great theme—how best to help the little ones to know their divine Lord—to send their helpful suggestions and experiences to the editor of the BANNER. It is not needful that one be practiced in writing to do this. The simple experience, the pertinent question, the practical thought, all will be welcome, and doubtless used to advance our good work.

## International Bible Lessons.

### FOURTH QUARTER.

### LESSON V. (November 1.)

DAVID AND ABSALOM. 2 Sam. 15. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Exod. 20. 12.

### Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



*Approach.* Plan and teach this lesson with the direct purpose of influencing children to obey parents and others in authority. Teach the need of obeying in the right way, at the right time, and for the right reason.

Few lessons are needed more, perhaps. Introduce by story of a boy who wished his father to get him a wheel. Father promised it if boy would do certain things, keep certain rules. Boy obeyed carefully while his father's eyes were on him. Out of sight, he disobeyed. He was an eyeservant, only obedient when watched. This is shameful cheating. Do not fear to rouse child's righteous indignation and sense of right against what is dishonorable. Sometimes we must use "Thou shalt-nots," as God does.

*Lesson Story: Absalom.* Who was he? David's son, who had done wrong, killed his brother, had been sent away, at last allowed by kind father to come back. He pretended to be a good son. In his heart he was not honest, but selfish, and anxious to get first place himself. Tell how he "stole hearts." Was this fair? Tell how Absalom planned to be made king and what he did. Arrange the story around

### ABSALOM'S SELFISHNESS. SIN.

Trouble began in his heart. He did not feel right; this led him to do what was not right. He thought only of himself; he did harm to others and himself too.

The secret of all the trouble was that Absa-

lom did not honor his father. If he had loved God he would have loved and obeyed the kind father God gave him. He broke the fifth commandment. Teach this.

*Memory Thought: Be Obedient.* This is our duty, or what is due or what we owe to our Father in heaven. We must pay what we owe for love's sake, not because we fear punishment if we don't.

What is it to honor? We may spell it out in this way:

Hear,  
Obey,  
Never grumbling,  
On time,  
Ready and willing.

To honor means all this. To honor means to treat father and mother, and those who have a right to tell us what to do, as if we really heard God's voice saying, "I have given you your parents to lead you, and you must treat them in the way that you know would please me."

Is it honoring our parents to be cross when they tell us what to do, to refuse to do it, or to obey with a frown and a grumble, to say "Why?" or "I don't want to," or "Let somebody else"? Is it honoring them to talk to them as if they were no older and no wiser than we are, and to tell them what we think and make fun of what they say? Is it honoring them to "talk back"? No, to honor is to listen carefully and obey lovingly. Why should we do all this? Draw out reasons for loving obedience—parent's love and care, God's command, God's delight in obedience.

*Thought for Teachers.* Not at this time only, but always, let us aim to instill reverence for authority as the natural result of love. For ourselves, O, let us seek earnestly to honor our



Father above by reverent speech, attitude, and demeanor, in the atmosphere of love, as we teach, and as we live with the children.

## LESSON VI. (November 8.)

### DAVID'S GRIEF OVER ABSALOM. 2 Sam. 18. 24-33.

GOLDEN TEXT: "A foolish son is a grief to his father." Prov. 17. 25.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* Aim to impress the fact that it makes all the difference in the world what sort of children parents have. A wise son makes his father and mother glad, and a foolish one brings pain and sorrow. Children realize this but faintly, if at all. Tell story of two men walking down street together. Two friends saw them. One said, "What makes Mr. A. look so happy and smiling all the time, and Mr. B. carry such a sober face? Look at the deep lines in his forehead and about his mouth. He hardly ever looks happy." The other said, "Mr. A.'s son is a comfort to him, and he has just taken him into the store to help. He finds him such a blessing every day that he can't help feeling and looking pleased. Mr. B.'s boy gives him so much trouble that he seems never to have a happy hour. No wonder he looks sober."

*Lesson Story: A Foolish Son.* Go on with story of Absalom. Tell how the king sadly left the city and his disobedient son came into it, and how at last there was a battle, when David's friends gathered to fight with David's son. How foolish Absalom was to set himself against his father and his father's friends and soldiers! How wrong and unthankful! Give very briefly indeed, but truthfully, the result of this battle in the wood. Absalom was not trusting in God, nor obeying God and his father, and how could he win this battle?

