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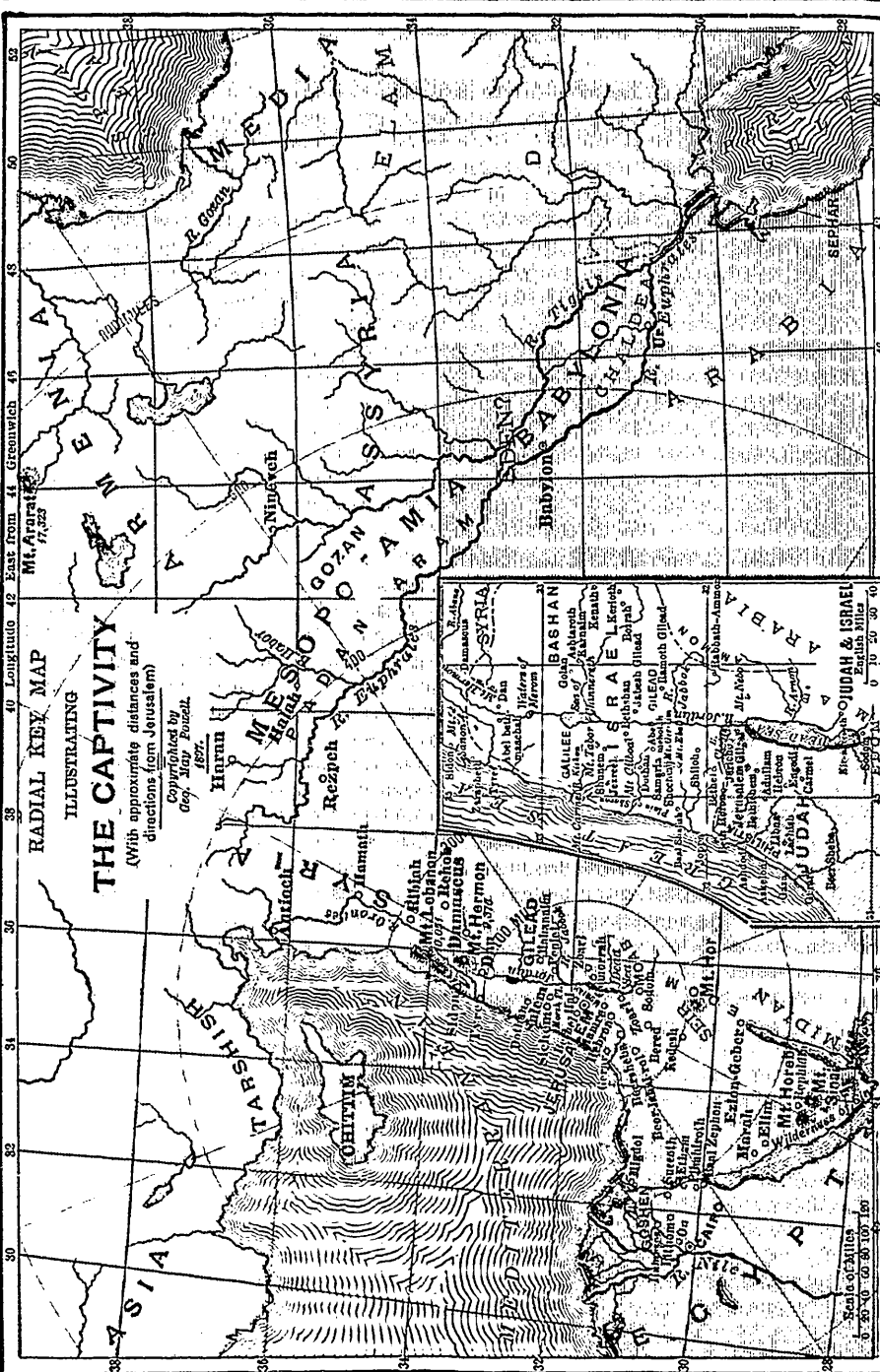
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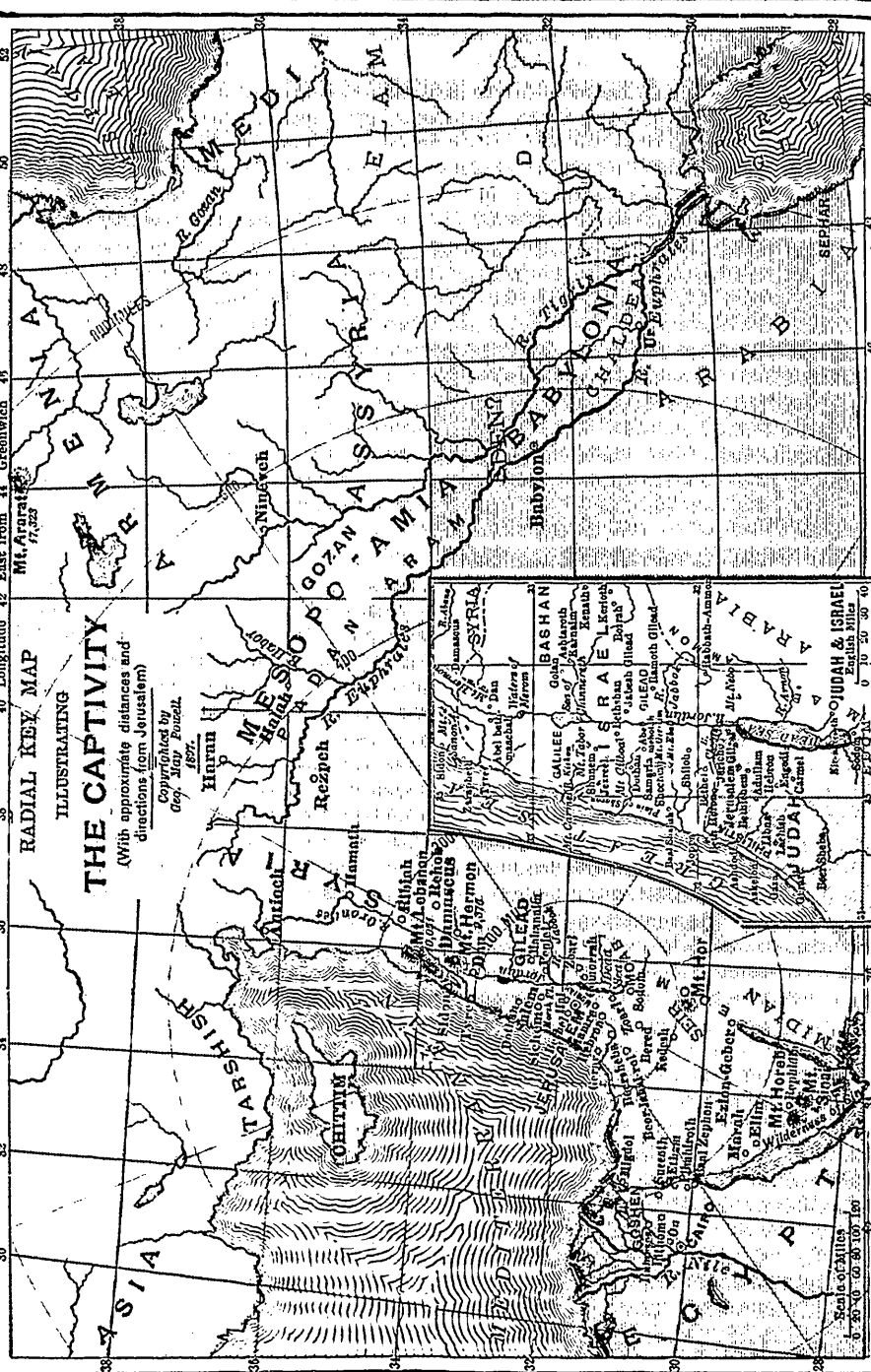
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RADIAL KEY MAP

ILLUSTRATING  
**THE CAPTIVITY**  
(With approximate distances and directions from Jerusalem)

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Scale of Miles  
0 20 40 60 80 100

# The Teacher's Monthly.

Vol. 1

JULY, 1898.

No. 7.

For *Class Register* for the month, see p. 216

This MONTHLY goes out the first week of June; the *Quarterlies* and *Leaflets* will follow in close succession.

The notes on the five Lessons in this issue of the MONTHLY have been prepared, in the order of their number, by Revs. J. Falconer, of Truro, N.S.; J. McDougall, of Holton, Que.; W. P. Archibald, of Sunny Brae, N.S.; C. B. Ross, of Lachine, Que.; and Prof. Ross, D.D., of Montreal.

## THE TEACHERS' CLASS-MEETING.

The ideal teachers' class is one connected with an individual church, where, in addition to a consideration of the lesson text, some thought can be given to specific classes and their needs. Even general teachers' classes, such as are now held in all the large cities and many of the smaller ones, ought not to be allowed to take the place of either church classes or of individual study on the part of the teachers.

It has fallen to my lot during the past eighteen or more years to be a teacher of teachers. Theoretically, I believe in the Socratic method of teaching, but I nevertheless pursue a modified lecture method. Inasmuch as I have always found that the majority of adults, for differing reasons, dislike the question-and-answer method (chiefly, I think, because of the large amount of time consumed in arriving at the truth, which could have been more accurately and efficiently put in much less time by the teacher), I have made it my practice to equip myself quite thoroughly not only upon the immediate lesson-text, but upon collateral lines of study also, so that I can safely, at the close of each verse or topic, ask, "Are there any questions or suggestions?" I also quite frequently remind them, at the beginning of the lesson, that they are at liberty to inject their questions even in mid-sentence if they feel so inclined. By this means the

class session is not necessarily a teachers' monopoly,—the choice to have it otherwise being thrown upon the individual members of the class.

I have endeavored to show the teachers that every lesson ought to be, and can be, made interesting to their classes. In order to do this I have tried to show that this result can be accomplished by the judicious use of certain simple methods.

1. A wise approach to the lesson, so that at the very start of the lesson the class will be impressed with a desire to press into it, because of a conviction that they are sure to enjoy it. I feel certain that the success or failure of different teachers lies, to a large degree, in their manner of commencing the presentation of the lesson.

2. Making the lesson graphic and real, remembering that the Bible characters were real flesh-and-blood people; in a sense putting ourselves in their place, and reverently read the Bible between the lines.

3. Making use of the eye-gate, remembering that Jesus, the model teacher, though possessing all the possibilities of spoken language with which to appeal to his hearers' ears, did, nevertheless, repeatedly make use of object lessons which would also impress by the way of the eyes.

I make frequent use, in various ways, of the eyes as an avenue of approach to both head and heart, by object lessons, maps, and other devices.

I am an inveterate user of the blackboard before the class, making it pay weekly tribute to the efficiency of the lesson work by way of simple diagrams, modified words, etc. Many doctrinal truths, even, can be made much clearer by the help of simple diagrams, and modified words are a source of weekly help.

I have long since discovered that there is not a Sunday-school lesson during the year that does not contain the possibility of dropping, here and there through the lesson, some pertinent item of secular information of a helpful

kind, which consumes but a few moments in the telling, and increases the relishability of the lesson teaching. I have often noticed the avidity with which some of the teachers before me note down such little items,—which fact convinces me that my theory is correct, that the average boy or girl especially enjoys gathering something at Sunday-school that is worth hearing, even though it is not in itself religious.

Remembering that on several occasions, Jesus, by his words, appealed to the sense of the ludicrous on the part of his hearers, I do not hesitate to occasionally inject into my teaching some pleasantry, when (and only when) I can not only entertain the class thereby, but at the same time make some especially good lesson point.

I endeavor, by the phrasing of my opening prayer, to impress upon the teachers present that even a large and praiseworthy searching of commentaries and other helps is not enough. We call the Bible the Word of God, and so it is; consequently, he knows, much better than any of those to whom we have gone for help could know, just what the real meaning of the lesson text is, and what he would have us gather from it. Hence the need of frequent prayer on our part for help in the study, and for guidance in the teaching, of the lesson.

In connection with my teachers' class work I have printed each week, for the use of those who attend, and others, what is termed a "Suggestive Arrangement." As these weekly issues contain the result of much thought and study, they consume a great deal of my time in getting them ready for the printer; but, as teachers, we must be ready to make large personal sacrifices if we do our work properly. As many persons seem to place a high value upon the serviceableness of these "Suggestive Arrangements," for use and preservation, it would, perhaps, be well for some others having charge of teachers' classes to issue their lesson analyses, etc., on a somewhat similar plan.—Robert T. Bonsall in *S. S. Times*, Cincinnati, O.

### PREPARING THE LESSON.

Some teachers think that preparing the lesson is merely the loading of a cannon with powder, that it may go off with a big bang in the presence of admiring scholars. And the more powder, the bigger bang. So they load

up with scintillating similes, and pretty parables, and striking stories.

Other teachers have set up some historical or theological or ethical target-board off at a distance from their class, and load their cannon with ball, that their scholars may see how accurate is their aim and how fairly they can hit the bull's-eye. So they prepare a mass of facts and figures, arguments and evidences.

But the wise teacher rejects *in toto* the cannon notion. He sees in each lesson a ledge of that grand mountain of life—of Christ-serving, strong life—up to which he must lead his little band, on which he must plant their feet so firmly that they may not slip back during the six days' interval, but may be ready for the next fair terrace, and the next.

So the wise teacher, in preparing the lesson, knows that he must first reach that ledge himself; must repeat the journey over and over until he has learned the easiest way for little feet; must make ladders with rounds close together; must spread sand on slippery places and stretch ropes along the edge of the cliff. He, too, lays in supplies of stories and pretty parables, not, however, in the form of powder, to make a show, but (if this is not too severe a twist of the simile) as dainty food to keep the young travellers fresh and hearty. He, too, has facts and figures and arguments and evidences, not, however, as cannon balls, but in the shape of iron bridges and railings and ropes, that the way may be solid and safe.

There are some teachers that do not study at all. It is as if a will-o'-the-wisp should undertake to guide one on an important journey. Those teachers are going they know not whither, over they know not what road, for what purpose they have not the slightest idea, and land always in a bog.

Emphatically, the teacher that is not always climbing himself will leave his class on a very dead level indeed. He should be reaching down and pulling them up, but he is soon compelled to stand where they are and push, and ends with believing his "level best" to lie along the smooth road of the easy-going valley.

The teacher who ceases to grow ceases to teach. That is why a Sunday-school lesson cannot be crammed. That is why preparation for it must extend all through the week.

Growth cannot be ordered off-hand. It comes from Father Time's shop, and he is a deliberate workman. You will lose your hold on your class if each Sunday hour does not begin with you a little above them, and end with them at your level. This advance cannot be won Saturday night, or during the space between the first and second bells for Sunday-school. Such a spasmodic leap ahead will leave you too much out of breath even to tell them to come on.

Dropping metaphor, of which we may have had too much, there are several substantial reasons why the Sunday-school preparation should extend over the seven days of the week. Thus only can you utilize in the Master's work odd bits of time, your Bible on the bureau while you dress, in your hands on the street-cars or while you wait for the meat to be cooked. There are many Bible verses which should be carefully committed to memory in connection with each lesson, as the teacher's best reliance for commentary and inspiration. These verses should be running through our heads as we run on all our six-day tasks, and should sing themselves to all our labor-tunes. But chiefly, it is only in this way that we can accumulate hints, and grow into the truths of the lesson by experience. With the lesson theme for a nucleus, it is astounding to see what a wealth of illustration, of wise and helpful comment, each day's living thrusts upon us. Every event is a picture of some truth which needs only a sensitive plate to be photographed forever. That sensitive plate is a mind which is studying that particular truth.

How much time do you spend in studying your Sunday-school lesson? You see that no true teacher can answer that question, any more than the poet can tell how long he is in writing his poem. This is the inspirational part of the teacher's work, and not the mechanical part, and his brooding will have issue of life just in proportion as the Holy Spirit dwells in his heart. But along with this lofty work must go lower processes, of which it is far easier to speak. I mean those lower processes which alone we are likely to call "studying." Permit me to lay down a programme for the study of a Sunday-school lesson which, it is hoped, teachers will find in some measure helpful.

To begin with, let it be always with pencil in hand. You have seen iron filings scattered in rough confusion over a sheet of glass. And then, when the magnet was placed beneath, you have seen those ugly bits of metal dance into the daintiest designs, fairy curves and most symmetrical figures. Such a delightful magnet is a pencil or pen for all the disordered thoughts and fancies of our brains. Next to the Bible, the Sunday-school teacher's inseparable companion should be a lead pencil.

What book is nearest you while you study your lesson? Teachers may be classified finally by their answers to that question. Is it the commentary, the atlas, the Bible dictionary, the concordance, the question-book, or the Bible? If the commentary, your comments will fall fruitless to the ground. If the atlas, your class will wander nowhither. If the Bible dictionary, your diction will have no issue in deed. If the concordance, your class will know little from you of that concord which passes understanding. If the question-book, the value of all your study is at least questionable. No; let me emphasize this statement: *Not a single lesson help should be touched until everything possible to be learned about the lesson from the Bible directly has been learned.*

For this you will need two Bibles at least, one to be kept open at the lesson, one to turn back and forth in pursuit of references and information. The first must be a King James reference Bible; the second, the noble translation of Victoria's reign. Thus furnished, read the lesson. As you read, examine your mind. What questions assail it? Those moments are full of matter. Those questions are the clues to the lesson labyrinth. Those perplexities constitute your programme. "I wonder where this place is?" you will say to yourself. "Who was this man, and what was his past history, that he did this deed? What does this odd phrase mean? Is that sentiment a just one? Is that act a model for us modern folk?"

As these difficulties come up in your slow and thoughtful reading, jot them down, and the resultant half sheet of scribbling means half the work accomplished. But hold! Did you read through a child's eye as well as your own? Did you read in the plural number?

If not, you must read the lesson once more, with a poet's imagination noting this time the difficulties which you strode easily over, but which would soon trip up little feet. When you write down such points on your paper, underscore them. And underscore them again. A vast deal of preparation for teaching is fruitless because it is made in the singular number.

The next stage in our lesson study will be to answer our questions. Points in regard to antecedents and motives will be answered by the chapters intervening between the last lesson and this. Those should next be read. Many difficulties concerning customs and laws will be cleared up by parallel passages and the references of your reference Bible. Those same references will collate for you helpful utterances on the ethical problems of the passage. Comparatively few people know, by the way, how nearly a reference Bible allows one to dispense with the Bible dictionary, Bible index, concordance, and commentary. I am continually astonished to see how few are the questions which may be asked about a passage that the Bible itself does not answer if closely scrutinized.

"But all this is a waste of time," you object. "In the lesson helps all of these points are stated and discussed, fully, methodically, concisely. Others have done this work for me, anticipating all my difficulties. Why need I repeat their labor?" Surely not merely to be original. There's too much original work crying to be done to waste a moment in duplicating unnecessarily work already done for us. But the Bible study cannot be done for you. It must end in familiarity with the Bible, in appreciation of it, in a wide-awake understanding of the problems it presents, to be obtained in no way except by original work. If difficulties are solved before we have felt them to be difficulties, if customs and phrases are explained before we have discovered the need of an explanation, and places located before we fall to groping after them, it is the old story of "light won, light lost." And so I wish to repeat that the one proper commencement of study of a Bible lesson is the Bible, and the Bible, and the Bible; once to note our own questions, once to imagine our scholars' questions, and once, in large measure, here, there, and everywhere, concord-

ance, index, references, and atlas at our elbow, to answer, if it may be, from the Book itself all the questions it has raised.

And when this is done, even if every question has been answered, open arms to the commentaries and the lesson helps, the wisest and richest you can find, and as many as you have time for. Why? Because twenty heads are better than one; because the Hebrew and Greek travel and debate and experience and insight and spirituality of our best thinkers will suggest new points of view, add a world of illustration, may even upset some of your conclusions. Stand sturdily, however, in the presence of these learned doctors. You will be tempted to throw away your own honest results and adopt their wise and brilliant homilies. If you do, your class will laugh at you, or yawn. You will be giving them, not your life, but your rhetoric. These helps are for inspiration, not respiration and circulation. They are for hints toward originality, not hindrances. They are useful in strengthening your own thought, vivifying your own feeling, confirming your own conclusions, opening new vistas for your own exploration, suggesting methods for your own practice.

If these two lines of preparation have been faithfully carried out, you will by this time have accumulated a mass of material which will be confusing, and the third step is to reduce it to order. Long practice has convinced me of the utility of the plan of writing out questions. Whether these questions are used in the class or not, they clarify the subject marvellously, and themere drill of writing them adds fifty per cent. to the teaching power of the instructor. When I began trying it, I was astonished to see how many thoughts which seemed to me quite promising and bright could not be approached by the interrogative mood. I wanted to lead up to this simile, that illustration, this theory, that pretty idea. I would soon find that my questions refused to lead up to them naturally. Why? Simply because these fancies answered no query likely to rise, solved no difficulty likely to suggest itself, and were mere adventitious decorations wherewith I had been accustomed to load my Sunday-school teaching, to show off.

My attempt at formulating questions soon taught me, too, that I had been indulging in

monologue. I found it unexpectedly difficult to frame a question—one, that is, which required the scholar to do some thinking to answer. I discovered that I had been in the habit of propounding "yes" and "no" queries, merely as excuses for five-minute orations.

Then, too, when I began to put down in black and white, just what I expected to put into that precious half-hour, I wondered what I had been doing with it hitherto. By my previous methods two or three little notions would keep me going through the whole thirty minutes; but ideas do shrink so when you put them on paper with a question-mark at the end! It is wonderful how many questions can be asked and answered in half an hour. I gained a new conception of the value of time, and of the teaching value of study hours.

In writing out these questions, then, the first thing to be thought of is that consideration with which a good teacher will begin his lesson, but a poor teacher will close: "What is the main teaching of the lesson?"—as important, this "main teaching," as the compass to the sailor. What particular characteristic of God's noblemen is this lesson to strengthen in my scholars? Every teacher should know the power which is given by an ultimatum; by a decision, that is, as to the one thing which, no matter what else it wins or fails to win, that lesson must accomplish. Is it to make my boys and girls more truthful, more brave, more cheery, more trusting? Whatever the point be, about that shall cluster the questions, the illustrations, the arguments. Countries, customs, times, history, shall be only its framework. There must be other points, to be sure, but merely as side excursions, from which we return with greater zeal to this our main quest. Those subordinate points we next determine, and the order in which we shall treat them, and then sit down to write out our questions.

Does all this seem too mechanical, this writing out questions, and determining point by point just what results you will seek, and in what order? It is business-like; it is mechanical. Why are we so afraid of mechanism in bringing hearts to the great Mechanic, without whom was nothing made that has been made? A machine is merely a contrivance for applying power effectively, and the

only question should be, "Does this machinery make my aim more direct, widen and deepen the range of my efforts? It is a grand and god-like thing to be mechanical, but it is a pitifully weak thing to stop with being mechanical. Machinery accomplishes all the work that is being done anywhere, but it is machinery informed by the Holy Spirit. Our lesson preparation will be in harmony with all of God's preparing, if it is orderly, painstaking and definite, binding together, however, all its labored details with the sweet and creative spirit of prayer. Machinery touched by prayer is always the machinery in which, as in the old Greek plays, the god descends. Nothing is mechanical, everything is poetical and spiritual, that can be prayed over.

But will not all this take time—all this ransacking of the Bible, original study, writing out of questions, and formulating plans? Of course it will. Time is what good things are made of—time and toil. It would be strange if the best of good things, the sanctification of lives, did not take time and toil. But let us remember two facts: one, that this work, being thorough work, need not be done twice. Seven years of such Bible study as I have indicated, and what a magnificently trained teacher you will be, ready, all ready, for the next International Lesson cycle, the next Sunday-school Sabbath of years! We Sunday-school teachers have enlisted for life. It is so much wiser, then, to study for life. And in the second place, familiarity with this thoroughgoing way of working makes it much easier and more rapid than at first. We no longer have to use the concordance, but memory supplies passages needed for illustration. Bible customs are soon learned. The peculiarities of Bible language are readily mastered. The poetic instinct which sees parables and applications grows with its use until they crowd upon you and must be critically culled. Nothing ends easy but that which begins hard.

After all, however, these are the lower motives. What matters it even if the preparation for this blessed work remains hard to our last Sabbath? Let it be the best we know, and on that last Sabbath, if God has given us the knowledge that even one soul has been turned to the supreme happiness by all our toil, we shall deem it rich reward.—*Amos R. Wells, in "Sunday-School Success."*

Lesson, 1 Kings 12: 16-25. Read 1 Kings 12: 1 to 14: 20. Commit vs. 16 19

16. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

20. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

21. And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22. But the word of God came unto Shemlah the man of God, saying,

23. Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

24. Thus saith the Lord, Yeshall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.

25. Then Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein: and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."—Prov. 15: 1.

**LESSON PLAN.**

1. Israel Rebels, vs. 16-19.
2. Israel chooses a new king, vs. 20.
3. God confirms the division, vs. 21-25.

**DAILY READINGS.**

- M. Wise counsel rejected, 1 Kings 12: 1-11.  
 T. The kingdom divided, 1 Kings 12: 12-25.  
 W. Idolatry established, 1 Kings 12: 26-33.  
 T. The event foretold, 1 Kings 11: 28-40.  
 F. Despising counsel, Prov. 15: 1-14.  
 S. Refusing to hear, Zech. 7: 8-14.  
 S. Pride and destruction, Prov. 16: 16-33.  
*The I. B. R. A. Sel.*

**CATECHISM.**

Q. 25. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?  
 A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God; and in making continual intercession for us.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

No. 105, (Psalm) 535, 531, 556.

**Historical Setting.**

This lesson tells of a leading epoch in the history of the Hebrews. Solomon's reign is over. Up to this time Israel has been one nation, but from this date, 937, there are to be two nations:—the northern, called Israel, or Ephraim, or Samaria, and the southern, called Judah.

The division of the tribes is as follows: Israel included Joseph (=Ephraim and Manasseh), Issachar, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, Gad, and Reuben. Eventually the greater part of Benjamin and probably the whole of Simeon and Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah.

**Causes of Disruption.**

(a) *Personal.* There had been a long continued jealousy between the tribe of Joseph and the tribe of Judah. Until the time of David the house of Joseph had been in the ascendancy, and the chief rulers had been drawn from its families, *c.g.* Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Saul, Samuel, (see also Deut. 13: 13; Judges 8, 1. 12; 16.) But when David was chosen king and his sons began to claim the throne as if by right, Ephraim was annoyed.

The members of this tribe began to chafe under the rule of the house of Judah; and from the history it becomes evident that the men of Israel and the men of Judah did not entertain feelings of mutual esteem. 2 Sam. 19: 40. Ps. 78: 67-68. Several times trouble broke out against David and Solomon, while the northern tribes were all the time striving for independence. Accordingly when this opportunity arose, the old family feud was quick to reassert itself.

(b) *Social.* Under Solomon, despotic tendencies grew apace, and oppressive taxation combined with forced labour led to a widespread dissatisfaction. The seeds of national discontent were sown by the extravagance and oppression of the Davidic dynasty.