*A Sad Father.* These are the two persons this history is written about. Describe David's deep love for his disobedient son, and his command to be careful of him. Picture the king sitting anxiously between the two gates of the city where he was, waiting for news of the fight. Make the children see the watchman on the roof over the gate on the wall, and the two runners who come with their story. What is it that the king longs to hear, first and most of all? "Is the young man Absalom safe?" is the question asked of each one. David cares

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more for this than for any great victory in battle. When at last he hears the news and knows that this foolish son, that he loved so much in spite of everything, has lost his life, his heart seems to break. His sorrow is almost more than he can bear. Not only was his son gone from him, but he lost his life fighting against his father. He was ungrateful and disobedient. He did not care for his father's love. Let young hearts follow the sorrowful king as he goes up to the chamber over the gate weeping as he goes, and let them hear the sorrowful words he speaks. This is the grief of a loving father who has a foolish son. Teach Golden Text.

*Memory Thought: Be Wise and Give Joy.*

Write this on the memory roll which is being kept in view from week to week. We have had a dark picture, but each one present can make a bright picture by being a wise child, and giving joy to the Saviour, and to father and mother and all friends. To be wise is to know what is right and to do it in the right way. How many wise children are here to-day? How many loving, obedient hearts, that wish to give joy instead of grief? How may you do this? Learn this tiny verse:

"To do to others as I would  
That they should do to me,  
Will make me honest, kind, and good,  
As children ought to be."

*Thought for Teachers.* It is an excellent thing to try a bit of silence now and then, by way of making an impression. Just before the pathetic cry of David's sorrow, for example, a moment's pause securing a hush of expectancy, a lowered voice, an earnest look, may deepen



feeling, if the teacher really feels what she says. Make the final impression a cheerful one, but a moment's deep thoughtfulness is helpful.

## LESSON VII. (November 15.)

### DAVID'S TRUST IN GOD. Psa. 23.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psa. 23. 1.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* Aim to prevent the tender Shepherd and the dear delight of following. Come, let us get close to the Shepherd ourselves, bringing the lambs with us, so close that he will draw them that they may run after him. Begin by portraying the shepherd of the East with his flock. Draw from the children these points: His love, care, watchfulness, tenderness, his understanding of the sheep, his leading, guarding, feeding, and folding them, protecting and defending. Tell how David killed a lion and a bear that came to hurt this flock. Tell the little story of Peace and Playful, two lambs. Peace was obedient and stayed with the shepherd. Playful was coaxed off by wild sheep to go outside the fold, was lost in the wood, fell into a pit, was forsaken of the wild tempter, was in danger of being eaten by wolves, was lost, torn, bruised, when the shepherd came seeking her and took her home in his arms upon his kind breast.

*Lesson Story.* Picture David the shepherd keeping his flock and putting his thought of the Great Shepherd into this sweet song or psalm. Teach the Golden Text, taking first "The Lord is my Shepherd," showing how Jesus is like a shepherd, and how each one can say, "He is mine." Unless he is mine how can I feel safe?

Then take the other part, "I shall not want." Not want what? Picture the good things we all want—life, love, health, happiness, forgiveness, leading, care, comfort. Put the two parts together. The shepherd must be ours; we must say the first part, or we can never say the second part, "I shall not want."

Make it clear that it was David's trust that made him say, "The Lord is my shepherd." When we really trust we take him as ours too.

*Memory Thought: Follow the Shepherd.* This is our part. Dwell on the Shepherd's wisdom, knowledge, love. For these he should be followed. Then we belong to him. The Shepherd's own sheep ought to follow. He knows our names, he calls each one. But we must

follow. Show how the little lambs get into trouble when they do not follow. Impress the safety and gladness of those who do follow.

How shall we follow? Children ought to be like lambs in being gentle, obedient, peaceful, and playful, but they are not lambs, for they know much more. They can understand and choose for themselves. They can know the Shepherd much better than sheep and lambs know theirs. They can hear his dear voice saying, "Follow me," in their hearts. They have the word of the Shepherd to tell them what to do and how to follow. Follow Jesus by believing all he tells you, by doing what he says, by loving him always and loving his other sheep and lambs, so that you will help them all you can.

*Thought for Teachers.* The undershepherds must take the word and the guidance from the Great Shepherd. Let us study his methods in shepherding the flock. Ah, how much we need



help. Can we say, "I shall not want"? Yes, if we can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

### LESSON VIII. (November 22.)

THE CURSE OF STRONG DRINK. Prov. 20. 1; 23. 20, 21, 29-35.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Wine is a mocker." Prov. 20. 1.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* Two tiny boys were left in a drug store for a while to wait till father came back for them. In the window was one of those glass vessels filled with something bright which one often sees in such stores.