(c) *Religious.* "The cause was from the Lord" 1 Kings 12: 15. Idolatry had crept in within recent years, and had become so extensive that the stern prophetic voice of Ahijah the Shilonite declares that the Lord will punish the sin of the land, 1 Kings 11. 29-37.

**Outline history of the Kingdoms.**

(a) *Israel* had the more brilliant record as long as it lasted. Its land was fertile and



beautiful, one of the leading characteristics being its openness. This made it easy of access for foreign armies, so that the invasions of Israel are more frequent than those of Judah. Smith in the "Historical Geography of the Holy Land" speaks of the open roads which account for the abundant chariot driving in Israel. "All the long drives of the Old Testament are in Samaria." 1 Kings 18: 44; 2 Kings 5: 9; 9: 16. The wealth of soil made the country a temptation to the foe, while the luxury resulting from the plenty of the land induced such sins as drunkenness and thoughtlessness. Isaiah 28: 1.

Israel had also a larger list of illustrious men than its neighbour to the south. Among her prophets were Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and most of the prophetic activity was confined to Samaria.

However, the hand of fate seemed to rest on the land. Idolatry was introduced at its birth by Jeroboam, and the sin of the son of Nebat was repeated with grievous monotomy in every reign. This corrupted the springs of national character and caused the lack of stability which is met with in the Israelite. Rebellion was continually breaking out, and dynasty followed dynasty in rapid succession, so that in a brief period of 211 years, representatives of eight houses occupied the throne. The destruction of Israel came in 722 with the fall of Samaria, after which time the existence of the tribes becomes one of the enigmas of history; for they are lost as a road is lost in the desert.

(b) **Judah** was of much less significance to the contemporary world. The land was not valuable, and the high and rocky frontier made it more secure against outside attack. This forced the people to become self-contained; and a patriotic spirit emerged which led to a sense of unity that was lacking in the north.

Then there was one source of strength left to Judah which was of inestimable value, and which became the secret of its continuity as a Kingdom. This was the city of Jerusalem with its temple and throne and the memories of David and Solomon.

The house of David continued, in accordance with divine promise, to give kings to Judah, and after the fall of Samaria gathered to itself all the national spirit of the land. The whole people became identified with the tribe of Judah, and the name *Jew* came into use.

In 586 Jerusalem fell; but the nation did not cease. "Judaea earning from outsiders little but contempt, inspired the people, whom she so carefully nursed in seclusion from the world, with a patriotism that has survived two thousand years of separation, and still draws her exiles from the fairest countries of the world to pour their tears upon her dust, though it be among the most barren the world contains."—G. A. Smith.

### Notes on the Lesson.

**V. 16.**—The effect of the King's ill-advised answer of v. 14. He had not correctly gauged the strength of the opposition. The young men thought that force and severity would suffice to quell the rebels; but there was more vitality to the revolting party than they imagined. The movement must have been quite general since it speaks of *all Israel*, i. e., the main part of the nation. The verse shows the party feud between Israel and the house of David. No love is apparently lost between them. *What portion have we in David?* Thus the battle cry is a party cry. *To your tents, Oh Israel; see to your own house, David.* Tents tell of a life partially nomadic.

**17.**—See notes on v. 23.

**18.**—It was another impolitic move on the part of Rehoboam to send Adoram (Adoniram), one of the most hated of the advisers of the crown. He presided over the forced labor service, 1 Kings 4: 6; 5: 14. Rehoboam had hoped to appease the people with this move, after the discovery of the miscarriage of his defiant answer; but poor statesman that he was, he did not possess the art of selection. He was unfortunate in the choice of companions, and they were his ruin. The people advance to open rebellion: the only blood spilt being that of Adoram, and the king makes every effort to get up to his chariot. Cruelty and cowardice often go hand in hand (cf Haman).

*Over the tribute.*—R. V. *levy*—forced labor which some of the tribes had to pay (cf French Corvée and Kanaka traffic in New Hebrides, a species of slavery).

**19.** *Unto this day.* The author of the Book of Kings, like other historians, made use of old authorities and MSS. Here we see a quotation from some such old source which must have been written before 722, since it speaks of the kingdoms as still existent. The tone of the

words is sad, and the separation is regarded as a great catastrophe.

**20.**—Study the career and character of Jeroboam, 1 Kings 11: 26. An astute and useful man, he was quick to learn. He rose rapidly in the employ of Solomon because of his native ability. He made himself indispensable. Rising thus quickly from the humble ranks he lacked moral strength. Rich in ability, he was poor in character. His sin was lack of conviction, while policy was his dominant principle. 1 Kings 12: 25. He had watched over the Ephraimites in their labors, and seeing the germs of revolt he ingratiated himself with the common people by his affable manners; and in their need of a king all eyes turned to him. Jeroboam is the type of many a man in the world to-day, quick, shrewd, and successful, as the world calls success, but without principle and moral courage, and therefore a failure in God's sight.

**21.**—The king makes an attempt to put down the rebellion, but is prevented by the prophet who speaks for God.

**22.**—History of Shemaiah. One of the minor characters in the Bible, who appears for a moment and then passes, as ships pass in the night. These short studies of character are very interesting (cf Epaphroditus, Mnason, etc). Enough is given to furnish a key of his nature, the man of God, a title full of meaning in O. T. 2 Chron. 12: 5 and 15. It is often found in 2 Kings (cf 1 Tim. 6. 11).

**23.** *Remnant of the people.*—Those who belonged to the north yet had possessions in the south, and who identified themselves with Judah. The tie of property was stronger than the tie of nationality.

**24.**—The prophet makes for peace. He seems to say. "How unedifying would the sight be, brother fighting brother, when there were plenty of other enemies to defeat; besides, the Lord had done it and they need not expect to conquer him."

**25.**—Jeroboam, the castle-builder, fortifies his capital Shechem. This town occupied a romantic situation, with historic Ebal on one side and Gerizim of sacred memory on the other side. Gen. 12: 6; 33: 18; Dt. 27: 12. The town at present is called Nablus and is the seat of government of the Province. Penuel, a fort on the eastern border of the land, and of strategic importance.

## PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

### 1. A lesson from history.

God is the maker of history. The division of the kingdom is from the Lord. This is the Bible view of all events. History is God's conversation. His acts are his revelation. The ordinary view of nature, history, and human life, is, that all things happen by natural laws which are of the earth. An army is defeated, and the difficulty is said to be solved when we know that one's army was weaker or less equipped than its opponent.

But in the background is the Lord God. He is as it were the atmosphere for all events. There is a council in heaven where are decided the ups and downs of nations. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. He setteth up one and putteth down another (cf Prov. 21: 1). The Lord is the real originator of the division, and the cause of this action is the sin of Solomon who had gone after idols. The external unity was of little value since the unity of worship was broken; and he who had formed the one nation was now the cause of its division. The one guarantee for the continuance of national prosperity is righteousness. It alone exalteth a nation.

This lesson may well be applied to our time, and the scholars impressed with the truth that amid all the events of to-day, social, political, national, individual, the final arbiter is God. Let this lesson in O. T. history be modernized to our own days. In the division of the kingdom we see the real currents below the surface, and they make for God and righteousness. They who oppose God's way will find that he is the stronger of the two (cf Is. 31: 2). After Moscow, Napoleon is reported to have exclaimed "The Almighty is too strong for me."

### (2.) A lesson from individual life.

While God makes all history, yet each man is allowed to work out his own salvation or ruin. He is free. We see Rehoboam fall by his own folly. He is the foolish son of a wise father. Wrongly trained by Solomon, he had been brought up in the seclusion of the court, and had none of the healthful influences that come from mingling with the people. This isolation had made him imagine that the poor, the working people, whom he saw, were worthless. He knew little of men; the fault of exclusiveness. This led him to overestimate the power

of force. He thought too highly of the virtue of the whip, and accordingly refused the wisdom of the long-headed advisers of his father, who knew that kindness could do more than cruelty, and that service was the best pathway to the throne.

But Rehoboam does not accept this rule of service. He is too proud to serve, and he follows the others who were such high-minded aristocrats. Their idea was that the common people were dangerous radicals and must be kept in their place. "Give them blows for arguments," they would say. Then the folly of the king is the apparent cause for the division.

The faults of Rehoboam are those of the proud; and the sons of wealthy homes in our day need to keep clear of the sins of this king: a supercilious attitude to the poorer classes and an arrogant self-confidence. Let Rehoboam's character be so displayed as to show the hatefulness of this spirit; while on the other hand the beauty of a life of service may

be offered as a contrast. John 13: 1-17; Phil. 2: 7. Jesus Christ the servant-king. Read Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*.

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

1. What were the causes of division?
2. Contrast the characters of Jeroboam and Rehoboam as to home, character, sin, end.
3. What was the future of each kingdom?
4. What part did the man of God play?
5. What are the deciding principles history?

### THE BLACKBOARD.

A DIVIDED KINGDOM  
HEART  
LIFE  
WHAT FOLLOWS?

## Lesson II.

## ELIJAH THE PROPHET.

July 10th, 1898.

Lesson, 1 Kings 17: 1-16. Read the Chapter. Commit vs. 2-6.

1. And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Anab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

2. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,

3. Get thee thence and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

4. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5. So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

6. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,

9. Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain thee.

10. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when

he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not, go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

15. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

16. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

### GOLDEN TEXT.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord."—1 Kings 17: 16.

### LESSON PLAN.

1. The rain withheld, vs. 1.
2. The prophet fed, vs. 2-6.
3. The widow-rewarded, vs. 7-16.

### DAILY READINGS.

- M. Hardened in sin, 1 Kings 16: 25-33.  
 T. Elijah the Prophet, 1 Kings 17: 1-7.  
 W. Elijah the Prophet, 1 Kings 17: 8-16.  
 T. Sorrow and Joy, 1 Kings 17: 17-24.  
 F. The famine, 1 Kings 18: 1-16.  
 S. Power of prayer, James 5: 13-20.  
 S. Kept by God, Psalm 37: 12-24.

### CATECHISM.

Q. 26. How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

### LESSON HYMNS.

Nos. 256, 189, 314, 320.

**Time.**—The close of the tenth century before Christ. The age of Homer. Before any of the Prophets whose books form part of the Bible. Fifty-six years had passed since the unhappy division of the kingdom when Ahab came to the throne. Six kings had reigned, not one of them a godly man.

**Circumstances.**—Ahab's reign marked a new stage in the nation's fall. Jeroboam's calves were intended to represent Jehovah; Ahab brought in Baal and Ashtaroah. Jeroboam planned to keep Israel distinct from Judah; Ahab allied Israel with Sidon. He ceased to worship Jehovah even in name, and repudiated the covenant. He, first among the evil kings of Israel, wedded a heathen princess, Jezebel, daughter of a priest of Baal who had usurped the throne of Zidon. Jezebel is the first and typical instigator of persecution against the saints of God, and her very name has become a byword for all that is daring in evil. Ahab, stirred up by Jezebel, sold himself to work wickedness, and Israel fell with her king. A few thousand only remained true to God. A greater crisis does not occur in history.

**1. Elijah.**—The name means "My God Jehovah is." Elias is its New Testament form. It was probably given by believing parents as a protest against idolatry, and is most suitable to his mission. He is the earliest among the greater prophets; and a prophet of the northern kingdom, where most of the earlier prophets taught. He wrote no book, yet no prophet is so often mentioned in the New Testament as he. No man except Abraham and Moses was more venerated by the Jews.

**1. His sudden introduction.**—He is brought to our notice like another Melchizedek, his birth, his tribe, his call, alike untold. Like John the Baptist he "was in the desert until the day of his showing into Israel."

**2. The vividness of the picture.** We see him under a search light. He stands out clear-cut and outlined against the background of his age. His words strike like a sword; meteor-like he comes and goes; he is the "prophet of fire."

**3. His appearance.** He was a son of the desert, like those heroes of Gad (to which tribe he probably belonged) who swam the Jordan in flood to join David, "whose faces were the faces of lions, and their feet were swift as the roes upon the

mountains." His dress was that of the desert; "an hairy man and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins." "This refers not to his body but to his dress. In the margin of the R. V. the meaning is correctly given, "a man with a garment of hair."—Milligan. In this he was like the Baptist. **4. His character.** His singleness of aim; he lived and thought for the religious revival of Israel. He did all things waiting upon God. His fearlessness of action; he stands a hero-prophet before a craven king. He "never feared the face of man." His sternness of spirit; "he leaves on us the impression of a man of sterner mould than either the prophets of the Old Testament or John the Baptist." "He is the embodiment of law."—Milligan.

**The Tishbite.**—The familiar surname of Elijah. Lightfoot makes it refer to his office, "The Reformer" or "Converter." Its true interpretation depends on the meaning of the word translated "Inhabitants" which has the same root letters. This may be read "Of the strangers of Gilead," as modern German scholars take it, or "of Tishbi of Gilead," as the LXX and Josephus understood it. The former would describe his race "Elijah the stranger," making him not of Hebrew birth. The latter, referring to his home, is more probable, save that Tishbi has not yet been discovered. There was a "Teshbi" in Naphtali, but we await the finding of another in Gilead.

**Gilead.**—"The Rocky Land," the wild, rugged region east of Jordan, "meet nurse" for its prophetic child. The Israelites of this half desert region were half Bedouin in habits. "And the rough hair mantle,...the sudden disappearances...the long wanderings into the desert...are all characteristics of the Bedouin life, dignified but not destroyed by his high prophetic mission"—Stanley.