This one was open, and the boys were left

alone beside it for a little while. "It looks so pretty," said Dick, "I want to drink some." "I do too, when I look at it," said Ted, "so I won't look. Come away, Dick," and Ted went to the other part of the room. But Dick kept looking, and by and by he tasted. It was very bitter and made him sick. The pretty color was not worth much. The liquid, whatever it was, might be called a mocker. It made believe. It cheated. The trouble was that Dick kept looking. He was not wise. Ted was wise. He would not look.

*The Lesson.* This is about something that cheats and mocks, and the only way to keep from being hurt by it is to turn away and not even look at it when it gives its bright color in the glass.

Draw out from the children the fact of the downward way. If they look and keep on looking they will wish to taste. If they taste they will wish to drink. If they drink they will wish to drink again. Alcohol always calls for more alcohol. It never satisfies. It mocks one, because when it seems as if it would quench thirst it only makes a man more thirsty. Whoever is deceived, or cheated, or hurt, as the words mean here, is not wise. The wise way is not even to look. Then one cannot be hurt.

*The Drunkard's Cup.* It seems to be full of light and sweetness, but after all there is much in it which one does not see at first. This lesson written by the wise man, as God showed him how to write, and as God has kept it in his words, tells us what is really in the wine cup. Take the Bible, and read the things that we find the drunkard shall come to—things that will by and by fill his cup: Poverty, rags, woe, sorrow, contention or quarrels, babbling or foolish talking, wounds without cause, and redness of eyes. This is the dreadful cup. And one who keeps looking on the wine when it is red will at last find that these things have come to be in his cup, really, even if they do not show there at first. Drinking brings these in time. Then the man does not know what he is about, any more than a crazy man lying on the top of the mast of a ship—a dangerous place but he does not care. The worst of it is that he says, "I will seek it yet again." The fearful danger is that the man who begins cannot stop. The way to make sure of not being hurt by the cup is not to look at it, but to turn away.

*Memory Thought:* Look Not upon the Wine. This is the way to be safe.

*Thought for Teachers.* Let us seek above all things to make our little temperance men

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and women "strong in the Lord." Let us lead to him in every lesson, for all should early learn that in him alone is help against this dreadful curse.

Some simple pledge like this may be taught:

God helping me, I promise  
Not to taste strong drink at all.



### LESSON IX. (November 29.)

DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON. 1 Chron.  
28. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Trust in the Lord with all  
thine heart." Prov. 3. 5.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* There was once a very curious and beautiful palace which had many gates and windows and many servants. The most wonderful part of this palace was the room in the middle. In this room sat the one who gave orders to all the servants and they did as they were told. There were two who came into this room and gave orders. When one was there all the servants ran cheerfully in and out to do their work and help others, and all was peace and joy. When the other gave orders the doors were shut and every one did what he could for himself, caring nothing for others outside and doing nothing for them. The name of the one whose orders meant help was Love, and the name of the other was Selfishness. Now, each person has a body that is like a palace, and if Love is in the middle room, the heart, the servants, which are the hands, feet, lips, tongue, are quick to do loving

things. When Selfishness gives orders they only serve themselves.

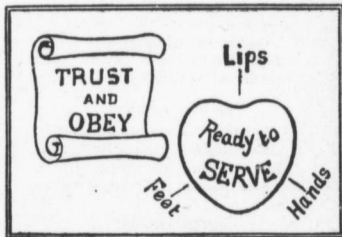
We learn to-day how David wished his son to have love in his heart, so that all he did would be loving and right.

*David's Command.* A charge is a command, or something told to another to do—something laid upon him to do.

Picture this wonderful assembly of princes and captains and people and the king and his son together. Tell how David reminded his son of his wish to build a temple to God, why God did not allow it, the promise that his son should build the house, and the way in which he was now to carry out this great plan. Two things to remember that David told Solomon; they are for us too—a charge to each one: Know God and serve him. How? With perfect heart and willing mind.

How shall we know God? In his word we learn to know him. In all he does we get acquainted with him. We know a person best when we love him and trust him. Then we understand him. We feel acquainted. God says we must get acquainted with him. We must be with him, or we cannot know him well. Let us think of our Saviour God, learn about him, talk to him, read what he says, listen to his voice in our hearts. Then let us do as he says, with willing mind and loving, ready heart.