**Ahab.**—Worst of the kings of Israel. Strong in war, in commerce, and in art, in religion he was completely under the power of Jezebel's evil will. He made streets for himself in the great trading city of Damascus, and allied himself with Zidon for the sake of the commerce of the Phenicians, while his "house of ivory" led the architecture of his age. But his adoption of the gods of the old Canaanites, with their impure and bloody rites, was a complete apostasy from Jehovah.

**God of Israel.**—Theirs by the covenant, theirs still, though they had cast him off. "He had drawn near to them in their past. Not by the dread of his power only, but by the thought of his love, he had bound them to his service. And the experience of the past was a promise of the future. All that could either save or win the heart lay in the words—The Lord God of Israel."—Milligan.

**Liveth.**—In contrast with Ahab's idols. They had no life in themselves, were unable to give life to others, were without power or even reality. He had life in himself; his eyes are upon his creatures, his ears open unto them "and as life could only be maintained in holiness, as sin was self-destructive, he could give life to none but the obedient, and the wages of sin was death." "When the Bible makes God the Living God, it has in view that blending of thought with feeling which renders the Divine essence a throbbing centre of self-consciousness. He loves and he abhors. The Old and New Testaments are vivid as lightning with the feelings of the Deity."—Shedd.

**Before whom I stand.**—In the east the servant stood before his master, and the phrase is a synonym for "whose servant I am." But the words tell more than this. "An habitual attitude of the soul is pointed at in Elijah's language." Like the Saviour himself, it was his meat and his drink to do the will of God. Each of the two who were translated lived thus, for Enoch also "walked with God." And this was the source of Elijah's authority, of his strength. He could not tremble before a king who stood fore God.

**Dew nor rain.**—These were blessings promised to Israel on condition of faithfulness, to be withdrawn if they forsook God. "According to my word."—Not uttered in caprice, but as the minister of God. He does not mean that he should send now drought or now rain at his pleasure, but that, if Israel would repent before three years God would send rain at Elijah's word. This message is exactly what the fire-test on Carmel was afterwards, a challenge to put God and the idols to the test as to which could answer by rain.

**3. Hide thyself.**—From the wrath of Ahab. **Cherith, before Jordan.**—Tradition has always placed this brook on the west of Jordan. Josephus also favors this. "Before," elsewhere, is used to signify "east of," Gen. 25:

18; and it is urged that Elijah would naturally cross the Jordan to Gilead. But "before" also means "towards," and explorers by general consent place it at the Wady Kelt near the Jordan.

**4. Ravens.**—Elijah was miraculously fed. God "commanded" the ravens to feed him. But many who do not doubt the miracle are perplexed at ravens being employed, and seek some other interpretation. The Hebrew word is "Orebim" which some would translate "Merchants" or "Arabians" or "people of Orbo." "But these attempts must be rejected upon exegetical and historical grounds"—Dr. Milligan. He was fed by ravens. Now the raven is an unclean bird, it is ravenous, and its food is carrion. But the very lesson needed may have been taught by using an unclean bird. And as the place was not far from Jerusalem, the flesh may have been snatched from the altar by the birds.

**5 He went.**—How simply yet how forcibly does this tell of the implicit obedience of the prophet! Imperative authority and implicit obedience is the prophet's conception of life.

**6. Morning—evening.**—The supply came with constant regularity, yet in such a manner as to be a constant draft on faith. Yet is not all our life lived in like dependance? Our food is given us year by year, month by month, we have no dependance for another harvest but God's faithfulness.

**7. "Dried up."**—Thousands of others were suffering from the same scarcity. What effect is being produced upon their hearts? Elijah is sent forth to learn this, and finds that in one unlikely place the hammer of the Lord has been making a heart ready for trust in him.

**9. Zarephath.**—Sarepta in Luke's Gospel, now Surafend. Its people were Zidonians, worshippers of the very gods Jezebel had brought to Israel. Here Elijah would see the system he was to overthrow in all its native hideousness. **A widow.**—She is generally placed in contrast with the Shunamite as though one were humble and the other noble. There is no ground for such contrast. She is poor only because of the famine. Her house has a "loft" or upper room, v. 19. "Our translation makes Elijah live in a loft, but not very accurately. The Hebrew word is "alliyeh," the common Arabic word now for

the upper room. This alliyeh is the most desirable part of the establishment, and is still given to guests who are treated with honor. The poorer sort have no alliyeh." Thompson.

**Sustain.**—Nothing is said yet of his sustaining her. This Elijah will learn in time. Yet it is the important part of the narrative, and is the feature thought of by our Saviour. Lu. 4: 25.

**10. The gate.**—The meeting was providential, like that of Abraham's servant and Rebecca. By means of it the woman was pointed out to Elijah. His request is like that of our Saviour to the woman of Samaria. Though the famine was severe in the place, water could be had, for Zarephath was watered by a stream from Lebanon. Her readiness to help shows preparedness to be helped.

**11. A morsel of bread.**—This added request is a further test. Nor does she refuse, but shows that she is in dire need also. Her answer shows that Elijah had revealed himself to her as a servant of Jehovah, and that either she had already placed her faith in God, or did so at once at the prophet's words. Trial had done its work on her heart, making her teachable.

**12. Meal, oil.**—The meal was coarse unsifted flour of wheat or barley; the oil, olive oil, an important article of food; the barrel, a large and deep earthenware jar sunk a third of its distance in the earthen floor.

**13-16. Fear not.**—A recognition of and encouragement to her faith. **First.**—In the region of miracle and in the kingdom of nature the same law of the first fruits for the Lord is found. **Shall not waste.**—We are here in the region of miracle—a living topic to-day. "There are even Christian minds which have begun to waver at this point, while others, on the opposite side, are perhaps nearer believing their own illusive difficulties than at any former period."—Cairns. Yet miracles stand, and shall while faith and christianity last.

Notice, 1.—*A miracle is a divine work.* Gen 8: 19; John 3: 3. All denial of miracle in Spinoza, Hume, Strauss, Mill, has been at bottom a denial of God, and makes christianity itself subversive of reason. No one can claim "Miracle is impossible" unless there is no God. Given God, miracle follows. 2. *Miracle recognizes natural law.* John 9: 32. Science, therefore, cannot disprove miracles, for men in Bible

days recognized the uniformity of nature, on which science builds, and which science cannot, therefore, make more certain. 3. *Miracles rest on the same evidence as all other occurrences,* the testimony of the senses of the actors and of history since. John 9: 25, 27. 4. *The whole system of Christianity, revelation, incarnation, and redemption, lives in miracle. To deny miracle makes sin the order of the universe.*

**And she went, etc.** Her faith, like that of the woman of these same coasts in our Saviour's time, was great, and her reward was great, in keeping with her faith.

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

Was Elijah an early prophet or a late one? Of Israel or of Judah?

Was Israel's course upward or downward when he appeared? 16: 33; Rom. 11: 2-3.

Mention other noted men of Gilead. Judge: 11; 2 Sam. 19: 31.

What action in the Baptist's life is like this of Elijah in bravery? John 14: 4.

Read Israel's covenant chapter, Deut. 6, to understand the words God of Israel; and Psalm 115, the Ode of the shield of God, with the word Liveth.

Read Deut. 10: 8 for its light on Elijah's "standing before" God in his official relation, and Gen. 5: 24 for its light on his personal relation. Look at God's ancient promise and threat regarding rain and dew. Deut. 11: 13-17.

How long does Jesus speak of the drought as lasting? Lu. 4: 25.

Read about the overthrow of Nineveh "according to the word" of the Lord by Jonah. Jonah 3: 4-10.

Whither was Joseph warned to flee with the child Jesus? Matt. 2: 13.

Has God given a like promise to all the righteous? Isa. 33: 15-16.

Would not a good motto be John 2: 5?

For how long are we to ask for our bread, and how often? Matt. 6: 11.

How does Christ use this verse? Lu. 4: 25. Is the added burden laid on the widow a hard one to bear? Compare Matt. 11: 30.

When did Christ make a similar request? John 4: 7.

When did Jesus make a little serve for many? John 6: 9.

What was Israel commanded to give the Levites? Deut. 18: 4.

Did she not act as a true Israelite? Deut. 15: 10.

What is it that "faileth never"?

## PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

**1 Boldness in God's service.**—Elijah took his life in his hand in appearing before Ahab. The true faith was being stamped out by persecution. He himself was afterwards hunted by Jezebel's servants. Yet with directness, fearlessness, earnestness, he speaks to Ahab in the palace.

**2. The covenant relation of God.**—God is the God of Israel. He remains so when they have forgotten him. The Father's attitude towards the Prodigal remains unchanged throughout his absence. What is the motive this for the sinner's return !

**3. The personal, living character of God.**—"I am" is the foundation of "God is light," and "God is love," and "God is a consuming fire." He lives; that is, he thinks and feels and wills. "I thought of God and was troubled." "To know God is life eternal."

**4. Communion of the soul with God.**—"How distinct and abiding must the vision of God have been which burned before the inward of him who struck out that phrase." "Every place where he stands is as the very holy place of the Most High. All circumstances are the voice of God, commanding or restraining. That voice is no mere utterance of iron impersonal duty, a thought which makes men slaves but never makes them good. It is the voice of the living God, loving and beloved. His law is life. The heart that hears him speak is filled with music."—Maclaren.

How pure that soul must be,  
When, placed within thy searching sight,  
It shrinks not, but with calm delight,  
Can live and look on Thee !"—Binney.

**5. The use and misuse of temporal blessings.**—All these are in strict fact covenant blessings. The race of man was spared for the sake of its surety, Christ. The blessings rehearsed on Gerizim were for an obedient Israel. The goodness of God is designed to lead through repentance upward to his grace. But over against Gerizim is Ebal. They may lead to hardness of heart. Then are they withdrawn.

**6. God's guidance of his people.**—He no longer speaks to us by audible voice, nor by an inward light, but his word does come to us in the scripture and in providence. Let us listen and follow.

**7. Unceasing providence.**—He has commanded the earth to feed us, and we drink of streams he makes to flow. Could we with anointed eyes look upon the realities around us, we should see that always only a few weeks distant stands the grim spectre, want, and we should see also a pierced hand giving us through his laws in nature "our daily bread."

**8. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."**—When the brook dries, a double channel, of more grateful food and of help bestowed on others, is opened up.

**9. Mutual dependance.**—Eye sees for foot, foot walks for hand, hand grasps for taste, and each for everyone. Widow and prophet sustain each other; and so do wife and husband, capital and labor, man and man.

**10. The dependance of receiving upon giving.**—Only those who freely give can rightly receive. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But only more blessed. It is blessed to receive, and only less blessed than to give. We must accept from God before we truly give to men. We must bow our pride to accept, and then out flows the joy of giving.

**11. The omnipotence of faith.**—Even according to your faith, or much, or little, or wanting, be it unto you.

### THE BLACKBOARD.

Rain and Dew Denied.  
Bread and Flesh Supplied  
Meal and Oil Multiplied.

OR

Drought and Disobedience  
Food REWARDS Faith

Lesson, 1 Kings 18: 30-40. Read 1 Kings 17: 17 to 18: 46. Commit vs. 36-39.

30. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

31. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

34. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

35. And the water ran round about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.

36. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.

40. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, the Lord he is the God: the Lord, he is the God."—1 Kings 18: 39.

**LESSON PLAN.**

1. Preparation, vs. 30-35.
2. Prayer, vs. 36-37.
3. Answer, v. 38.
4. Results, vs. 39-40.

**DAILY READINGS,**

- M. The challenge, 1 Kings 18:17-29.  
 T. Elijah on Carmel, 1 Kings 18: 30-39.  
 W. The little cloud, 1 Kings 18: 40-46.  
 T. A solemn covenant, Deut. 30: 10-20.  
 F. Decide now! Joshua 24: 14-24:  
 S. Hold fast! 2 Tim. 1: 6-13.  
 S. Reward of faithfulness, Rev 3: 7-13.

**CATECHISM.**

Q. 27. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

Nos. 42, (Psalm), 246, 252, 398.

Elijah's life as a prophet, alternates between long periods of seclusion and sudden, meteor-like, appearances. The hiding by the brook Cherith and the sojourn, in the widow's home at Zarephath prepare the way for Carmel. All his movements are under divine direction. In his divinely appointed hiding places he not only finds a refuge from the wrath of Ahab, Jezebel, and the prophets of Baal, but he gathers spiritual strength for future conflicts. Faith in God and the spirit of obedience to him are deepened. Three years the land is under the ban of Jehovah. Baal and his prophets cannot remove the ban. That the people may learn righteousness the judgments of the true God are visited upon them. At the end of the appointed period Elijah appears, to remove the ban and to vindicate the honor of Jehovah.

A public assembly is called that there may be a trial of the God of Elijah, the God of Israel, and the new deity that had been brought in by the Sidonian queen. The folly of idolatry, and the power and glory of Jehovah are to be set forth in an acted sermon before the eyes of the people.

The scene, the persons of the drama, and the successive acts, make up a most impressive and

memorable picture. Elijah chose a very effective way of reaching the popular imagination and heart.

In the first act of the drama, the prophets of Baal are seen calling upon their God, and going through with all the rites of a frenzied fanaticism; but all to no purpose. The curtain falls on them utterly crestfallen and discomfited.

In the second act, where our lesson begins, Elijah steps forward.

**Vs. 30**—"Come near unto me." Note the tone of courage and confidence. He anticipates success and victory. He takes the position of leader. He summons the people to his side. Every action of his is to be full of significance. He would have them observe carefully every step, that they might learn truth and duty. He would also take away all ground for suspicion of imposture.

"All the people came." They felt and owned his commanding influence.

"Repaired the altar." His mission was not to establish a new worship, but to restore the old. He came to call the people to repent, and return to the true God whom they had forsaken. He would remind them of their glorious past history so full of tokens of the divine power.



**31.**—“*Took twelve stones.*” He would carry their minds back to the better days before the division into two Kingdoms. They were chosen to be one nation, and to worship the one true God. Political division had been accompanied by idolatry and apostasy. They had fallen from their high calling and destiny. They were to be an “Israel” with a rich heritage of spiritual privilege and power, but they had bartered their birthright. Elijah would recall them to their true position. In the acknowledgment and service of Jehovah every tribe must be represented.

**32.**—“*In the name of the Lord.*”—Every step the prophet takes is by divine authority and in entire dependence upon the divine power. The man of faith and prayer is clearly revealed at each step. He is not seeking his own glory, but the glory of the God whom he serves. “*He made a trench.*” He takes steps that the subsequent miracle may be brought out in the most striking light. “*Two measures*” literally two *seahs* of seed. The *seah* was the household measure of the Hebrews, and contained about one and a half gallons. Comp. Gen. 18: 6.

**33.** “*Barrels with water.*”—He proceeds in the most deliberate and systematic manner. The calm confidence of his soul is apparent in all that he does. Water could be had from a mountain spring near at hand. The wood and sacrifice are thrice saturated with water, so that there could be no suspicion of fire concealed about them, and that the reality of the fire from heaven might be more apparent. Elijah stands aside, and summons helpers from among the people to do this work, that there might be no ground for alleging that the fire had been applied by his own hand. Everything is now ready. The preparation has been thorough and complete. It is a moment of suspense and eager watchfulness to the assembled multitude.

**36.**—“*The evening sacrifice.*”—See Ex. 29: 38-39. Fitly chosen moment, when according to the law, the children of Israel were daily to acknowledge their God, and seek his blessing. Elijah breaks the solemn hush of expectation with the voice of prayer. Calm and self-possessed, he presents a striking contrast to the excited, frantic prophets of Baal. In simple, reverent, earnest words, he presents his case before God.

Notice how he addresses God: “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel.” He appeals to the God of the covenant, the God who had made promises and pledges to their fathers. His faith lays hold upon God’s faithfulness.

Notice what he asks for: (1) That the supremacy and true deity of Jehovah might be established. The honor and glory of the true God stands in the foremost place. (2) That his own mission as a prophet might be made clear. No doubt his prophetic claims had been disputed. He had been despised and persecuted. The word of the Lord through him had been rejected. (3) That conviction and repentance might be brought to the heart of the people. With the heart of a true prophet, he longs after his apostate fellow-countrymen, that they may be saved from the folly and doom of idolatry. It is a brief but model prayer. A single desire for the glory of God runs through it all.

**38.**—Elijah’s faith was vindicated. Jehovah showed himself to be the hearer of prayer. In the presence of the vast assemblage, he revealed his glory and established his right to the sole homage and obedience of his people. He answered by fire, the emblem of his spirituality and power.

Fire is a frequent symbol of the Divine presence, e.g., the burning bush; the pillar of fire; the Shekinah or appearance of fire over the mercy-seat, in the tabernacle. In its subtle, searching character, in its purifying and destructive influences, in its brightness and majesty, how appropriate an emblem of the Holy One. The answer was complete as well as immediate. Sacrifice, wood, stones, dust, water; all vanished before the fiery baptism. No flame kindled by earthly hands could accomplish such results.

**39.**—Awe-struck at the sight, the people prostrated themselves and cried: Jehovah, he is the God; Jehovah, he is the God. There is no longer any halting between two opinions (vs. 21). Baal’s claims are swept away. It was an hour of thrilling soul-satisfaction for the prophet. All that he asked for had been fully granted. Jehovah’s claims had been established. The prophet’s relation to him had been clearly shown; the heart of the people was turned toward their God in faith and reverence.

## PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1.—Imposture flourishes best on ignorance; true religion is nourished and advanced by knowledge. The great teacher tells us "this is eternal life, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." True religion is not afraid of investigation. It wants all its followers to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them.

2.—In times of religious carelessness and declension, he who calls men back to God, and leads them to repair their broken altars, is a great benefactor. Revival begins with the repairing of the altar, and the earnest prayer for the divine blessing. Every true religious movement links itself with all that is good in the past.

3.—There is a spiritual unity among men, notwithstanding all their differences of race, clime, and condition. They are one in their need and helplessness. They are one in the capacities and possibilities of their spiritual nature. Access to God and power in prayer are among the greatest privileges that can be granted to any people. To belong to the true Israel is a high honor.

4.—Whatever we do, we should do it in the name of the Lord; according to his will and for his glory. See Ps. 20: 5; 1 Cor. 10: 31; Col. 3: 17. Not only our act of worship, but all our work and pleasure, ought to be done in the name of the Lord.

5.—All Christian work should be performed with calmness and thoroughness. The worker for God can afford to be calm, since he has the assurance that his labor will not be in vain in the Lord. He ought to be thorough; for the work is worthy of our best. We ought not to serve God with that which costs us nothing. The godly McCheyne said, in reference to the time and labor put upon his sermons, "Beaten oil for the sanctuary."

6.—Prayer is at once a precious privilege and a great power. "Prayer moves the hand that moves the world." "The effectual fer-

vent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Elijah did all that he could. He summoned the people, built the altar, arranged the sacrifice. He mingled prayer with his work. Prayer brought the fire of heaven that manifested the divine presence, consumed the sacrifice, and convinced the people. As S. S. teachers we must study our lesson, and prepare our material; but we must pray for the power of God to help us to commend the truth to our scholars. We need the heavenly fire to cleanse our hearts, and to fill us with a burning zeal for the salvation of those whom we teach.

7.—We have in our lesson one of the remarkable answers to prayer; but God does not only answer on these great occasions, but wherever and whenever a sincere heart pours out its burden before him.

The teacher will find use for the historical imagination in the teaching of this lesson. Try to make the scene and the persons living and real to your class. Study the geography, and the historical associations of the region, and use a map in teaching if possible. Make the central figure of the lesson stand out clearly, so that your scholars will receive a due impression of his moral and spiritual greatness. Show what faith and prayer did for Elijah, and their fundamental place in the life and work of every Christian. Teachers of Bible-classes may refer to the incontestible evidence that we have for the divine origin of Christianity. God has given us Christ as the full and final answer to all our enquiries and longings. How reasonable that we should bow before him, and cry, "My Lord and my God."

### THE BLACKBOARD.

True	<b>PRAYER</b>	True God
False	to	False Gods

Lesson, 1 Kings 19: 1-16. Read, the Chapter. Commit vs. 9-12.

1. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.

3. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

4. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life: for I am not better than my fathers.

5. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

6. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

8. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

9. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

10. And he said, I have been very jealous for the

Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

12. And after the earthquake a fire: but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

13. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

14. And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria.

16. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

"Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him."—Psa 37: 7.

**LESSON PLAN.**

1. Elijah threatened, vs. 1-3.
2. His fear and flight, vs. 4-8.
3. Elijah encouraged, vs. 9-14.
4. His commanded return, vs. 15-16.

**DAILY READINGS.**

- M. Elijah's Flight and Encouragement, 1 Kings, 19: 1-8.  
 T. Elijah's Flight and Encouragement, 1 Kings, 19: 9-18.  
 W. A despondent heart, Ps. 55: 1-8.  
 T. Cast down, Psalm 42.  
 F. The Glory of the Lord, Exodus 33: 12-23.  
 S. The refuge, Psalm 56.  
 S. Distress and deliverance, Ps. 120-121.

**CATECHISM.**

Q. 28. Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

No. 31, (Psalm) 575, 256, 573.

Elijah had been successful in the scene upon Mount Carmel told in the last lesson. By fire coming down from heaven he had received full proof that his religion was the true one, and that the God he worshipped is the One True God. Jezebel, however, was not convinced of the truth of Elijah's message. She was a Canaanite, of a very cruel nature, and was wholly given over to idolatry. There is no more sinful character in Scripture history than this heathen princess who married Ahab, king of Israel. It was she who brought the worship of idols into Israel, which occasioned such sin and suffering, and, at last, caused the ruin of the kingdom.

When she heard of what had taken place upon Mount Carmel she was filled with hatred against the prophet and resolved to kill him.

When the prophet learned this he was very depressed indeed, and, fleeing to the wilderness, he longed for death. Our passage describes his journey and the means used to comfort and strengthen him. It is thought that these events took place about 900 B.C. The rulers were Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and Benhadad king of Syria, with his capital at Damascus.

12.—Ahab is one of the most striking figures in the history of Israel. Still he owes this not so much to his own qualities, as to his connection with Elijah and to the influence of Jezebel, his wife. She was much more able and sinful than he. It was she who led him from one step of wickedness to another. It was she who tempted him to build temples to Baal. It was she who tempted him to permit

the murder of Naboth. These verses show us three features of Jezebel's character—Idolatry, Blasphemy, Cruelty.

3.—When Elijah heard the message of Jezebel, he at once saw his danger, and resolved to flee the country. He knew how fickle the multitude were, and how completely Ahab was guided by his queen. **Beersheba**, to which he fled, was a place well known in the history of God's people. The word means "well of seven," or "the oath." It lies at the entrance of the desert on the south at the extreme limit of Judah, hence the expression "From Dan to Beersheba." It was a great religious centre from the earliest times. Abraham lived there. (Gen. 22: 19.) Afterwards it was Isaac's home. After the conquest it formed part of Judah.

Elijah left his servant at Beersheba. In great crises of his life he longed for solitude. We are thus reminded of our Saviour, who often left the busy haunts of men that he might hold fellowship with the Father. (Mark 6: 46; Matt. 26: 39.)

4.—Elijah went a day's journey into the wilderness that desert through which the Children of Israel had wandered many years before. It is now called El Tih, a region stretching into the very heart of Arabia. The prophet sat under a juniper tree, a brown shrub, affording a welcome shade; and there he requested that he might die. He had hoped that, by the victory upon Mount Carmel, the power of Baal in the land of Israel would have been forever destroyed. But the wrath of Jezebel taught him a different lesson; and, like Jonah when the people of Nineveh repented, he longed for death.

5.—Kindly sleep came to his wearied frame; and, when he was awakened, it was by the touch of an angel, who bade him rise and eat. Note how frequently angels are spoken of as ministering to God's people, nay, as ministering to Christ himself. (Gen. 16: 7; Exod. 23: 20; Psalm 34: 7; Matt. 2: 13; Luke 1: 13; Mark 1: 13; Matt. 28: 2; Acts 7: 30; Heb. 1: 14.)

6.—"*Cake baked on the coals.*" The writer once saw such a cake baked by a Syrian woman. She first kneaded the dough upon a round stone till it was little more than the thickness of a wafer, and then she baked it over a slow fire. Such was, probably, the food given to Elijah, for customs in the East rarely change.

Having partaken of food the weary prophet lay down again. But the angel of the Lord touched him a second time and bade him rise and eat, as there was a great journey before him.

8-9 **Horeb**, whither Elijah went, is either the Sinaitic range of mountains or the particular mountain from which the Law was given to Moses. In any case, it is impressive to notice that Elijah was in the same region where, many years before, Moses had received the Law from God. He was probably urged by a natural desire to visit the place where God had made such a revelation to his people. Notice how frequently, in scripture, mountains are associated with sacred events (Gen. 22: 14; Exod. 19; Deut. 33: 2; 1 Kings, 18: 19; Matt. 5: 1; Matt. 28: 16; Rev. 21: 10.)

The word of the Lord probably came to Elijah in a dream. The words are those of gentle rebuke, chiding the prophet gently for leaving the post of duty.

10.—The children of Israel, as a whole, were unable to understand the character of Jehovah. They thought he was merely the God of Israel, and not the one and only God; and thus, they were liable to place the worship of other gods, which were no gods, alongside the worship of Jehovah. It was the burning desire of Elijah's life to teach his people the truth so long afterwards taught in our Catechism, that "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

When the prophet thought he had failed to do this he was crushed and depressed in spirit, so that his words have a tone of complaint. "**Forsaken thy Covenant.**" They had broken the first of the Ten Commandments, and, hence, must have broken them all. Elijah complains that the people had thrown down the altars, thus showing that they had given up the worship of God altogether and had turned to the worship of Baal. They had also slain the prophets (1 Kings 18: 4.) Elijah ends his sorrowful tale by saying: "I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." One is reminded of Luther struggling almost alone against the errors of Papacy.

11.—The scene described in this verse must have been one of wild and awful grandeur; a terrible tornado followed by an earthquake, the mountain rocked to its foundations; and then the

fire. It must have appeared to the prophet as if the end of the world was near. "But the Lord was in none of these."

**12-13 A still, small voice.**—Elijah felt that, here, indeed, was a message from the unseen Jehovah, and he prepared, reverently, to listen to it.

**15- Damascus** is situated at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountains, 135 miles north-east of Jerusalem, and about 50 miles east of the Mediterranean, at a height of 2260 feet above the sea. One of the oldest and most remarkable cities in the world—remarkable both on account of the beauty of its situation and the interest of its history.

It was known in the days of the Patriarchs, as Eliezer, Abraham's trusty servant, was a native of Damascus. David conquered it after a bloody war, but, in the reign of Solomon, it passed into other hands. An adventurer made himself king of Damascus, and founded an empire with which the Israelites came into violent conflict.

**Syria** is a country whose boundaries are not always clearly marked. Its capital was Damascus; and the Holy Land is often included under the term; although it is evident that, in the passage before us, the two countries are distinguished from each other.

**Hazael**—King for 45 years of Damascus Syria in the first half of the 9th century B.C. Sent by King Benhadad to consult Elisha concerning the cure for his sickness, he received from the prophet news that the king would die, and he was told that he himself would be king. He was a ferociously cruel man who warring successfully against both Israel and Judah.