*Memory Thought: Trust and Obey.* If we really believe that God is our Father, if we know him as we should, then we will obey him. How shall we trust? Teach Golden Text. A part of the heart will not do. Love and Trust must sit in that middle room and fill it all up and give orders to hands, feet, lips, and all the servants to do their part. David gave that charge or command to Solomon his son, but



now our King and our Father gives it to us, his children, every one. If the President came to your house to ask you to do something would

you listen and obey? How much more should you do what Jesus asks!

*Thought for Teachers.* "Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it." He charges the teachers of children to prepare in young hearts a place for his dwelling.

### The Pure Milk of the Word.

In a recent number of a monthly magazine was a bright article entitled "A City's Campaign for Pure Milk." In this we learn how science and philanthropy worked hand in hand in a great metropolis to save the lives of the innocents. A standard of purity was set up and earnest men and women labored to lift the community to this standard, with such manifest result that the mortality among the babies has decreased to an amazing degree. Are we, dear primary teachers, doing our utmost not only to give the pure milk of the word to our own little flocks, but also to help and stimulate others in this life-saving work?

### Whisper Songs for November.

#### FIFTH LESSON.

HONOR give unto thy father,  
Honor to thy mother give,  
And the life of earth and heaven  
Shall be given thee to live.

#### SIXTH LESSON.

Jesus loves his wayward children,  
And to give them life he came,  
While he names us to his angels  
Shall we not confess his name?

#### SEVENTH LESSON.

God is watching all his children  
On the sea and on the land;  
And through dangers seen and unseen,  
Angels lead them by the hand.

#### EIGHTH LESSON.

When the storms of life are ended,  
And its strong temptations past,  
Bring us, Lord, into thy haven,  
Safe from sin and death at last.

#### NINTH LESSON.

Life on earth is only school-time;  
Life in heaven is life at home;  
He will keep his charge while waiting  
For our Father's welcome "Come!"

### Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

#### Fourth Quarter.

#### CONCERT RECITATION.

"All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
The Lord has made them all."

#### SINGING.

"Jesus, where'er thy people meet,  
There they behold thy mercy seat;  
Where'er they seek thee, thou art found,  
And every place is hallowed ground."

*Teacher.* Jesus called a little child unto him.  
*Class.* "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me."

*T.* Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.

*C.* They will be still praising thee.

**PRaise SONG.** "Praise him, praise him," suggested.

**ADDITIONAL LESSON.** (Five minutes.)

**SINGING.** "I think, when I read that sweet story of old." (Two stanzas.)

#### WHISPER PRAYER.

"Dear Saviour, as in days of old  
Thou didst thy little one enfold  
Within thy loving arm,  
So wilt thou take this heart of mine,  
And keep it ever truly thine,  
Secure from sin and harm."

**PRAYER,** by teacher, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

**SINGING.** "Yet still to his footstool in prayer I may go." (Two stanzas.)

#### GIVING SERVICE.

*Teacher.* What did Jesus say about giving?  
*Class.* "Freely ye have received; freely give."

*T.* Who gives us all our good things?

*C.* God, our loving heavenly Father.

*T.* What should we bring with our gifts?

*C.* True love and obedience.

#### OFFERING MARCH AND PRAYER.

"Bless, dear Lord, the offerings  
Which we come to lay  
At thy feet, rejoicing,  
On this holy day."

#### THE LESSON TAUGHT.

#### ECHO PRAYER.

#### BRIEF RECALL OF LESSON TEACHING.

#### BENEDICTION.

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Amen.



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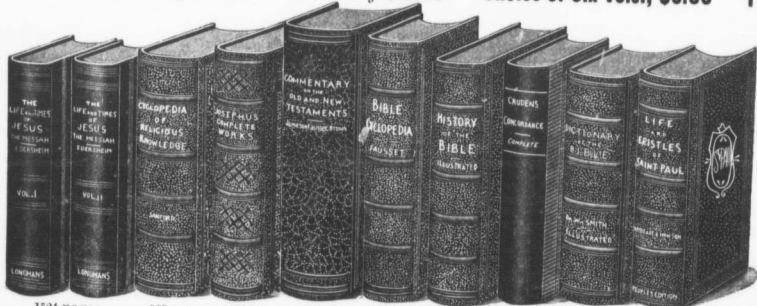
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