**16 Jehu**, king of Israel, ruthlessly destroyed the House of Ahab and killed the prophets of Baal. He was anointed king of Israel, (II Kings 9: 6) by a messenger of Elisha in obedience to Elijah's message. He was a very cruel man, and was himself not faithful to the worship of Jehovah.

**Elisha**, was a prophet and successor of Elijah. As he was engaged in ploughing, Elijah consecrated him to the prophetic office by throwing his mantle over him. He was prophet for 50 years. As idolatry was almost overthrown, Elisha lived in a time of greater religious calm than Elijah. "Elijah was stern and severe,—solitary and lonely; Elisha was benevolent and tender, a man of the city and home. His miracles approached nearest to those of the Saviour, in which the fulness of divine grace revealed itself."

## PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1. We learn that no one who strives to do his duty in God's strength can wholly fail. We often fancy that we have failed when such is not the case. Give instances.

2. We learn the causes of Elijah's low spirits. He was unstrung after his conflict with Baal, and, being a man of great nervous energy, he gave way to painful depression.

3. Notice how God removes Elijah's depression. He gives him nourishing food, and then causes the prophet's mind to recover its tone by giving him work to do. God assures him that the cause of true religion is not so hopeless as he imagines. There are yet 7,000 persons in Israel who have not bent the knee to Baal.

4. We see God's wisdom and love also in the method of the revelation. He showed the prophet that he speaks not ordinarily by means of the Tempest, the Earthquake, and the Fire, but by the still, small voice, of righteousness and love. Thus God hints to Elijah on

Horeb the truths afterwards taught by Christ on Calvary, when, by his still, small voice, he revealed to us that God is a God of infinite holiness and tenderness and mercy.

### To the Teacher.

The great difficulty the teacher will find in this lesson is the number of facts presented. A careful choice must be made, so that the mind of the child may not be burdened too much. Ask the scholars briefly to describe the scene upon Mount Carmel and Elijah's victory there. Describe shortly the characters mentioned in the tale. Draw from the class what they know of Beersheba and the wilderness of Arabia and Sinai.

Then picture to the children the causes of Elijah's depression, not forgetting to remind them gently that they may have often annoyed father and mother by their self-will.

Then trace God's dealing with the prophet,

and show his wisdom and love. Show them that one great cure for depression is faithfully doing one's duty, in God's strength. Here, if you have time, you may ask them to narrate the parable of The Talents.

Be careful, lastly, to point them to Christ upon the cross, and remind them of the mercy revealed in the still, small voice, of Calvary; and ask them individually whether they have heard that voice and accepted its message.

For your own private study, read over again the story of Calvary and Christ's triumph over defeat there; the story of Paul and Silas in Philippi, and their triumph over defeat there;

the story of Luther in the Castle of Wartburg, and his great depression there.

THE BLACKBOARD.

FLIGHT FROM		
Jezeel Jezebel Hate Weakness Danger Fear	TO	Horeb God Love Strength Safety Comfort

Lesson V.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

July 31st, 1898.

Lesson, 1 Kings 21: 4-16. Read 1 Kings, Chapters 21 and 22. Commit vs. 4-6.

4. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

5. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad that thou eatest no bread.

6. And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

8. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

9. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

10. And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blas-

pheme God and the king. And then carry him out and stone him, that he may die.

11. And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

13. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house."—Ex. 20:17.

LESSON PLAN.

A Covetous Spirit.

1. Is a painful thing, vs. 4-6.
2. Listens to bad advice, vs. 7.
3. Leads to many sins, vs. 8-14.
4. Defeats its own ends, vs. 15-29.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Naboth's Vineyard, 1 Kings 21: 1-6.
- T. Naboth's Vineyard, 1 Kings 21: 7-16.
- W. Law of inheritance, Lev. 25: 18-28.
- T. Vanity of Wealth, Eccl. 2: 1-11.
- F. Oppression condemned, Micah, 2: 1-10.
- S. Covetous Achan, Josh. 7: 10-13: 19-26.
- S. Sin of covetousness, 12: 13-21.

CATECHISM.

Q. 29. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

LESSON HYMNS.

Nos. 19, 546, 530, 256.

The scene opens in the royal palace at Samaria in the year 899 B.C., but the vineyard was in Jezreel, and there the murder was committed. "Seven miles north of Engannim, across the plain, on a cape of Gilboa, with a view that sweeps Esdraelon east and west, stood Jezreel. It was built by the same dynasty which built Samaria, and like it lay convenient to their alliance with Phœnicia. It

also protected the highways from the coast to Jordan, and from Egypt to Damascus."—(Smith.)

One of the reasons why an incident like this is recorded, is to show how the fall of the house of Ahab was connected with the moral character of the king and his queen. One private act reveals character more fully than much public policy.

**4. Heavy and displeased.**—Sullen and angry. Ahab had built a new palace in Jezreel and desired to have Naboth's vineyard, which lay quite near it, in order to lay it out as a part of the grounds. "A garden of herbs" might be rendered "a park of shrubbery." It was not to raise vegetables for the kitchen that the king wanted it, but to enlarge his pleasure grounds, and complete the idea of the palace and its surroundings which he had laid out in his mind.—hence his deep disappointment at his failure. He had come personally to see Naboth in reference to the matter, and the offer which he made to him seems perfectly fair. But if he made this offer knowing that Naboth would deem it a sin to sell, then his conduct was wrong.

**The Jezreelite.**—Although Naboth is thus named from the city where he dwelt, he was no doubt an Israelite, and from his speech he was a worshipper of Jehovah. **I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.** He was not holding the land for a higher price; he had conscientious reasons for refusing to sell.

(1) The sale of land, except as the last resort of extreme poverty, was forbidden by the law. Lev. 25: 23-28; Num. 36: 7-9. Jehovah was the original possessor of the whole land, and he had made a free gift of it to Israel on certain conditions, one of which was that it should always remain in the families to which it had been assigned. When it was sold under compulsion, it must return at the year of jubilee, which would not have been practicable in this case. Perhaps by this time the land had largely fallen into disuse, and was thought of only by a man specially loyal to Jehovah.

(2) Naboth had a patriotic desire to hand down in his own line what had come to him from his fathers. Even in this country it is hard to sell the old homestead, but in an older land many more memories gather around a home and its gardens and fields.

**Turned away his face.**—Ahab, although an enterprising man in some things, had a vein of pitiable weakness in him, which appears in this pouting like a spoiled child. Perhaps his sorrow was in part assumed, to awaken the sympathy of his stronger wife.

**5.**—Jezebel apparently missed Ahab from the dining hall, and went in search of him. She

shows a commendable wifely concern for him.

**6.**—Ahab does not tell her the reason which Naboth gave for his refusal to sell. They do not seem to have made much impression on his mind, or else he thought that Jezebel being a foreigner would not understand them.

**7. Dost thou now govern.**—You are only playing at being king of Israel if you allow a little thing like this to stand in your way. **I will give thee.**—These words ring with her usual energy and force of character which we cannot help admiring even although we abhor the means which she employed.

**8. Seal.**—The seal was used for purposes of identification from a very early period. This one probably contained the name of the king. In any case, it was equivalent to his signature, and made these letters a royal mandate. This suggests that Ahab was aware of what she was doing, but it is not absolutely certain.

**9. Proclaim a fast.**—The object of this ordinance was to give the impression that the city was under a curse, or was at least threatened with one because of some undiscovered sin, which must be removed or averted by public humiliation. 2 Sam. 21: 1. Josh. 9: 11-15. The prophets often call a fast for such a cause. Joel 1: 14; 2: 12; I Sam. 7: 5-6; 2 Chron. 20: 3. Of such a fast a public assembly was a part. Joel, 2: 15. The feelings of the people of Jezreel would thus be excited by the thought that something of far more than ordinary importance had occurred, and the wicked deed which the queen proposed would be clothed with all the solemnity of a religious act.—Milligan.) **Set Naboth on high.** Either (1) place him at the bar of the public tribunal as an accused person to be tried; or (2) give him a position of honour as an elder of ancient lineage. (Josephus.) If the latter interpretation be the true one it would give a color of impartiality to the proceedings. A deeper horror would be awakened by a charge of impiety brought against one who occupied so exalted a position, and it would accord also with the idea of retributive justice that Naboth should be denounced at the very hour of his special honour.—(Hammond.)

**10. Two men.**—This was required by the Mosaic law. (Deut. 17: 6; 19: 15; Num. 35: 30.) Even Jezebel bears witness to the Pentateuch. (Wordsworth.) **Sons of Belial**—Belial is

not the name of a person, as both English versions would seem to imply. It means worthlessness or wickedness, and the phrase "children of worthlessness" had become proverbial for abandoned men. In the ancient East as in China to-day men could be hired for a specific sum to swear to anything that their employer might desire. This was one of the causes which led to examination by torture, because it was thought that in extreme pain men would speak the truth.

**Thou didst blaspheme.**—The word for "blaspheme" usually means to bless, and it is so rendered in this passage in several versions. That it is used in an evil sense here is plain from the context. But why should such a word be used? Answers, (1) It is an accommodation to the prejudices of the Jew, to whom the idea of cursing God was too horrible to be put in words. We still speak of giving one a blessing, when we mean a scolding or a cursing. (2) A curse invoked on men is really a prayer addressed to God. (3) Blessing and cursing in all tongues lie very near together, and the one may easily shade into the other. The same words are used, but with a very different intention.

**God and the king.**—These offences were not regarded as two different crimes, but as internally connected as in the law. Ex. 22: 28. To curse the king was practically to curse Him whose visible representative he was; and hence cursing is called blasphemy, and is punished with death. Lev. 24: 14-16; 2 Sam. 19: 21. It is not likely that a good man like Naboth, a faithful worshipper of Jehovah, could live under a ruler like Ahab without giving some color to such a charge.

**II. The elders and nobles did.**—That the elders of Jezreel instantly obeyed the detestable command of the queen shows the deep moral degradation of the people, as well as the terror which her name had begun to inspire. (Keil.) That she did not hesitate to put all this in writing shows the determined courage of this woman, as well as a reckless, insolent unconsciousness of any wrong-doing, which is appalling.

**13.**—Not only was Naboth stoned, but also his sons. 2 Kings 9: 26. This was the ancient Eastern law. Num. 16: 27; Josh. 7: 24, 25; Dan. 6: 24. But a juster and more merciful principle was published in Deut. 24: 16. This

was adopted and enforced by Joash, 2 Kings 14: 6, and insisted on by the prophets, Ez. 18: 4-20. If the heirs in this case had not been slain they might have interfered with the land reverting to the crown. These very elders a few years later slew seventy of the descendants of Ahab and Jezebel. 2 Kings 10: 1, 6, 7.

**15. Take possession.**—Inherit, succeed to. The goods of the man guilty of idolatry were devoted to the Lord, Deut. 13: 16; so the possessions of those executed for treason were by general usage forfeited to the Crown. (Keil.) **Which he refused to give thee for money.**—There is a proud malicious triumph in these words. "He refused, simple fool, to sell it, now thou canst have it for nothing. I have discovered a better plan than buying it." (Hammond.) This tone ought to have aroused in Ahab suspicions of foul play. Perhaps he lulled his conscience to sleep with the thought that if any evil had been wrought he had not done it. Matt. 27: 24.

**16. Ahab rose up.**—This was the next morning. 2 Kings 9: 26. He was eager to enter on his ill-gotten possession. He seems to have been pleased and satisfied, with the whole transaction, if indeed he ever thought of the particulars.

### To the Teacher.

A succession of appeals to the imagination may be made by means of this lesson. Let the teacher draw on his own imagination, and describe the following scenes.

**First scene.**—The king standing on the roof of his palace in Jezreel planning terraced grounds around it. He sees Naboth's vineyard running up into the proposed extension; he must try to secure it.

**Second scene.**—The king and Naboth together in earnest conversation. Mention the arguments the king would be likely to use, and the replies which Naboth made.

**Third scene.**—The king lying on his couch with his face to the wall. Make him think out loud, so that the children will hear from his lips the fretful, petulant, and unreasonable things which they are accustomed to think and say when they are disappointed.

**Fourth scene.**—The entrance of the queen. Describe her. Not a sour-visaged, low-voiced virago, but one of the most hand,



some women of history, tall, stately, beautifully dressed and perfumed, with a sweet, winning voice, and most kind and loving towards her husband. Temptation to sin never comes in a repulsive form. Try to picture in a graphic way the conversation between them.

**Fifth scene.**—The fast in Jezreel. Describe the gathering of the solemn assem-

bly, the sudden appearance of the witnesses, their charges, Naboth's surprise, his protests, the rage of the crowd, they seize him, drag him forth, the witnesses strip off their upper garments, Naboth's prayer to Jehovah, the pain of the first blow, insensibility, death, the dogs devouring the mangled form. This is the result of sin.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

Why could Naboth not sell his land? Lev. 25 : 23.

Could the land be ever sold? Lev. 25 : 25-27.

For how long? Lev. 25 : 28.

What was Ahab's character? 1 Kings 16 : 25, 30, 33 ; 21 : 25.

What is covetousness? Eph. 5 : 5 ; Col. 3 : 5.

With what sins is it classed? Mark 7 : 22 ; Rom. 1 : 29 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 10-11 ; 6 : 10 ; Eph. 5 : 3.

Give some examples of Sons of Belial. 1 Sam. 2 : 12 ; 10 : 27 ; 25 : 17 ; 2 Sam. 16 : 7 ; 20 : 1.

Trace the history of Jezebel. 1 Kings 16 : 31 ; 18 : 4 ; 19 : 2 ; 2 Kings 9 : 30.

What woes are denounced against evil counsel? Micah 2 : 1-2 ; Hab. 2 : 9-12.

What were the elders for? Num. 11 : 16-17 ; Deut. 16 : 18-19.

Why were these elders ready to obey Jezebel? Ps. 12 : 8 ; Prov. 29 : 26.

What is the true purpose of a fast? Is. 58 : 6.

What was the penalty for blasphemy? Lev. 24 : 16.

How was a false witness punished? Deut. 19 : 16-19 ; God's estimate of it. Prov. 25 : 18 ; Mal. 3 : 5. Instances, Matt. 26 : 60-61 ; Acts 6 : 13.

What was the end of Ahab? 1 Kings 22 : 34-37. Of his heir? 2 Kings 9 : 24. Of his other children? 2 Kings 10 : 6-7. His daughter? 2 Kings 11 : 13-16.

## PRACTICAL THOUGHTS

1. *Duty should always be more in our thoughts than pleasure.*—If Ahab's mind had been full of the well-being of his subjects, and the political, social, and religious strength of his nation, threatened as it was at this time on several sides, he would not have had time to think of building palaces or laying out pleasure grounds in Jezreel. At the present time there is a danger that many young people will become so much interested in various kinds of sport that they will, like Ahab, easily fall into sin, neglecting their work, their studies, breaking the Sabbath, and completely destroying their Christian conscience.

2. *Happiness does not depend on having many things but on being good.*—Therefore a sinful desire for the possessions of others is very foolish as well as wrong. It makes us more selfish, hard-hearted and unhappy. And if we get the things we long for, the possession of them does not make us better, but worse. Covetousness is idolatry and idolatry is insanity. Happiness comes through the possession of

Christ, and by administering all our gifts and opportunities for Christ's sake.

3. *Sulking is a sin.*—Pouting, a somewhat milder form of it, is common among children, and is painful to others, injurious to themselves, and displeasing to Jesus. Sulkingness is a sour, cross and obstinate ill-humor, at something which has happened to us. It generally arises from thinking too much of ourselves. When we give way to it, it keeps the evil part of our nature uppermost, and makes us a constant prey to wicked thoughts. When we feel it coming on, we should betake ourselves to prayer.

4. *The danger of listening to evil counsel.*—The tendency of our own natures to sin is like tinder, to which the evil advice of others is the convenient kindling spark. We need to seek counsel from those who will repress the evil in us, rather than from those who will encourage it.

5. *Doing our duty may bring us loss, pain and death.*—So it did to Naboth. But it was not

less his duty on that account. We are sure that in the state beyond death God would make up to Naboth what his righteousness had lost him here. Yet if doing his duty should bring a man pain hereafter, as well as here, he ought still to perform it. And whether the result of his devotion to God be pleasure or pain, he will have within him the reward of a good conscience, which no external pain can destroy.

6. *Talents and social position increase one's power to sin.*—No ordinary sinner could have planned or carried out Jezebel's wickedness. What a noble woman she would have made if her gifts had been sanctified by faith in Jehovah, and her regal powers and indomitable will been consecrated to his service! But in the service of sin these gifts only increased her infamy and aggravated her doom. Her name has become a by-word for wickedness.

7. *Sin indulged tends downward with startling rapidity.*—Ahab's selfish desire for the vineyard led, when thwarted, to petulant sullenness, listening to evil counsel, mockery of the forms of religion, perjury and murder. Jezebel had reached a point where she gloried in sin; her words show not the least compunction, but a

certain malicious triumph that her wicked scheme had succeeded so well.

8. *The principal instrument of all this wickedness was falsehood.*—The children ought to be solemnly impressed that it is **never** right to say what is not true. When we see how much wickedness is still wrought among us by lying, we ought to learn the supreme value of truth, and that no sacrifice which we can make to maintain it ought to be counted too great.

9. *The triumph of wickedness is short-lived.* Job. 20: 5.—Ahab was no sooner in the vineyard than Jehoval served a sentence of death on him through the prophet Elijah, and took all joy in his ill-gotten possession clean out of his heart. God has made the punishment of sin a part of the laws of the universe, but sometimes they have not time to work it out within the limits of one short life. Amidst the many unrighted wrongs of this world we need to have faith in eternity and its settlement of all moral accounts.

“The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small,  
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.”

### CLASS RECORD.

Teacher .....

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# Primary Department.

HELPS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS, BY MR. & MRS. G. H. ARCHIBALD, MONTREAL.

GOLDEN TEXT: "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. 84: 11.

The twelve lessons of the Quarter are a continuation of our studies in the Old Testament. We finished last year with the life of Solomon, and now begin with the kingdom at its division under Rehoboam, and Jeroboam.

The principal characters to be studied during the Quarter are—

Rehoboam.

Jeroboam.

Elijah, and Elisha and his servant.

Ahab and Jezebel.

Naboth.

The Shunamite.

Naaman.

Amos.

The lessons are as follows:—

1. The Kingdom Divided.
2. Elijah—the prophet.
3. Elijah—on Carmel.
4. Elijah's flight, and encouragement.
5. Naboth's vineyard.
6. Elijah's spirit on Elisha.
7. The Shunamite's son.
8. Naaman healed.
9. Elisha—at Dothan.
10. The death of Elisha.
11. Sinful indulgence.
12. Captivity of the Ten Tribes.

The Central Thought of the Quarter for the study of the Little Folks, would seem to be that suggested in the Golden Text of the Quarter, God's good gifts, and the following thought for each lesson is suggested.

1 A HAPPY HOME	2 FOOD and CLOTHING	3 HOLY SPIRIT OF FIRE	4 SEEN FRIENDS and UNSEEN
5 A CONTENTED HEART	<b>G</b> OD'S <b>GOOD</b> <b>GIFTS</b>		6 HOLY SPIRIT OF LOVE
7 LOVE FOR OTHERS			8 A CLEAN HEART
9 ANGELS EVER NEAR	10 PEACEFUL LIFE and DEATH	11 GUIDANCE THROUGH LIFE	12 JESUS Our SAVIOUR

These are all God's good gifts, each one plainly taught by the lesson we study. In our Primary work we do not want to teach history or chronology. A little such teaching may be done for the sake of the older scholars, but the Primary child of eight years old, and under, will not grasp hold of much of either chronology or history. The wise teacher, therefore, will aim to get a Central Thought for the Quarter and a Central Thought for each lesson that will leave the deepest possible impression for good.

These lessons in this Quarter seem naturally to fall into some such divisions as are suggested, and a very helpful Quarter's teaching can be made of them in this way.

We might make twelve objects or pictures as follows:—

- Les. 1. A house—signifying a happy home.
- “ 2. Elijah—being fed by ravens.
- “ 3. A church.
- “ 4. Elijah—under the juniper tree.
- “ 5. Naboth's vineyard, with a heart and the word “Content” therein.
- “ 6. Upper room, and the Holy Spirit as a fire coming upon the disciples.
- “ 7. A cup of cold water
- “ 8. A heart with the word “clean” in it
- “ 9. Host of angels, as shown in cut of lesson 9.
- “ 10. Elijah's tomb, with the words “Peaceful Death” on it.
- “ 11 Two roads as suggested in cut.
- “ 12. The Cross.

The subjects of the pictures or objects are, of course, only suggestive. As you teach the lesson you may find others more suitable to your class, and if so use them. The objects can easily be made of blocks of wood, or if a sand map be used, of paper. If pictures are preferred, they can easily be roughly sketched—either with pen and ink, wax crayon, or water color. Do not attempt to make them very artistic. The imagination of the child will fill up the detail. For example, in Lesson Four; a simple little tree, with a small piece of wood for Elijah, as suggested in the cut of that lesson, will do.

When the lessons of the Quarter are begun, have these twelve objects, or pictures, rolled up in nice paper, or put in boxes, and suggest that we are going to have each Sunday something that will remind us of God's good gifts to us. Tell the children that they must try not to miss a single Sunday for the Quarter, as each day we are going to open one of the parcels, or boxes. The plan will arouse their curiosity, and make the teaching work less difficult.

As each picture, or object, is unrolled, be sure and place it on the blackboard, sand-map, or shelf, as the case may be and review each Sunday, the previous lessons. Every Sunday, have the Golden Text for the Quarter repeated again, and let the burden of the Quarter's teaching be “God's care for us.”



# LESSON I.—July 3rd, 1898.

## THE KINGDOM DIVIDED. 1 Kings 12: 16-25.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." Prov. 15: 1.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: A happy home.

IV. SYNOPSIS. We begin a half year's studies in the Old Testament at the death of Solomon, and the division of the kingdom upon the accession of Jeroboam, and Rehoboam. We must keep in mind that for the preceding 120 years the kingdom had been growing strong and united, under the successive reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. There was thorough military organization. Peace on all sides. Riches in abundance, gold as plenteous as stones. But for Solomon's sins this might have continued. Rehoboam was Solomon's son and would naturally be his heir. He was a true son of a wicked father and an equally ungodly mother. There was no peace within the kingdom, however. The people demanded reform, and sent to Egypt for Jeroboam, who had been banished thither by Solomon. The people demanded relief from Rehoboam, but his answer was haughty and thoughtless and under the leadership of Jeroboam the Ten Tribes revolted, and the kingdom was divided.

### V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS.

1. Once upon a time there was a happy home. The children lived very happily there, until one day a quarrel came. There was one thoughtless and selfish boy. He wanted his own way, he only thought about himself. What endless trouble it made. One took his part, and the others took the other side, and there was a division. No more nice games that afternoon. No more bright smiles, etc., etc. Why? Selfishness had come in. Thoughtlessness led to angry words. Then quick answers, and the damage was done.

This story can be made more effective by being made more concrete, if, as it is told, some pieces of paper are used to represent the children, showing how, as they quarrelled, they divided. Emphasize that one thoughtless word led to all.

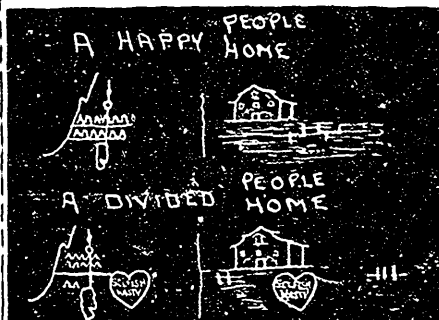
2. Teach the Golden Text.

3. Ask questions about the Kings, Saul,

David, and Solomon, and tell of the happy home the children of Israel had until after Solomon died. As you speak of the people recall the twelve tribes. Hold in the hand a piece of black paper on which are pasted twelve white pieces of paper, each the shape of a tent, and each time the people are spoken of throughout the Quarter, point to the paper to represent them.

4. Now tell that trouble had come into that once happy home, and one boy had the power to put an end to it, if he had only been thoughtful and unselfish, but he was not. Now tell the story of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and when this is finished again refer to the Golden Text.

5. Now make the personal application showing how we often can be peacemakers. Ask



the children, for instance, where they have known a soft answer to have turned away wrath. Show the danger of the hasty word and of the angry word, and again drill on the Golden Text.

6. God gave the children of Israel a happy home, but sin made it unhappy. Sin divided it. Here tear the two tents from the ten, and place them on their respective places on the map.

7. God gives us a happy home and we must be careful not to allow sin to enter in and divide it. Our home is God's good gift. Let us prize it as a precious thing he has given us, and let us each do his share to keep it happy.

NOTE.—Sometime each Sunday in the Quarter, either during the opening exercises of the lesson or the closing exercises, have the children repeat the Golden Text for the Quarter.

## LESSON II.—July 10th, 1898.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET. 1 Kings 17: 1-16.

1. **GOLDEN TEXT.** "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruise of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord." 1 Kings 17: 16.

II. **PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER:** God's good gifts.

III. **PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON:** Food and clothing.

IV. **REVIEW.**

1. Who was Solomon's son?

2. Why did not all the people want him to be King?

3. How many of the people allowed him to reign over them?

4. What was the other king's name?

V. **SYNOPSIS:**—The kingdom was now divided. Several years of Ahab's rule in Samaria had passed. The kingdoms seemed to be prosperous, but religiously the worshippers of Baal were the only ones who were recognized by the king, and Jehovah was almost forgotten. Idols were set up on every hand. Jezebel, the wicked wife of the irreligious king, did everything to foster the worship of Baal, and to put down that of Jehovah.

In the meantime, God, away off in the little hamlet of Thisbe on the eastern side of the Jordan, was preparing a man to be a leader, and a reformer. He was used to hardships, at home on the hills, and was a strong, speedy, shaggy, hairy man, clothed in skins, and with loins girt with a leathern girdle. Like John the Baptist, a child of the desert. "Too strong to die, so God took him." He was in constant communion with God, a man who seemed to have no rival to God in his heart. His character may be summed up as follows:—

Verse 3. Get thee hence.

Verse 5. So he went.

Verse 9. Arise, go to Zarephath.

Verse 10. So he arose, and went.

At Cherith, the ravens fed him. At Zarephath, with the widow and her son "the barrel of meal wasted not, and the cruise of oil did not fail." He was God's own child, and God took care of him.

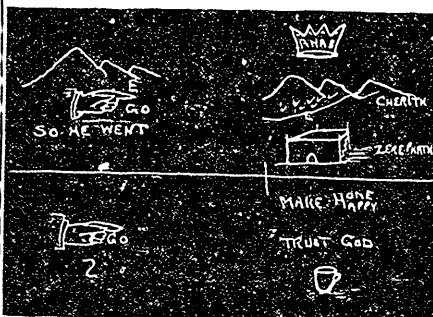
VI. **SUGGESTIVE STEPS.**

1. Boys and girls, I want to make six pictures for you upon the blackboard to-day.

Here are six picture frames. Point to the squares made upon the blackboard beforehand.

2. Review last week's lesson, and tell that the kingdom was now divided, the happy home broken up. Nearly ten years had passed, and the wicked King Ahab was on the throne.

3. Have a heart, or a letter, or something that will stand for Elijah, and as you begin to tell the story of Elijah's life, hold the representation of him in the hand. Now tell the story of the wicked king Ahab, who was upon the throne. Here pin a crown in the first picture frame, as suggested in the cut. Tell the story of Elijah's early life as suggested in the synopsis of the lesson above, and then complete the first picture. God told him to go and stand before Ahab, so he went.



4. Elijah was a man always ready to obey. He stood before Ahab, and was not afraid of him, because he knew God was with him. There was a famine in the land, and God sent him away to the brook Cherith. Here tell the story of the ravens feeding him. As the second picture frame is filled up as suggested in the cut, emphasize the thought that wherever God told Elijah to go, he always went. There was always prompt, and willing obedience on Elijah's part.

5. Now tell the story of the journey to Zarephath, and all that happened there, and as it is told, fill in the third picture frame.

6. Hold in the hand a heart, or a letter, or something to stand for a boy or a girl. God speaks to us as he spoke to Elijah. He says, go do this, do that. Who can tell me some of

the things God asks us to do? As the children suggest, fill in the three other picture frames in such a way as will be most impressive to your class. The pictures used in the cut are only suggestive. Make home happy. Trust God. Cup of cold water.

7. Who has been listening to God's voice this last week? How does he speak to children?

1. In the Bible.
2. In prayer.

Note.—It is probable that God spoke to Elijah while he was in communion with him, and not by any miraculous appearance. The

teacher who knows God's voice best, will be best able to teach this lesson.

8. Who will listen to God's voice this week, and when he calls us as he did Elijah, do as we are bidden?

9. Here teach the Golden Text.

10. God cared for Elijah. He sent the raven to feed him, and the barrel of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil did not fail. The Golden Text for the Quarter teaches us that so he will care for us. No good thing will he withhold from them who walk uprightly.

### LESSON III.—July 17th, 1898.

#### ELIJAH ON CARMEL. 1 Kings 18: 30-40.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they said, The Lord, He is the God, the Lord, He is the God." 1 Kings 18:39.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER. God's good gifts.

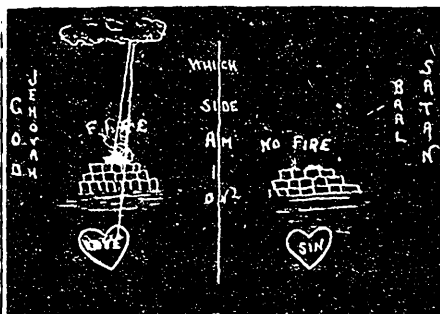
III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The holy spirit of love.

IV. REVIEW:

1. What was Elijah?
2. To what three places did God send him?
3. How was he fed at Cherith?
4. How was he fed at Zarephath?

V. SYNOPSIS: For three years God had taken care of Elijah. The famine was great in the land. The gods of the people had been appealed to in vain. The people were wondering what was the cause of all the suffering. Just at this time, the voice of God again comes to Elijah, and he is bidden once more to stand before Ahab. It would seem a dangerous thing for the prophet, for the king thought Elijah was the troubler of Israel, and so charged him when they met. God and Elijah, "workers together," were desirous to have the people turn to the worship of Jehovah. With this end in view the king was asked to assemble the people together at Mount Carmel. Ahab agreed to do so, and sent word to all parts of the land. Doubtless, the days intervening were spent by Elijah in communion with God, in preparation for the great event. On the eventful day, the prophets of Baal, and many of the secret worshippers of Jehovah gathered on the platform of Carmel. The pro-

phets of Baal were given the first opportunity, but could not call fire down from heaven. Elijah mocked them, and then having built the altar of God, and covered it and the sacri-



fice with water, (so as to prove beyond a doubt that the test was a real one,) the prophet with mighty faith then called upon Jehovah, who answered by sending the fire from heaven. Then the people cried, "The Lord, He is God, etc.," and Elijah said, "Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape." And they took them, and brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS:

1. Begin the lesson with the following story.

Come children and listen I'll tell you in rhyme  
A story of something that happened one time;  
There was war in the land and brave hearts bent high,  
And many went forth for their country to die,  
But who can tell of the fear and dismay  
That spread through the village of Wilson one day

When the enemy's army marched up through the street  
 And their own brave soldiers were forced to retreat,  
 Such running, and hiding, and trembling with fear,  
 When who in the midst of it all should appear  
 But Grandmother Gregory, feeble and old,  
 Coming out of her cottage, courageous and bold,  
 She faced the intruders, who marched through the  
 land,  
 Shaking at them the poker she held in her hand.

It has been used before, but those who remember it do not object to an old story. This story is worth learning by heart. It will always be helpful in your work.

Note.—If you have a child who can recite this story acceptably, and the disposition of the child is such that it will not hurt her to do so, (for often it is a harmful exercise, and develops self-consciousness in the child,) have it recited. As the story is told draw a line down the middle of the blackboard as suggested in the cut, and bring out the thought "which side am I on?"

2. Elijah was on God's side. The king was on the side of Baal. Elijah knew the king was wrong, and that he was leading the people away from God. God had told him to bring the king and the people back to himself, but they would not listen to the prophet. The famine was severe, and the people were suffering, and Elijah prepared the test on Carmel.

Tell the story to the children, and draw the two altars as suggested in the cut. With red chalk, draw the line showing the fire coming down from heaven, and burning up the sacrifice.

3. When people go away from God, they need some one with the great fire of love in their hearts to lead them back to God. This love was burning in the heart of Elijah, and God honored him. If it is burning in our hearts God will honor us. If we will give our hearts to God as Elijah did, God will send the Spirit of love like a warm fire, and when people see the fire burning, when they see kind actions, gentleness, and patience, as a result of the fire of love that is burning in our hearts, they will cry out in the words of our Golden Text, "The Lord, he is God, the Lord, he is God."

4. As this thought is emphasized, make another red line from heaven, and show that God will send this burning love into our hearts if we will allow him. It is one of God's good gifts to his own children.

5. Now review the Golden Text for the Quarter. God gives us happy homes, food, clothes, and loving hearts. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

## LESSON IV.—July 24th, 1898.

### ELIJAH'S FLIGHT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. I Kings 19 : 1-16.

I. GOLDEN TEXT. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Psalm 37 : 7.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON : Friends seen, and unseen.

IV. REVIEW :

1. What idol did the people worship?
2. Whom should they have worshipped?
3. What did Elijah do on Mount Carmel?
4. What made Elijah's sacrifice burn?

V. SYNOPSIS : Elijah had power. Constant communion with God made him to know the Father's will. His work had been successful, the famine was over. There was every opportunity for a real and lasting reformation taking place, but just now, Elijah fails. Perhaps the prosperity was too much for him, we know

the body must have been overtaxed. Be that as it may, fearful of the wicked Jezebel, "he arose and went for his life." Instead of standing firm, with the same old courage that he had always shown, he fled away to the distant wilderness, and under the juniper tree prayed that he might die. In our lesson we have the most touching picture of the shepherd care of God. When one of the flock is missing, the shepherd goes after him; so God went after Elijah, and he fed him, and gave him water to drink.

Like Moses, he spent forty days in the mountain alone with God. He found his Father whom he sought, not in the strong wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, but in the still, small voice. Now he is back again into the Father's heart, acting under his instruc-



tions. Once more he is sent back to his work, and is specially instructed to appoint Elisha to be prophet in his place.

#### VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS :

1. We are going to have for our lesson to-day, one, two, three, stories. As we say this, write on the black-board the figures 1, 2, 3. This would appeal to the love of story characteristic in the child.

2. Tell, in part, the story of the Twenty-third Psalm, specially emphasizing the words "He restoreth my soul." Make for the first story (as suggested in the cut) the sheep fold, a paper crook, to stand for the shepherd, and the hills. Have a small piece of paper to represent a lamb. Tell of the shepherd standing at the door, and counting the sheep, ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, but one is missing. It is this lamb. It has wandered far away from the shepherd, and the fold. It is missed by the shepherd, and although it is night, he hurries away, and looks for it.

3. Have the children repeat the following verse:—

"Lord, Thou hast here thy ninety and nine,  
Are they not enough for Thee?  
But said the Shepherd, "This of mine  
Has wandered away from me,  
And, although the road be rough and steep,  
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

4. Tell how the shepherd kept on searching till he found it. Make the story as graphic as possible. Tell of the bringing back of the lost lamb, and repeat the following verse:—

But all through the mountains, thunder  
riven,

And up from the rocky steep,  
There arose a glad cry to the gate of Heaven,  
"Rejoice I have found my sheep."

And the angels echoed around the throne,  
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own."

5. Tell the story of Elijah's flight :

- (a) The distress of the prophet.
- (b) The run to Jezreel.
- (c) Jezebel's threat.

(d) Elijah's fear and flight.

(e) The Juniper tree.

(f) The angel's visit.

(g) The food.

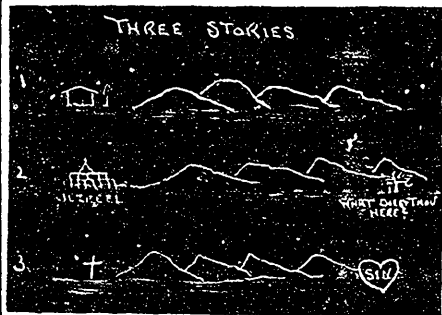
(h) The second visit.

(i) Searching for God.

(j) The still, small voice.

(k) God again speaks to Elijah.

6. Another story. Tell the story of a boy who having done something wrong got away, away off from God. How did he get back again? Suppose you or I ever did anything wrong, how will we get back to the happy place again? Now the teacher can use the two illustrations in pictures No. 1 and No. 2, and apply this beautiful lesson with great force to the child's life. "He restoreth my Soul." No matter how far we go away from the Saviour, he is searching for us. Sending his angel for us. Coming himself to bring us back, for the Lord is my Shepherd.



7. We have friends seen and unseen. Those we see love us, and will do much for us, but let us remember that the angels are near at hand, and that Jesus is really our shepherd. Though we cannot see him, he is seeking as the shepherd for the lamb, and as God did for Elijah, to bring us back to himself.

8. No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.



NABOTH'S VINEYARD. 1 Kings 21: 4-16.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house." Ex. 20: 17.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: A contented heart.

IV. REVIEW:

1. How far did Elijah run before Ahab's chariot?

2. What was the wicked Queen's name?

3. What did she want to do to Elijah?

4. What did Elijah then do?

V. SYNOPSIS: Near by the palace of the selfish Ahab, was the vineyard owned by Naboth, the Jezreelite. The sale of the vineyard was contrary to the Levitical Law. When the King found he could not obtain the vineyard, he showed his lack of self-control, in a fit of sulks. The resourceful Jezebel, however, had always some scheme ready. Thoughtless for others, selfish in the extreme, she laid the plot to murder Naboth, and to seize upon the wanted property. The plan was as successful as she had hoped it would be. She told the king, "And it came to pass when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab arose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it."

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS.

It would be impossible to teach the Golden Text in to-day's lesson, if the children do not know what covetousness means. While we of course always aim to teach a positive, rather than a negative lesson, our Golden Text is from the old dispensation, and if we use it, it must be in the form of a warning. Few of the children there are who have not experienced this sin of covetousness. Let us seek to use this parable as the Saviour used his parables, to teach that the good gift of a contented life comes from God himself.

1. Suppose we begin with a question. What does this word covetousness mean? Draw from the children, by test questions, what they know about this sin of covetousness, without any reference to Naboth. Keep the one thought in mind, and continue questioning until the children see what it is we are talking about.

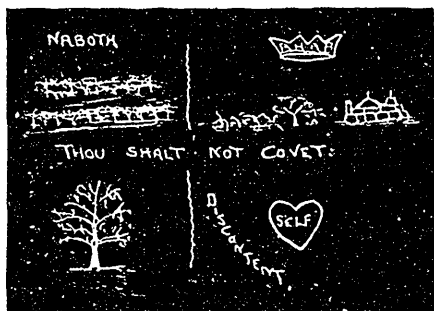
2. Tell the story of a boy you know who at the Christmas tree wanted all the best things

for himself. He was selfish, greedy, and covetous. As you tell this story, roughly draw upon the board, (for it always makes a story more interesting,) a picture of a Christmas tree, with marks to represent the things thereon.

3. Draw or pin to the board, the picture of Ahab's palace. Over it pin the crown used in the second lesson, with Ahab's name upon it. Tell how he was surrounded with good things, and how he was not happy because he did not own the little vineyard of Naboth.

4. Don't dwell too long upon the horrible detail. Tell the story of the plot that was made by Jezebel to rob Naboth of his home.

5. Hold in the hand a heart, and tell the children that this is the boy's heart, and is very like that of the king Ahab, for therein is a great giant. As you speak, from within the



heart (which is made double) draw out the piece of paper, and as you unfold it, have the children spell the giant's name, Discontent.

6. The boy at the Christmas tree was unhappy, and made others unhappy, because this giant was in his heart. The king was unhappy, and made others unhappy, because this giant was in his heart. You and I will be unhappy, and will make others unhappy, as long as we are discontented, for discontent leads to covetousness.

7. There is only one way to keep the ten commandments. We must take from God the good gift of a contented heart, which he offers us. Remember, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. If we give our lives altogether to Jesus, and allow him to control us, he will drive out this giant, and make us contented and happy.